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# Upcoming Events



## THIS HALLOWED GROUND: ABRAHAM LINCOLN AND THE BATTLEFIELD DEAD

Presented by Brian Dirck

Sunday, November 17, 2019, 2:00 p.m.  
Meeting Rooms A-B  
Allen County Public Library, Main Library  
Fort Wayne, Indiana  
Free and Open to the Public

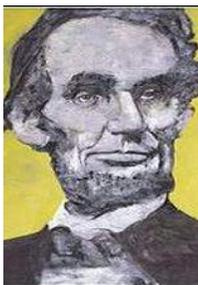


## 2019 MCMURTRY LECTURE

Lincoln and April 1865: The Month that Saved America

Presented by Jay Winik

Thursday, September 16, 2019, 7:00 pm  
Theater  
Allen County Public Library, Main Library  
Fort Wayne, Indiana  
Free and Open to the Public



## 2019 LINCOLN FORUM

Speakers include: Gary Gallagher, Elizabeth Varon, Joan Waugh, and Jonathan White

November 16-18, 2019  
Gettysburg, PA  
For more information, visit  
[www.LincolnForum.org](http://www.LincolnForum.org)

# On the Cover



*Proclamation of Emancipation [calligraphic print], 1930s.*  
To see more items from the collection, see "Lincoln, Emancipation and Civil Rights" on pages 14-15.

# MONUMENT MAN

The Life & Art of Daniel Chester French



HAROLD HOLZER

# An Interview with Harold Holzer

*regarding his new book,*

## *Monument Man: The Life and Art of Daniel Chester French*

Sara Gabbard

*["As one of the foremost living authorities on Abraham Lincoln, Harold Holzer has long straddled the crossroads of history and art with his own inimitable brand of scholarship. Not surprisingly, in this grandly illustrated and beautifully written biography, he proves to be the ideal guide to the life of Daniel Chester French, who transmuted Abraham Lincoln and other historical figures into monumental sculptures of surpassing beauty, poetry, and inspiration. This book will surely rank as the authoritative life of a man whose creations in stone and bronze have become inseparable parts of our historical memory." Ron Chernow]*

**Sara Gabbard:** While I have read most of your books, I wasn't sure about undertaking *Monument Man* because the topic is so vast, and I am woefully uninformed on it. Deciding to "soldier on" after reading Ron Chernow's description of the book, I am delighted to know more about this remarkable man. When did you first realize that this story should be told? How did you begin such a massive undertaking?

**Harold Holzer:** I wish I could say I thought of the project myself, but book inspiration comes in so many

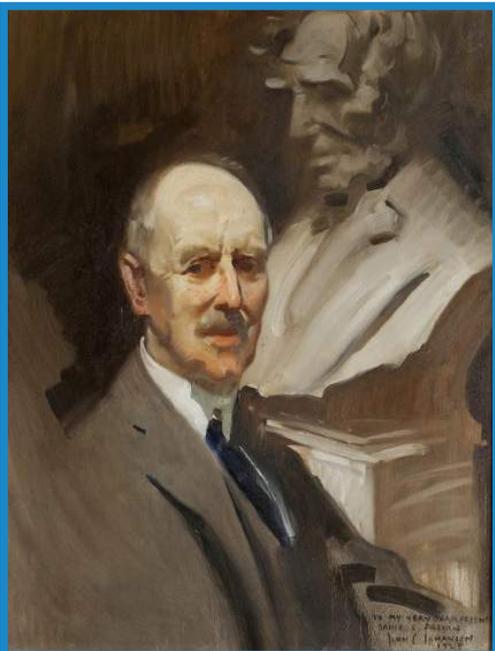
different ways, often from others. In this case, my friends at Chesterwood, French's home and studio in Stockbridge, MA, came to me and commissioned the book. So it was written under the aegis of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, which owns the French property in the Berkshires, but left completely to me in terms of research and interpretation.

I began at the literal beginning—at the Chapin Library at nearby Williams College, repository of French's original papers, to read the bird-watching diary the future artist kept as a teenager—which included an entry on the day Lincoln died (alas, without mentioning the assassination at all). Concurrently I turned on the visual experience—the remarkably vivid plaster models in the Chesterwood collection, the heroic statues in Washington, Boston, and New York, and the house and studio themselves. I was reminded again why Mr. and Mrs. French loved the Stockbridge place—it is a truly magnificent setting, a pedestal waiting for a monument as they once described Capitol Hill—in French's case, as it turned out, many monuments. During one research spree we even got to reside in the

"Meadowlark," the onetime second studio French built across the road for more privacy and more outdoor light.

**SG:** Please describe Chesterwood.

**HH:** In its present state—a national trust site open to the public in the warm months—it is a beautifully restored home, artist's studio, barn gallery and gardens—looking very much as if DCF is still in residence. The great architect Henry Bacon—who later created the Lincoln Memorial—designed both the house and studio building, and there is a stately harmony between the two nearby structures. The home lets in summer breezes and combines luxury with a rustic bow to the environment—beautiful views everywhere, functionality together with striking design touches, much of it collected and installed by French, who loved to haunt local flea markets. The studio is designed not only as a workshop but a showplace—a site where French could not only roll up his sleeves (figuratively, of course—he was quite formal even with his hands in a vat of clay) and work but also entertain and impress potential clients and patrons; it's filled not only with eclectic furniture and décor



John C. Johanesen, oil painting of Daniel Chester French, 1925 (Chesterwood, Stockbridge, MA)

from his Concord days and from abroad, it not only includes a teeming workroom still filled with the tools of the trade; it is connected to a lovely porch where I can just imagine this canny artist-entrepreneur wining, dining, wooing, and impressing his visitors. Just spectacular and well worth a visit. The docents, by the way, are extraordinarily welcoming and well-informed. And so many of French's plaster models are on display it's a rare encounter with creativity.

**SG: What was French's relationship with the following:**

**HH:**

**The Alcott family:** Of course as a resident of Concord, Massachusetts, Dan knew all the Alcotts well: they were local royalty. May (the model for "Amy" in *Little Women*) was Dan's first art teacher; the young man's father turned to her and asked if she might frankly assess the boy's talent—so he'd know whether to encourage Dan to pursue sculpture as a career. May endorsed the idea and Dan was liberated from MIT to devote his life to art. In gratitude, he carried with him for the rest of his life, wherever he might be working (Florence, Paris, New York, the Berkshires) the crude sculpting tool May had once given him—his first. Later, May's famous sister Louisa May Alcott demanded a VIP seat at the dedication of Dan's 1875 *Minute Man* in Concord—and stormed off in a huff when no space could be found for her.

And finally, when Dan returned to his hometown after studies abroad, he produced a fine bust of old Bronson Alcott. So he was very much involved with the entire Alcott clan for sure.

**Ralph Waldo Emerson:** Emerson was an early DCF champion—helping him secure his first major commission, for the *Minute Man*, without subjecting him to a formal competition—openly favoring and encouraging the hometown boy even when his first proposed design failed to win approval. Of course Dan wasn't offered a fee for it, just expenses, so he more than repaid their confidence by producing an icon. Emerson of course appeared at its 1875 dedication—so the families remained close. Later, when DCF finished an unrewarding post-Florence stint as a government-paid (per diem!) sculptor in Washington, he returned to Concord and decided to sculpt Emerson from life. The result was one of his greatest achievements, and one of the best portrait busts ever created in the 19th century. DCF later produced a larger seated statue for the Concord Library. So their associations ran deep.

**Theodore Roosevelt:** TR bared his famous teeth at DCF one day at the White House—and both Mr. and Mrs. French were smitten. TR wanted French to help him organize a fine arts commission that could take hold of developing the Washington Mall and other public spaces in the capital. French would later serve as its chair when Taft became President. Unfortunately, DCF never sculpted that great face of Roosevelt's—a loss to art and history alike. But French was loyal enough to remain a TR supporter even when his fellow Trustees at the Metropolitan Museum of Art—like J. P. Morgan—denounced him.

**SG: What were the various sites which you and Edith visited during your research for this book?**

**HH:** We saw the replica of French's *Republic* in Chicago (it once rivaled the Statue of Liberty as a national emblem, but the original was not built to last; now the Obama Library is being built near the replica. We revisited the Lincoln Memorial many times, checked out the Boston statues (like Joe Hooker and the Millmore Memorial), then had a wonderful two days in Concord looking at early works like

the Emerson statuary and the memorial to the Civil War Melvin brothers in the local cemetery: *Mourning Victory*, a masterpiece. We regret that we haven't—yet—made it to Lincoln, Nebraska (though a fine replica stands at Chesterwood). We had one of our best outings checking out the works closest to home—the New York City statuary from the Bronx (at the Hall of Fame) to Columbia (*Alma Mater*) to the Hunt Memorial opposite the Frick Museum, to the massive Custom House *Continents* on the southern tip of Manhattan—not to mention the works across the bridge in Brooklyn. I trusted my memory about *John Harvard* in the Harvard Yard since our older daughter went to school there and we encountered him many, many times. Happily, the collections at my own professional alma mater—the Metropolitan Museum—boast wonderful bronze models, and marble versions of his works, plus his last great statue, *Memory*—along with an obscure gem, a plaque dedicated to the Met's onetime curator of arms and armor, who advised French on his Washington Irving memorial (which of course we visited in Westchester).

**SG: Please describe the dedication of the Lincoln Memorial on Memorial Day (May 30) in 1922.**

**HH:** It was one of the most anomalous, indefensible public ceremonies in American history—worse in a way than the sometimes overtly racist dedications of many Confederate Memorials, because this great work was, after all, dedicated to the savior of the Union and the author of the Emancipation Proclamation. The 1922 Lincoln Memorial dedication was not only segregated, but roughly so: African Americans were roused out of the seats they had held from early morning and forced by mounted police to backless benches at the rear of the crowd. Some understandably left rather than endure the insult. The African-American Press condemned what happened, even if the mainstream press did not. And those who endured the insults and remained on the scene did not even know that the day's only speaker of color, Robert Russa Moton of the Tuskegee Institute, had to deliver a truncated speech. His remarks were censored by the Harding Administration because they included a paragraph warning that the Memorial would be a "hollow mockery" if Lincoln's unfinished work on race remained in-

complete. To think that aged Confederate veterans—wearing the old uniforms they had once worn to fight to destroy the Union and preserve slavery—got places of honor while the first African-American Rhodes scholar was forced from his seat! It was not America's finest moment of enshrining Lincoln memory. Fortunately, if belatedly, when the great opera singer Marian Anderson concertized there 17 years later on Easter Sunday 1939 (after being barred from the DAR hall), the trajectory of the Lincoln Memorial turned 180-degrees—and what had been a magnificent statue dedicated at a miserable ceremony became the talismanic icon for American aspiration. Indeed, for the last four score years it has been the symbolic backdrop for heroes striving to finish Lincoln's unfinished work, just as Moton had hoped. Dr. King and countless American presidents followed Anderson here, and launched new movements for change in its symbolic shadow.

**SG:** What were the circumstances surrounding George Washington's statue in Paris?

setts on July 3, 1775—and French provided the requisite drama by showing the general holding his sword high. Dan was on hand on July 3, 1900 for the dedication in Paris. John Philip Sousa, no less, performed the French and American national anthems—so it was a very big deal indeed, as were many statue dedications at the time. Two interesting tidbits: the commission came from the Daughters of the American Revolution, the same organization that would later prevent the African-American star Marian Anderson from singing at its Washington hall—thus “forcing” her to sing at the Lincoln Memorial, forever transforming its iconic status. Second, French may have sculpted General Washington for this great work, but not his horse. By then, French assigned all the “horse work” to a collaborator named Edward Clark Potter. One of the key things to remember about DCF as an artistic genius is that he knew what he was good at and where he was weaker. He felt he didn't do animals as well or enthusiastically as others, so he farmed that work out. He did the riders—and some magnificent ones, including Ulysses S. Grant.

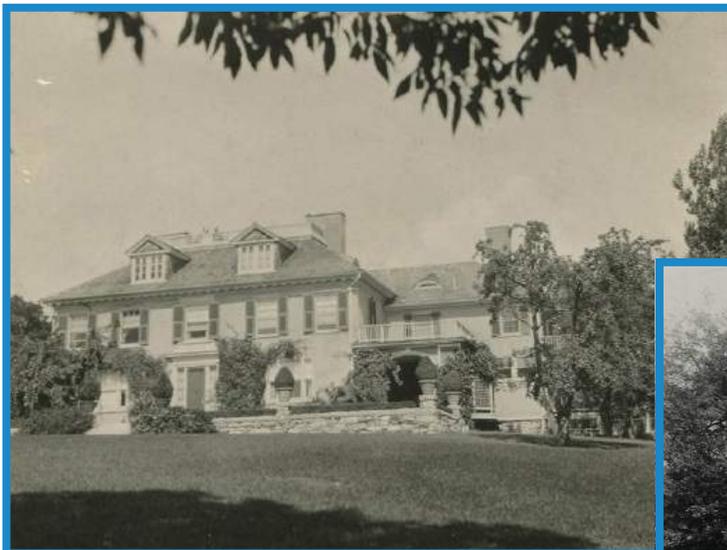
which there are dozens and dozens), we counted 82 public, outdoor works by French from coast to coast (including your institution's home state, Indiana—Beneficence in Muncie), along with two in France. French is literally really all over the map, a major presence on the American landscape.

**SG:** Other than the Lincoln Memorial, which statues did you find: most artistic? most touching? most unexpected? most “eloquent” in the stories they told?

**HH:** For artistry I'd emphasize *Mourning Victory*, for one—with its winged angel bowed in mourning for the Melvin brothers who died during the Civil War. For emotion I'd cite *Death Stays the Hand of the Sculptor* in Boston's Evergreen Cemetery—a daring and deeply touching tribute to one of French's rivals, Martin Milmore, who died young. French took a huge risk in combining portraiture with symbolism, showing the angel of death literally seizing Milmore's mallet as he works on a sculpture of the Sphinx. Somehow he pulled it all off and created a masterpiece. Among the surprises is the Washington Irving memorial that shows the author in front of relief portraits of two of his famous fictional characters, Boabdil and Rip Van Winkle; and also French's final great work, *Memory*, a nude woman splayed before the viewer, checking herself out with a mirror!—pret-

**SG:** How many French works of art are displayed in the United States?

**HH:** Not counting works in Museums (of



Chesterwood, the French residence at Stockbridge, MA, 1922. Photograph by Ambrose Swasey (Chesterwood Archives, Chapin Library, Williams College)

**HH:** For one thing it was the first major work French undertook in his brand-new studio at Chesterwood. The stucco walls were still drying when he got a strapping young local boy to pose. Also his first major work overseas. The equestrian was meant to show Washington at the moment he assumed command of the Continental Army at Cambridge, Massachu-



The new Chesterwood studio looking toward north entrance, 1914. Photograph by James Tarbox Beals (Frances Loeb Library, Harvard University Graduate School of Design)

ty daring then, and now. And among the most eloquent is the Gallaudet Memorial in Washington, showing the great educator of the hearing-impaired giving hope to a youngster. Remember, you asked me to omit Lincoln—but the standing figure in Nebraska and the enthroned colossus in New York offer all of the above—artistry, emotion, and eloquence that speaks to us as powerfully today as when these works of art were unveiled.

**SG: Who made the decision to build the Lincoln Memorial? How was it funded? How long did construction take?**

**HH:** In a way, the decision was made in 1865, right after Lincoln died. But it just took 50 years for Congress to get its act together; yes, there was dysfunctionality then, too. Finally, President Taft turned to the new National Commission on Fine Arts (which French chaired until he sensed the potential conflict, won the commission for the statue, and finally quit!) and organized a new Lincoln Memorial Commission. Congress finally appropriated the money, \$75,000 to start, and work began on the building around 1911. The statue actually got installed in 1920, but for some reason the formal dedication was delayed almost two years; some blamed our focus on post-World War I recovery, but that seems a bit of a stretch. It's extraordinary that no formal competition was ever staged for such a mammoth government-funded project. The powers-that-be named Henry Bacon as architect after rejecting just one other designer; and Bacon turned immediately to his longtime partner French even after a campaign to save money by commissioning a reproduction of the 1887 Chicago statue by Augustus Saint-Gaudens, *Abraham Lincoln: The Man*. Fortunately, every subsequent decision worked out beautifully. Bacon insisted on a Greek-style temple. French rejected the idea of a standing Lincoln, chose marble over bronze, and once he saw the interior atrium for himself, insisted on making the statue 19-feet high instead of the originally proposed 12. Then DCF hired a family of Italian immigrant stonecutters to enlarge and carve the behemoth in the



Harold Holzer and Judy Collins after performing at Chesterwood, 2017. Photo by Edith Holzer.

Bronx—another perfect choice. The final result was everything one had hoped—both grand yet somehow intimate, and extraordinarily harmonious with its setting. Can anyone today imagine it looking anything other than it looks? Yet things could have gone wrong half a dozen times—for example, some influential men wanted to build the Memorial at the Capitol, or at the Soldiers' Home. When the influential Congressman "Uncle Joe" Cannon rejected the western fringe of Potomac Park because he judged it a "god damned swamp." He threatened to place it instead at Arlington—in the old Confederacy! Swampy or not, it ended up where it was almost ordained to be—at the western edge of the Mall—thanks in large part to the urging of Secretary of State John Hay, Lincoln's own former White House secretary, who thought the site should be remote—but not too remote.

**SG: Who wrote the words inscribed in the Memorial?**

**IN THIS TEMPLE  
AS IN THE HEARTS OF THE PEOPLE  
FOR WHOM HE SAVED THE UNION  
THE MEMORY OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN  
IS ENSHRINED FOREVER**

**HH:** It's a puzzling story. French originally wanted his friend Robert Underwood Johnson of *Century Magazine* to do the epigraph. Johnson had edited *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War* but otherwise was a curious choice to be what French called "my poet laureate." He was best known as an editor, not a writer. For some reason, it didn't pan out; maybe Johnson's first draft got rejected—maybe he lost interest—we just don't know (or at least I could not find the answer). In any event, French turned to yet another unlikely candidate: the *New York Tribune's* art critic, a fellow named Royal Cortissoz, who had been very generous in praise of French. He composed an epigraph before he was even

asked to do so. And French loved the result. Like the sculptor, Cortissoz was a traditionalist who didn't much care for modern and abstract art. The words today qualify almost as American scripture, but in its day they were roundly criticized. The man who succeeded French as head of the National Commission of Fine Arts called the epigraph "poor, cheap, sentimental, erroneous, disfiguring." Now it seems to capture and enhance the mood magnificently—at least for me. If only it had mentioned emancipation as well as union—that unfortunate omission constitutes its one shortcoming. We have to remember that the Lincoln Memorial was designed to promote sectional reconciliation, not racial reconciliation. Thanks to those who staged their protests there, however, its power to inspire racial healing is what it is now best known for.

*Harold Holzer is Jonathan F. Fanton Director of Roosevelt House Public Policy Institute at Hunter College. His book Monument Man: The Life & Art of Daniel Chester French was published by Princeton Architectural Press in 2019.*

# The Woman Who Found Lincoln at Gettysburg: Josephine Cobb of the National Archives



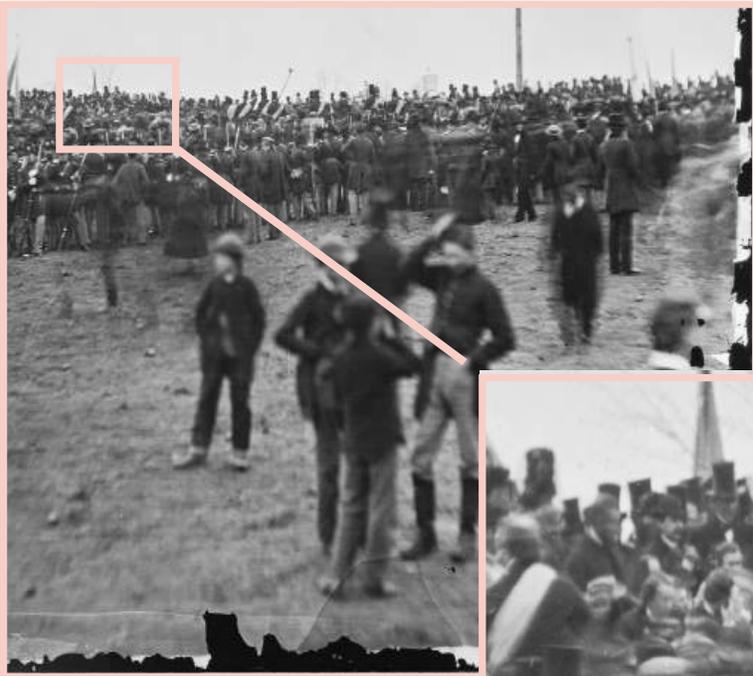
Mark B. Pohlad

For nearly ninety years there were no known photographs of Abraham Lincoln at Gettysburg. That changed dramatically in 1952 when the intrepid Washington, D.C., archivist Josephine Cobb (1906-86) went searching—and found him. She enlarged a mislabeled glass plate negative until she identified Lincoln's face in the crowd. The War Department had purchased the image as part of a collection from Mathew Brady in 1875; the army moved the group to the National Archives in 1941 where it came under Cobb's purview. Its historical significance had gone unrecognized for ninety years, and it may have remained so today. Her discovery is the closest thing we have to an actual visual record of the Gettysburg Address—one of Lincoln's, this country's, and democracy's finest moments.

In the image, a group of boys are milling about casually in the foreground.

A crowd can be seen very deep in the background; it is so dense that no individual can be distinguished in it. But Cobb intuited that it might have valuable information to offer. The tallest flag, she reasoned, might mark the location of a speaker's platform, a promising place to search for dignitaries. She enlarged the image repeatedly—some twenty times—until she could make out the bare-headed, downcast, bearded face of Abraham Lincoln. Cobb had not only found the war-weary president in the photo, she had also found the first known photograph of the dedication at the Soldiers' Cemetery at Gettysburg on November 19, 1863. Within hours of when the exposure was made, Lincoln would speak the most famous piece of oratory in American history—273 words that redefined the war and the meaning of freedom in this country.

Cobb estimated that the image was probably exposed around noon when the president and his cortege arrived on the speaker's platform, still three hours before his own "few appropriate remarks." Given the position of his head and shoulders, he appears to be taking his seat. Cobb identified Lincoln's bodyguard, Ward Hill Lamon, directly to Lincoln's right, along with Pennsylvania Governor Andrew Curtin, the official host of the event, seen in great clarity at the far right. Other observers have recognized Major General Robert C. Schenck on Lincoln's left and Edward Everett in the upper right, hands on hips and perhaps looking around (because his face is thoroughly blurred). Lincoln's secretaries, John Nicolay and John Hay, are here too. So well known is the enlargement showing Lincoln's face that many viewers are genuinely shocked to see the original photograph from which it came. Even when the two images are seen side-by-side, it is not immediately obvious how they relate to each other.



Moreover, the glass plate itself is broken; about a quarter of the upper left side is gone, giving it a roughly trapezoidal shape. It is possible the cameraman made a random shot merely to get rid of a defective plate.

Many people erroneously believe that the detail shows Lincoln seating himself *after* he has already delivered his famous speech. They claim that the photographer was caught short because he thought he would have enough time to capture the president speaking. After all, the previous speaker, Edward Everett—a former Secretary of State, Harvard president, governor, and congressman—had spoken for two hours. This narrative has currency because it corroborates the startling brevity of the Gettysburg Address, just a couple minutes or so. But since the detail of Lincoln comes from a very distant crowd scene, where the president would be virtually invisible anyway, it cannot be the case that the photographer intended to take this picture during his speech. Apart from what the image shows, most perplexing of all has been determining who took the picture in the first place. Researchers disagree; many believe it to have been Alexander Gardner, others David Bachrach, and still others an anonymous Brady “operator.”

It is difficult to imagine a time when we did not possess the image of Lincoln at Gettysburg, for Cobb made her discovery a full sixty-seven years ago, in late

1952. At that time, not even a century had passed since Lincoln’s assassination. Incredibly, a couple of Civil War veterans were still alive. In fact, an article about the



Crowd of citizens, soldiers, and etc. with Abraham Lincoln at Gettysburg, National Archives, 529085

hundred-and-sixth birthday of a Union drummer boy appeared on the same front page of the newspaper where Cobb’s discovery was first announced. The year 1952 was a kind of *annus mirabilis* for Lincoln and photography. In that year the last picture of Lincoln “from the flesh”—a photograph of his body lying in state in an open coffin—was discovered by teenaged Ron Ritveld. As in Cobb’s case, he had also found Lincoln hiding in plain sight, in a photograph he came across while perusing the cabinets and drawers of the Illinois State Historical Society. Finally, 1952 was also the year in which the photohistorian Helmut Gernsheim discovered the oldest known photograph of all: Nicéphore Niépce’s *View from the Window at Le Gras*, of 1827.

On Lincoln’s birthday in 1953, a small, front-page article in the *Gettysburg Times* announced Cobb’s discovery. Soon the story would be reproduced in newspapers across the country. A week later, *Life* magazine ran a small story featuring Cobb’s detail of Lincoln on the speaker’s platform. Its glib first sentence ran, “Long lost photographs of Lincoln have a way of turning up just in time for Lincoln’s birthday.” It then recounts how “going over a col-

lection of 5,000 miscellaneous Matthew [sic] Brady photographs, Josephine Cobb of the National Archives in Washington found one labeled ‘crowd of citizens, soldiers, etc.’ which she has tentatively identified as showing the Gettysburg ceremony.” The author continues, “The face of the bearded man who may be Lincoln is slightly blurred making positive identification almost impossible.” In the announcements of Cobb’s discovery, her claims are invariably described as “tentative,” likely at her own insistence. But there is enough visual information in the detail to make it certain—Lincoln’s location in the crowd, the many glances directed at him, the long, thin face, the familiar hair pattern, and even his characteristically crooked tie. In the years since Cobb found Lincoln, no one has challenged her claim.

Cobb’s find became even more well known after it appeared in Stefan Lorant’s lavish picture book, *Lincoln: A Picture Story of His Life* in 1957. Throughout her career, she had frequently helped Lorant with his projects. In Cobb-like fashion, Lorant once enlarged a photograph of Lincoln’s New York City funeral procession to find young Theodore Roosevelt peering down from a window. A review of Lorant’s *Lincoln: A Picture Story of His Life* claimed that Cobb, in order to find Lincoln, had enlarged the negative 100 times, and Lorant 250 times in order to reproduce it in his book. In the 1960s and beyond, the image became so well known that viewers forgot that its discovery was actually someone’s achievement.

Two years before unearthing the Gettysburg plate, Cobb brought to light another Civil War-era photograph containing a Lincoln look-alike. In 1950 she became intrigued by an 1863 photograph labeled “Hanover Junction, Va.” But something seemed a bit off. That town, she knew, is only twenty miles north of Richmond, well within Confederate lines during the war. And noticing that the soldiers were wearing Union uniforms, she reasoned that the image must instead have been taken in Hanover Junction, *Pennsylvania*. For many viewers, the 1863 date raised the possibility that the tall, top-hatted figure seen in it was Lincoln on his way to Gettysburg. It created a great deal of excitement in the Lincoln community (recall that there were no known

images of Lincoln at Gettysburg before her enlargement-based discovery.) Ultimately, Cobb did not believe that it was the president in the photograph, but not before she had conducted her own extensive research. In any case, carefully examining mislabeled photographs—then exercising extreme caution in making claims—would prepare her for her own positive identification two years later of Lincoln at the Soldiers' Cemetery in Gettysburg. Had Cobb lived into our own time, she would have been intrigued with more recent examinations of Gettysburg stereoscopic photos purporting to show a top-hatted Lincoln on horseback. Researchers of those images employ the same principles of enlargement she had used so effectively in 1952.

Cobb's background prepared her well for her image-based research. She grew up in South Portland, Maine, in the eighteenth-century home of her ancestors. Her father was a journalist who often wrote about the history of the state; a grandfather had served in the Union army. After high school, Cobb earned a bachelor's degree from Simmons College in 1931. She worked in the rare books room of the Boston Public Library and at the venerable Massachusetts Historical Society. Her M.A. thesis from Boston University four years later recommended the establishment of a national research collection before anything like it existed. At American University in Washington, D.C., she studied the relatively new field of archival sciences. When the National Archives was established in 1936 and hiring only men, Cobb boldly ventured there and secured a position as its first woman employee, "Assistant Archivist in the Photographic Archives and Research Division." Among her duties was cataloguing Frederick Hill Meserve's collection with the assistance of his daughter, Dorothy (1901-1979). It marked the beginning of a long association with members of the renowned Kunhardt family. Over time, the photographic department at National Archives grew and improved, including—crucially for Cobb's Gettysburg discovery—its ability to enlarge images. She closely monitored these innovations while becoming intimate with the holdings. A sensitivity to photographic media seemed to be in her DNA; her brother Allen was employed at the Eastman Kodak Company in Rochester, New York.

Cobb occupied positions at the National Archives for thirty-six years as a cataloger, specialist in Civil War subjects, and later as Chief, or Archivist-in-Charge, of the Still Picture Branch. Some of the earliest photographs accessioned by that department were of the Civil War, and it was this era that became her specialty. Her exhaustive research on Mathew Brady and Alexander Gardner, as well as on photographs of Abraham Lincoln and Civil War photography more generally, made her well known, even legendary. Over the course of decades, Cobb was a devoted contributor to professional and academic associations. A medal recipient for her work on the Lincoln Sesquicentennial in 1959, she was also long a member of the distinguished Lincoln Group of the District of Columbia and served as its president in 1970 and 1971.

Cobb looked like the consummate professional—tall, thin, immaculately dressed, and tidily coiffed. Entirely engrossed in her work, it became part of her endearingly quirky personality. As a young scholar, Harold Holzer had a memorable experience with her "eccentric side." "Once," he recalled, "Miss Cobb pressed her forefinger to her lips as if to hush our conversation, then slowly opened a drawer in her old wooden desk, whispering: 'I am going to show you a rare daguerreotype. If you can tell me who it portrays, I will consider that you have graduated into a real student of Civil War photography.' And then, almost conspiratorially, she handed me a small plate, covered completely in wax paper and secured by an orange rubber band. 'But I can't see it, I protested. It's wrapped in wax paper. May I remove it?' 'Of course not,' she snapped, snatching it back and replacing it in her drawer. 'That would make it too easy.' So much for graduating." According to the conventions of the day, she was always officially referred to as "Miss Josephine Cobb." Holzer recalled that she affectionately signed her letters, "your friend, J. C." Acquaintances called her simply, "Jo."

Not merely a librarian, Cobb was also an accomplished scholar in her own right. Her publications and conference talks were meticulous and exhaustive. Her groundbreaking article "Mathew B. Brady's Photographic Gallery in Washington," on which she must have been at work when she

found Lincoln at Gettysburg, was the first detailed examination of the social and commercial realities that shaped Brady's career. Not sequestered in the stacks and archives, she was also doing field work with people from the Civil War era. Cobb once interviewed octogenarian Lydia Mantle Fox who had known Brady personally and who provided many details about Civil War-era Washington photography. Encounters like this were still possible in the 1950s, but it took an enterprising soul to find and conduct them. Her interest in the field was consuming, an editorial note in her article alerting the reader that "Many years of research, much of it on her own time, have made her an outstanding authority on Brady and his work." Indeed, Cobb told a reporter in 1951 that, even though she would prefer to devote her life to studying Brady, "As it is, I have to chisel to get extra time to work on him, for as head of a section here I am constantly called upon to fill out forms and beat people over the head for statistics." Among the many original insights she makes in this essay is one concerning the chair in which Lincoln sits in Gardner's portraits. Her discussion of where such chairs were made, who owned them, and where they could be found, is contained in a single remarkable footnote. We also learn that, among the presidential candidates in the 1860 race, Brady favored Stephen A. Douglas over the rail-splitter candidate.

Likewise, Cobb's superb biographical article "Alexander Gardner" was the most accurate and comprehensive study of the cameraman until the first book-length treatment three decades later. It is still worth consulting for the photographs she reproduces, which are startlingly contemporary looking, and for the intriguing details of Gardner's life and career she recounts. These include how Gardner rescued his fifteen-year-old son from the boarding school in Confederate-controlled Emmitsburg, Maryland, just before the nearby battle at Gettysburg. Or how, long after the war, Gardner and his wife dressed members of the Indian delegations to Washington in old, "smelly" costumes with beads and feathers because their attire had become too Americanized.

Cobb was deeply engaged in her topic, but not a fanatic merely in love with

the medium. Proof of that is seen in the first line of another of her articles: "Photography's part in the Civil War was not significant to either military or naval operations and it had no part at all in the organization of the forces of either North or South." She was sober and realistic, which made her a good judge of what represented a genuine contribution to the field. Accordingly, that same piece concludes with her "List of Photographers and Their Assistants with Military Units," some three hundred names, "most of whom have been forgotten despite their contribution to the views of the Civil War." It is a breathtaking piece of historical research and still indispensable today. Nor was Cobb's research limited to photography. Just as she found Lincoln's face at Gettysburg, she did the same for Gardner's when she uncovered a rare painted portrait of the "camera-shy" cameraman. She was also particularly knowledgeable about Masonic history and its imagery, her Maine relatives being long-time members of the Order. Cobb even wrote the foundational essay on collecting patriotic envelopes, a marvelous source of political graphics in the war era. In this article, she characteristically enlarges some examples, speaks at length about those that show Lincoln, and explains papers and pigment composition in terms that would impress a conservator.

Given this wide range of expertise in nineteenth-century visual culture, after 1962 Cobb's title at the National Archives had changed to "Specialist in Iconography." It was the first such use

of that term in relation to an archivist, one whose interests spanned a vast range of media and their intersection. Along these lines, at a 1962 Library of Congress symposium on "American Printmaking Before 1876: Fact, Fiction, and Fantasy," she spoke about how prints were often based on a range of photographic media and could therefore be trusted as accurate representations. Indeed, Cobb read widely in her field and held strong, informed opinions, as seen in her book reviews for *American Archivist* in the 1960s. About a new edition of Beaumont Newhall's even-then classic survey of the medium, *History of Photography*, she claimed that he had omitted some fifty important photographers. Furthermore, as she said, "Mr. Newhall writes largely of the contributions made by those of English-speaking countries, giving less attention to the contributions by those who work and write in other lands and tongues." Here Cobb leveled the kind of criticism that inclusive-minded humanities scholars only began making thirty years later.

Beyond her own superb scholarship, her best work consisted of her day-to-day assistance to researchers for their own projects. She was instrumental in the books of many of the twentieth century's most important historians. Searching her name on the Internet reveals countless publications by authors on Civil War-era photography, Abraham Lincoln, and the American West, in which they acknowledge her assistance. Those who visited her in room 14-N of the Archives Building in Washington, D.C. (after 1959) were genuinely helped along in their work. Later in her career, she even conducted graduate seminars for future museum directors and librarians. To be sure, Cobb's expertise and good judgment suffuses the field even now.

After retiring from the National Archives in 1972, she returned to her childhood Portland, Maine, and built a beautiful home in Cape Elizabeth overlooking the sea. Cobb turned her attention to local history, working with state organizations such as the Maine Old Cemetery Association and the Maine Historical Society. She helped convert the latter from "an old boys' club" into something more public and inviting. "She was of that generation that made things pop," one local historian said. In her large library of books were volumes signed to her by researchers and notables such as

Carl Sandburg. Replaying the type of work she had done for the National Archives, Cobb now carefully curated the photographs she herself owned, composing a six-volume catalogue of her collection of daguerreotypes. She carefully labeled the 245 images and had copy prints made of each. This intimate archive was her final gift to the field. Cobb's last few months were especially difficult, as she suffered from Alzheimer's. A nightmare for anyone, of course, the disease is perhaps especially devastating for archivists who have dwelt in a world of order and detail.

Anyone else might have written a book or article about the discovery of Lincoln at Gettysburg, for such an achievement could launch or crown a Lincoln scholar's career. But it was characteristic both of Cobb's humility, and perhaps her ethics as an archivist, that this discovery was unselfishly given to the field as simply more information about an object under her care. Considering her importance to Lincoln scholarship, to Civil War studies, and to the history of American archives, it is unimaginable that to date there is not a single piece of scholarly writing on her. Nor are there any obituaries or appreciations to be found online. Sadly, she did not receive any acknowledgement in the recent televised documentaries celebrating the sesquicentennial of the Gettysburg Address, even though the image of Lincoln she found was often analyzed in detail.

Surely, Josephine Cobb joins the ranks of major Civil War-era photohistorians such as Frederick H. Meserve, Stefan Lorant, Lloyd Ostendorf, Robert Taft, and the Kunhardts. She should also be regarded as a pioneering historian of American visual culture. In all, her discovery of Lincoln at Gettysburg was neither inevitable nor a matter of luck. It was the result of her years-long engagement with the collection of the National Archives and a function of her expertise and hard work. She well deserves to be part of the narrative of the beloved image of Lincoln at Gettysburg.

*Mark B. Pohl* is an Associate Professor of Art History at DePaul University, Chicago.

*Endnotes and additional comments can be found online at [www.FriendsoftheLincolnCollection.org](http://www.FriendsoftheLincolnCollection.org).*



Photograph of Josephine Cobb, National Archives, 12169321

# Edwin McMasters Stanton

Frank J. Williams



Edwin M. Stanton LN-2113

Edwin McMasters Stanton was born in Steubenville, Ohio, on December 19, 1814. On the eve of achieving his life's dream, chronic asthma caused his death on December 24, 1869. His lifelong struggle with poor health also contributed to his volatile temper, as did the early loss of his father and the deaths of his brother and two children. Upon his father's death, young Stanton had to take work at a bookstore to support his mother. He became a lawyer in 1836 and married Mary A. Lamson, with whom he had two children.

Judge Benjamin Tappan, a family friend, invited Stanton to join his law firm in 1837. Tappan, a Democrat with anti-slavery leanings, mentored Stanton and provided the base for Stanton's political direction. In 1837, Stanton was elected prosecuting attorney for Harrison County, Ohio. He also played a major role in the election of his partner to a U.S. Senate seat.

After Mary died in 1844, Stanton sank into deep depression. Obsessed by work, Stanton expanded his law practice, and he left Tappan in 1845. In 1847, he partnered with Charles Shaler, and he soon had clients throughout Ohio and Pennsylvania. Stanton was extremely bright, shrewd, and aggressive and was soon regarded

as one of the best trial lawyers in the country. Helen Hutchinson entered Stanton's life, and they married in 1856. They had four children.

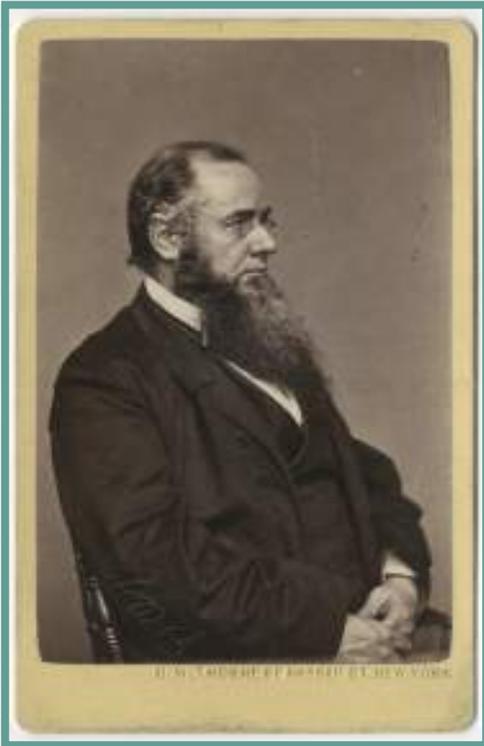
After moving to Washington in 1856, Stanton began arguing cases before the Supreme Court of the United States. Forming a close friendship with Attorney General Jeremiah S. Black, who served under President James Buchanan, Stanton supported Southern Democrat John C. Breckinridge for the presidency in 1860 because he believed that only Breckinridge could save the Union. After Lincoln was elected in November, Buchanan appointed Black to serve as secretary of state, and Stanton became his successor as attorney general. Stanton supported the Union and did all that he could to prevent secession. He and Black pressured Buchanan to push back against the secessionist elements in the South. Stanton also backdoored intelligence to the incoming secretary of state, William H. Seward.

Stanton greeted Abraham Lincoln's arrival in Washington as president-elect with contempt. After Lincoln was inaugurated the 16th president on March 4, 1861, Stanton remained in Washington where he became a consultant to Secretary of War Simon

Cameron. In December 1861, he helped Cameron draft a report that recommended enlistment of African-American troops. When Cameron was compelled to resign due to his mismanagement and corruption of contracts in the War Department, Lincoln named Stanton as Cameron's replacement. It's uncertain why Lincoln made this appointment, as Stanton was a Democrat and Lincoln had been insulted by Stanton in a patent case while Lincoln was the local counsel in Illinois. But Seward, who thought Stanton was a moderate, had recommended him. And Secretary of Treasury Salmon P. Chase, an abolitionist, was impressed with Stanton's anti-slavery views.

Stanton was a much better manager than his predecessor Cameron. Working well with leaders of both parties, he made efforts to cultivate relationships in Congress, especially with those who had a major say on military appropriations bills. He reorganized the War Department and reformed the guidelines by which the department conducted business, establishing a system of open, competitive bidding for contracts. He also assumed control of the Union's railroad system and telegraph network. He eventually befriended Major General George B. McClellan, the new Commander of

the Army of the Potomac, who had replaced General Winfield Scott as commander in chief of the army. But after McClellan's repeated failures to take aggressive action, Stanton asked Lincoln to remove McClellan from command of all the Union armies, and Lincoln complied, leaving the general in command of only the Army



Edwin M. Stanton OC-0979

of the Potomac. McClellan, true to his insecurity and failures as a battlefield commander, blamed Stanton. They then became bitter enemies until McClellan was finally relieved of all command by President Lincoln after the Battle of Antietam in the fall of 1862.

The Lincoln-Stanton relationship evolved into mutual respect, despite Stanton's initial low opinion of Lincoln as a lawyer and as a president. While the two often disagreed, the president was able to soften the war secretary's harsh demeanor and draw him out of his self-absorption. They became close friends. To Lincoln, Stanton became his "no" man, turning down outrageous demands of the president's time from those seeking government contracts and patronage.

Between late 1862 and 1864, Stanton played a central role in Lincoln's administration, especially in the

appointment and removal of military commanders. He oversaw military operations and, along with Lincoln, played a role in shaping Union strategy. He was an advocate of total war and, like Lincoln, supported the confiscation of slaves and other property of secessionists as a war measure, believing that the federal government could seize the slaves and free them because they were considered property by the slaveholding South. He therefore strongly supported Lincoln's issuance of the preliminary and final Emancipation Proclamations and urged inclusion of the call for enlistment of African-American troops in the final proclamation of January 1, 1863.

Stanton's most controversial function during this period was to supervise internal security, a duty that he assumed from Secretary of State William H. Seward in March 1862. Initially, Stanton restricted the exercise of martial law and ordered the release of most of the citizens interned under Seward after Lincoln suspended the writ of habeas corpus. Bitter objections to conscription – the first draft in American history – as well as the issuance of the Emancipation Proclamation caused the administration to broaden the suspension of habeas corpus nationwide, and military arrests rose dramatically. In March 1863, Congress established a militarized provost marshal's bureau that was placed under Stanton's control. This created, in effect, a national police force. Stanton used this apparatus vigorously to enforce the draft and combat dissent, including the arrest and detention of civilians and their trial before a military commission (there were over 4,200 U.S. citizens tried before these tribunals), as well as closure of disloyal newspapers. But he did support General in Chief Halleck's collaboration with Columbia University Professor Francis Lieber, who drafted the first code on the law of war. President Lincoln approved the code, and it became

General Order 100 in 1863. (It would become the basis for the first Hague Conventions in 1899 and 1907.)

Because his supporters were now primarily Republicans and like the trial lawyer he once was, Stanton did not hesitate to seek Republican support for military appropriations. His position on soldiers voting in the canvas of 1864 helped the Republicans and President Lincoln achieve victory. This was the first soldier vote, and it permitted voting in the field.

With the appointment in early 1864 of Ulysses S. Grant as general in chief, President Lincoln, almost unbeknownst to himself, created the first effective joint chiefs of command structure with General in Chief Grant, Army Chief of Staff Henry W. Halleck, and the president as commander in chief. With Stanton providing logistics through the War Department, the armies were provided the tools to wage war. Lincoln provided overall direction, and his acuity as a politician helped assure a successful political strategy. Halleck acted as a conduit between the president and secretary of war to Grant and other military departments.

Stanton's relations with Grant's



Abraham Lincoln and his Cabinet LN-1818

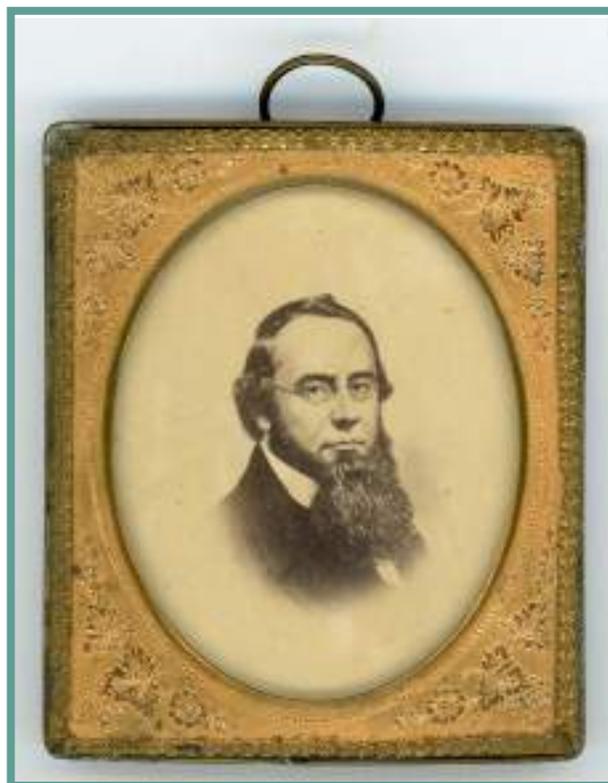
colleague and friend, General William T. Sherman, were less cordial, especially when Sherman gave more generous terms to the surrender of General Joseph E. Johnston's army than those Grant gave at Appomattox. Stanton revoked the order. Because Sherman felt he was following Grant's lead, Stanton's action upset him. They would remain enemies for the rest of their lives. The assassination of President Lincoln on April 14, 1865, enraged Stanton. Grieving at Lincoln's deathbed, he allegedly said, "He now belongs to the ages," which somehow morphed into, "Now he belongs to the angels." (Stanton biographer Walter Stahr believes the secretary of war uttered nothing when Lincoln breathed his last.) After the assassination, a furious Stanton assumed control of the government and used all his resources to hunt down the conspirators who had orchestrated this crime and the attack on Secretary of State Seward. He pressed President Andrew Johnson and Attorney General James Speed for a military commission to try the conspirators and personally directed the prosecution, using Judge Advocate General Joseph Holt and Congressman John Bingham as his surrogates. The judge advocate general and the congressman actually joined in the deliberations of the members of the military commission that tried the conspirators. Stanton favored the death penalty for the convicted conspirators, including Mary Surratt, the proprietor of the boarding house where the plotting had transpired. It is unfounded that Stanton withheld the recommendation of the military court for clemency in Surratt's case, nor was he himself involved in the conspiracy as some have alleged.

Stanton remained secretary of war under President Johnson, so he was actively involved in Reconstruction and overseeing the demobilization of the Union armies. Reports of violence against freedmen changed Stanton's view of Johnson's policy of lenient Reconstruction. Stanton came to believe in stronger measures. Working with Grant, he tried to convince the

president to accept the more Radical view of Reconstruction by Congress.

Stanton and Grant began an alliance with Congress because of the failure of Johnson's policies. Stanton supported the first and second Reconstruction Acts despite opposition from the president. There was to be no compromise with the president, and Johnson turned against him. Stanton and Grant drafted a third Reconstruction Act that removed the armies in the South from the president's control.

Johnson demanded Stanton's



Edwin M. Stanton LN-2345

resignation.

Stanton refused, and on August 11, 1867, Johnson suspended him and named Grant as his successor ad interim. Congress in January 1868 ordered Stanton restored to his office under the terms of the Tenure of Office Act, which Congress had passed over Johnson's veto in March 1867 to protect Republicans in the cabinet, including Stanton himself. Grant immediately acquiesced, and Stanton resumed his duties. Johnson again tried to replace Stanton, this time with General Lorenzo Thomas, but Stanton refused to acknowledge the appointment by blockading himself in his office.

On February 22, 1868, the House of Representatives drafted articles of impeachment against President Johnson on charges of violating the Tenure of Office Act. Johnson was acquitted by one vote in the Senate.

Disappointed that the Senate was unable to convict Johnson, Stanton remained in his post. But on May 26, 1868, he resigned and was replaced by General John M. Schofield. Stanton returned to private life, exhausted, in ill health, and virtually bankrupt. He did, however, participate in the campaign to elect Ulysses S. Grant president in November 1868. Grant was elected, but Stanton's health had suffered another setback from his active support of General Grant.

Grant appointed Stanton to a vacant seat on the Supreme Court out of gratitude and for his years of friendship and service. Although the Senate ratified the appointment, Stanton's asthma finally took his life at the age of fifty-five, before he could take the oath.

Stanton was one of the central and most controversial political figures in the Civil War era. Lincoln referred to him as his "Mars" – the chief manager under the president in the Union's war effort. Stanton engendered intense hostility because of his abrasive personality, his autocratic leadership style, and his position as director of internal security, which inevitably made him a lightning rod for dissent.

Yet his efforts did much to redeem the sacrifices of the war.

Suggested reading:

Walter Stahr, *Stanton: Lincoln's War Secretary* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2017)

William Marvel, *Lincoln's Autocrat: The Life of Edwin Stanton* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015)

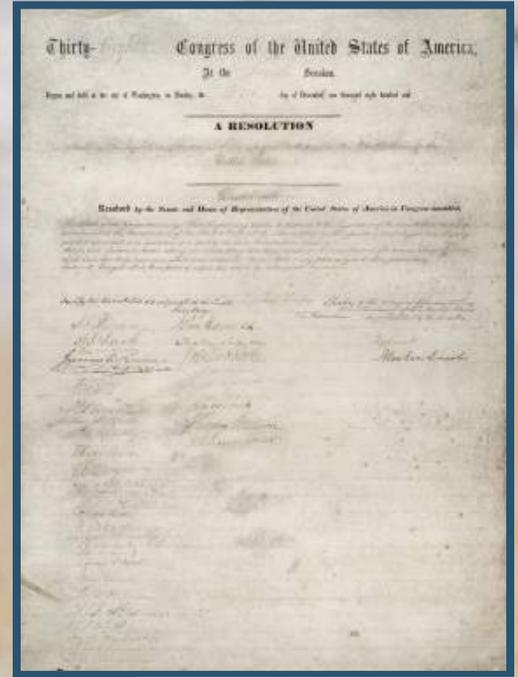
Frank J. Williams is Founding Chair of the Lincoln Forum and serves as President of the Ulysses S. Grant Presidential Library and Museum at Mississippi State University, Starkville, MS.

# Lincoln, Emancipation, and Civil Rights

Over the past several years, we have proceeded through the anniversaries of emancipation and the civil rights amendments, with the ratification of the 15th Amendment approaching in March 2020. The Lincoln Financial Foundation Collection is well-suited to explore the response to these events, not only at the time but in succeeding decades, with its combination of manuscripts and letters, books, popular prints, music, newspapers, magazines, ephemera and objects.

Focusing on visual imagery, it is clear that the Emancipation Proclamation and the 13th Amendment were seen as signal moments in the country's history. This is evident in prints and works of art, both those focused on the document and those using it to symbolize Abraham Lincoln's character and achievements. Emancipation emerged as a recurring theme in popular prints memorializing Lincoln, in symbolic figures and vignettes surrounding paired images of Lincoln and George Washington and in numerous portrait prints, where he is shown with the Emancipation Proclamation. One genre, the calligraphic portrait composed of the Proclamation's text, was popular well into the 20th century, sometimes combined with the names of those who voted for the 13th Amendment. The 13th Amendment prints often focus on those who supported it, through facsimiles of the signed resolution and composite photographs.

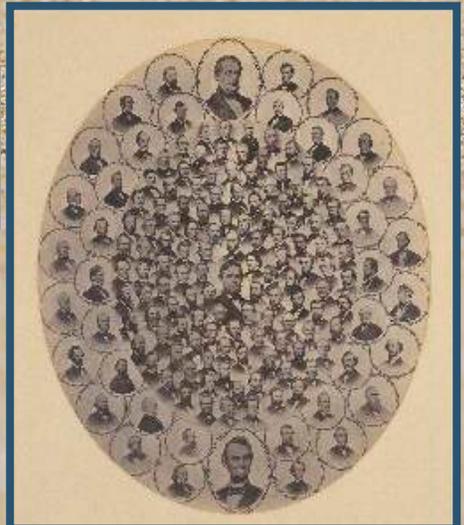
While these images present Lincoln and emancipation in a positive light, the collection provides ample evidence of the debate's uglier side. A significant amount of material was produced around the time of the 1864 presidential election, including political cartoons and prints showing African Americans as buffoons or sinister figures in mixed-race social settings or voting. It was during this election that the term "miscegenation" was coined, attempting to raise fears that Lincoln's policies would inevitably lead to race-mixing, a theme that would continue through more than a century of battles against segregation and discrimination.



*Senate Engrossed Copy of the 13th Amendment to the Constitution*



*David Gilmour Blythe, President Lincoln Writing the Proclamation of Freedom, January 1, 1863, Pittsburgh, Ehrgott, Forbriger & Co., 1864*



*Anti-Slavery Constitutional Amendment Supporters, Powell and Co., New York, 1865*



*Adalbert Volck, Writing the Emancipation Proclamation, 1863*



*Gilman R. Russell, Emancipation Proclamation, Issued January 1, 1863, P.S. Duval & Son, Philadelphia, 1865*

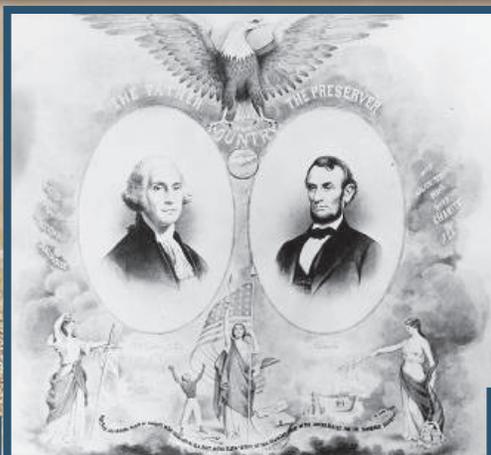
Although far fewer in number than depictions related to the end of slavery, various publishers produced colored prints commemorating the 15th Amendment. They have similar content, featuring the celebratory parade held on May 19, 1870 in Baltimore, key civil rights leaders always including Hiram R. Revels, the first African American senator (from Mississippi), and Presidents Lincoln and Ulysses S. Grant. Vignettes show the fundamental impact of the civil rights amendments: African Americans marry and enjoy family life, worship in their own churches, till their own land, attend school, vote and fight for their nation and their rights. Some prints, as with pictorial prints of the Emancipation Proclamation, include contrasting images of life under slavery.

Imagery from these prints would be put to new uses even as the battle for civil rights continued. A 1919 print published by E.G. Renesch in Chicago, celebrates both the Emancipation Proclamation and African American soldiers' service in World War I, surrounding a large portrait of Lincoln with images of Frederick Douglass and Booker T. Washington, poet and novelist Paul Laurence Dunbar, and the highest ranking African American officers from Illinois' 370th Infantry, Lt .Col. Franklin A Denison and Lt. Col. Otis B. Duncan. Vignettes of heroic soldiers, a prosperous farm, Lady Liberty with children and students streaming into school echo the earlier prints.

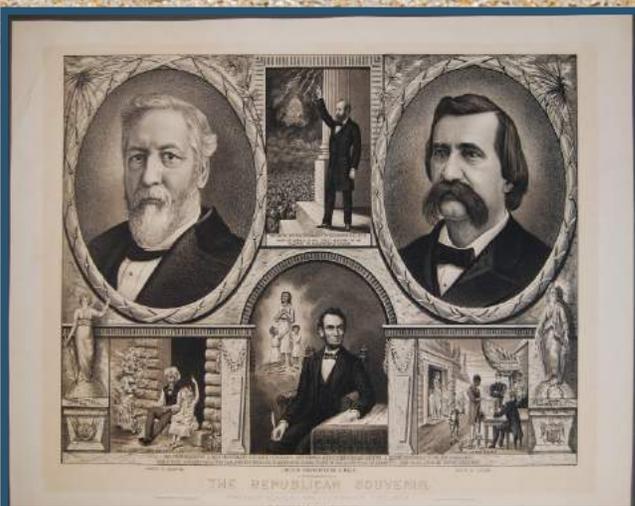
The 15th Amendment and Renesch prints appear to have been created primarily for an African American audience. More ambiguous is *The Republican Souvenir*, a print from the 1884 election, featuring the Republican candidates for President and Vice President, James B. Blaine and John A. Logan. As with other prints from the period, it reflects increasingly weak support for civil rights by diluting imagery that suggests the depth of struggle or agency of African Americans. The print shows Lincoln with the Emancipation Proclamation and a newly freed woman with her children. Above is an image of President Garfield, also an assassin's victim. Lincoln is flanked by two vignettes—one of African Americans voting and attending school but the other showing Uncle Tom and Eva from Harriet Beecher Stowe's novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.



*Emancipation Proclamation, September 22, 1862, E. G. Renesch, Chicago, 1919*



*The Father and Preserver of Our Country, E. J. Post, 1865-1885*



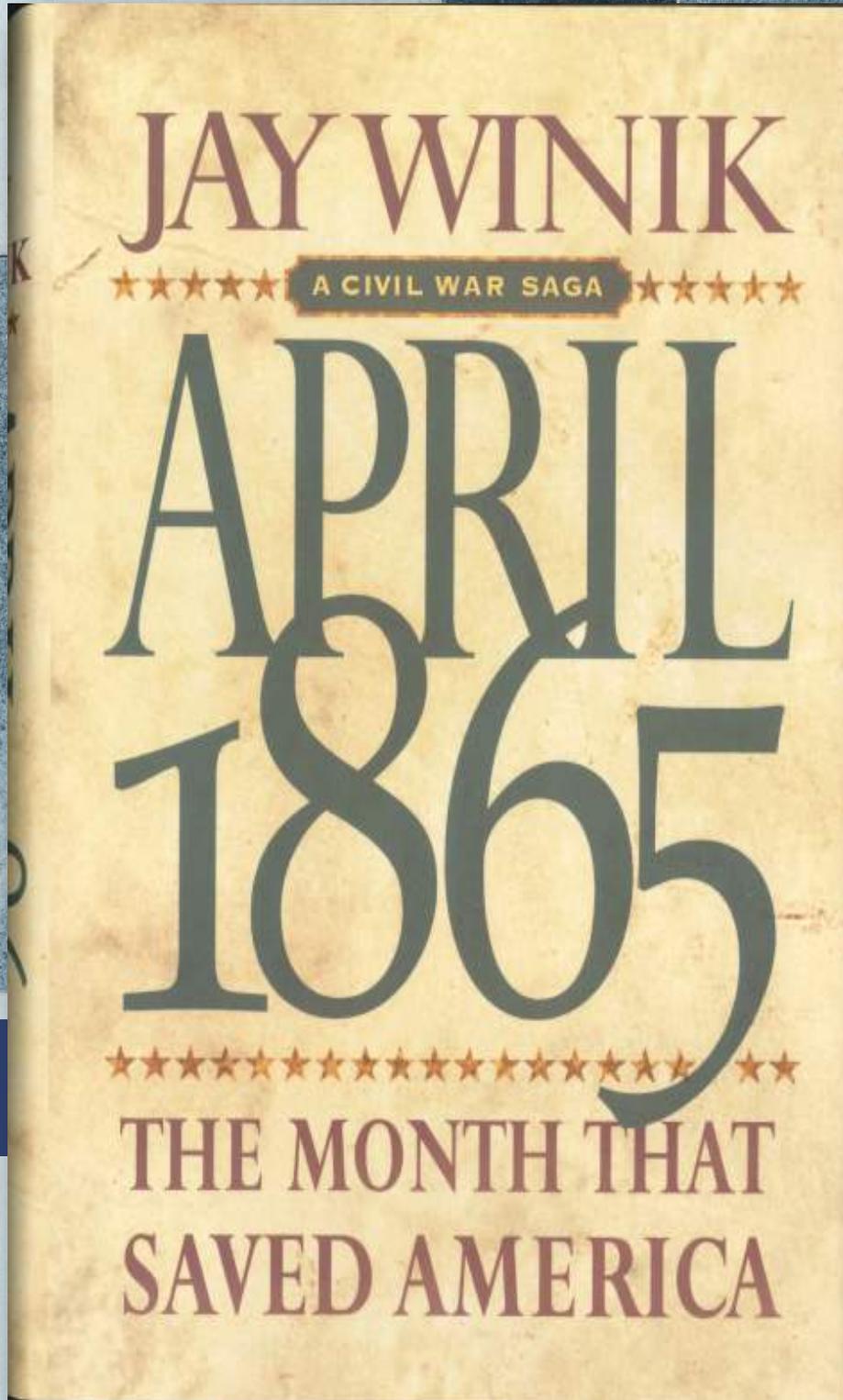
*The Republican Souvenir, R.H. Curran, Boston, 1884*



*Liberty, E.C. Bridgman, New York, 1870-1875*

by Susannah Koerber, Chief Curator and Research Officer at The Indiana State Museum

# Interview with Jay Winik



**Sara Gabbard:** Your book *April 1865: The Month that Saved America* is a “must read” for those intent on understanding the ramifications of the presidency of Abraham Lincoln, the Civil War, and the aftermath of both assassination and war. What prompted you to undertake this challenge?

**Jay Winik:** When I was searching around for a topic for my book, I was trying to find something that I thought would be fresh, would be exciting, would have a pounding narrative, and would really change the way people look at things. What really struck me about April 1865 is that you had this dramatic surrender at Appomattox, this moving surrender at Appomattox, yet it was not a surrender of the entirety of the Confederate Army, and then five days later, Abraham Lincoln was dead. I thought that’s the story that we don’t hear enough about, and that’s the story that needs to be told. That in the end is what prompted me to undertake the lofty challenge of making sense of what would become

*April 1865.* One thing I would add is that the readers obviously agreed with me.

**SG:** Tell our readers something about Lincoln’s meeting at City Point with Grant and Sherman as April 1865 dawned.

**JW:** As April 1865 was about to dawn, Abraham Lincoln called the very important meeting with his two top generals, Ulysses S. Grant and William T. Sherman. He wanted to talk about the war: when it would end and how it would end. He did some things that were really quite crucial there. One of the first things he said to them was something that had deeply concerned him. That was the possibility, as Lincoln put it, that the southerners would take to the hills with their hearty horses and hearty men and then wage in effect what would be guerilla warfare.

At that point Grant agreed that was a real possibility. And then Lincoln wanted to talk about something else with both Grant and Sherman and



Entered according to Act of Congress, A. D. 1868, by Thomas Nast, in N.Y.

“Lincoln Entering Richmond,” by Thomas Nast OC-1481

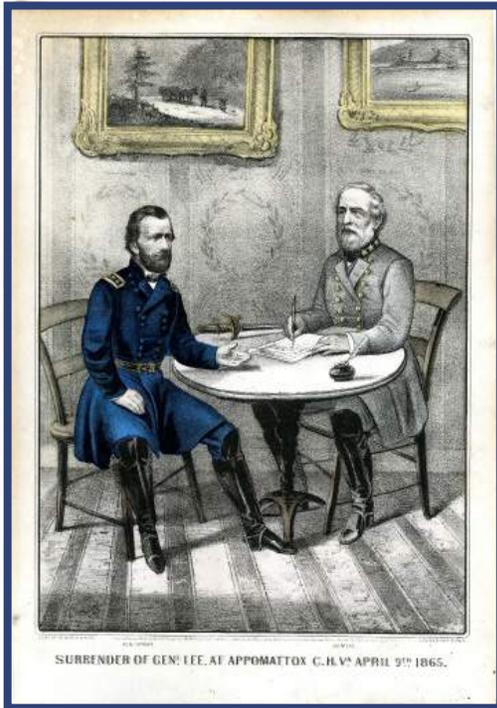
that was, as he put it, that there would be one final bloody Armageddon. And he said, “Must there be more bloodshed, must there be one final great battle?” Grant said, “Lee being Lee, there will be a final cataclysmic war.” There was one other thing that Lincoln wanted to talk about. It was an extremely insightful comment: when this war is over, there must be no bloody work, no hangings, there must be none of that. In other words, what he was talking was the need for a soft peace. His reference was to something that loomed large in the minds of all Americans in that day and age: that there could be a repeat of the French Revolution in America with terrible consequences of an ongoing cycle of bloodshed and civil war that would continue on without end.

**SG:** Can you please describe Lincoln’s appearance in Richmond on that stirring day of April 4th?

**JW:** As Lee was retreating, this had to have been one of the most stirring days, not only in the entirety of April, not only in the entirety of the Civil War, but in the entirety of all American history if not modern contemporary history. Lincoln wanted to



St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Richmond, Va. LN-2429



"Surrender of General Lee, at Appomattox Court House, Virginia, April 9th, 1865," *Currier & Ives*, 1865 71.2009.081.0739

see the now-fallen rebel capital, and he wanted to see it with his own eyes. He got into a small boat and made his way to Rocketts Landing in Richmond. He then got off the boat and was surrounded by a number of men who were there to guarantee his security. All of a sudden President Lincoln saw a crowd of African Americans, many of whom had been slaves. They wanted to get a look at the man they considered to be their liberator. They wanted to see him with their own eyes. They tried to touch him. At one point, Lincoln said to them very poignantly, "You're free, you're free as air." It was at that point another one of these former slaves threw himself at Lincoln's feet, and the president wagged a stern finger at him and said, "From now on you do not kneel to me, you kneel to your God, you kneel only to your creator." He then proceeded to visit the office of Jefferson Davis. That was that stirring day in Richmond that will live in time and memorial as a powerful moment in American history.

**SG:** Could you please comment about Lee's retreat and its significance?

**JW:** If you think about what Abraham Lincoln was saying to Grant and Sherman, he was talking about a "soft peace" and reconciliation. Lincoln had his ideas, but Robert E. Lee had a totally different mindset. Lee was think-

ing that he could retreat from Richmond as well as Petersburg, take his army down south, hook up with Joe Johnston, and from there he would strike at William Sherman. He would then "take to the hills" and continue the war from there, prepared to fight as long as possible. Lincoln feared more than anything else this mindset of Lee. In the actual retreat itself, all Lee had to do was "hook down south" with his army and link up at a place called Amelia Courthouse, where rations were waiting for him.

When Lee began his retreat, this epic military measure spawned over four sets of long lines stretching over thirty-five miles each. However, when he left Richmond and Petersburg, he had taken military equipment but no food. His men marched hour after hour and day after day, and finally arrived at Amelia Courthouse. Lee made his way to the train tracks, where the precious cargo was waiting for him. He opened up one of the boxcars, and what did he find? He found weapons and other military equipment. He found everything but food and water. In other words, the absence of these essentials threatened to undo this mighty Army of Northern Virginia. But it was at this point that Lee resolved that he and his men would fight with whatever they had. They would continue this retreat with great spirit and determination.

On April 7th they would have a bitter battle against the North at a place called Saylor's Creek. They would fight with their weapons, but they would be fighting hand-to-hand combat as well. Lee's forces eventually lost this battle, and by April 8th and then April 9th, it was obvious that they were surrounded on the east, west, and south sides. The option to head north was not a viable alternative. It was at this point that Lee was forced to consider surrendering.

**SG:** Please describe what you consider to be the most generous terms of the peace treaty at Appomattox.

**JW:** This is one of the great moments in all of American history. Grant and Lee met at the Wilmer McLean house. Lee wore his finest uniform, and Grant appeared in muddy military clothes. The most important provisions were:

Confederate soldiers were allowed to return to their homes, and they were allowed to keep their horses. After the signing of the treaty, Lee left the house, mounted his horse Traveler, and left the premises.

**SG:** Since your book is titled *April 1865* would you please comment on the assassination in that month?

**JW:** What's so dramatic is that when Lee surrendered, he surrendered only *his* army. There were still three Confederate armies in the field, ready to fight to the bitter end. Also, there was still Mary Lee, who was a direct descendant of Martha Washington, calling for continued fighting; and there was Jefferson Davis calling for guerrilla warfare. The situation was so unstable that chances for reconciliation were, at best, uncertain. Five days later in Washington, D.C., on April 14th, three deadly assassins fanned out across the city. First was, of course, John Wilkes Booth, who shot the president at approximately 10:15 p.m. The next morning at 7:22 a.m., the great Abraham Lincoln died.

The second deadly assassin made his way to Secretary of State William Seward's house, managed to gain access to his bedroom, and stabbed him multiple times. Seward's life was left hanging by a thread, but he survived. The third member of the assassination conspiracy planned to kill the vice president, Andrew Johnson, but by happenstance, he got cold feet at the end and did not make an assassination attempt. Imagine the chaos and the turmoil that rippled through Washington, D.C., at that point. That was the 9/11 of their day. Indeed, the Chief Justice of the United States said it was a night of horrors. It was a night of chaos. The American people had not had sufficient time to experience the relief promised after the surrender of Robert E. Lee when their president was taken from them.

**SG:** How real was the threat of guerrilla warfare by Confederate groups and individuals?

**JW:** It was incredibly real. Between the riders and the fighters and men like John Mosby, Nathan Bedford Forrest, the legendary William Quantrill, and

the James boys, it would have been possible to carry out guerrilla war, not only for days, but for weeks, if not for years.

**SG: At the end of your chapter titled "Reconciliation," you tell a moving story of an incident at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Richmond. Please repeat that story for our readers.**

**JW:** The marvelous anchor of ABC news, Peter Jennings, told me that, when he read the scene, it caused tears to form. But I want to give a little bit of setting just for a second. One thing that Robert E. Lee did after the war was to give an interview to the *New York Herald Tribune*. In this interview, he said the best men of the South were rejoicing at the end of slavery, and he talked about what we in the United States should do next. The reason that this statement is so significant is that in earlier days when he said "we," he always meant the Confederacy. Now he said "we" in the context of what the country should do next. The moving scene at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Richmond occurred during the service when a black man walked to the chancel

rail to take communion. Members of the congregation were unsure as to what would happen next. All of a sudden, an elderly man who looked sickly made his way up to the rail and took communion next to that black man. That man was Robert E. Lee.

**SG: Such disparate individuals as President George W. Bush and actor Tom Hanks read and reacted to *April 1865*. Please comment on their reactions.**

**JW:** This book really has had a remarkable set of individuals who have read it: President George Bush and President George Herbert Walker Bush; Bill Clinton; Chief Justice of the United States John Roberts; many senators, including Mitch McConnell; and the legendary actor Tom Hanks. In George Bush's case, he read the book and finished it the day after 9/11 and was observed carrying the book as he exited Marine 1 on the south lawn of the White House on September 12, 2001. Tom Hanks gave an interview to Maureen Dowd, a great journalist of the *New York Times*. At one point, he went into his library and he came out with *April 1865* and said that this book was amazing.

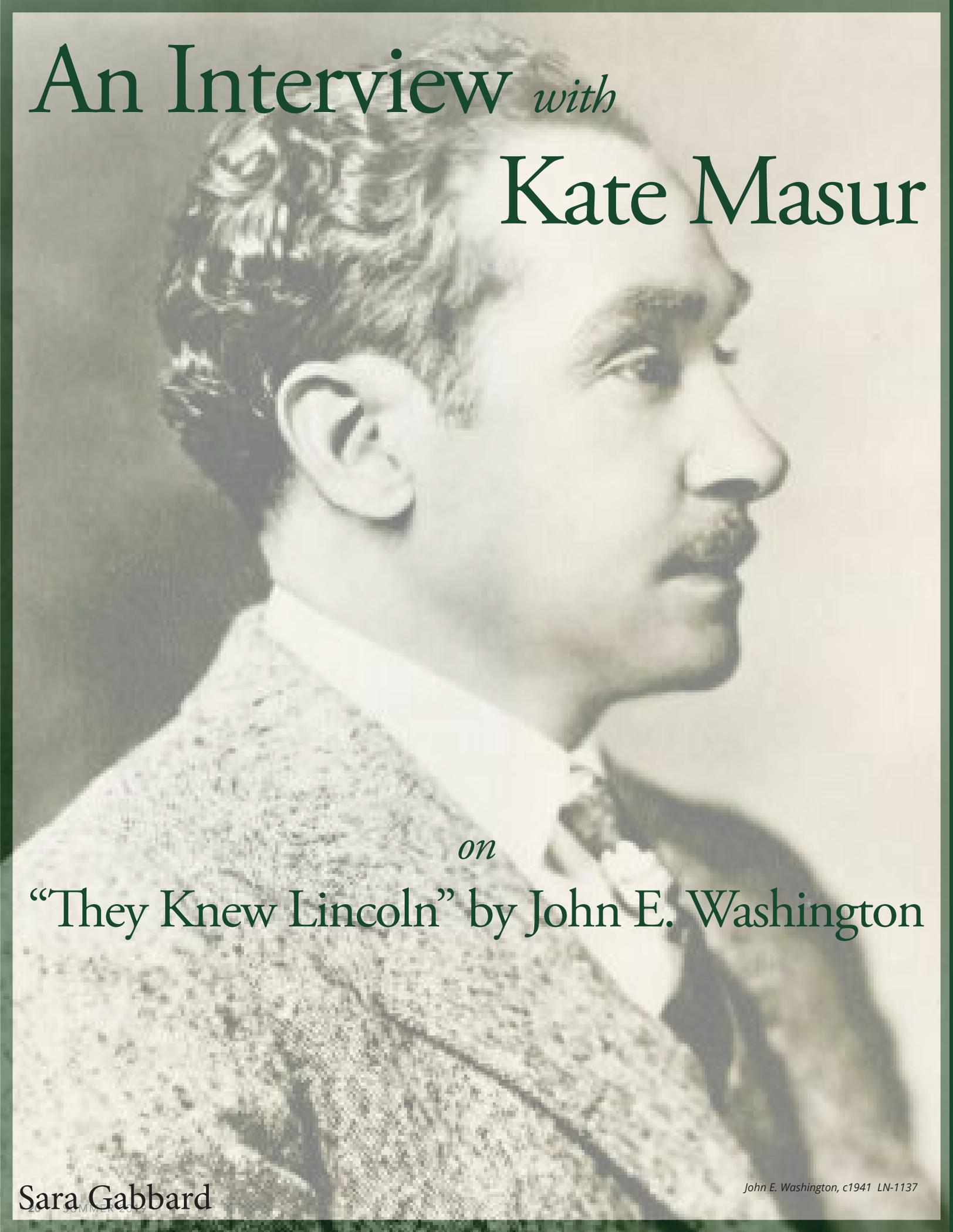
**SG: Do you have an upcoming project which you can share with our readers?**

**JW:** I'm not at a point where I'm yet ready to share with your readers, but I can give one little inkling into what I'm doing. In each of my books, I try to find a profound turning point in time. I try to write about a significant president as well. I try to write about something fresh. So while I'm not at liberty yet to tell you what I'm writing about, you might think about what I've written before: George Washington in his era; Lincoln in his era; and FDR in his era. In each of these are momentous periods and momentous presidents. So I'm hoping to do the same with my next book and all I can say is: "stay tuned."

*Jay Winik is the author of April 1865: The Month that Saved America. He will give the annual R. Gerald McMurtry Lecture at the Allen County Public Library in Fort Wayne, Indiana, on September 16, 2019.*



*"Assassination of President Lincoln, Ford's Theatre, Washington, April 14, 1865," E.B. & E.C. Kellogg 71.2009.081.1756*



An Interview *with*

Kate Masur

*on*

“They Knew Lincoln” by John E. Washington

**Sara Gabbard: Who was John E. Washington? What brought him to your attention?**

**Kate Masur:** I first came across John E. Washington's book, *They Knew Lincoln*, when I was a graduate student at University of Michigan in the 1990s. I found a citation to the book and wanted to have a look for myself. I found the book very intriguing, and I especially wanted to know more about the author. Who was John E. Washington, and how did he come to write and publish this book? At that time, when the internet was just getting started, it wasn't easy to find any substantive information about Washington. I thought it was strange that he was so obscure. My primary focus at that point was writing my dissertation, but I kept thinking about Washington and his book.

Eventually I learned quite a bit about John Washington and the origins of *They Knew Lincoln*. In the new edition of the book I provide a narrative of his life and work, but here are the basics: Washington was a man of many talents. The son and grandson of slaves, he was born in Annapolis, Maryland, in 1880. His parents passed away when he was young, and he was raised by his grandmother, Caroline Washington, who ran a boarding house near Ford's Theatre in Washington, D.C. He earned three degrees at Howard University – in teaching, dentistry, and liberal arts – and taught commercial art for decades at Cardozo High School, a business high school for black students in D.C.'s segregated public school system.

Washington became interested in Lincoln and the Civil War Era when he was young. He grew up listening as his grandmother's friends told stories of those days – of escaping from slavery, of working in the Lincolns' White House, or of hear-

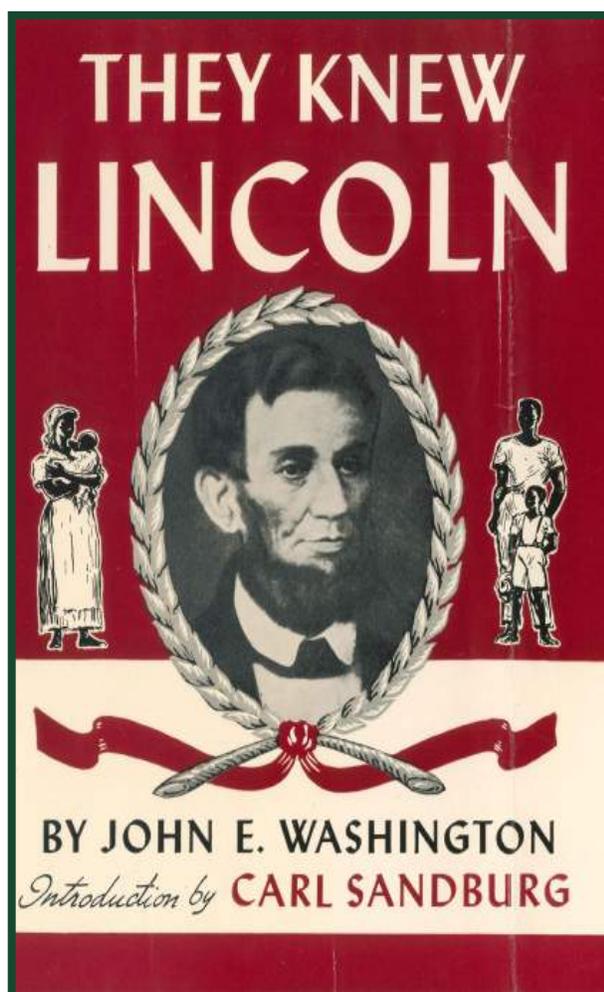
ing the ghosts that haunted Ford's Theatre. Washington's motivation to write publicly about those people and their era began in 1935, when the Associated Press ran a story asserting that Elizabeth Keckly was not the author of her 1868 book, *Behind the Scenes*, and that in fact Keckly had never existed. Like many other African Americans in Washington, D.C., John Washington knew very well that Keckly had indeed existed and

**status of African Americans living in Washington, D.C., during Lincoln's presidency?**

**KM:** African Americans' status in Washington, D.C., was tremendously dynamic during Lincoln's presidency. Perhaps one way of imagining the big picture is to think about two groups: the African Americans who lived in the District of Columbia in 1861, and the thousands who migrated there during the war. Slavery was legal in the District of Columbia until April 1862, when Congress passed a law requiring that all slaves be freed (and providing compensation to slaveowners). The end of slavery in the nation's capital was momentous. Abolitionists had been demanding it for decades. Yet the city already had a large free black population. In fact, almost 80 percent of the African Americans who lived in the District of Columbia when the war began were already free. In this sense, the capital was similar to Baltimore and other parts of Maryland, where free black people significantly outnumbered the enslaved.

The antebellum black community of

Washington had managed to flourish under difficult circumstances. Its members built churches and developed schools, and by the time Lincoln became president, Washington was home to some very accomplished



*They Knew Lincoln*, by John E. Washington, first edition, 1942  
71.2009.084.13229

had been closely associated with the Lincolns. His effort to vindicate Keckly eventually led him to write *They Knew Lincoln*.

**SG: Can you briefly describe the**

leaders and organizations, including people like John F. Cook, the pastor at Fifteenth Street Presbyterian Church, and Kate Brown, who worked in the U.S. Capitol building. Many members of the antebellum black elite had strong ties to the white elite. As in other slaveholding jurisdictions, however, the city's laws and power structures were designed to secure slavery and racial subordination. Local laws required free African Americans (but not whites) to register their residency and imposed special curfews and licensing requirements on them.

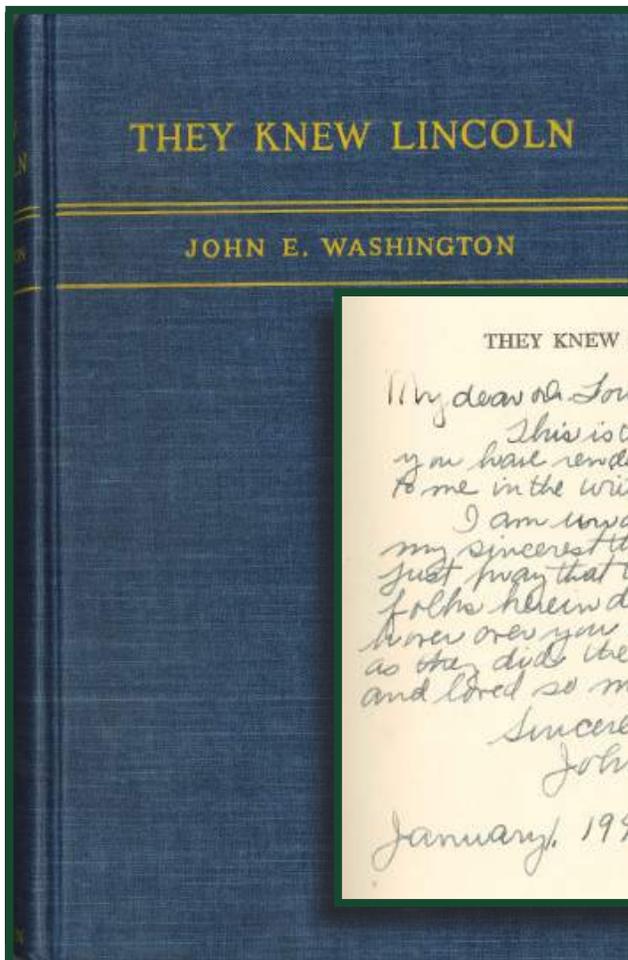
When Congress abolished slavery in the District of Columbia in 1862, it also repealed those racist laws and, for the first time, established a public school system for African American children. Meanwhile, the Civil War, particularly in neighboring Maryland

and Virginia, created opportunities for enslaved people to escape into the capital. They came to Washington seeking safety and also employment with the U.S. Army and Navy, which had significant bases in the capital. Thousands of people migrated into the District, leading to a shortage of housing and problems with control of sanitation. Members of the existing African American community mobilized to provide food, clothing, and shelter to the new migrants, but the problem was far larger than they alone could handle. The government established several "contraband camps" that provided temporary housing. In *They Knew Lincoln*, John Washington explains that one of his grandmother's friends, Aunt Mary Dines, taught school and supervised the choir in such a camp, and she described what it was like when President Lincoln stopped by.

This was a period of almost unfathomable change in Washington. In 1863, African Americans publicly celebrated July 4 with a huge parade that showcased their churches, Sabbath schools, and mutual aid societies. Such a display would never have been possible before the Civil War. Black men and women demanded equal treatment on the streetcars, attended sessions of Congress, and even sought admittance to parties at the Lincoln White House.

The black population of Washington tripled between 1860 and 1870. The mix of people who lived there at the time – those who had long been free, Civil War migrants, and numerous highly political African Americans from the free states who came to the capital in search of employment and opportunity – made Washington, D.C., an exciting and interesting place during the Lincoln administration and throughout Reconstruction. African Americans demanded equality and respect in all manner of public places, and black men were enfranchised by an act of Congress in 1867. For a short time, the District had a biracial electorate and a mayor and city council that was responsive to the will of the voters. An opposition movement quickly mobilized, however, and in 1871 Congress turned the District into a federal territory, eliminating almost all elected offices and putting power in the hands of the wealthy elite. I've written about all this in my book, *An Example for All the Land: Emancipation and the Struggle over Equality in Washington, D.C.* (2010) and also in an article, "Color Was A Bar to the Entrance," in the March 2017 issue of *American Quarterly*.

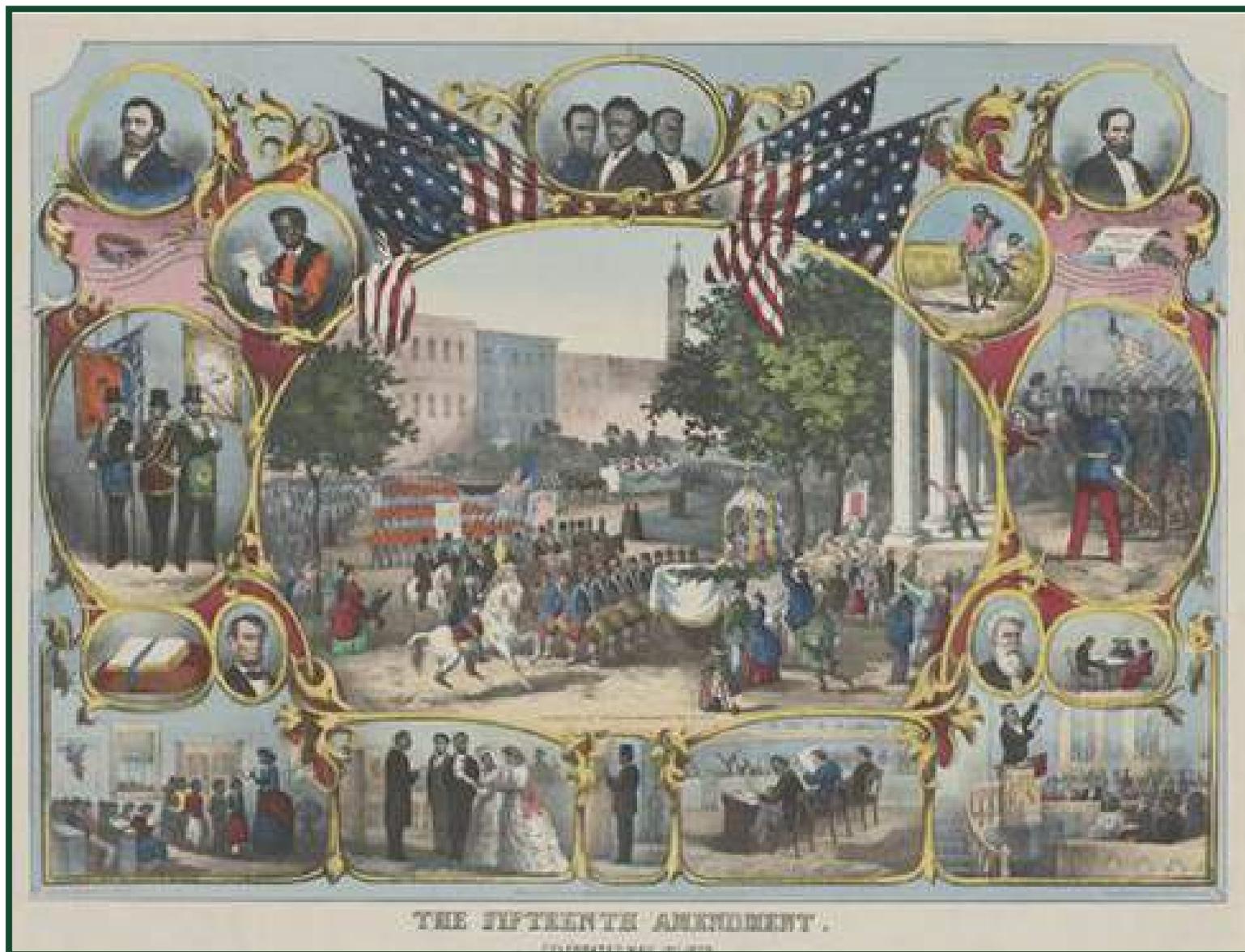
**SG: Abraham Lincoln has been described as both too slow and too fast in his path to emancipation. What is your take on his**



THEY KNEW LINCOLN

My dear Dr. Louis A. Warren,  
 This is the book that  
 you have rendered so much assistance  
 to me in the writing.  
 I am unable to express  
 my sincerest thanks in words so I'll  
 just say that the souls of the old  
 folks herein described will always  
 honor over you in their prayers  
 as they did the man they knew  
 and loved so much - Lincoln.  
 Sincerely  
 John E. Washington  
 January, 1942.

Cover and Inscription by John E. Washington to Dr. Louis A.



### journey?

**KM:** I definitely don't think he was too fast, and I can certainly understand people's frustration that he seemed too slow. Many abolitionists believed from the beginning of the war (and even before it started) that war would bring about the end of slavery. They wanted Lincoln to hurry up and realize that – to attack slavery directly rather than, for example, insisting that U.S. military officials allow ostensibly loyal slaveowners to come into army camps looking

for escaped slaves. They had no patience for Lincoln's gradual, voluntary emancipation schemes, nor for his proposal that African Americans voluntarily leave the United States for Central America. As Frederick Douglass wrote in May 1861, "The simple way . . . to put an end to the savage and desolating war now waged by the slaveholders, is to strike down slavery itself, the primal cause of that war." Douglass was frustrated that the Lincoln administration was not permitting black men

to volunteer for the U.S. Army. He wrote, "Until the nation shall repent of this weakness and folly, until they shall make the cause of their country the cause of freedom, until they shall strike down slavery, the source and center of this gigantic rebellion, they don't deserve the support of a single sable arm, nor will it succeed in crushing the cause of our present troubles."

Douglass was prescient, but we also need to appreciate how Lincoln saw the issue. Particularly in the first year

*"The Fifteenth Amendment" 71.2009.081.0588*

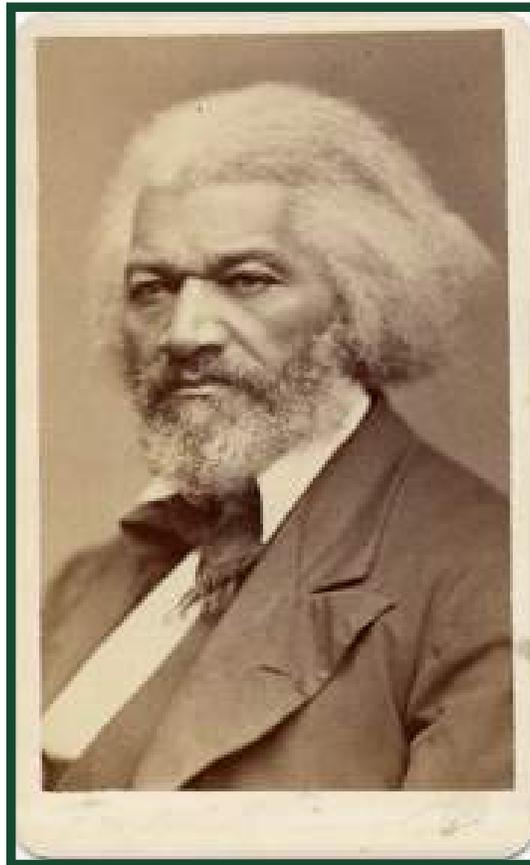
of the war, he worried that a full-bore attack on slavery would push Maryland or Kentucky out of the Union. Both states were strategically important for the U.S. – and would have been so for the Confederacy as well – and so it was important to show the governments of those states that the Lincoln administration was not, as so many of its opponents insisted, allied with the radical abolitionists and poised to somehow summarily abolish slavery. Moreover, and this may have been even more important, Lincoln believed slavery was legal in the states where it already existed and did not believe he had the authority, as president, to attempt to destroy it. He repeatedly asked Congress to pass legislation that would have allowed the government to pay the loyal border states to end slavery voluntarily, and he signed several congressional measures that increasingly boldly provided for the freedom of enslaved people who escaped to U.S. Army lines. But he was reluctant to use his power as president to act unilaterally against slavery. He was already wielding power more forcefully than any previous president, and he was wary of alienating northerners who suspected him of being a tyrant at heart.

Lincoln's sense of the limits on the power of the presidency was a major reason it took him a while to decide to issue the Emancipation Proclamation. It was as commander in chief of the U.S. Army and Navy that Lincoln believed he could act against slavery, and his presidential proclamation applied only in places that were in insurrection against the United States. Yet once he took the momentous step of issuing the proclamation, which also called for the enlistment

of black men as soldiers, he stood by it despite widespread opposition.

**SG: What parts of Lincoln's life and the Civil War most interest your students at Northwestern? Are there any subjects that they would prefer to ignore?**

**KM:** I teach a freshman seminar called "Abraham Lincoln in History and Memory." In that class we spend a lot of time reading Lincoln's own writings, particularly on race and slavery, and then we look at how Americans have remembered



Frederick Douglass, 1876 LN-0513

Lincoln over the last 150 years or so. Maybe I'm projecting, but I think students are particularly interested in trying to figure out Lincoln's views on slavery and race. Many have never considered, for example, why Lincoln – if he hated slavery – didn't just wave his magic wand and end it when he became president. We

end up talking quite a bit about the Constitution and also about how Americans imagine presidential power. Students are also interested in thinking about the many ways it was possible to both despise slavery *and* seriously doubt, as Lincoln did, that white and black people could coexist in the United States in conditions of freedom and equality. Lincoln was such a good writer that it's always fun to engage directly with his own prose.

**SG: Is Reconstruction a topic that is well understood or generally ignored?**

**KM:** I've spent a lot of time writing, thinking, and teaching about Reconstruction. The period is generally not well understood, in part because it's often ignored or glossed over, and in part because our collective misunderstanding of it runs deep. After the Civil War, Americans had to settle two crucial and interrelated questions: How would the nation be brought back together after a brutal war? And how would Americans contend with the abolition of slavery? The process of answering these questions is the history of Reconstruction. The period can be hard to understand, but I've come to believe that if we can break it down into these fundamental questions – questions that are absolutely central to American history – Reconstruction can be compelling

for students and for all people who want to better understand the United States.

During Reconstruction, African Americans founded independent churches and communities, and many historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) date to this period. Questions about civil rights,

voting, and the proper scope of federal power were front and center. Americans passed three new constitutional amendments, dramatically transforming the relationship between the federal government and the states and promising, for the first time, that the U.S. government would protect certain individual rights. The 14th Amendment promises birth-right citizenship and basic civil rights, while the 15th prohibits racial discrimination in voting. The 14th and 15th Amendments remain critical to so many facets of American life. Reconstruction was also a tremendously violent period. Many white southerners refused to accept the new order and turned to terrorizing and murdering black southerners and their white allies in an effort to reassert white supremacy.

Congress's efforts to launch the nation on a new footing during Reconstruction – and to prioritize freedom and equality for all people – were remarkable. Yet for a long time, conventional wisdom held that these policies were a grave mistake, that Reconstruction was an unconstitutional usurpation of state power, and that white southerners were heroic for rejecting federal policy and restoring white domination. That interpretation of Reconstruction prevailed in textbooks and popular culture, and it served to justify the Jim Crow order that endured for much of the 20th century. Most historians have rejected that interpretation since at least the 1960s, but it remains deeply embedded in American culture. It has been heartening to see, over the last five years or so, growing attention to Reconstruction in public life, as communities uncover and discuss their own histories. The National Park Service has devoted growing attention to the period, and in 2017, Barack Obama created the Reconstruction Era National Monument in Beaufort, South Carolina, the nation's first na-

tional park dedicated to interpreting Reconstruction.

**SG: I really appreciate studies that take the reader beyond the Treaty of Appomattox and Lincoln's assassination and focus on effects and repercussions. You co-edited *The World the Civil War Made*.**

**Your Introduction is titled "Echoes of War: Rethinking Post-Civil War Governance and Politics." Please comment on your experience in working on this book. Surprises? Changes in outlook? New approaches to teaching the subjects? Affirmation of precisely held viewpoints?**

**KM:** That book was one of the most gratifying things I've ever done as an historian. My co-editor, Greg Downs, and I were interested in pulling together and assessing cutting-edge scholarship on the post-Civil War period. Eric Foner's tremendous 1988 book, *Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution, 1863-1877*, cast a very long shadow over our field. Foner's book is a stunning piece of research and writing, and it's widely influential across all fields of U.S. history. When it came out, one prominent reviewer speculated that there might be nothing further to say on the subject of Reconstruction! Yet scholars continued to produce new work, and we wanted to see what new patterns and approaches we could detect. We deliberately went beyond the usual North/South and black/white dichotomies in Reconstruction scholarship by including historians of the U.S. West and of Native American history. Bill Blair and Penn State's Richards Civil War Era Center hosted a symposium where scholars gathered, gave papers, and talked about connections across subfields. The participants' papers were excellent and generated a terrific discussion, and we drew

on that stew of ideas to develop the ideas we put forward in the volume's introduction. Researching and writing history can be very isolating, but this was a collaborative project on many different levels. I hope readers can detect the energy and excitement that went into the volume.

**SG: Are you currently working on any special projects?**

**KM:** I'm writing a book about the origins of federal Reconstruction policy – particularly the 14th Amendment – in struggles over the rights of free African Americans in the antebellum North. The book traces how growing numbers of northerners came to believe that racially discriminatory laws had no place in American life. For instance, it highlights the work of black activists and white activists as they worked to strike down racist laws in the Midwest and as they argued that the federal government ought to do more to protect the civil rights of *all* free persons, regardless of race. The standard story of congressional Reconstruction policy is that Congress was cobbling together responses on a piecemeal basis as it became aware of conditions on the ground in the former Confederacy. This book takes a much longer view, showing that Republican legislators already had very clear ideas about what kind of a nation they would like to live in but did not have the chance to try to put those ideas into practice until the Civil War. This project is introducing me to issues, sources, and historical subfields that are entirely new to me, so I'm having a lot of fun with it.

*Kate Masur is the Wayne V. Jones II Research Professor in History at Northwestern University. In 2018-2019, Masur was awarded the National Endowment for the Humanities Faculty Fellowship.*

# 210 Years Later



In February of this year, we marked the 210th birthday anniversary of America's secular saint, Abraham Lincoln, although it can be hard to separate it from the car, furniture, carpet and indoor spa sales that have somehow become barnacles on the birthday cake.

And we Hoosiers, along with the Illini to the west and the Kentuckians across the river, continue to squabble over who made the man who saved the United States. I once put together a panel program to answer the absurd question of whether Mr. Lincoln became Mr. Lincoln "because of" or "in spite of" his rural Midwestern beginnings. And one of the real irritations in my life is that Indiana, Illinois and Kentucky continue this divisive born-here- grew-up-there quibbling rather than harmoniz-

ing on the riff that we all are in and of Lincoln country.

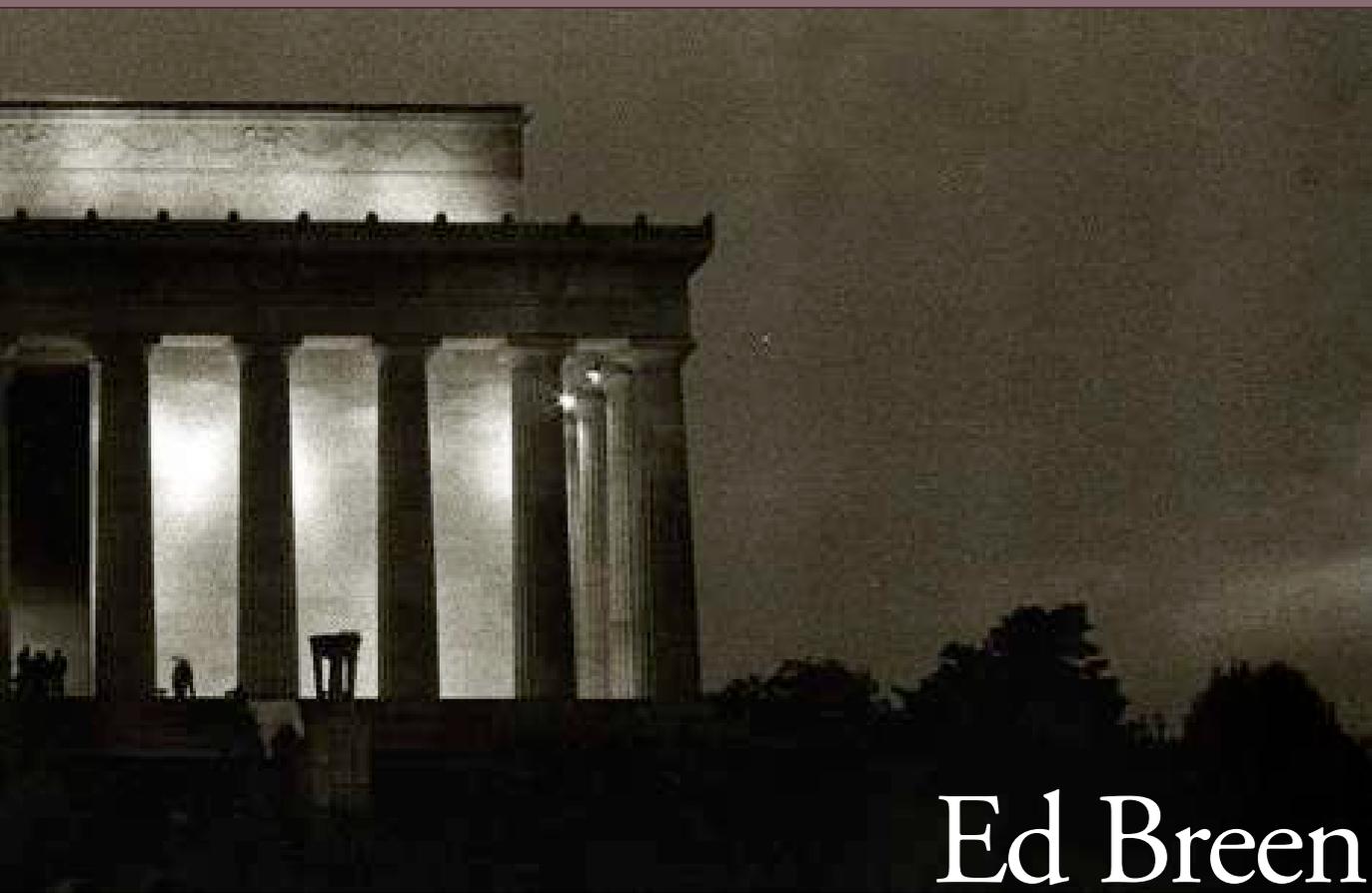
Imagine the tourist dollars rolling in from a cooperative tour of Lincoln Land that began in Hardin County then on to Spencer County and over to the banks of the Sangamon River. And, no, you do not need a passport.

Not everyone agrees even on the merits of Mr. Lincoln himself. I once knew a fellow who was a serious Lincoln scholar who, deep in his soul, believed that - his words - "assassination was a good career move for him." A harsh judgment but probably more correct than most of us like to think. He won the war but could he have won the peace? Don't know. Never will. And, in many ways, we aren't there yet, are we?

But there are those who point out that prior to the Civil War, we spoke of "The United States are . . ." and only after the war did it become "The United States is . . ." Mission accomplished. Millions of gallons of blood shed, but he held the place together.

And he continues to fascinate. Someone did the research and found that more books have been written about Abraham Lincoln than any other person except Jesus Christ. But to get a sense of Mr. Lincoln deep in your soul, in your gut, you need to visit the Lincoln Memorial at the far west end of the National Mall in Washington D.C.

This massive marble edifice, will be getting renewed attention in the next couple of years as it ap-



# Ed Breen

proaches its centennial: 100 years since it was completed and dedicated on May 30, 1922. Fifty-seven years after the death of the man it celebrates.

Glorious, somber, elegant, imposing, reverent. America's finest tribute to one of its own. The marble statue of the seated Lincoln weighs 120 tons. Nineteen feet high, 19 feet wide. And the base on which it rests is another 55 tons. Six million visitors a year.

Accompany me, if you will, on a visit to this place. It was 30 years ago now.

It is a winter night in Washington. Fresh snow -- not much by our standards -- on the landscape of the Mall. It is nearly 1 o'clock in the morning. We have walked along M Street and Pennsylvania

Avenue to 23rd Street and past the Watergate and across Constitution Avenue. Ahead is Independence Avenue and to our left, the Washington Monument and the great dome of the Capitol in the distance. All are bathed in flood lights.

To the right, the 87 steps leading from the reflecting pool to the Memorial and another 58 marble steps up to the cavernous interior, surrounded by the 36 Colorado marble columns, one for each state in the Union that Mr. Lincoln fought to preserve.

We are alone. No tourists. No police. No protestors. No demonstrators. Not even one of those green uniformed folks from the National Park Service in sight, although we have no doubt that they are here.

We ascend the steps and enter that enormous space. Two hundred feet wide. A hundred and thirty feet across to the other side. Banks of spotlights 60 feet above us in the ceiling are carefully directed at Daniel Chester French's breath-taking tribute in stone. And we stand there. Transfixed. We look up at Mr. Lincoln's marble face, which seems somehow animated, alive. Three feet, seven inches from chin to brow. Motionless.

It is, even in this most secular of cities and places, a religious experience.

*Ed Breen is a retired editor of Fort Wayne's Journal Gazette. He serves as Vice President of Friends of the Lincoln Collection of Indiana and provided the photo above.*

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*Lincoln* LORE

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