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Lincoln Update



The Rolland Center for Lincoln Research Allen County Public Library, Fort Wayne, Indiana

The Lincoln Financial Foundation Collection has partnered with the Allen County Public Library to create the Rolland Center for Lincoln Research. The Center will highlight the thousands of unique and significant items in the Collection including original photographs of Abraham Lincoln, his family, Cabinet members, and generals; letters and documents to and from Lincoln; diaries of Civil War soldiers; and so much more. Primary sources combine with modern technology to create new opportunities to experience Lincoln and his time.

The Center will incorporate an expert-in-residence program. That position will be open to a wide range of individuals, including scholars and artists, who wish to work with the Collection's materials to further an understanding of Lincoln.

There are four points that serve as the North Star for the Rolland Center, guiding the project team members as they work through the planning and construction process:

- Connect people to the life and times of Abraham Lincoln.
- Display and bring to life this incomparable collection of Lincoln materials.
- Deliver a 21st century engaging experience.
- Make the Center a destination for people inside and outside of our community.

Learn more about the Rolland Center at www.friendsofthelincolncollection.org.

On The Cover: An image of Old Concord Cemetary in Sandridge, Illinois. To learn more about Sandridge and Lincoln's time there, see Guy Fraker's article " SANDRIDGE: Lincoln's Home Away from Home during the New Salem Years" on page 14. (image: Guy Fraker)

Memories: An Interview with Harold Holzer



Sara Gabbard

Sara Gabbard: Recent questions about the fate of various Civil War memorials raise several obvious questions. Is there a profound difference between possible sites for statues; e.g. public vs. private property?

Harold Holzer: To me, yes, there is a difference: private sites can display what their owners want to feature, within reason (a Hitler statue shouldn't be displayed anywhere, for example). But public sites owe an obligation to the public good and public mood, because as a citizenry, we collectively own and maintain such ground. I might add that there are subtle differences among public sites, too. Placing a heroic statue in front of a courthouse or other government building, for instance, bestows "official" status on that monument, and suggests that decisions rendered inside are guided by the hero portrayed outside. I have heard this from several people of color who grew up in Southern towns that boasted Confederate statuary outside their local government offices. The message those statues conveyed seemed clear to them: expect less than equal justice here, because we celebrate Confederate generals, soldiers, and politicians who waged war to keep your ancestors enslaved. On the other hand, placing such a statue in a public park or square, or a college campus, is meant in most cases not to intimidate but to celebrate (however misguided some cases of admiration might be). Of course, exceptions abound within that category, too: UNC students pulled down the school's *Silent Sam* Confederate soldier statue, and when one reads the virulently racist speeches with which it was dedicated, there can be little doubt that it deserved to go. Many of these seemingly benign statues

have cast a long and ugly shadow for too long. A statue of Nathan Bedford Forrest in Memphis—a man who murdered unarmed Black troops and became the first Grand Wizard of the Ku Klux Klan? Indefensible. The Lee statue and the others along Richmond's Monument Avenue? They became a genuine tourist attraction today, but were installed in part to delineate a new batch of fancy, whites-only real estate (still, the Mercier statue of Lee is phenomenal). Finally, what of museums? People are always saying: put these contested statues in a museum, where they can be contextualized with labels. Well, museums are public spaces too—and display there conveys a stamp of approval by their curators. Besides, these statues were carved to be seen from far below their elevated pedestals. Placing them at lower sight-lines in museum galleries makes them look like cartoons, and the resulting reaction can only be: why did we save these ugly things anyway? The other "public" solution is the Civil War battlefield park—many of which, like Gettysburg, rank as outdoor sculpture galleries in their own right. In such cases, historian Allen Guelzo has proposed some useful guidelines. Did the general fight on this ground? If so, relocate him here. Was the statue commissioned to commemorate leadership or promote Lost Cause ideology? Accept only the former. Less useful perhaps is Guelzo's additional suggestion, that only those convicted of high crimes should be excluded from battlefield display. The fact is, too few Confederate leaders ever faced such reckoning.

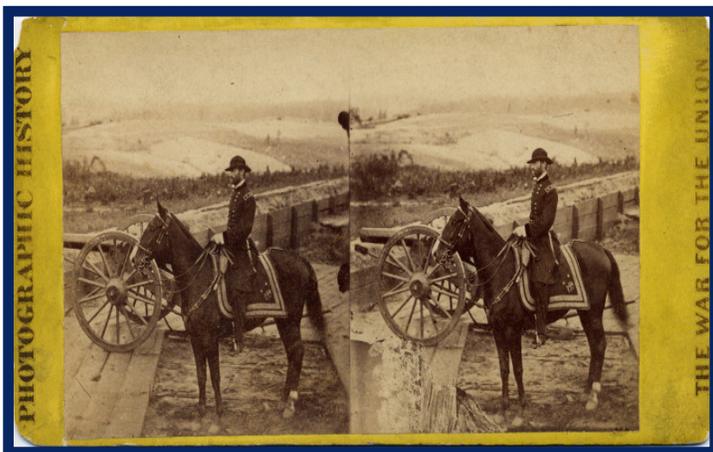
SG: Is the discussion of location similar to the controversies about, for instance, erection of tablets containing the Ten Commandments on courthouse property?

HH: Well, the contest for the public square has been going on for a long time—in a variety of forms. Speaking of the Ten Commandments, wasn't Moses the world's first

iconoclast? When he hurled down the golden calf, he took the initial stand against idol-worship! I dare say he might be surprised that some people now contest the tablets containing the ten principles of human justice. The objection to "Thou shalt not kill"? Not sure, though I do understand the point of discouraging so-called religious messaging in a secular sphere that is supposed to reflect freedom of religion. I've heard similar objections to the seasonal display of crèches and Christmas trees, because they inherently stigmatize non-believers. OK, but in my home town of New York City, the tradition of Christmas decor is almost universally accepted. Think of the storefronts along Fifth Avenue and the Rockefeller Center tree. Plus, the quest for equal access has been met by adding a giant, seasonal Hanukkah Menorah near the Plaza Hotel. By the way, all these holiday displays stand quite close to Augustus Saint-Gaudens' brilliant equestrian statue of William T. Sherman outside the Plaza Hotel near Central Park—and it's bright gold, lest anyone fail to notice it. Actually, Donald Trump paid for its re-gilding some years back. Sherman, who of course helped win the Civil War, has come under criticism lately for his hostility to Native Americans, and some have called for even this great work of art to be removed. No way, I hope.

SG: Please relate the story of the "tearing down" of the statue of King George in New York City.

HH: It was the first, and until Mayor Mitch Landrieu removed the Confederate statues in New Orleans, the most famous outbreak of American iconoclasm. In July 1776, the newly issued Declaration of Independence was read aloud to the public from Bowling Green at the southern tip of Manhattan Island—which was then dominated by a huge equestrian statue of George III made of lead. Apparently, the patriots were so aroused by the Declaration, and its prospect of freedom from royal domination, that they not only hauled down the statue—they smashed it into pieces to make bullets for the anticipated war for independence: some 42,000 pieces of ammunition in all. Only a few fragments survived. The royal head was spared so it could be displayed on a pike in the manner of beheaded English kings and princes, but it somehow fell



Maj. W.T. Sherman LN-0071

into the hands of Loyalists and spirited to England. The horse's tail, for reasons that should be obvious, was preserved intact and today lives in the New-York Historical Society. For generations, painters and printmakers depicted the act of destruction and desecration as a seminal patriotic event, venerated as an entirely justifiable outburst of the public yearning for liberty. It is such a celebrated story, illustrated so often, that I fail to understand how modern Americans who think all statues should be preserved can neglect or ignore the episode. By the way, the statue's empty pedestal survived for more than 40 more years, and when it was removed in 1818, many New Yorkers objected, believing it should remain where it was in perpetuity, as testimony to the fragility of false idols!

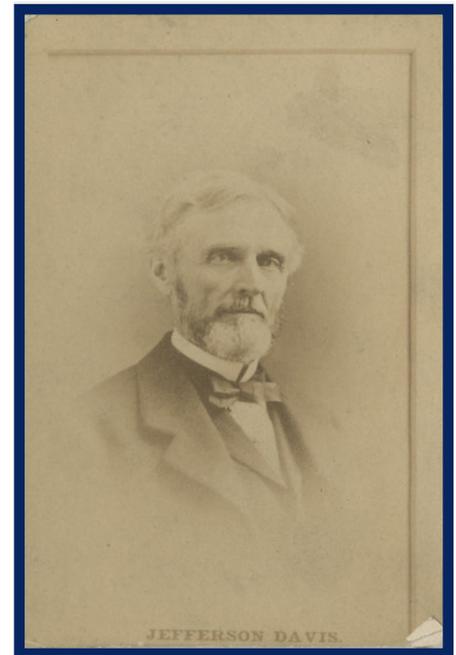
SG: What was the impact of the movie *Birth of a Nation* when it was first released? Is it still a factor today?

HH: The impact was simply enormous—more, I try to convince myself, because of its cinematic power than because of its retrograde, racist perspective. For this 1915 feature, director D. W. Griffith introduced tracking shots and close-ups—unheard of innovations in technique that really brought both its dramatic action and human stories to life (however corny the film looks a century later). It was a revolutionary phenomenon as a work of art, and still taught in film schools—because there's no way to ignore the fact that it changed the way movies were made. On the other hand, its prejudicial attitude was so egregious that the movie offended many people of the day, even though segregation and inequity were routine. Remember also, the movie coincided with the final phase of the age of minstrelsy, and Griffith embraced it by insisting that Blacks in his movie be portrayed by white actors wearing blackface. This outrageous casting decision made African American, Reconstruction-era legislators into caricatures who seemed less than human. Still, there was no escaping the revolutionary technology. Southern-born President Woodrow Wilson, who personally knew the author of the novel *The Klansman*, on which the movie was based, hosted a White House screening and came up with the best line I've ever read about the power the movie achieved: He called it "History by lightning." Of course, it was the kind

of history with which Wilson felt comfortable: Lost Cause revisionism melded with white supremacy. Two points to add. Griffith, the Kentucky-born son of a former Confederate colonel, ended his career with a sympathetic biopic about Abraham Lincoln—so in a sense he came full cycle. And remember, 25 years later, *Gone With the Wind* had an equally huge impact on the next generation—telling its own retrograde story of grateful slaves, noble plantation owners, and evil Carpetbaggers, but in such grand style, and with such great stars, that it may have done even more than *Birth of a Nation* to sustain Lost Cause mythology. By the way, if you're also asking whether such films should be banned, my answer is no. Televised screenings can easily offer what outdoor sculptures often can't: context. And TCM, for one, is doing a fine job of running these retrograde but revolutionary films preceded and followed by useful discussion.

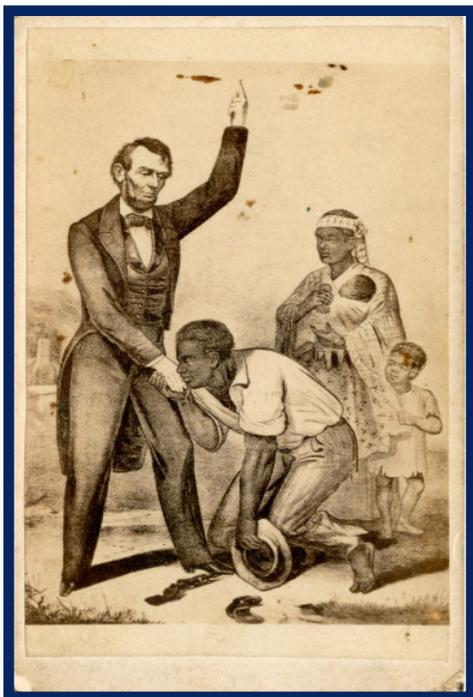
SG: Historically, when did the custom of erecting monuments to military figures first begin?

HH: With the Greeks and then the Romans, and even earlier in non-Western cultures. Think of the life-size statues of the armies of Qin Shi Huang in 210 BCE China. Archaeologists have unearthed some 8,000 of these figures, now known as the "Terracotta Army." The Romans lionized military heroes like Titus, who sacked the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem in 71 AD and was depicted in the Arch of Titus, a still-standing architectural wonder built in Rome some 10 years later (and kind of offensive to many Jews, although no one even whispers the idea that it should be removed). Trajan's Column appeared in Rome about 110 AD. The French and British likewise honored their military heroes, especially from the 17th century onward. There are probably more Napoleon statues in France than statues of anyone else, anywhere, even though his reputation is coming under renewed scrutiny, too. In the United States, George Washington became the ideal figure for early lionization in both painting and statuary. As first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen, to quote General Harry Lee, he deserved monumentalizing. And to his great benefit, he looked the



Jefferson Davis OC-0551

part. The idea of honoring the common soldier in the U. S. was a more recent phenomenon, though one of the earliest American war monuments, which celebrated a naval victory in Tripoli, paid tribute not only to officers like James Decatur, but to enlisted men as well. Briefly displayed at the Washington Navy Yard and the U. S. Capitol, it now resides at the U. S. Naval Academy in Annapolis. In both the South and North, anonymous, cookie-cutter Confederate and Union soldiers began appearing on pedestals a generation after the Civil War, and as recent scholarship has revealed, their dedication ceremonies inspired Southern communities to spew racist nonsense and Lost Cause claptrap. The phenomenon of focusing on the common soldier really took off after World War I, which inspired countless "Lost Generation" tributes to the doughboys who lost their lives overseas. The apogee, I think, came with the terrific Iwo Jima statue at Arlington Cemetery, based of course on an iconic photograph. Now, the trend is to honor only the common soldier—witness the Vietnam and Korean War Memorials in Washington, the latter designed by my good friend Louis Nelson. I haven't seen any statues of William Westmoreland or Creighton Abrams—just the grunts who bore the brunt of wartime sacrifice, and this seems perfectly appropriate in a post-heroic age. Officials couldn't even agree on a military statue for the National Mall honoring Dwight D. Eisenhower,



Freedom to the Slaves OC-1476

who led the D-Day invasion—they originally wanted to memorialize him as a barefoot boy from Kansas.

SG: Please give the history of the term “Lost Cause.” Has its meaning changed through the years?

HH: I’m not sure it has changed all that much. From the beginning (launched by journalist Edward Pollard in 1866 and fueled by revisionist postwar memoir-writing by Jubal Early and Jefferson Davis) it introduced the myth that the Confederacy failed to win the Civil War and establish independence only because of the superior manpower and materiel of Northern aggressors. The mystique held that Confederate generals were superior, its citizens nobler, its slaves loyal (and better off enslaved), and of course that its states seceded and armed only to preserve liberty and state rights, and not to preserve slavery. Here was a Big Lie before there were Big Lies—fake history easily disproven by the proceedings of the various secession conventions, not to mention Alexander H. Stephens’ “Cornerstone” speech in Georgia. I think the phrase “Lost Cause” was amplified most loudly, effectively, and shamelessly when Jeff Davis visited Montgomery, Alabama in 1886, 25 years after he had been inaugurated there as the first and only President of the Confederacy. He spoke unrepentantly and defiantly there and, unpopular as he had been during

the war, wowed the crowd. Davis proceeded to Atlanta, and from there to Savannah, in a kind of perversely defiant re-tracing of Sherman’s March. *Frank Leslie’s Illustrated Newspaper*, published in New York, devoted eight pages of coverage to Davis’ tour, and repeated the old man’s call to arms—or what might be called a call to rewrite history: “Is it a lost cause now? Never...a thousand times, no.” So the perpetuation of the false narrative of justifiable treason and unrepentant white supremacy owed much to the revival of Davis’ reputation. Remember, he had reportedly been captured in 1865 in drag—an exaggeration, to be sure—so he came a long way, from ridicule to revival. Maybe it was because he was the only one of the Confederate “big three” (which included Jackson and Lee) to live into the 1880s, and because unlike Lee, Davis was eager to re-fight the war and justify and perpetuate white supremacy. At first a literary movement, it eventually enfolded itself into something approaching a religion, sustained by organizations like the United Daughters of the Confederacy, perpetuated in misleading textbooks, given iconic status through statuary, and emblazoned and emboldened by the offensive (to many) display of the old Confederate battle flag. Historian Rollin Osterweis called the Lost Cause an “expression of the despair of a bitter, defeated people...a lost identity,” but that analysis ignores the Black population whose memory of the Old South was anything but nostalgic. Historian David Blight came much closer to the centrality of Lost Cause mythology: that of a lily-white South that sought sectional but not racial reconciliation.

SG: There has been controversy surrounding two (in Washington and Chicago) well-known statues of Abraham Lincoln. Please comment.

HH: The controversies—and the public mood in each locale—strike me as entirely different, requiring separate explanations and approaches. In Washington, some are uncomfortable with *The Freedman’s Memorial* or *Emancipation Group*, Thomas Ball’s bronze statue, paid for entirely by African Americans, dedicated in 1876

by Frederick Douglass, and unveiled by President Grant. It shows Lincoln as the Great Emancipator, hand outstretched, lifting to freedom a half-clothed Black man. But is the enslaved man kneeling or rising? There’s the issue. The image of a subservient man of color, semi-naked to imply inferiority, upsets people now, and upset some people in 1876—including Douglass, as historian Jonathan White has shown. During the George Floyd protests in the capital, crowds tried to haul the statue down, and failed only because the authorities defended it, and then fenced it up. The district’s Congressional observer, Eleanor Holmes Norton, has called for its removal. The mayor of Boston ordered the removal of the copy unveiled there a few years later, and no one is sure where or how it is being stored. But my friend Edna Greene Medford, historian at Howard University, wants the original to stay just where it is. What people forget is that the image of the kneeling (or rising), half naked Black man was once the symbol of the abolitionist movement—in both England and the U. S. The image actually appeared on the masthead of William Lloyd Garrison’s newspaper, *The Liberator*, as Sidney Blumenthal and others have reminded us. I admit I’ve gone back and forth more than once on this statue—but I hope passions cool and we can take our time considering its fate carefully, reassessing it both as a work of art and an expression of admiration that Lincoln once universally evoked among people of color. As for the Chicago case, nothing I’ve heard in the last four years of debate over public statuary has disheartened or mystified me more. We’re talking about a genuine masterpiece, Saint-Gaudens’ standing Lincoln in Lincoln Park, one of the greatest American sculptures. The rationale for putting it on a watch list? That Lincoln’s onetime racial attitudes make people uncomfortable today. What a travesty—and what a tragedy if Chicago doesn’t backtrack, admit it made a huge error in inviting people to re-examine masterpieces of enduring historic and artistic value, and reiterate its pride in this great tribute to the American dream. Ironically, the Saint-Gaudens is one of the “second generation” Lincoln statues—that is, created after the boom in Lincoln tributes that followed his 1865 murder. Rather than depict him as an Emancipator, as many early sculptures

did, it showed him as a statesman giving a speech. Does any American of any background dispute the fact that Lincoln was the greatest writer and orator among our presidents? Not to mention that he composed some of the greatest words ever written to celebrate American opportunity? Talk about the stark difference, to paraphrase Lincoln, between little noting and long remembering!

SG: Do you see a difference between removal of physical items such as statues and objections to retaining names of historical figures on schools, military bases, etc.

HH: As someone who worked in an art museum for 23 years, I just don't like the idea of destroying worthy sculptures because of changing tastes, updated historical perspectives, or evolving community demographics. Yes, I didn't mind when angry citizens destroyed statues of Saddam Hussein (even if American troops helped). But I was pained when the Taliban destroyed the 1,500-year-old Bamiyan Buddhas with explosives in 2001, simply because they were built by people of a different faith. (Now authorities are creating replicas to attract tourists to Afghanistan!) And I like to point out that the people of Leningrad preserved the city's extraordinary statue of Czar Peter even when the Communists ruled—lovingly protecting it when the Nazis lay siege to the city. I do think statues, like everything else, require periodic re-evaluation—and in some cases even removal and replacement—but I just hate the idea of destruction and demolition. I prefer the solution reached in Budapest, where worthy statues of unworthy people are displayed in a kind of garden of villains. As for the names on schools, they too are worth re-examining from time to time. It took much too long to change the name of Calhoun College at Yale. But removing Woodrow Wilson's name from the public policy graduate school at Princeton punishes him for his bigotry without acknowledging his progressive reform agenda. As for removing Lincoln's name from a school in San Francisco because of the Minnesota Indian executions of 1862—which he actually minimized in defiance of political pressure to hang hundreds of Native people?—that seems misguided. Thankfully, the school board has punted—at least for

now. As for military bases, I do think it's high time to remove the names of Confederate generals from U. S. military installations. There was never any excuse for honoring the likes of Braxton Bragg and John Bell Hood—and now I think it's imperative to rename them for military men

think the response by some local school boards that have moved to ban lessons about slavery is disproportionate and insulting. Talk about cancel culture! Equally blind was the so-called patriotic curriculum championed by Donald



Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1862, by BARNARD & GIBSON, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the District of Columbia.

who did not take up arms against the United States to defend slavery.

SG: What is the answer to the debate over national memory—in both the classroom and the public square?

HH: In a word: thoughtful study and appropriate caution, and an acknowledgment that there's never going to be a final, definitive decision about these matters. Meanwhile, I'd hesitate about destroying anything that we may later regret obliterating. Yet the process of re-examining our past, acknowledging mistakes, admitting the centrality of slavery to the early republic, and celebrating unsung heroes whom we've long ignored, can be uplifting, not threatening. Sometimes a statue may have to come down, but so did King George III when its time had come and its symbolism seemed too oppressive. As for the classroom, I think we're deep into a period of overheated action and equally overheated reaction. I think the 1619 project was a deeply flawed document, riddled with errors and omissions—but also useful because it opened eyes to neglected history. I

Contrabands at Headquarters of General Lafayette LN-2629

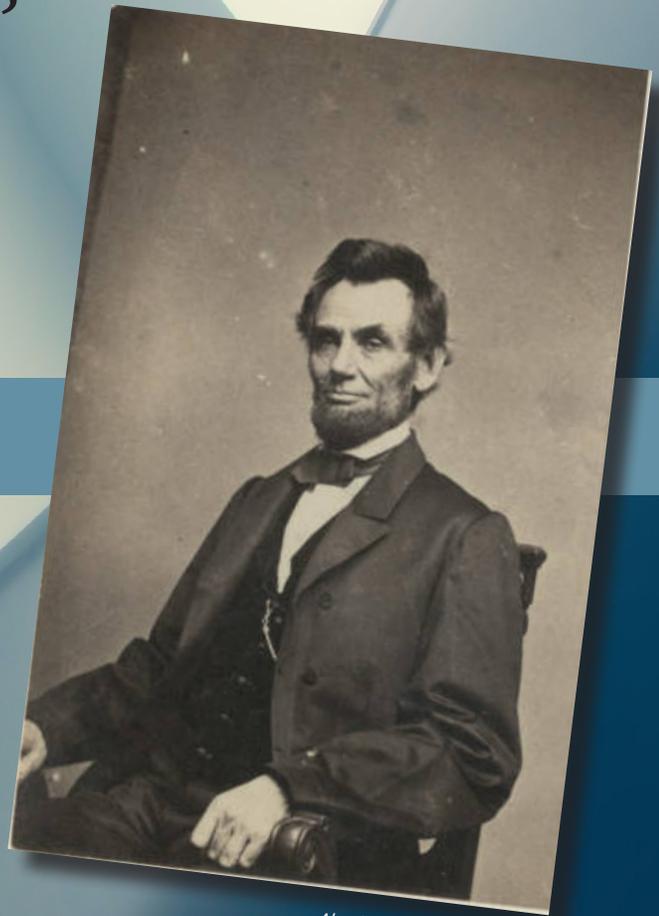
Trump, along with his proposed outdoor garden of heroes, which struck me as grandiose, dismissive, and superfluous. Over all, it's time to understand that American history and national reputation are not like the plaques at the Baseball Hall of Fame: once enshrined, always enshrined. History and memory never have a fixed, final date when we sign off in perpetuity on our heroes and villains. Reputations remain open to interpretation, analysis, and, let's face it, change. And the fact we can conduct such re-evaluations freely, without fear of reprisal, is as powerful a monument to our democracy as any statue ever built...or taken down.

Harold Holzer serves as Director of Roosevelt House Public Policy Institute at Hunter College.

The “Great Emancipator” *and the* “Grim Chieftain”



James H. Lane OC-0764



Abraham Lincoln LFA-0054

Jason H. Silverman

Abraham Lincoln was in trouble - and the fate of the United States tenuously hung in the balance. The firing on Fort Sumter, five weeks after Lincoln took office, ominously signaled the start of civil war. This act, the President proclaimed, "forced upon the country the distinct issue, immediate dissolution or blood."

The nation's capital was located within the heart of slaveholding territory. Surrounded by slave owning states, Lincoln's White House had no fortifications and few loyal soldiers to protect and defend it. All that stood between Lincoln and capture in those first few days was the width of the Potomac River, approximately 800 feet.

Lincoln's emergency proclamation calling for 75,000 troops to suppress the rebellion and protect the capital went out three days after the firing on Fort Sumter, but Lincoln could not be sure whose troops would arrive first: his or the Confederacy's. Virginia soon chose to join the Confederacy while Maryland hung over the brink of secession and made it very dangerous for Union soldiers traveling through the state.

For a week and a half Lincoln and the Union held their collective breaths. The Union Army totaled less than 16,000 men with most of them serving in the West to guard against Indian raids. Lincoln's anxiety about the vulnerability of the White House was palpable to all around him.

The only force standing in the Confederates' way was United States Senator from Kansas James H. Lane's impromptu army of 116 composed of other Westerners, who Lane called together at Lincoln's request to protect the President and the White House. Lane called his company the "Frontier Guard," and most of its soldiers camped in the East Room of the White House during the first ten days of the Civil War. They became the first line of defense in a fledgling Union Army.

The Frontier Guard not only successfully protected Lincoln but, in so doing, might have actually altered the outcome of the war. Confederate General Thomas B. Gates called the Confederates' failure to capture Lincoln in the first days of the Civil War one of the "unsolved riddles of Confederate [war strategy]." The unlikely friendship between

James Lane and Abraham Lincoln perhaps holds the answer to that riddle.

They had a strange relationship indeed. Begun two years before on the plains of Kansas, the man who would go on to become the "Great Emancipator" and General Jim Lane, already known as the "Grim Chieftain," provided quite an unlikely friendship on first appearance.

Jim Lane very quickly went from ally of President Lincoln to something akin to a close friend. Lane visited Lincoln every day in the White House; he sat in on important meetings with the President and his Cabinet; and he regularly offered Lincoln advice. Lane's burgeoning relationship with the president resulted in the jealousy and rivalry of the Republican Governor of Kansas, Charles Robinson, who consistently sought to poison the Lincoln and Lane relationship.

"Lane's singular influence over Mr. Lincoln and his secretary of war, Mr. Stanton," observed the Governor's ally, Leverett Spring, "is one of the most inexplicable and disastrous facts that concern Kansas. It was the source of the heaviest calamities that visited the commonwealth during this period, because it put [Lane] in a position to gratify mischievous ambitions, to pursue personal feuds, to assume duties and offices that belonged to others, to popularize the corruptest [sic] political methods, and to organize semi-predatory military expeditions. His conduct not only embarrassed the state executive and threw state affairs into confusion, but provoked sanguinary reprisals from Missouri."

If this is to be believed, it would appear impossible that Lincoln and Lane could ever be friends and allies. And, at first glance, the contrast between Abraham Lincoln and James H. Lane, the wild-eyed, perhaps even mad, senator seems ridiculous. Seemingly, the two men possessed few, if any, commonalities.

Ever the political pragmatist, Lincoln's connection with Lane could simply be viewed as nothing more than mere savvy and temporary political accommodations. But some contemporaries actually believed that Lane held a constant and sinister Svenga-

lian influence over Lincoln. Lane was an enigma, if not a chameleon, to all around him. Mercurial in character, Lane "was a man of so many sides, no one—save perhaps Lincoln—knew which was real," wrote one journalist.

Undeniably though, there were clear similarities between Lane and Lincoln. Separated in age by only five years, both spent a good deal of their youth in Indiana. Both served in the United States House of Representatives. Both told a good story. Both, in quite different ways, were riveting orators, able to captivate audiences.

The two also interacted significantly in public. They met through Lincoln's friend Mark Delahay in Kansas during Lincoln's campaign tour there in 1859. Delahay, seeking the Republican senatorial seat from Kansas, wanted Lincoln to intercede with Lane on his behalf. Lincoln agreed, and wrote to Lane. Delahay, however, did not receive the nomination and Lincoln ultimately appointed him Surveyor-General of Kansas and Nebraska, an office he held until October 5, 1863, when Lincoln appointed him United States District Judge for Kansas.

But that was just the beginning of the political connections between Lincoln and Lane. Lane actively supported Lincoln on the stump in both of his presidential campaigns. In return Lincoln threw much patronage Lane's way and, despite bitter opposition, supported the Kansan's ambition for a high-ranking military position. Lane early on urged Lincoln to implement some of his most significant policies such as the arming and recruiting of Black soldiers; issuing the Emancipation Proclamation, and the instituting of a "total war" policy aimed at defeating the Confederacy both domestically and militarily.

Lincoln was no political novice and it is doubtful that Lane unduly influenced him. All too aware of Lane's politically impractical radicalism, Lincoln proceeded at his own pace. Yet, given Lane's reputation as an irresponsible demagogue, his proximity to the President was a surprise to many. Two of the closest men to Lincoln, his secretaries John Hay and William Stoddard, both of whom disliked and feared Lane, still allowed the Kansas senator regular proximity to the President at Lincoln's request. Good natured that he was, Lincoln seemed

to be bemused by Lane. Writing to one of Lane's enemies who stridently warned the President about Lane, Lincoln said "[Lane] knocks at my door every morning. You know he is a very persistent fellow, and hard to put off."

A journalist remarked that "If Mr. Lincoln conferred upon Lane powers such as no other senator either possessed or desired, the latter was able to make substantial returns for the unprecedented favors which he had received." Realizing the value of Lane's friendship, Lincoln, as he was wont to do, would allow no one to make up his mind for him.

Being a difficult person himself to figure out, Lincoln recognized and respected Lane's complexities. He eschewed Lane's "mad-man" image and found Lane to be quite effective with him. The President saw little of the maniacal behavior for which Lane became historically infamous.

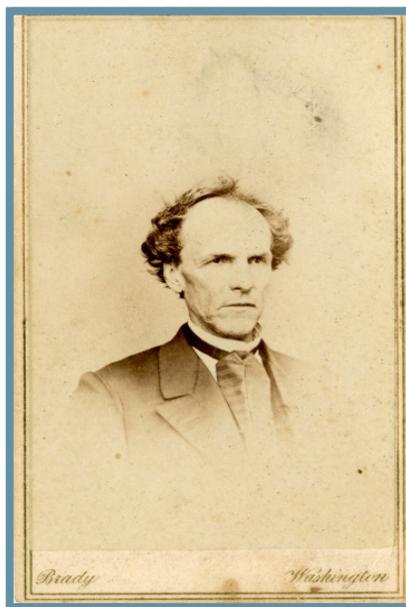
In 1857 Lincoln's predecessor, President James Buchanan, had denounced the citizens of Kansas as a lawless people "in rebellion against the government, with a military leader [Lane] at their head of most turbulent and dangerous character." Lane himself replied to that in detail, saying that Buchanan "stands without a parallel in [his] falsification of history." Although Lincoln was besieged with constant protestations from some in Congress that "had [Lane] been running for office in Hindostan [sic], he would have thrown his offspring to the crocodiles of the Ganges, or bowed among the Parsees at the shrine of the sun" in order to gain success, Lincoln continued to stand by him.

Sidney Clarke, a member of the House of Representatives from Kansas who had known Lane quite well concurred with Lincoln. "When other men hesitated, he went forward with faith and courage." Clarke wrote that Lane was "a comprehensive statesman, and his breadth of vision was as wide as the world in which he lived. There was but little hypocrisy in his nature. His faults were as conspicuous as his talents were brilliant."

Lincoln viewed Lane as his political eyes and ears in troubled Kansas and found him to be a principled individual and a very powerful orator to the masses, if not to insiders. Whether on the stump or simply sitting across a ta-

ble from Lincoln, Lane was a strong personality and a presence so powerful that some were said to comment they avoided him for fear of being "charmed out of their principles."

Lane charmed no more by physical attractiveness than did Lincoln. Both were odd looking, homely even. One contemporary described Lane as looking "like nobody else. . . . His hair stands out in every direction. . . . [his] eyes [resemble] anything you like." A reporter described Lane as "long," and "eely-shaped," with a "careless, loose-hung look," and "not an especially open countenance." And another observed that he "could talk away his [unattractive] face in twenty minutes." These descriptions could be said of Lincoln as well.



James H. Lane LN-0786

All agreed that as a speaker Lane was a marvel, but in vividly different ways from Lincoln. Contemporaries described Lane's speechmaking as "voluble and incessant, without logic, learning, rhetoric or grace," delivered in a voice that was "a series of transitions from the broken scream of a maniac to the hoarse, rasping guttural of a Dutch butcher in the last gasp of inebriation." His diction "was a pudding of slang, profanity and solecism," yet "the electric shock of his extraordinary eloquence thrilled." Lane could "grit and grind his teeth at an opponent in a way that could be heard in the back rows." He would "close his teeth

together and talk through them with a hissing sound that would make the flesh crawl, only to speak a moment later in mellow manner that would bring tears."

Similar to Lincoln, Lane's effectiveness as a speaker came from empathy with the common man, having "experienced the emotions common to every heart, and from an uncanny intuition." He spoke mostly extemporaneously, concentrating on his audience rather than his text and he connected with his crowd just as Abraham Lincoln was able to do.

After hearing Lane speak, the notable abolitionist, minister, and soldier, Thomas Wentworth Higginson enthusiastically commented, "Never did I hear such a speech; every sentence like a pistol bullet; such delicacy and lightness of touch; such natural art; such perfect adaptation; not a word, not a gesture could have been altered . . . not a man in the United States could have done it; and the perfect ease of it all, not a glimpse of premeditation or effort, and yet he had slept in his boots every night but two for five weeks." No politician, especially the embattled Lincoln, could afford to ignore that kind of charisma.

Unlike Lincoln, Lane changed his political coat many times, creating a confusing myriad of political beliefs. He had been a Democrat, the son of a Democratic congressman from Indiana. He had been an ardent supporter of Lincoln's nemesis, Stephen Douglas, and had voted for the Kansas-Nebraska bill at a time when its repeal of the Missouri Compromise and substitution of the doctrine of popular sovereignty were strongly opposed by Lincoln and his supporters. And he had grown up, he often admitted in his speeches, thinking that slavery was a perfectly justifiable institution.

Lane's abandonment of popular sovereignty and Stephen Douglas and his conversion to the Republican Party was pure political expediency many said. As was true of many, Lane did not believe in racial equality and voted for a clause in a proposed Kansas constitution that would ban free Blacks from Kansas. But political epiphany notwithstanding, none who would later hear him speak against the evils of the institution of slavery doubted his sincerity. "Let slavery lift its crest in the air," he told his troops in 1861, "and here I solemnly vow that if Jim Lane is compelled to add a note to such an infernal chorus, he breaks his

sword and quits the field." Slavery, he said, was "an emanation from hell."

Lane used his skills for Lincoln directly, as well as for his cause. In 1864, when Lincoln and Andrew Johnson ran on the newly named Union Party ticket, Lane was, according to contemporary observers, of pivotal importance. He had a private meeting with Lincoln the night before the pre-convention caucus of the Grand Council of the Union League. The following day amid "appalling charges" leveled against Lincoln, Lane gave an eloquent compelling address:

"I am speaking individually to each man here, Lane exhorted, "Do you, sir, know in this broad land, and can you name to me, one man whom you could or would trust, before God, that he would have done better in this matter than Abraham Lincoln has done, and to whom you would be now more willing to trust the unforeseen emergency or peril which is to come? That unforeseen peril, that perplexing emergency, that step in the dark is right before us, and we are here to decide by whom it should be made for the Nation. Name your other man."

Lincoln also recognized and appreciated Lane's military background and his aggressive attitude in battle. Lane's Frontier Guard protected and defended Lincoln and the White House by bivouacking in the East Room for eleven days following the firing on Fort Sumter, thereby intimidating the Confederacy out of attacking. Shortly thereafter, in recognition of his bravery, Lincoln rewarded the Kansan by appointing him a brigadier general of volunteers, an action unprecedented for a sitting U.S. senator. This led to howling calls for an investigation from Kansas governor Robinson who sent a replacement senator, and from the Senate itself demanding justification.

There's no doubt that Lincoln initiated the appointment based upon his clear faith and confidence in Lane. Writing to Secretary of War Simon Cameron in June 1861, Lincoln asserted that, "I have been reflecting upon the subject, and have concluded that we need the services of such a man out there at once; that we better appoint him a brigadier-general of volunteers to-day, and send him off with such authority to raise a force . . . as you think will get him into actual work quickest. Tell him when he starts

to put it through, not to be writing or telegraphing here, but put it through."

Questions immediately arose about Lane's field command and complaints poured in from regular officers that Lane's unorthodox leadership and fearlessness were dangerous. Undaunted and unauthorized, Lane raided the pro-southern port of Osceola, Missouri, on the Osage River in September 1861 with 2,000 troops. The town of 2,077 people was plundered and burned to the ground, 200 slaves were freed, and nine local citizens were court-martialed and executed. Lane planned to follow that with a guerilla expedition into Indian Territory and Texas where he was to command 10,000 Kansas troops, including Black soldiers as well as 4,000 Indians. However, he was ordered to stand down by the very military establishment he held in contempt.

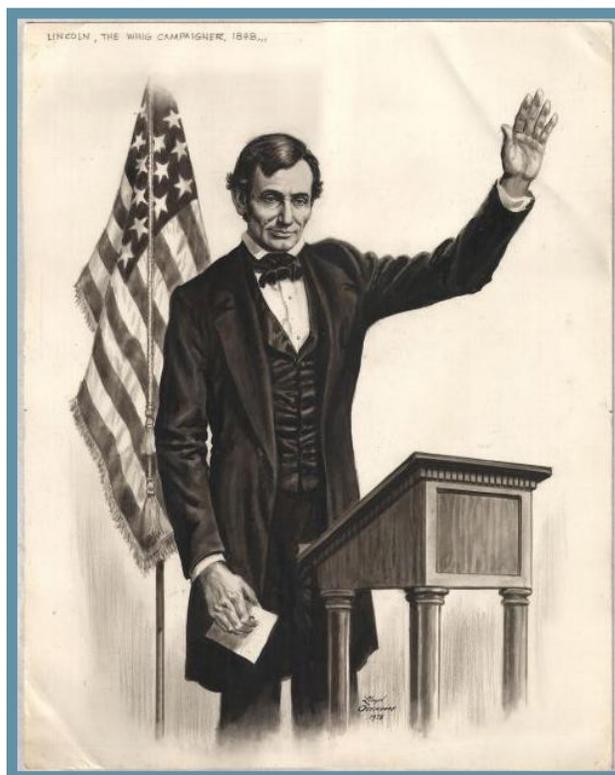
Lane believed that the Confederacy needed to be hit hard on its vulnerable western flank, and he loathed the pomposity and caution of the West Point officers, endearing him to very few in the Old Army. In fact, while in the Senate, Lane favored abolishing the academy at West Point on the grounds that many graduates from there lacked common military sense. "There is no board of examination," he chided, "to separate the stupid from those who have brains." Lincoln, already frustrated with the inaction of General George McClellan, could sympathize. "I desired to surround the institution of Slavery with Free Territory," Lane wrote when returning to his Senate seat in February 1862, "and thus girdle the cause of the rebellion itself. Without fault on my part as I believe, I have been thwarted in this, the cherished hope of my life."

Major General David Hunter, commanding the Department of Kansas, was jealous of Lane's relationship with Lincoln so

he undermined Lane's efforts whenever and wherever possible. Hunter fired back to Washington a report that said Lane's units were "a ragged, half-armed, diseased, mutinous rabble taking votes as to whether troublous or distasteful orders should be obeyed." Lane, Hunter wrote, "has been trading in Washington on a capital partly made up of his own Senatorial position and partly of such scraps of influence as I may have possessed in the confidence or esteem of the President."

Others in the region were just as critical of Lane's leadership in the field. General Henry Halleck wrote McClellan in December 1861 that "I receive almost daily complaints of outrages by these men in the name of the United States." Governor Robinson complained that "what we have to fear, and do fear, is that Lane's Brigade will get up a war by going over the line, committing depredations, and then returning into our State."

These complaints put Lincoln in a precarious situation. While he very much admired Lane's audacity, given the timidity of his generals, Lincoln could see the problems with disrupting the chain of command. He re-



Lincoln, the Whig Campaigner 71.2009.081.0775

sponded to Hunter that he was “sorry General Halleck is so unfavorably impressed with General Lane.” But he also reminded Hunter, that “[he] who does something at the head of one Regiment will eclipse him who does nothing at the head of a hundred.”

A couple of months later, Lincoln wrote a joint letter to Lane and Hunter stating that he wanted them both to get along. If Hunter could “consistently with the public service, and his own honor, oblige Gen. Lane,” wrote Lincoln, “he will also oblige me.” But, Hunter’s jealousy of Lane would not allow him to oblige the President. Consequently, Lane was pulled from the field and went back to the Senate. The “cherished hope of [Lane’s] life,” leading a military incursion into Texas and Indian Territory never occurred.

Lincoln’s intervention in the acrimonious relationship of David Hunter and Jim Lane demonstrated that, while he was perhaps influenced by the Kansas Senator, he was never dominated by him. On occasion he even publicly chastised Lane. In 1864, Lincoln angrily wrote the two Kansas senators, Lane and Samuel C. Pomeroy that he wished they “would make a sincere effort to get out of the mood [they were] in. It does neither of you any good—it gives you the means of tormenting my life out of me and nothing else.”

On another occasion, the President met with Lane and a delegation from Kansas and Missouri in the East Room of the White House shortly after the pro-Confederate William Quantrill led a massacre in the antislavery town of Lawrence, Kansas. The delegation demanded the removal of General John Schofield, whom it blamed for allowing the raid. John Hay, one of Lincoln’s personal secretaries, recorded that Lane lashed out “boisterously,” demanding to know if Lincoln thought it sufficient cause for the removal of a general who had lost the confidence of his people. “Not if he lost it unjustly”, Lincoln replied. Lane fired back, “General Schofield has lost that confidence.” To which Lincoln angrily replied: “You being judge!” Secretary of the Navy, Gideon Welles, also present at that meeting, wrote in his diary that Lincoln was “sorry Lane had come here at this time,” but he was not about “to adopt all of [Lane’s] personal quar-

rels” as his own. “For the present,” Welles recorded, “and until [Lincoln] knew more, he declined to interfere.”

Lincoln, of course, was that rare human being who could be enormously patient with someone’s flaws. Both of Lincoln’s personal secretaries, John Nicolay and John Hay, witnessed that “Lincoln, recognizing Lane’s great energy and influence in Kansas, had intended to make it a tributary to the Union cause, but [that Lincoln] had the idea of giving him the superior direction of management.”

Still, Lincoln believed that Lane served him well in the Senate. While in Kansas, Lane had educated himself into something of a railroad expert, and he played a key role on the Pacific Railroad Act, a major Republican initiative. Throughout the debates on the bill, Lane vigorously pushed for federal aid to that railroad, something that Lincoln very much wanted.

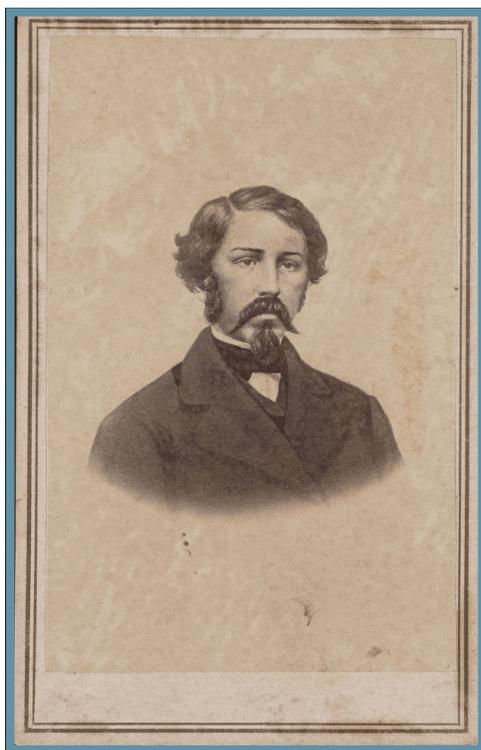
On the Senate floor, Lane was a champion for other Lincoln proposals. His “wild fanaticism” had its use in Washington and Kansas when the

a colleague, “a great lion here and his room is always filled with visitors; at this moment there is not a man in Washington more sought after.”

Lane’s tenacity was welcomed by many of the Republicans in Congress. “I always conceived him cautious in devising his plans and mapping out his future life,” Representative William Niblack of Indiana said of Lane, “but bold and resolute in the execution of those plans, never deterred by any dangers which seemed to threaten him personally or by any consequences which might result to him.” This opinion was echoed by Lane himself. “As a citizen and a Senator, I have a right of criticizing the acts of Government,” he said, “and I mean to exercise it with the full flush of truthful patriotism—kindly, but fearlessly, cordially, but searchingly.”

Although the President had constitutional reservations about emancipation, Lane pushed Lincoln to attach the abolition of slavery to the war objectives of the Union. Despite his own death threats, Lane advised Lincoln to issue the Emancipation Proclamation almost from the beginning of the Civil War and advocated it himself in speeches well over a year before Lincoln issued his preliminary version. In a speech in the spring of 1861, Lane said, “Let us be bold—inscribe ‘freedom to all’ upon our banners, and appear just what we are—the opponents of slavery.” Antislavery, he said, must be the “watchword for our lips,” and “a shibboleth for our banners.” He would enlist Black soldiers, he told his Senate colleagues and the cheering galleries; and he did so in Kansas, one of the first such experiments in the Union Army.

But Lane knew that Lincoln was restrained by political realities that he himself did not have to heed. Lane knew that Lincoln must wait for public opinion to accept the idea of freeing the slaves, and he readily sang Lincoln’s praise on the Senate floor. “Uniting prudence and firmness, wisdom and simplicity, integrity and sagacity, generosity and elasticity of spirit in a singular degree,” Lane asserted, “with that practical knowledge of men and things [placed] him [Lincoln]



William Quantrill LC-DIG-ppmsca-56450

timidity of other politicians stalled important programs. He was, wrote

head and shoulders above his peers for all the purposes of government.”

The bond between Lane and Lincoln, then, resulted from political expediency involving loyalty, military experience and style, vision, and Lane’s talent to persuade. But that doesn’t do complete justice to their relationship. Many contemporaries noted a personal affinity between the two built upon not only a common experience, but upon a deeper single-mindedness that the two men shared.

Like Lincoln, Lane was a decidedly different person than others described. When Lane spoke in Connecticut in December 1863 the audience was surprised “to find before them a man of fair proportions, of genteel appearance, of unobtrusive manners, instead of the rough and savage animal which the anti-war papers have seen fit to represent him.” Very much like Lincoln, there are many stories of Lane’s compassion, his kindness to individuals, and his “immunity to the temptations of money.” “No night was too dark,” one friend wrote, “no storm too wild, no heat or cold too excessive, no distance too great [to help a friend.]”

Much like Lincoln yet again, Lane was susceptible to frequent “low” spells, (Lincoln called his the “hypo,”). Perhaps both men today would be diagnosed as manic/depressive. One journalist thought Lane “grand, gloomy and peculiar” and felt “there always appeared to be something weighing on his mind—something which seemed to cause him trouble.” Lincoln’s law partner William Herndon once wrote of Lincoln, that “melancholy dript from him as he walked.” And an early friend noted: “No element of Mr. Lincoln’s character was so marked, obvious and ingrained as his mysterious and profound melancholy.”

One contemporary described Lane and Lincoln as having a “noble discontent with the world” in common, but unlike Lane, Lincoln had “the refuge of books and their rationalizing calm.” The two men, both tall, both carelessly groomed and dressed, both homely, both

charismatic in speech, and both susceptible to emotional highs and lows, were able to find a commonality that few understood. While Lincoln’s friends feared that he, in his darkest moments would commit suicide and sat up all night with him to prevent it, Lane finally succumbed to his depression on his Kansas farm on July 1, 1866, by jumping out of a carriage in which he was riding and shooting himself through the roof of his mouth.

By then Lincoln was dead, and Lane remained loyal to the office by supporting President Andrew Johnson, although not with the same fervor as his loyalty to Abraham Lincoln. “For several weeks previous to his departure [from Washington], Lane’s mental condition excited the serious apprehension of his friends,” recalled Representative Sidney Clarke of Kansas. “Those who knew him best, and were conversant with his wonderful mental and physical characteristics, saw in him a change which excited their most serious apprehensions.” Such comments suggest that the Lane who returned to his farm in Kansas in 1866 was not the Lane that Lincoln knew.

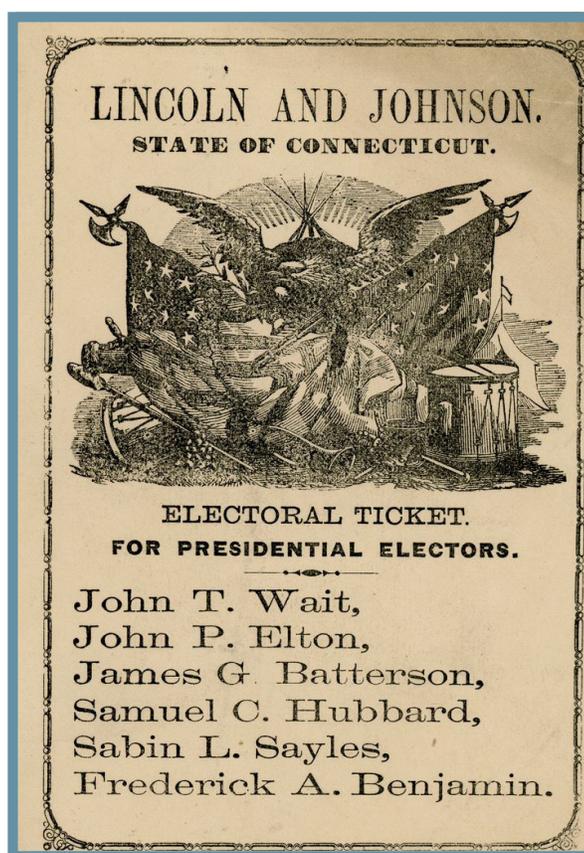
The preacher at Lane’s funeral emphasized that “time is the great elucidator of human intentions, as seen in human actions.” For all his faults Lane had been for Kansans “dear to our hearts as he certainly was to his friend Lincoln.” And surely Lincoln would have agreed.

Early in his career in his Lyceum Address of 1838, Lincoln once commented on the unfairness of history, as vivid personalities were swept away and survived only in fading memories. “The living history was to be found in every family,” he said, “a history bearing the indubitable testimonies of its own authenticity, in the limbs mangled, in the scars of wounds received, in the midst of the very scenes related — a history, too, that could be read and understood alike by all, the wise and the ignorant, the learned and the unlearned.” He went on, “But those histories are gone. They can be read no more forever. They were a fortress of strength; but, what invading foemen could never do, the silent artillery of time has done; the levelling of its walls. They are gone.”

Lincoln would have included Lane as a special casualty of his time because the passions he aroused would soon be forgotten. He appealed to Lincoln as few men did, for the “Grim Chieftain,” at one time the “king of Kansas and the lion of Washington,” was also Abraham Lincoln’s loyal friend in life, death, and in history.

For more information on James Lane, please see: Jim Lane, *Scoundrel, Statesman, Kansan* (2007); Reeder M. Fish, *The Grim Chieftain of Kansas and Oher Free-State Men in Their Struggles against Slavery* (1885); Wendell Holmes Stephenson, *The Political Career of General James H. Lane* (1930); and James Muehlberger, *The 116: The True Story of Abraham Lincoln’s Lost Guard* (2015).

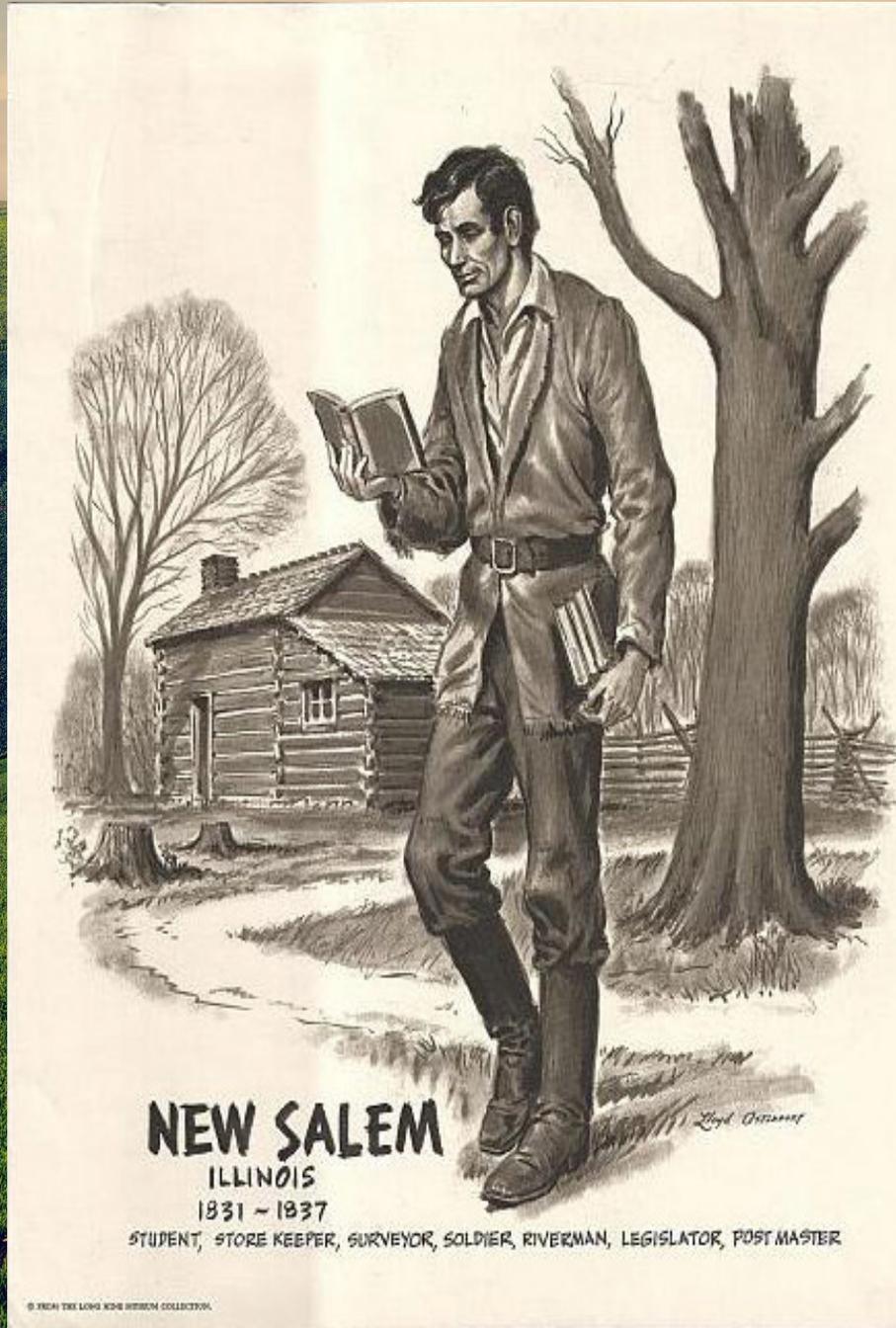
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Lincoln Johnson Ticket 71.2009.085.00037

SANDRIDGE:

Lincoln's Home Away from Home during the New Salem Years



New Salem 71.2009.081.1175

Guy Fraker

The seminal role of New Salem in Abraham Lincoln's maturation and development is well known. The concurrent influence of the nearby Sandridge area and its people during these formative years is not as well known.

Sandridge encompasses approximately 10 square miles, 7 miles north and west of New Salem. It is mostly an area of flat terrain, now almost all agricultural land, with few residents or settlements, which adds to the neighborhood's ambience. It is bounded on the north and east by the Sangamon River and on the west by the northeast corner of Cass County. This Sandridge is not to be confused with Sand Ridge State Forest, in Mason County, north and east of Havana.

Sandridge's most prominent topographical feature is the ridge for which the area is named. It is located in the eastern third of the ten square mile area. It is shaped like a half-moon, running in a northwesterly direction from its southern tip, then northeasterly along its narrow length to its northern tip. It is roughly 75 to 100 feet in height. In Lincoln's time, the area was mostly prairie except for the timbered ridge. Concord Creek is the other notable feature of the area, flowing first north and then east to its confluence with the Sangamon River. When Lincoln arrived in New Salem in 1831, Sandridge was part of Sangamon County. Many of the people who played a significant role in Lincoln's life during these years lived in Sandridge. This is the story of the place, its people, and Lincoln during the 1830s.

James Rutledge, his brother William, and their nephew John Camron (sometimes spelled "Cameron") were early settlers in Sandridge, arriving in 1825. The Rutledges had pulled up stakes in their native South Carolina and headed west, picking up Camron in Georgia, and continuing across Tennessee to Henderson, Kentucky. They settled there for several years. James met and married Mary Ann in 1813, and three children were born to them in Kentucky, one of whom was daughter Ann. She would later be linked romantically with Abraham Lincoln. The entourage that arrived in Sandridge was a tightly knit group. James' wife and Camron's mother were sisters, and Camron's sister was to marry

William Rutledge, brother of James. In 1826, Camron purchased 80 acres in Sandridge and later James Rutledge purchased an adjacent 80. Concord Creek ran through these tracts. Camron and James planned to build a gristmill on the creek. However, the depth and flow were inadequate, so two years later they purchased a more suitable site on the larger Sangamon River. They built a grist and saw mill there, powered by a dam that they constructed in and across the river at that point. The purchase included the bluff and an adjacent acreage above, upon which they founded and platted the Village of New Salem. Rutledge built a large log structure on the bluff which he converted into a tavern. Camron built a log home there also.

After Lincoln arrived upon the scene, he occasionally boarded with Camron. He boarded more frequently with the James Rutledge family, including Ann, thus forming close ties with her and her family.

A man named John McNeil arrived in 1829 and also boarded at the Rutledge Tavern. He had worked his way from his native New York to the Midwest, settling in New Salem. There he started a store in partnership with Samuel Hill, another resident of the village. In 1831 he purchased 40 acres in Sandridge from John Camron, and a year later 40 more acres from James Rutledge. He then sold his interest in the store to Hill and announced his plan to return to New York to retrieve his parents and siblings. He then disclosed that his real name was John McNamar, and that he had assumed an alias so he could not be traced by his family, as he attempted to earn a fortune in the "west." During his time in New Salem he courted Ann Rutledge and they became engaged. Having confidence and faith in the betrothal, she accepted his reason for departing for the east. After initial correspondence, there was no further communication of any kind from



Abraham Lincoln and Ann Rutledge ZPC-179

him. During the many months of his absence, with no word from him, Ann's feeling for him began to wane, and a friendship with the family's boarder, Lincoln, began to blossom.

During this period the Rutledge family's situation changed dramatically. The family's time in New Salem was surprisingly short. Rutledge's sale of the 40 acres to McNamar occurred in July of 1832, and in November he sold the tavern. Earlier that fall, his wife moved to Sandridge to work as a housekeeper for a landowner there named James Short, also known as "Uncle Jimmie," until the rest of her family could join her in Sandridge. Ultimately, they settled on the 40 acres that the absent landlord John McNamar had purchased from Camron.

At that time, Lincoln was adrift in New Salem having consecutively opened and closed two stores whose stock he had purchased, mostly on credit. Both of these operations failed and left Lincoln with heavy debt, all he had to show for these ill-fated ventures. It took him years to pay the indebtedness off, which was a factor in his earning the sobriquet "Honest Abe." He was rescued from this financial quagmire by two political appointments he received in 1833, the Postmaster of New Salem and, later that year, Assistant County Surveyor. Both these appointments were made by the dominant Democratic Party under pressure from influential New Salem residents, a measure of Lincoln's rising stature in the community.

The Postmaster's job included work-

ing in the post office, and delivering the mail to the surrounding vicinity. This gave him the additional benefit of broadly expanding his acquaintances in the area. Each county had an official surveyor at the time. Sangamon County's was John C. Calhoun, a prominent Democrat in Springfield. Calhoun offered the position of his assistant to Lincoln. When he was offered the job, Lincoln sought and received an assurance that his political future as a Whig would not be affected by the appointment. Lincoln's assignment was primarily northern Sangamon County, much of which was Sandridge. It was not until 1839, with Lincoln the Legislator playing a substantial role, that three new counties were carved out of Sangamon, which was the largest county in the state at that time. One of these three was Menard, including Sandridge and New Salem.

He quickly mastered the relatively complex geometry necessary to do surveying, thus launching yet another career. A considerable amount of his survey work was in Sandridge. His duties as Assistant County Surveyor included mapping and laying out roads in the area. He surveyed the town of Huron, just east of Miller's Crossing of the Sangamon, at the north end of Sandridge. This town site was never developed. Landowners in the area also engaged him for private work. His first survey in Sandridge was for Reason Shipley, a landowner there.

The weeks required for these jobs did not allow time for travel back and forth from New Salem. Acquaintances and friends from his time in the area provided him room and board during the time that he was working there, including stays in the homes of David Rice Short, William and James Short, Henry McHenry, the Miller brothers, and Kay Watkins, all of whom lived near Miller's Ferry. The most frequent residences in which he stayed were those of Jack and Hannah Armstrong and Uncle Jimmie Short, with whom he had become acquainted.

The Armstrongs were acquaintances from his past, and he stayed with them weeks at a time in Sandridge. Lincoln's relationship with them arose out of an event that occurred soon after his arrival in New Salem – his legendary wrestling match with Jack. Lincoln's move to New Salem resulted from a fortuitous accident in April of 1831. A man named Dennis Offut had engaged Lincoln and his cousin John Hanks, to take a flatboat load of produce to New Orleans via the Sangamon, Illinois, and Mississippi Rivers. The venture was threatened when the large flatboat they were operating down the Sangamon became stuck on the Rutledge dam. Lincoln's demonstrated ingenuity in dislodging the boat saved the cargo and allowed the journey to continue. Offut was so impressed that he offered Lincoln a job in the store he was planning to build in New Salem, when Lincoln returned from the journey to New Orleans.

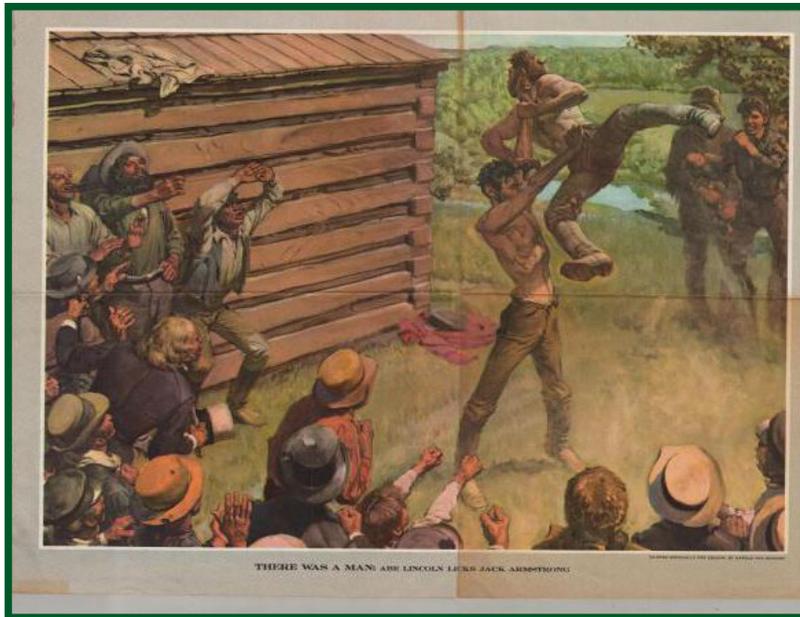
At this time, Jack Armstrong was the leader of a band of ruffians from nearby Clary's Grove. They occasionally invaded New Salem to wreak havoc

of a sporting event, not a hostile fight. Many of the locals attended and betting on the two contestants was quite heavy. The match took place near the location of the store on the edge of the bluff, looming over the dam and river. There are several variations recounting the outcome of the match, but all concur that Lincoln and Armstrong emerged from the match as close friends. When Lincoln enlisted in the Black Hawk War, his military unit included the men from Clary's Grove. Led by Armstrong, they elected Lincoln captain of the company, an honor which he always characterized as one of the highest that he had ever received. Armstrong became one of three sergeants in the unit in 1832.

Lincoln spent many weeks with Armstrong during the periods while he was surveying in Sandridge. He became like a member of the family, rocking the cradle of their son William, known as "Duff." They not only fed him, but Hannah did his laundry for him and sewed many of his shirts. One of his surveys was for Russell Godby, who paid Lincoln with two deer skins for the survey he had performed for Godby. Hannah sewed one of these on each of the legs of his pants as "foxing", for protection from the briars while surveying.

The relationship between Lincoln and the Armstrongs continued after his New Salem days. On August 29, 1857, Duff was at a whiskey camp outside of a religious camp meeting in Walker's Grove in Mason County. The sites are located in the

gently rolling countryside known as the "Mason County Hill." Late in the evening Duff engaged in a fight with James Metzger. Later, Metzger got into an altercation with James Norris in which he received another blow to the head. He died several days later, having suffered a fatal skull fracture



*There Was A Man : Abe Lincoln Licks Jack Armstrong
71.2009.081.1701*

on the community with their drinking, carousing, and fighting. Offut, somewhat of a loudmouth and braggart, noted the remarkable strength of Lincoln, so he pressed him to engage in a wrestling match with Armstrong. Reluctantly, Lincoln agreed to do so. The match was in the nature



Replica of the First Rutledge & Cameron Mill
ZPC-173

in these fights. Duff was charged with using a weapon, called a "slung shot," which consisted of a skin wrapped around balls of lead fused with liquid zinc poured over them. The device was attached to a thong on one end which went around the wrist of the assailant on the other end. It was then to be swung like a club. The key witness to the altercation between Duff and Metzger, Charles Allen, testified that he saw the entire incident unfold because the moon was high in the sky, "shining brightly." The co-defendant, Nelson, not represented by Lincoln, was separately tried in Mason County and was convicted, receiving a sentence of 8 years.

Early in the case Lincoln obtained a change of venue for Duff to Cass County. This strategy was frequently used by Lincoln. Other than obtaining the change, Lincoln was not yet fully involved in the case, until May 6, 1858. That day he arrived in Beardstown, Illinois, to try a divorce, and ran into Hannah. She prevailed upon him to take the defense of the murder case which was set for trial the next day, leaving Lincoln with little time to prepare the case for trial. The trial is famously known as the "Almanac Trial." In Lincoln's cross examination he pounded away at Allen's description of the bright moonlight. After the close of the prosecution's case, Lincoln placed into evidence an almanac which showed that the moon was low in the sky at the time of the fight, contrary to Allen's testimony. Lincoln's

closing argument relied on the evidence from the almanac and also his longtime relationship with Hannah, including the fact that Lincoln had rocked Duff in his cradle years before. Duff's father, Jack, had died between the occurrence of the crime and the trial, so Lincoln emphasized the characterization of Hannah as a poor widow. The case has been frequently used in movies and television shows, the most noted of which was Henry Fonda's portrayal of Lincoln in "Young Mr. Lincoln" in 1939. The courtroom in which this case was tried is located on the second floor of the municipal building in Beardstown. It is the only courtroom in which Lincoln appeared that is still actively in use.

When Duff was acquitted, Hannah remembered Lincoln's tears after the verdict was rendered. She also recalled attending one of his rare "Discovery and Inventions" lectures in 1858 in Springfield, which in fact was delivered in early 1859. Hannah recalled that she went to see Lincoln shortly before he left for Washington. Herndon's notes of his interview of Hannah state, "the boys got up a story on me that I went to sleep with Abe & - , I replied to the joke that it was not every woman who had the good fortune of sleeping with the President." Her obituary published in the Bloomington, Illinois Pantagraph stated, "He (Lincoln) often stopped at her house and she thought as much of him as a brother. In fact, in early days it is said that the martyred President was a lov-

er of the deceased." Obviously, this characterization of their relationship borders on gossip. But there are known facts which reflect the close ties between them.

In 1863, Duff, while in the Union Army, became afflicted with rheumatism. Hannah, who was illiterate, engaged a friend to write to Lincoln, asking if he would obtain Duff's discharge. The response was a telegram to Hannah, dated September 18th, 1863, "Mrs. Hannah Armstrong, Petersburg, Illinois. I have just ordered a discharge of your boy William, as you say, now at Louisville, KY. A. Lincoln." This was their last communication. The Armstrongs had moved to Mason County where

Jack died in 1857. Hannah married Samuel Wilcox, who died in 1870 in Mason County. She moved to Winterset, in Madison County, Iowa to live with her brother, John ("Fiddler") Jones, another character from the New Salem era, who had also been in Lincoln's unit in the Black Hawk War. Hannah died there in 1890, and her body was returned to Illinois where she was buried in Petersberg's Oakland Cemetery as "Hannah Wilcox."

The closeness of Lincoln to the Armstrong's, particularly Hannah, led to speculation and occasional banter about the nature of Lincoln's relationship with her, and the paternity of her son Duff. One New Salem resident remembered that Jack "use to plague Abe a great deal a bout his - Abe's son which he had by Mrs. Armstrong; but that it was a joke." There were also rumors about Lincoln and Elizabeth Able, the wife of Bennett Able, who had a daughter, which gossip claimed, "looked like Lincoln." These shocking examples of neighborhood gossip are not offered for the truth of the rumors, but to illustrate the rough frontier environment from which Lincoln emerged when he moved to the relative gentility of Springfield.

It also demonstrates the kindness of these people towards each other. Lincoln could not have gotten by and developed as he did without the support of these friends and neighbors. During the entire period that he was in New Salem and Sandridge, he never had a residence to call his own. Instead he relied on

these frontier families to supply his needs. These stories also confirm something about Lincoln. He never forgot those kindnesses and repaid them when the opportunity arose.

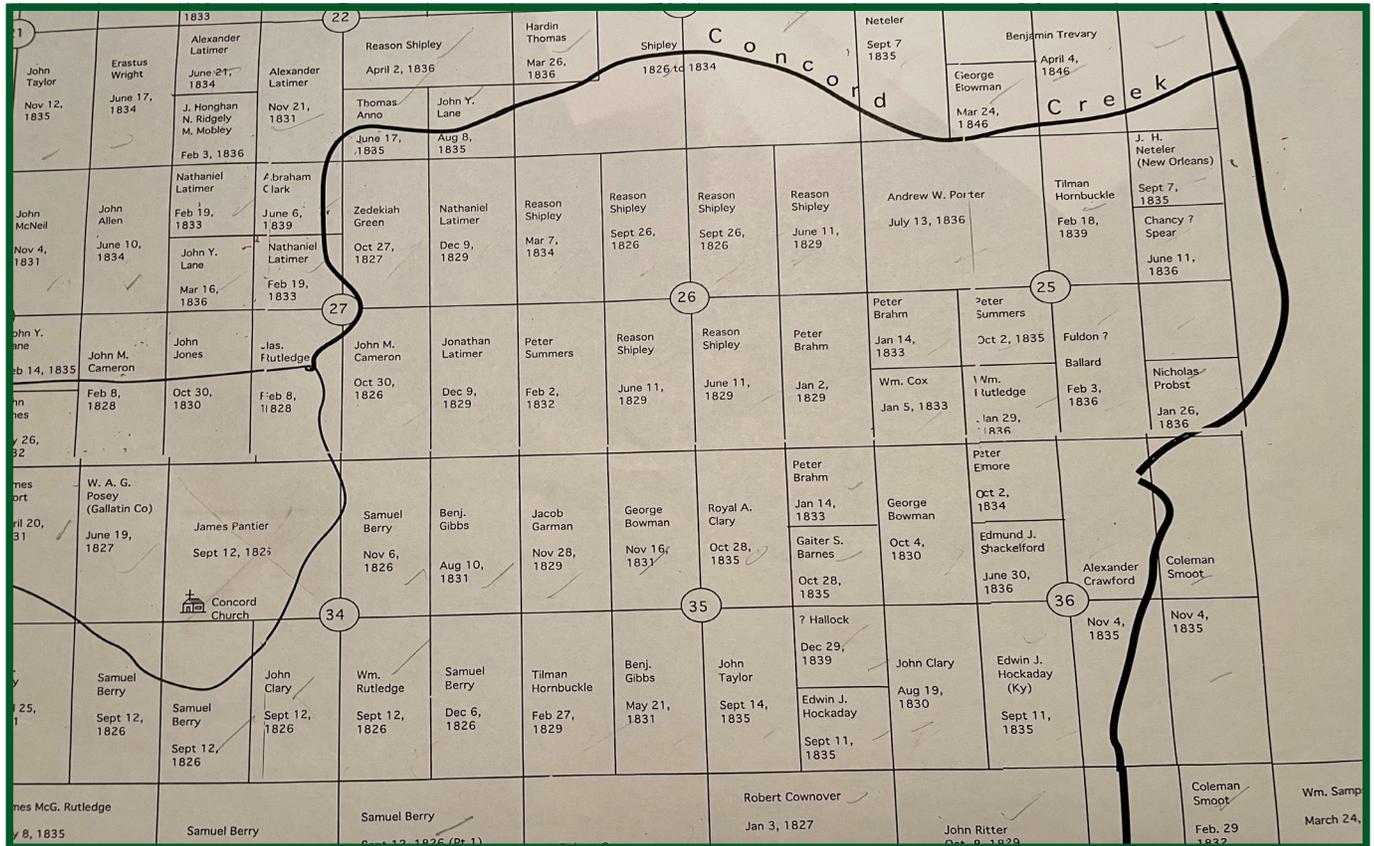
During this period, Lincoln's substantial indebtedness, accumulated from his unsuccessful ventures as a storekeeper, formed an obstacle in his efforts to advance himself socially, eco-

Supervisor of the Round Valley Indian Reservation in California, with a then substantial salary of \$1,800 a year.

Lincoln made frequent visits to the Rutledge home where he and Ann spent many hours walking the landscape of Sandridge together. Lincoln's law partner and early biographer, William Herndon, in interviewing a number of one-time New Salem residents,

zero said "no." Seven had no opinion. The third question was, "If they had an understanding about marriage?" There the count was fifteen "yes" and two said "no." Seven had no opinion.

The budding romance between Ann and Lincoln blossomed fully after the family moved to Sandridge. Lincoln made frequent visits to Ann, which further tightened the bond between



"The Neighborhood of Lincoln's New Salem," compiled and platted by Douglas L. Wilson, dated January, 1990, image: Guy Fraker

nomically, and politically. The debt finally caught up with him when a creditor took a judgment against him, in the amount of \$154. He did not participate in the proceedings because he had no money and no defense to the actions against him. After the judgment was entered, the court ordered the Sheriff to seize his possessions, including his horse and his surveying tools. Obviously this loss would cripple his ability to earn a living. The Sheriff took possession of these and held a sale. Without Lincoln's knowledge, his old friend, "Uncle Jimmie Short" stepped forward, purchased these items at the judicial sale, and returned them to Lincoln. Years later when Lincoln was President, Short was in serious financial straits and Lincoln returned the favor by appointing him

uncovered the story of a romance between the two. His lectures and writings about the interviews brought attention to the relationship. Some scholars in the mid-twentieth century displayed substantial skepticism about this romance. This skepticism was erased and generally disappeared because of the exceptional scholarship in the second-half of the twentieth century by Douglas L. Wilson and others. Wilson combed the Herndon interviews of New Salem residents. He compiled a score card with three questions about the relationship. The first question was whether Lincoln loved or courted Ann. Twenty-two witnesses said, "Yes." The second question was whether Lincoln "grieved exceptionally at her death." There were seventeen that said "yes," and

them. The tragedy of Ann's death from typhoid in August of 1835 devastated Lincoln. When it became clear that she would not survive her disease, he was summoned to her bedside at the Rutledge home in Sandridge. They were left alone for that final visit, as Lincoln saw her for the last time. He emerged grief-stricken from the cabin and staggered over to a nearby oak tree, sobbing beneath it. Ann was buried a few days later in Old Concord Cemetery, a service that was attended by Lincoln. Many local contemporaries told of the smothering grief that engulfed Lincoln. He would frequently trudge the four miles from New Salem to the cemetery alone

with his thoughts, as he mourned his inconsolable loss. It is said that, years later, he went there one more time before he left for Washington. William Herndon visited the cemetery in 1866. He described the ambience that can still be felt there today. He wrote, "The village of the dead is a sad and solemn place and when out in the country it is especially so."

The cemetery contains many other New Salem residents. Jack Armstrong and his father, James, are buried there. Ann's father died of typhoid in 1835, and he is buried next to her, as is her brother, David, who became an attorney after being educated at Illinois College in Jacksonville, Illinois, only to die in 1842. Ann's other suitor, John McNamar, buried his mother there in 1845. The Clarys, the Armstrongs, and Samuel Berry are also buried there. Ann's mother, widowed by her husband's death in 1835, ultimately moved to Birmingham, Iowa, to be near her son, Robert. She died there in 1878, at the age of 91, and is buried in Bethel Cemetery in that town.

The Old Concord Cemetery, no longer active, is remarkably unspoiled. It was replaced by a second cemetery, the Concord Cemetery, after the closing of Old Concord Cemetery. There is no road touching Old Concord's lo-

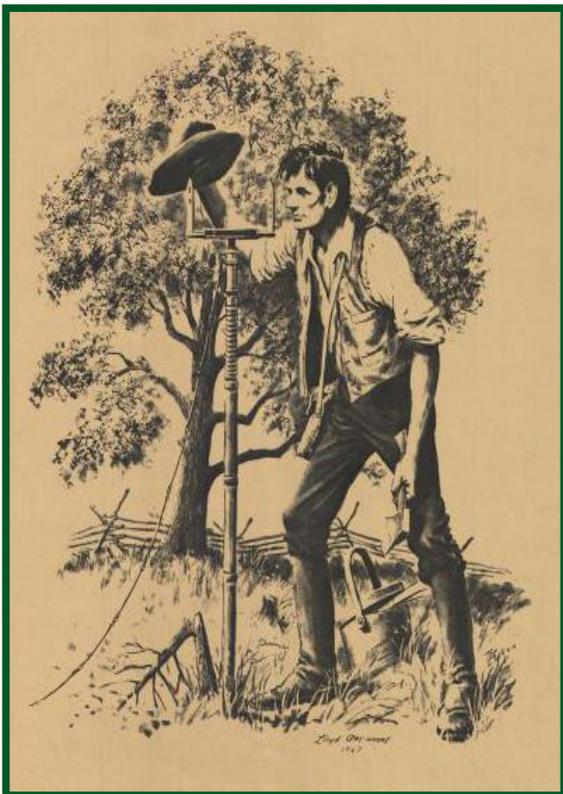
cation, adding to its remoteness. The author went there alone, along simple, winding rural roads, trying to find the cemetery, which he finally located. Turning off the road, he drove about a quarter of a mile along a narrow stretch of grass running parallel to Concord Creek. He spotted the pioneer cemetery and walked up the gentle rise to it. It was a cold January day, with temperatures in the 20s, made colder by a blustery wind. Upon reaching the burial ground, he pried open the rusty gate in the surrounding fence. Once in, he stopped and looked around from its modest elevation. There was virtually nothing else in sight, except a modest 19th Century home a quarter-of-a-mile away. He found his way through 30 to 40 aging stones, to the graves of Ann, James, and David. He was standing at Ann's grave, a place to which Lincoln had made many trips. In that desolate setting, the presence of Lincoln was palpable. Ann's gravestone, more recently placed there, bears the legend, "I cannot bear to think of her out here alone in the storm."



Concord Creek Today, image: Guy Fraker

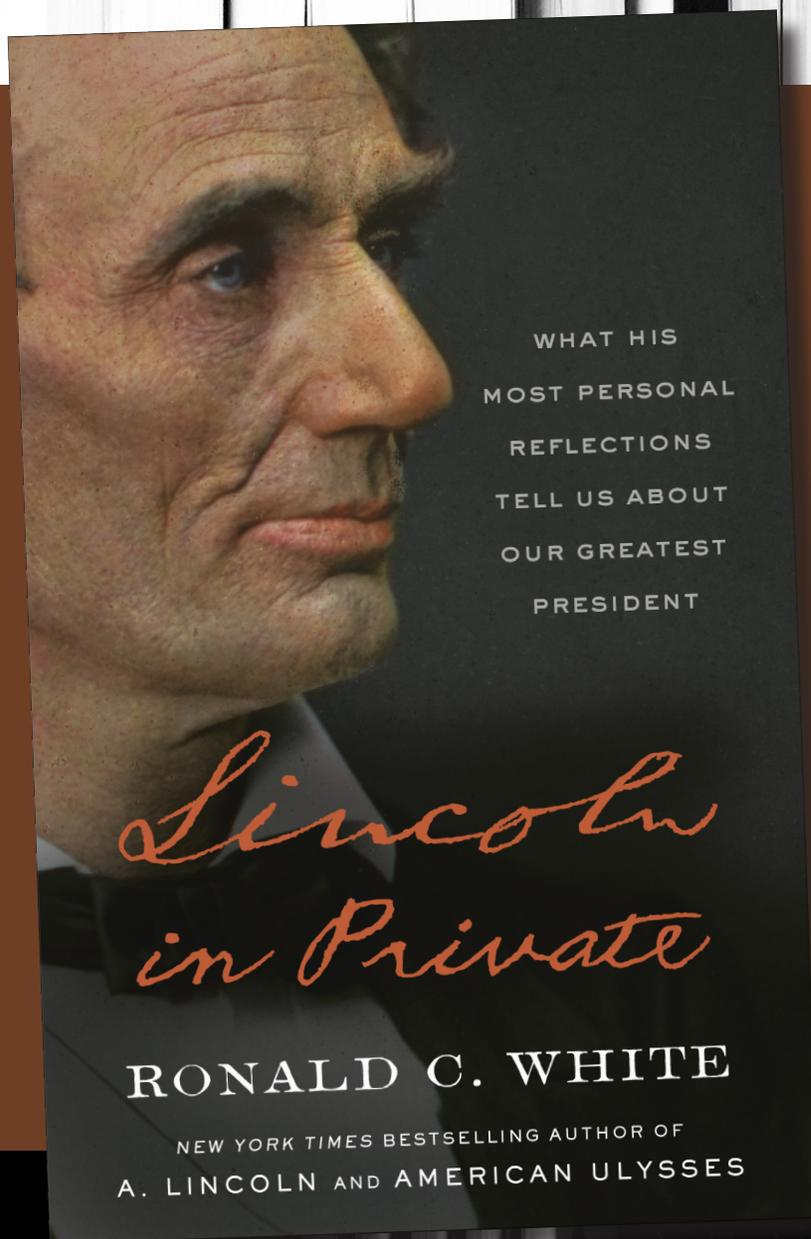
son, the noted Lincoln scholar from Knox College. He and his co-author, Rodney O. Davis, published *Herndon's Informants*, which is the encyclopedic compilation and transcription of the interviews and letters collected from sources by Herndon in researching for his biography of Lincoln. The book includes reminiscences and materials about Lincoln, by people who knew him during his New Salem and Sandridge days, including the quotes included herein. In 1990, Wilson painstakingly compiled maps of five Townships, entitled "The Neighborhood of Lincoln's New Salem," noting the ownership of hundreds and hundreds of tracts in the 1830s and 1840s. The third is Doug Kirby, a descendant of Duff Armstrong. His in-depth research of the story of Duff's life adds substantial facts to the story of the crime and its aftermath.

Guy Fraker is an attorney in Bloomington, Illinois. He has written two books on "Lincoln's" Eighth Judicial Circuit.



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Author's Note: The author wishes to acknowledge three people whose works have been instrumental in the preservation of the history of Sandridge and the Armstrongs. The first is Raymond Montgomery of Petersburg, Illinois, the most influential voice in preserving the history of the area. Born and raised on Sandridge, he has known descendants of the players in the Lincoln story there and has spent a lifetime studying the history of the area. His wonderful book, *Beyond the Shadows*, self-published in 2006, is the most authoritative volume on the subject. Second is Douglas L. Wil-



Book Review:

*Lincoln in Private:
What His Most
Personal
Reflections Tell Us
About Our
Greatest President*

*By Ronald C.
White*

In this short, highly readable volume, Ronald C. White examines “fragments” left behind by our 16th President, who made a lifelong habit of writing notes to himself. These thoughts and musings, ranging from a famous sentence (“As I would not be a *slave*, so I would not be a *master*”) to a little-known speech not delivered to fellow Kentuckians on his pre-inaugural train ride from Springfield to Washington, illuminate the mind of Lincoln as a lawyer, politician, and president. In assembling all 111 of Lincoln’s private notes in one volume and in writing short chapters examining twelve of them, White has taken a very good idea and made it into a very good book.

One need look no further than his 1862 “Meditation on the Divine Will” to recognize that Lincoln sometimes consulted (or at least drew from) these notes when the time came to compose an important letter, formal address, or presidential message. Indeed, parts of the Second Inaugural (“The Almighty has His own purposes” and “the judgments of the Lord, are true and righteous altogether”) eerily echo this meditation he scribbled to himself (many believe) two and a half years earlier after the Second Battle of Bull Run. (“In the present civil war it is quite possible that God’s purpose is something different from the purpose of either party” and “God wills this contest and wills that it shall not end yet.”)

And yet, as White points out, many of these notes do not reappear in later speeches. Instead, they are “building blocks that can help us reconstruct Lincoln’s thought processes as he approached history-altering decisions.” Some read like dialectical exercises wherein questions and answers go back and forth in Lincoln’s mind in an effort to get to the nub of a matter, such as this gem believed to have been written in July, 1854: If A can prove, however conclusively, that he may, of right, enslave B—why may not B snatch the same argument, and prove equally, that he may enslave A? You say A is white, and B is black. It is color, then; the lighter, having the right to enslave the darker? Take care. By this rule, you are to be a slave to the first man you meet, with fairer skin than your own.

Through these fragments Lincoln

sought to preserve his “best thoughts.” In 1846-1847, for example, he privately set down “on eleven foolscap half sheets of paper” his thoughts on tariffs. Thirteen years later, when protectionism formed a key part of the 1860 Republican platform, he stuffed these pages in an envelope addressed to his campaign manager, David Davis, with instructions to send them to Pennsylvania Senator Simon Cameron.

To be sure, these notes aren’t new. They can be found in John G. Nicolay and John Hay’s 1890 *Abraham Lincoln: A History* and in their 1905 *Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln*; in Roy P. Basler’s 1953 *Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*; and in the online *Papers of Abraham Lincoln*, a project begun in 2001. But not until now have they been collected, with color copies of several originals in Lincoln’s handwriting, to form the focus of a prominent scholar’s book.

White begins with Lincoln’s “lyrical” reflections upon seeing Niagara Falls in 1848 after giving a series of campaign speeches in Massachusetts for presidential candidate Zachary Taylor. Typically, Lincoln is curious about the effect produced by that much water pouring down in a “perpendicular jog,” then being lifted up by the sun. A philosopher, he imagines, would feel “overwhelmed in the contemplation of the vast power the sun is constantly exerting in quiet, noiseless operation of lifting water up to be rained *down* again.” More prosaically, asked by his law partner William Herndon to share his impressions upon seeing this natural wonder, Lincoln replied: “The thing that struck me most forcibly . . . was where in the world did all that water come from?”

But Lincoln’s thoughts turn to the “roaring” of Niagara Falls over the “indefinite past.” “The eyes of that species of extinct giants, whose bones fill the mounds of America, have gazed on Niagara, as ours do now.” Over that long stretch of time, Niagara was “never still.” It “never dried, never froze, never slept, never rested.”

As with all these notes, White “sets the scene” by providing historical and cultural context, including reflections by Nathaniel Hawthorne and Charles Dickens on their visits to the Falls.

He also shows us the magnificent 1820 oil canvas by Alvan Fisher, “a father of landscape painting,” entitled *A General View of the Falls of Niagara*.

Whether this note qualifies as Lincoln’s “most poetic,” as White suggests, may engender some debate, but there is no question we are dealing with a thirty-nine-year-old man of remarkable intellectual curiosity who was moved to express his thoughts on paper. That this fragment has survived for our reading pleasure (as, White posits, many did not) is a gift to Lincoln enthusiasts.

In this regard White reminds us that immediately after his father’s assassination Robert Lincoln wired Lincoln’s friend and campaign manager David Davis, then a U.S. Supreme Court Justice, asking him to take charge of his father’s affairs. Lincoln’s secretaries, Hay and Nicolay, collected the president’s papers, and Davis had them shipped to his hometown of Bloomington, Illinois, for deposit into a bank vault. Hay and Nicolay had to wait nearly a decade before being allowed to review them.

Of greater interest (from this lawyer’s biased perspective) is the Fragment: Notes for a Law Lecture, sometimes called Notes on the Practice of Law. Nicolay and Hay assigned them a date of July 1, 1850, accompanied by a question mark, and Basler retained the date “in the absence of satisfactory evidence to the contrary.” Persuasively, White suggests it was probably written “some years later” after Lincoln had gained more experience and prominence in his practice. This comports with the view expressed by the editors of the 2000 *The Law Practice of Abraham Lincoln: Complete Documentary Edition* who suggest Lincoln may have written these notes after receiving invitation in 1858 to give a lecture at Ohio State and Union Law College in Cleveland.

Regardless of when written, these Notes have today become required reading for persons seeking to enter the legal profession. They begin with trademark humility (“I am not an accomplished lawyer”) and end with an eloquent injunction not to yield to the “vague popular belief” that lawyers are “necessarily dishonest.”

Let no young man choosing the law for a calling for a moment yield to the popular belief—resolve to be honest at all events; and if in your own judgment you cannot be an honest lawyer, resolve to be honest without being a lawyer. Choose some other occupation, rather than one in the choosing of which you do, in advance, consent to be a knave.

White notes that a “fresh examination” of Lincoln’s work as a lawyer began in the 1980s, with the Lincoln Legal Papers Project scouring the records of county courthouses across Illinois, unearthing thousands of new Lincoln documents. Undoubtedly, these records have increased our understanding of Lincoln’s law practice. Yet, “as valuable as they are,” White contends, they “do not include anything as revelatory as this fragment,” which offers us “an intimate look at how Lincoln understood his vocation as a lawyer.”

Here I should note that Ron White shares with his subject two characteristics of good writing: clarity and concision. Instead of weighing us down with facts and figures, or lengthy descriptions of particular cases (as we know, several good books have recently been written on cases such as *Effie Afton* and “*Peachy*” *Quinn Harrison*), White deftly summarizes Lincoln’s career as a lawyer, spicing up his account with vivid images such as Lincoln’s carpetbag (“the first mass-produced luggage”) and his “large cotton umbrella” purchased for seventy-five cents. In homes out on the prairie, White informs us, people welcomed traveling lawyers with “a latchstring on their doors.”

White also highlights the lessons Lincoln learned from his scholarly second law partner Stephen Trigg Logan, who counseled him thoroughly to examine the merits of his opponent’s case. In addition, Logan “never encouraged litigation, but as a friend and neighbor strove for the peaceful adjustment of all controversies.” Consistent with this theme, in his Note Lincoln observes: “As a peacemaker the lawyer has a superior opportunity of being a good man.” He denounces lawyers who review the register of deeds looking for defects in titles, averring that “a moral tone ought to be infused into the profession which

should drive such men out of it.” White moves on to five fragments Lincoln wrote as a politician re-energized in 1854 by opposition to the Kansas-Nebraska Act, which presented the prospect of slavery expanding westward into the territories. He begins with the aforementioned gem wherein “You” tries to justify slavery but is admonished by the writer to “take care” lest his logic come back to haunt him. White points out that during the summer of 1854, before jumping into the political fray, Lincoln spent hours poring over the history of slavery in the statehouse library across the street from his office. This “period of intellectual gestation” ultimately led to his September and October speeches in Bloomington, Springfield, and Peoria.

A separate Fragment on Slavery, also assigned a date of July 1, 1854, consists of a single page cut off from a more complete document. It begins with “dent truth” (which White suspects was a next-page continuation of “self-evident truth”) and ends with “of ship, and steamboat, and rail.” Basler speculates these notes may have been omitted from the speech Lincoln gave in Cincinnati on September 17, 1859.

This fragment contains Lincoln’s well-known observation that “although volume upon volume is written to prove slavery a very good thing, we never hear of the man who wishes to take the good of it, by *being a slave himself*.” It ends with another “call and response” between “they” who said men were too ignorant for self-government, and “we” who “propose to give *all* a chance; and we expect the weak to grow stronger, the ignorant, wiser; and all better, and happier together.”

What gave rise to these reflections? White believes they may have been written in response to Lincoln’s reading a book called *Sociology of the South*, or the *Failure of Free Society*, written by a Virginian named George Fitzhugh. Herndon confirms this book “aroused the ire” of his law partner, and White notes that Lincoln (consistent with Logan’s advice) was determined to understand pro-slavery arguments in order to expose their defects. According to White, these fragments show Lincoln writing in private what he was not yet ready to say in public.

Next is a Fragment on Stephen A. Douglas dated December 1856, showing Lincoln at a personal low point. By this time Lincoln had lost his 1855 race for U.S. Senate. He had also been badly treated by a prominent Ohio lawyer named Edwin Stanton in the McCormick wheat-reaper patent case tried in Cincinnati. By contrast, his rival Douglas was a prominent, influential Senator whose name was nationally known and who was frequently mentioned as a potential presidential candidate.

Lincoln writes that he met Judge Douglas twenty-two years ago. Both were ambitious, but “with me, the race of ambition has been a failure—a flat failure;” with Douglas it has been a “splendid success.” In this private note Lincoln “gives voice to his rawest feelings.”

Of interest is whether the somewhat self-pitying tone of this Note is “rescued” by its ending. Lincoln “affects no contempt” for Douglas’s eminence, adding that if he (Lincoln) had reached such a lofty perch “so that the oppressed of my species, might have shared with me in the elevation,” he would be more gratified than he would to “wear the richest crown that ever pressed a monarch’s brow.” White interprets these lines as Lincoln making a “final, decisive comparison with Douglas.” Another view might be that, while Lincoln was struggling to console himself, the real impetus for this Note was to give vent to his feelings of disappointment.

Of course, as White points out, at the time he wrote these words Lincoln had no inkling that in less than two years he would achieve national prominence through debates with Douglas in seven venues across the state, debates which would help catapult him to the White House.

White examines two fragments in which Lincoln responds to charges of “sectionalism” lodged against the Republican Party. He summarizes the Party’s history, “born out of protests against the 1854 Kansas-Nebraska Act.” As usual, Lincoln paused and pondered before joining, worried about the Party’s apparent appeal to intolerant “Know-Nothings” and concerned about its limited northern and western base (in contrast to the Whig Party which included many southerners).

In his Fragment on Sectionalism dated July 23, 1856—written, White believes, in preparation for a speech he was to deliver in Galena, Illinois, the same day—Lincoln responds to criticism over the party's recent nomination of John C. Frémont of California and William L. Dayton of New Jersey, for president and vice-president, which supposedly revealed Republicans as sectional and therefore "disunionist." While it has been a "custom," he writes, for one nominee to hail from a free and the other from a slave state, this was not always the case. The Democratic Party nominated two men from slave states in 1828, and since 1844 it had not nominated a southerner. Colorfully, he notes that northern men nominated by the Democratic Party have been "each vying to outbid the other for the Southern vote—the South standing calmly by to finally cry going, going, gone, to the highest bidder." Lincoln suggests the Democratic Party is truly sectional. To northern men, the South says: "Give us the measures, and you take the men."

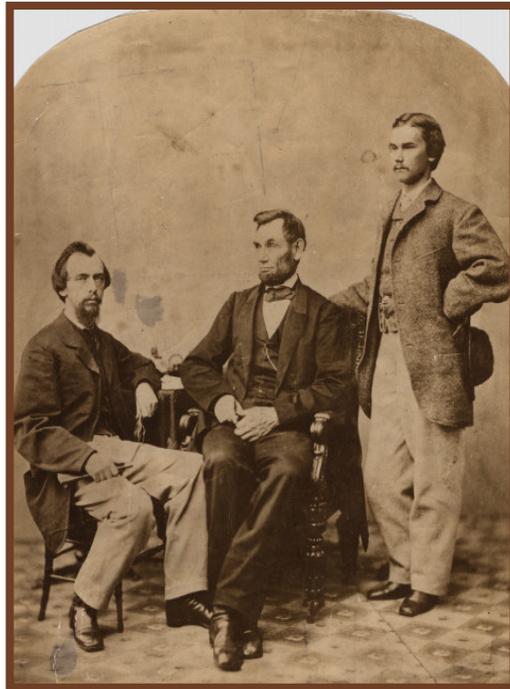
Eight months later, in a fragment dated February 28, 1857, Lincoln seems to have banished such concerns. He expresses pride in a party whose members "were drawn together by a paramount common danger." Although they did not win the 1856 election, "they stood up, an army over thirteen hundred thousand strong," an army, he adds (foreshadowing a phrase he would later make famous) that is "the best hope of the nation, and of the world." Lincoln has accepted the reality that the country is indeed sectionalized over the slavery issue, and (as he would later note) "the tug has to come." The momentous issue can no longer be avoided.

In the three-sentence fragment called "Definition of Democracy," conjectured to have been written on August 1, 1858, after writing "as I would not be a slave, so I would not be a master," Lincoln adds: "This expresses my idea of democracy. Whatever differs from this, to the extent of the difference, is no democracy."

White informs us that while nearly all of Lincoln's notes remained unknown

until Nicolay and Hay began serializing their biography in *Century Magazine* in 1886, this one emerged in 1875. Why? This scrap of paper fell into the hands of Mary Lincoln, who later gave it to a pioneering woman lawyer named Myra Bradwell. With her husband James, Myra mounted a successful campaign to have Mary released from Bellevue Place sanatorium in 1875 after four months of confinement. As a token of her gratitude, Mary gave the Bradwells this priceless fragment.

White walks us through Douglas's allegedly "democratic" answer to the possibility of slavery expanding westward—namely, let the people



Abraham Lincoln and his secretaries OC-1536

in the territories decide. To Lincoln the issue was more basic: slavery by definition is "no democracy." In denying the humanity of a human being, it is the antithesis of democracy.

White elucidates another fragment on slavery dated October 1, 1858, which again has Lincoln thinking to himself. Continuing to familiarize himself with the pro-slavery position, Lincoln read a book entitled *Slavery Ordained of God*, published in 1857, written by a Presbyterian minister named Frederick A. Ross. Its thesis was that the southern slave "is elevated and ennobled compared with his brethren in

Africa," and God entrusted southern masters to "give them civilization."

Lincoln responds:

So, at last, it comes to this, that Dr. Ross is to decide the question. And while he considers it, he sits in the shade, with gloves on his hands, and subsists on the bread that Sambo is earning in the burning sun. If he decides that God wills Sambo to continue a slave, he thereby retains his own comfortable position; but if he decides that God wills Sambo to be free, he thereby has to walk out of the shade, throw off his gloves, and delve for his own bread. Will Dr. Ross be actuated by that perfect impartiality, which has ever been considered most favorable to correct decisions?

As James McPherson established in his famous essay, "How Lincoln Won the War with Metaphors," Lincoln rarely restricted himself to abstract argument, preferring to illustrate a point through story and image.

White concludes this remarkable book by considering three more fragments, two Lincoln wrote as president-elect, one written as a war president.

In his chapter on Lincoln's Fragment on the Constitution and the Union, believed to have been written in January, 1861, we learn how and why Lincoln came up with the image of the Constitution as a "picture of silver" framed around the Declaration's "apple of gold." This can be traced to Lincoln's friendship with Georgia's Alexander Stephens during his one Congressional term (1847-49). Years later, when as president-elect Lincoln learned that Stephens had given a speech urging southerners not to secede, Lincoln wrote his old colleague asking to see a copy. On receiving it, Lincoln responded with a nice note, adding, "You think slavery is right and ought to be extended; while we think it is wrong and ought to be restricted."

Apparently taken aback, Stephens sent a "sharp reply" imploring Lincoln to say a few words of reassurance to southerners in order to "save our common country." Drawing from Proverbs, 25:11, Stephens wrote: "A word fitly spoken by you now would be like

'apples of gold in pictures of silver.'" Lincoln did not reply to this letter, nor did he break his resolution not to make public statements prior to delivering his inaugural address. At the same time, White maintains, Stephens's reference to this proverbial image "jump-started" Lincoln's "flexible mind" as he contemplated the importance of preserving the Union. The Declaration's principle of "liberty to all" was, he wrote, the word "fitly spoken" which proved to be an apple of gold around which the Union and Constitution, pictures of silver, were framed. "So let us act, that neither *picture*, or *apple* shall ever be blurred, or bruised or broken."

As we know from the First Inaugural, in which Lincoln re-worked closing lines suggested by William Seward, he had a remarkable ability to adapt ideas and images offered by others to refine his own (sometimes different) thoughts and express them with surpassing eloquence.

A few weeks after writing this note, Lincoln stood in front of Philadelphia's Independence Hall to declare: "I have never had a feeling politically that did not spring from the sentiments embodied in the Declaration of Independence."

In Notes for an undelivered Kentucky speech (a five-page fragment, on the back of which Lincoln pasted paragraphs from a first draft of his inaugural address), Lincoln addresses widespread criticism that "I could in my position, by a word, restore peace to the country." He responds:

But what word? I have many words already before the public; and my position was given me on the faith of those words. Is the desired word to be confirmatory of these; or must it be contradictory to them? If the former, it is useless repetition; if the latter, it is dishonorable and treacherous.

Why did Lincoln not give this speech? We do not know. White notes that although a Kentucky stop was not list-

ed on the Great Western Railroad's Time Card, Lincoln wanted to "make a detour." In the fragment's first sentence he refers to "your invitation" to appear before an audience in his na-



Ohio River Crossing Where the Lincoln Family Migrated to Indiana in 1816
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tive state. Whose invitation? Possibly Joshua or James Speed, but again we do not know. Clearly, Lincoln wanted to cross the Ohio River at Cincinnati to explain his silence over the past few months and appeal to the integrity of his "fellow Kentuckians."

Although available in the Lincoln records, White notes with regret that this fragment has rarely been mentioned and has been "nearly erased from public knowledge." Thankfully, that is no longer true.

The author, who has a Master of Divinity degree from Princeton Theological Seminary, saves the best fragment for last. Discovered by John Hay in Lincoln's desk drawer (and given a title), "Meditation on the Divine Will" is well-known to Lincoln devotees. White notes that Hay did not hold it in reserve for his and Nicolay's 1890 biography, but instead revealed it to audiences in a series of lectures he gave in 1871 and 1872. "I have here a paper written by him," Hay said, "in a time of profound national gloom, with religious soul-searching . . . You shall see how this patriarch and prophet wrestled in secret with his God."

White leads us into an interesting discussion of the difference between fatalism and providence, the former

described as a "distinct system of unbelief," the latter rooted in "belief in a God with personality, who loves human beings, and acts in history." White traces Lincoln's growth from youthful dalliance with fatalism (sometimes called "the doctrine of necessity") to his later point of view in which a providential God has a purpose, one perhaps "different from the purpose of either party" fighting the Civil War.

Questions remain about when Lincoln wrote this fragment. Like Basler, White believes it was probably penned in early September of 1862, after the Second Battle of Bull Run, when, according to Attorney General Edward Bates's

diary, Lincoln "seemed wrung by the bitterest anguish—said he felt almost ready to hang himself." But White duly notes that Lincoln scholar Douglas L. Wilson disagrees, believing the meditation is "chronologically much closer to, and perhaps even belongs to, the year 1864," when, after three full years, the war dragged on.

White concludes this small meditation not only presages Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address, it holds "the key to the long-debated riddle of Lincoln's religious faith."

In an Appendix the author provides all 111 fragments, which include a detailed chart of legislative districts Lincoln hoped to win in the Senate campaign of 1858 and a Note Regarding Conditions for Peace dated April 5, 1865.

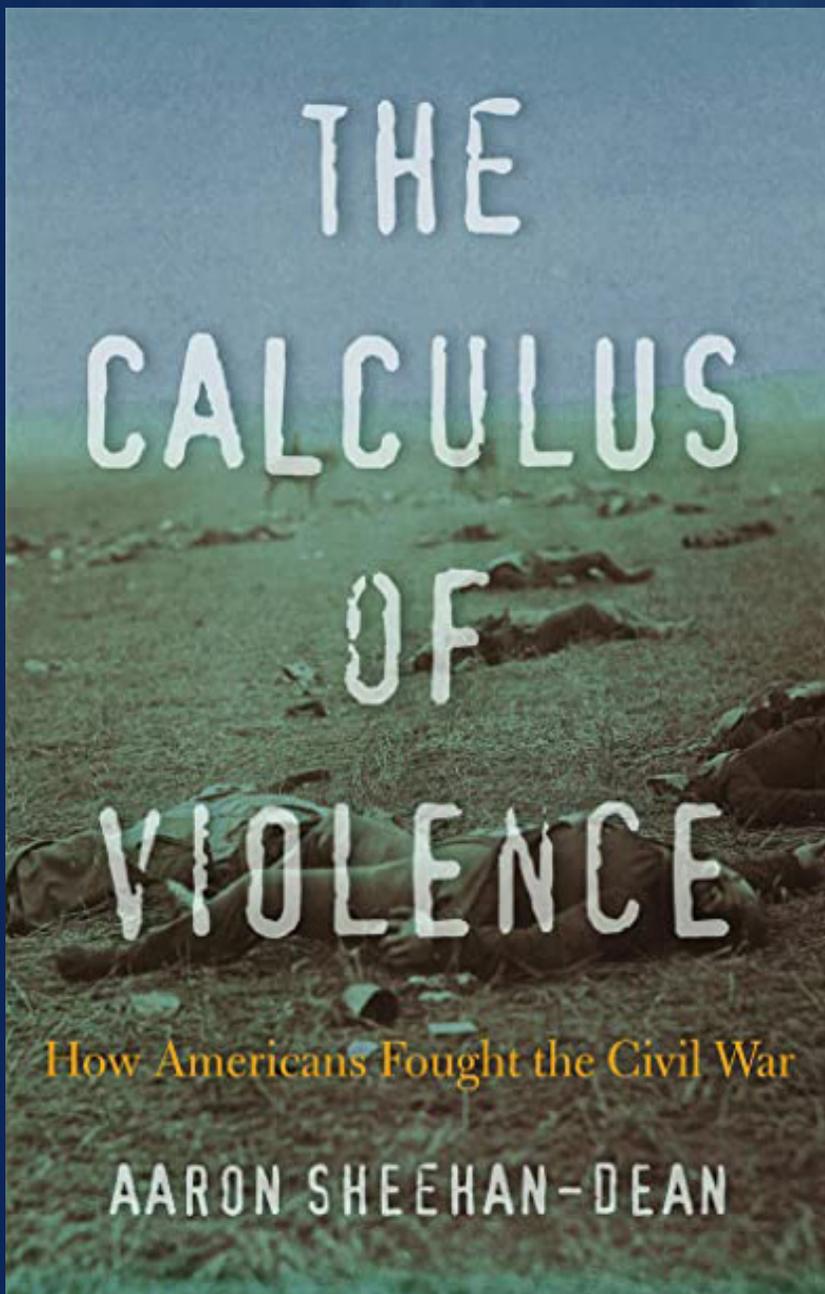
In the end, the best way to know Lincoln is to hear from him first-hand, through his letters and speeches. Now, we may also know him through his notes and fragments. Although always available, thanks to Ronald White they have been brought on to center stage for our consideration and enjoyment.

Book reviewed by E. Phelps Gay, who practices law in New Orleans, LA.

Book Review:

*The Calculus of Violence:
How Americans Fought the
Civil War*

By Aaron Sheehan-Dean



Burrus Carnahan

For decades, historians have debated whether the American Civil War was the first modern, total war, foreshadowing the World Wars of the 20th Century, or whether it was more akin to the limited wars of the 18th Century. In his thorough study, *The Calculus of Violence*, Professor Sheehan-Dean comes down on the limited-war side of the spectrum, while also conceding that for some groups the war was close to total. The violence of the Civil War, he concludes, did not fit neatly into any category, but rather offered a “tangle of lessons.”

That both the Union and the Confederacy held themselves out to be modern, civilized nation states was, the author believes, an important restraint on their use of violence. Regular armies on both sides fought according to the accepted laws and customs of war. Despite its refusal to recognize the Confederacy

as a government, the Union ended up applying the international laws of war to its adversary, and even issued a concise codification of those laws for the guidance of its troops.

The author identifies the institution of formal surrender as a prime vehicle for ensuring restraint. Soldiers subject to a surrender agreement could be assured that they would be regarded as legitimate combatants and treated as prisoners of war rather than criminals.

These restraints began to erode in the final years of the war. The North intensified its destruction of the South's economic infrastructure, most notably in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia in 1864 and in General Sherman's campaigns in Georgia and the Carolinas in 1864-65. While Southern civilians were not directly attacked,

the destruction of their livelihood produced substantial suffering, particularly for the women. In response, the Confederacy launched terror attacks on Northern civilians, including an effort to burn Manhattan in New York, and a raid on Albans, Vermont.

The author attributes this loosening of standards to frustration, on both sides, at the failure of conventional military operations to produce victory, and to the “just war” ideologies embraced by both sides. The United States identified its cause with the

twice in France and failed both times. To those holding this view, the secession of the Southern states proved that governments relying on elections for political legitimacy were inherently unstable; the losing side would simply secede, destroying the country. Stability in a large nation required hereditary monarchy or aristocracy.

This is what President Lincoln meant when he said that the central idea of secession was “the essence of anarchy.” To prove that self-government was feasible, he believed it was necessary

that the majority demonstrate the political will to compel a seceding minority to accept the results of a general election. While it cannot be proven that Confederate victory would have set back the cause of self-government in the 19th Century, Lincoln's position had a rational basis, unlike Jefferson Davis' “moonlight and magnolias” view of the Old South.

The author emphasizes that even before the final es-

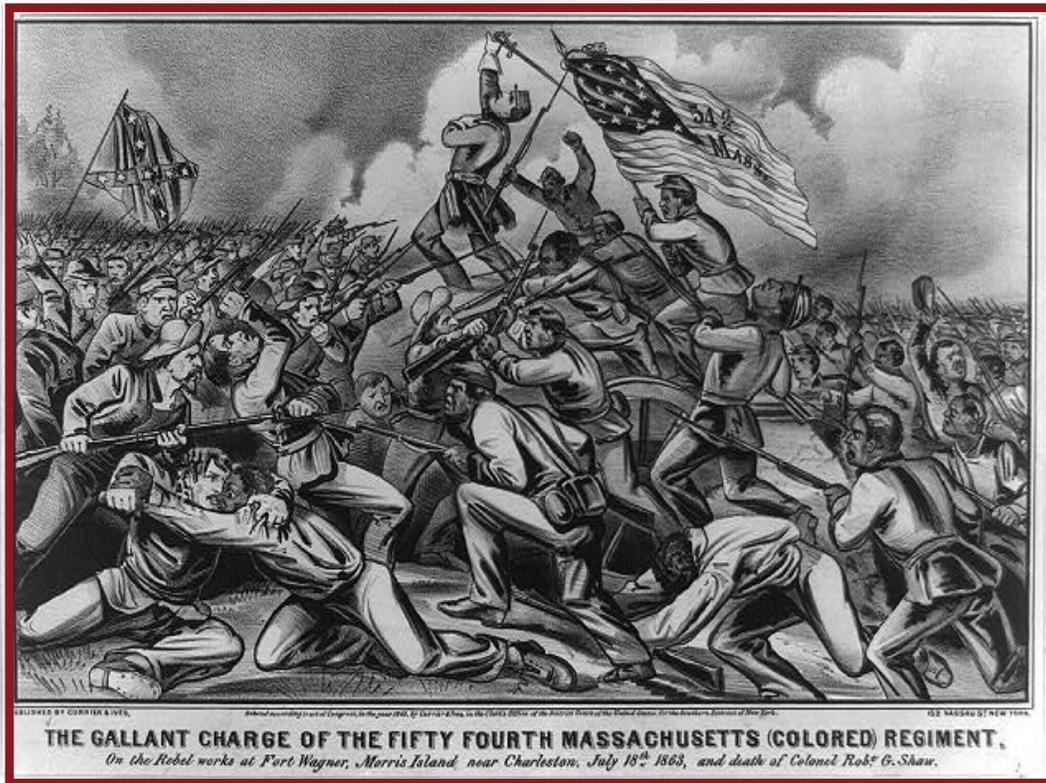
calation of violence, the traditional laws of war provided little protection to certain groups. For members of these groups the Civil War could be total war, since their treatment was largely at the discretion of their captors. For the Union, these discretionary groups included enemy guerillas and the inhabitants of occupied territory. For the Confederacy, they included African American soldiers of the U.S. Army and their white officers, free African Americans in areas invaded by the Confederate army, and refugees fleeing slavery. The arbitrary treatment of these groups was exacerbated by the decentralized character of both the Union and Confederate war efforts. Even in the age of the telegraph, irregular fighting units could be raised and operate with no sanction and little supervision from central authorities.



On the March to the Sea 71.2009.081.0673

future of democracy world-wide. As President Lincoln put it, a Union victory was the “last best hope” on earth for the cause of self-government. The South, in turn, regarded itself as defending a morally superior agrarian way of life against the mercenary, capitalist North. In the final year of the war the speeches of Jefferson Davis emphasized this theme to rally his people to the cause.

The author treats both ideologies as morally equivalent nationalist rhetoric, little more than rationalizations for waging harder war. He does not engage Lincoln's position as a serious argument. In reality, there was a widespread consensus among European elites that, while democracy might work in a small state like Switzerland or the Netherlands, it was not viable in a large, diverse country. By 1860, republicanism had been tried



The gallant charge of the fifty fourth Massachusetts regiment LC-DIG-ppmsca-35357

Field commanders were often left to their own discretion in dealing with members of unprotected groups.

Even here, however, the author finds institutions and practices that limited discretion in the treatment of such groups. Threats of retaliation were an important motive for restraint. While the official position of the Confederate government was that African American soldiers were not entitled to prisoner of war status, actual practice of Confederate officers in the field varied widely. Many captured members of the U.S. Colored Troops were treated as prisoners of war, though this often led to the doubtful privilege of being sent to Andersonville. The author attributes this partial restraint to the Lincoln administration's threat to retaliate against Confederate prisoners for abuse of African American soldiers.

Sheehan-Dean also argues that planned executions of Confederate guerrillas, and execution of civilian hostages in response to guerrilla activities, were often prevented by threats of retaliation. He detects a common pattern that ran as follows: Federal authorities would announce a forthcoming execution; Confed-

erates would protest and announce plans for a retaliatory execution; leading to suspension of both killings and an eventual diplomatic solution often involving an exchange of captives.

In response to guerrilla attacks, the Union army routinely imposed collective punishments on hostile populations to deter them from supporting the insurgents, such as burning all houses within a certain distance from the scene of an attack. While such measures inflicted hardship on civilians, they tended to have little impact on the guerrillas. The author discusses one prominent case, "General Order No. 11," exiling all civilians from several northern Missouri counties in response to Confederate guerrilla Quantrill's destruction of Lawrence, Kansas. The author notes that President Lincoln believed the order was humane in the long run because it defused the likelihood of a bloody reprisal raid into Missouri by Kansas Unionists. The author does not identify any institutional restraints on collective punishments during the war. As the result of abuses in the 20th century, the 1949 Geneva Convention on Civilians now prohibits all collective punishment of inhab-

itants of occupied territory.

While the author does not address this subject, readers of *Lincoln Lore* may be interested in President Lincoln's own policies in discretionary cases. He did not lay down general guidance for the treatment of guerrillas and enemy civilians, but became involved as individual cases were appealed to him. As might be expected, he was often inclined towards leniency. For example, he suspended a collective fine on Virginia civilians for the destruction of a lighthouse by guerrillas, and intervened to protect the wife of a Confederate soldier whose Arkansas house had been seized by the army. A theme consistently running through Lincoln's decisions was that punitive actions must be justified by military necessity, and never taken merely for revenge. *The Calculus of Violence* is a comprehensive, almost encyclopedic, study of the uses of violence during the Civil War. It will be of interest to both scholars and general readers interested in that war, as well as readers interested in the development of restraints on war.

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