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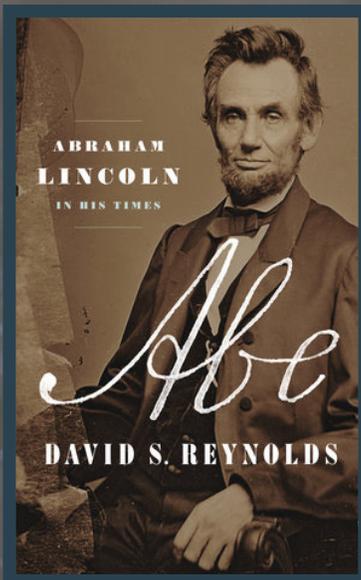
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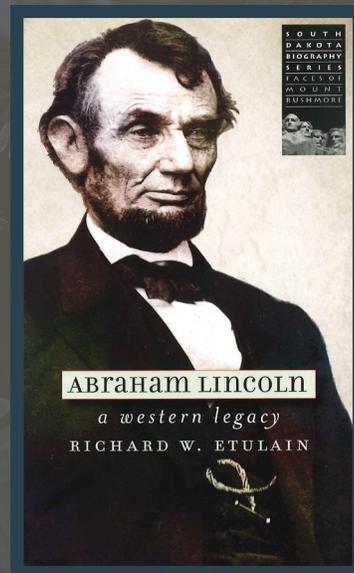


ABE: ABRAHAM LINCOLN IN HIS TIME

David S. Reynolds, Penguin Press

ABRAHAM LINCOLN: A WESTERN LEGACY

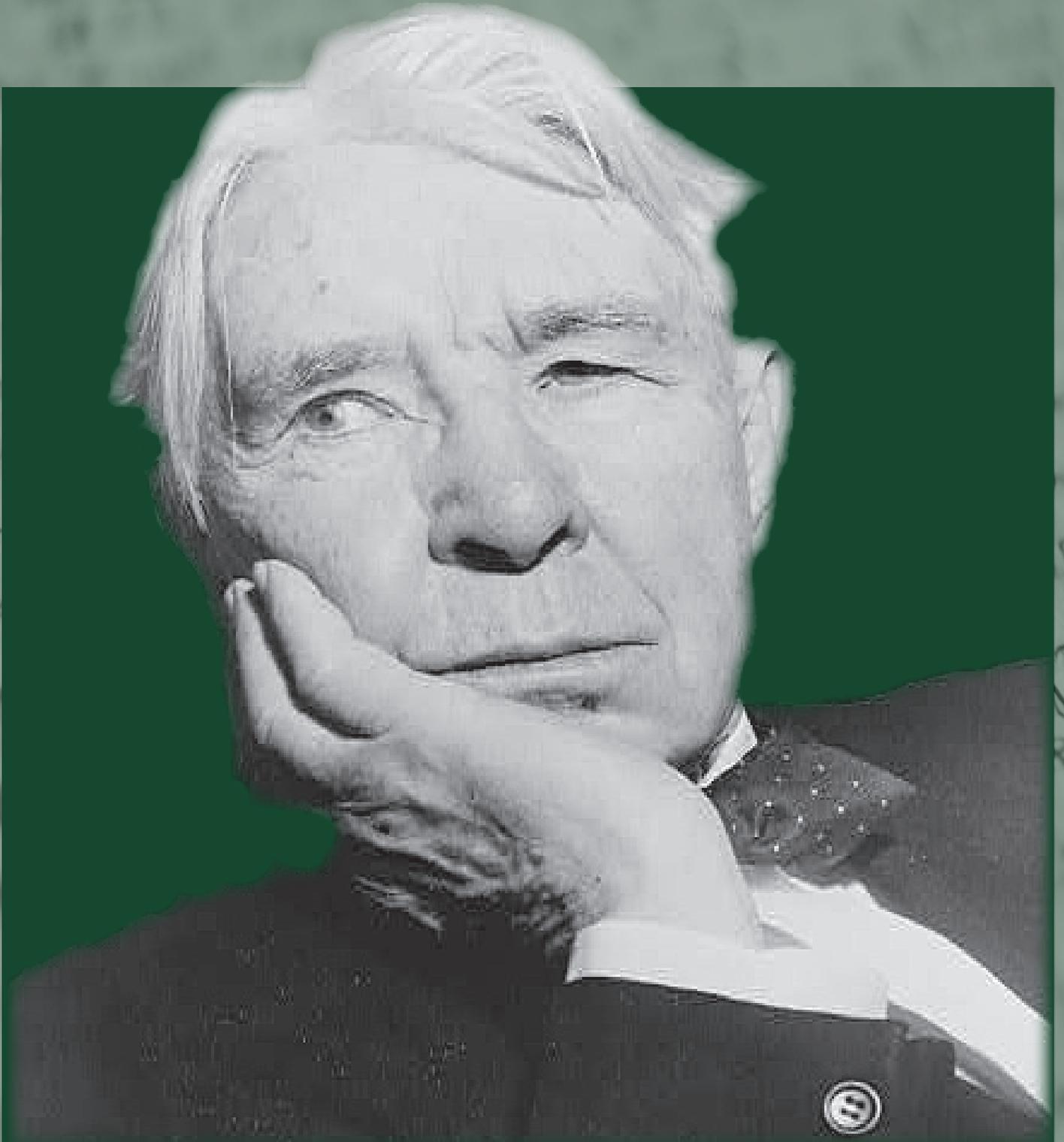
Richard W. Etulain,
South Dakota Historical Society Press



On the Cover

Carl Sandburg (L) looks at a display case with Dr. Gerald R. McMurtry. Sandburg visited and toured the Lincoln Museum in Fort Wayne, IN on Nov. 15, 1960. (Photo: Lincoln Museum archival photos).

HISTORY THROUGH A POET'S EYES



Carl Sandburg's books on Abraham Lincoln, far from traditional biography, remain unmatched for their vivid combination of mood, incident, and epochal sweep

The “elusive Lincoln is a challenge for any artist.” So the poet, troubadour, journalist, and political activist Carl Sandburg declared (in combination warning and boast) in the preface to his 1926 two-volume epic, *Abraham Lincoln: The Prairie Years*. Few before or since have stalked the sixteenth president as relentlessly—or indelibly. Later biographers have revised, and in some cases, debunked Sandburg's opus—which the author augmented thirteen years later with the four volumes of *The War Years*. Professional historians repeatedly lamented the absence of source notes, flights of fancy, and occasional factual errors.

But Sandburg's work has long endured. It remains the most influential and popular life of Lincoln ever published, with *The Prairie Years* alone selling some 1.5 million copies. As of Lincoln's birthday month 2020, *Prairie Years*, *War Years*, and Sandburg's 1954 one-volume abridgement all remained on Amazon's list of the fifty best-selling Lincoln books.

An explanation for their sustained appeal may lurk within the assessment that critic Mark Van Doren offered in the *Nation* in 1926: “[I]n spite of some rather obvious poetry stuck in here and there,” *Prairie Years* was “amply and profoundly beautiful.” Yet behind the Whitmanesque free-verse vernacular was evidence of deep research. To Van Doren, Sandburg seemed “drunk with data.” But as scholar Charles Austin Beard saw matters, “few if any historians...ever labored harder in preparation for composition.”

Sandburg's own prefatory remarks reveal what truly set his work apart: he came at Lincoln as an “artist.” His

evocation of Lincoln's experiences and milieu remain unmatched for its vivid combination of mood, incident, and epochal sweep.

Sandburg filtered history through the poet's ear. Tellingly, he had first dealt with his subject in verse, writing of Lincoln's mother in his 1919 collection, *Cornhuskers*: “Oh, dream, Nancy. / Time now for a beautiful child. / Time now for a tall man to come.” Hooked, the poet began amassing Lincoln data. He also carried memories of his own childhood in Galesburg, Illinois, site of the fifth Lincoln-Douglas debate, where Sandburg had “listened to stories of old-timers who had known of Lincoln.”

Initially, Sandburg planned only a children's book, but soon determined to broaden his ambition. Now he bundled “fact and legend” to “lurk and murmur” side-by-side for a full-scale, if impressionistic, biography.

Predictably, some Lincoln specialists of the day greeted the result coolly. Writing in the *American Historical Review*, William E. Barton acknowledged *Prairie Years* as “a piece of genuine literature,” but cautioned that it was bathed in “the aura of poetic interpretation...not history.” A caustic Edmund Wilson sneered that “the cruellest thing that has happened to Lincoln since he was shot by Booth has been to fall into the hands of Carl Sandburg.”

Undeterred, Sandburg wrote on. An ardent New Dealer, his 1939 *War Years* found a receptive audience among progressives who believed that only Lincolnesque leadership could guarantee American survival. Robert E. Sherwood, soon to become a speechwriter for Franklin D. Roosevelt, had used *Prairie Years* as the basis for his Pulitzer Prize-winning play, *Abe Lincoln in Illinois*. Now he praised *War Years* as another “superb literary outburst.” Sandburg, who began likening Lincoln to FDR, won his own Pulitzer Prize for history in 1940 for *The War Years*.

In short order, the poet became the dominant figure in the Lincoln “industry”

that mushroomed after World War II—his shaggy white hair becoming nearly as iconic as Lincoln's beard. In 1959, Congress chose him to address a joint session marking Lincoln's 150th birthday. He appeared in TV documentaries, and in his distinctive twang, narrated Aaron Copland's “Lincoln Portrait” on *The Ed Sullivan Show*. His recorded Lincoln speeches even won a Grammy. Seven years after his death, his books inspired (and his still-formidable name adorned) David L. Wolper's miniseries, *Sandburg's Lincoln*.

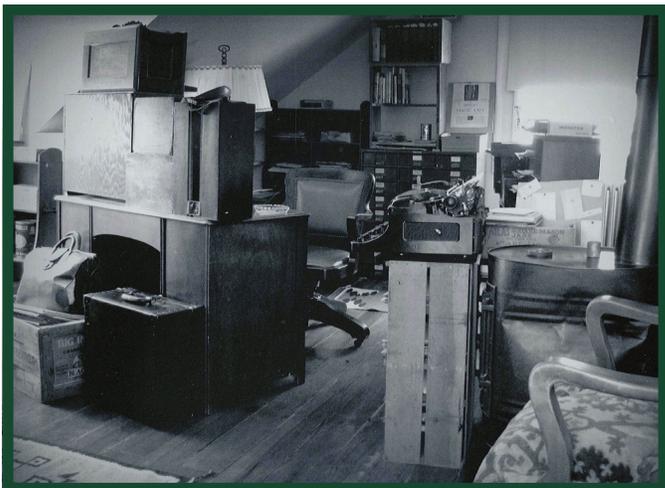
If nothing else, his prodigious works remain the most prodigious of Lincoln tomes: 962 pages in *Prairie Years*, 2,503 more in *War Years*. True, they may constitute, according to Sandburg biographer Penelope Niven, only “a mythic text of American popular culture” But as such they remain unsurpassed—perhaps growing quaint around the edges, but still evocative and majestic, not to mention (Niven to the contrary) well-informed. For example, no more realistic or bracing account of Lincoln's exhausting work routine can be found than the chapter on “The Man in the White House” in *The War Years*, volume 2. “I am from Indianny!” Sandburg recalls a proud Hoosier greeting Lincoln one day in the White House. “So am I,” the beleaguered president replies. “I almost wish I was back there again.”

Sandburg endures not because he is cited by modern scholars, but because he continues to be read for sheer pleasure. In my own travels on the Lincoln circuit, I am often asked: “Do you like Sandburg's books?” My affirmative answer invariably relieves questioners who find him a guilty and perhaps outdated pleasure. Such skepticism never inhibited Carl Sandburg. Writing in *The People, Yes*, he all but predicted his own durability in verse:

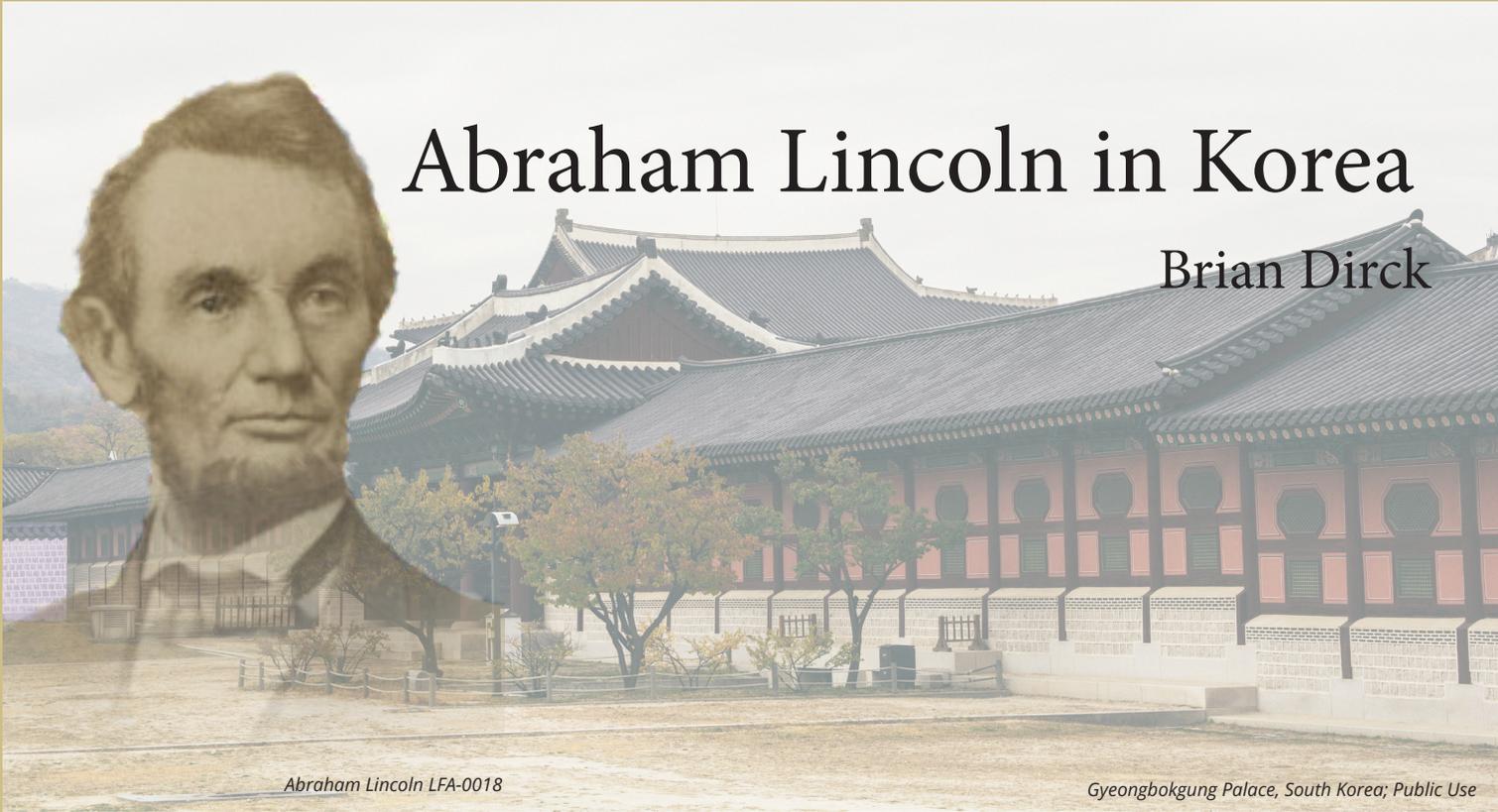
*This old anvil laughs at many broken hammers.
What is bitter to stand against today may be sweet
to remember tomorrow.*

Sandburg transcends biographical fashion. The old anvil of a poet could hammer out sweet prose, too.

Harold Holzer is the Jonathan F. Fanton Director of Roosevelt House Public Policy Institute at Hunter College. (This article first appeared in the Review Section of the Wall Street Journal.)



Carl Sandburg's Writing Room, 2014 by Ed Breen



Abraham Lincoln in Korea

Brian Dirck

Abraham Lincoln LFA-0018

Gyeongbokgung Palace, South Korea; Public Use

In early 2019 I received an invitation to deliver a speech about Abraham Lincoln in Seoul, South Korea. I was initially taken aback. Abraham Lincoln? In South Korea?

In retrospect this should not have been a surprise; Lincoln is a major American global export. There are statues of our sixteenth president in Mexico City, Mexico, London, England, and Edinburgh, Scotland. The town of Lincoln, Argentina, recently installed a bronze bust of the sixteenth American president in their central square. Russian residents of Moscow unveiled a sculpture in 2011 of Lincoln (freeing the slaves) and Czar Alexander II (freeing the serfs) shaking hands. On a more personal level, while visiting Japan in August 2018, I stumbled upon a restaurant called the “Abraham Lincoln House” in an Osaka shopping district, where this establishment’s sign was the only English language visible.

What does the world see in Lincoln? To be sure, not everyone outside the United States finds him an inspirational figure. He is not altogether popular in France, where he was viewed during the Civil War—fairly or not—as both a potential dictator and a tardy actor on the stage of human freedom and emancipation, viewpoints which color French opinion down to the present day. Italians likewise believed Lincoln was too reluctant an emancipator,

and more generally European socialists were not comfortable with Lincoln and his party’s unabashed embrace of free market capitalism.

But overall, Lincoln offers a positive representation of American values for most of the world, a process that began during his lifetime. Historian Richard Carwardine wrote it was doubtful “that Lincoln, even when Confederates laid down their arms in April 1865, appreciated just how far he had stirred the hearts and minds of sympathizers at home and abroad.” Germans for example typically revere Lincoln, his image particularly resonating during the Cold War. In 1959, West Berlin Mayor Willy Brandt visited Springfield and spoke eloquently about safeguarding Lincolnian ideals of democracy before a banner quoting Lincoln’s House Divided Speech.

Brandt’s audience would not have found much difficulty drawing parallels between Lincoln’s North/South split and Germany’s East/West divide. But as Carwardine points out, Lincoln was a man who “cast American nationalism not in ethnic or racial terms but as a moral force for the improvement of mankind, a beacon of liberty to the world.” People turn to Lincoln for inspiration not only because of his specific circumstances—author of the Emancipation Proclamation and leader of a

nation during a civil war that occurred over one hundred fifty years ago—but also because he speaks to more fundamental, abstract issues and challenges that transcend national borders.

All of which begged the question: what would South Koreans see in Abe? What would that nation and that culture find inspiring or useful in the Lincoln story?

I approached these questions from an embarrassing perspective of ignorance. I had never visited Korea and knew little of Korean culture or history beyond the basics. Nor did I have much time for research. The invitation came in February 2018, during a dinner at the annual Abraham Lincoln Symposium in Springfield, Illinois; the Korean Abraham Lincoln Association’s event was scheduled for April. With only two months between the time I received the invitation and my departure, I could not pretend (then or now) to possess any real expertise on Korea.

But I gathered what information I could; and some aspects of Korean history and culture stood out, as they related to Abraham Lincoln and his legacy. First, the idea of a common Korean national community has long posed challenges, and for a far longer period of time than the current division between North and South. Korea’s origins lie in the unification of the “three kingdoms” of Goguryeo,

ryeo, Baekje, and Silla, which co-existed on the Korean peninsula fifteen hundred years ago. The common national culture which eventually resulted from the melding of these three kingdoms was a mix of many different ingredients, ranging from common forms of bureaucracy to language, customs and the Korean traditional religion of Muism. National identity is often a fragile thing, an act of creating a shared “imagined community” (to borrow Benedict Anderson’s felicitous phrase) requiring persistent effort. Korea has always faced challenges in this regard; and this was also true of the United States in Lincoln’s day, with its crisscrossing currents of different regional, ethnic, political, and socioeconomic elements.

Second, Koreans underwent a period of immense change and upheaval, born from the ravages of the Korean War in the 1950s, that was comparable to the American South during the American Civil War and afterwards. The cost in human lives and suffering on the Korean peninsula was staggering: an estimated 5 million deaths, or approximately 10 percent of the total population. Civil War deaths (estimates ranging from 620,000 to 750,000) were considerably fewer, and constituted a smaller overall proportion of the American population at around 2 percent. Nevertheless, modern Koreans can certainly understand the deep reach of large scale warfare, just as Americans of the Civil War era would have been well able to comprehend Korea’s level of suffering, deprivation and death over a century later.

These are some common threads between the Korean experience and the America of Lincoln’s time, and American history overall. But most of all, I was struck by a third issue: questions of reconciliation and forgiveness which challenge South Koreans as they ponder their long and troubled relationship with North Korea. In North Korea, South Koreans confront the prospect of a large region in their once-unified nation behaving in a morally disturbing and threatening manner, and this following a horrific war during which the different sections of Korea inflicted untold pain and misery upon one another. Northern and Southern Americans also struggled with sectional bitterness during the years following the Confederacy’s collapse, with prospects for reconciliation often hampered by lingering

mutual hostilities and distrust, as well as the manifest evidence of the white South’s barbarous mistreatment of its formerly enslaved population.

Pondering these questions led to a still larger, more fundamental issue: how might those of us who study Abraham Lincoln relate our inquiries to larger topics? This is a matter of avoiding pedanticism

and an excessive focus on the details of Lincoln’s life and times, at the expense of unreasonably neglecting other places, lives and times. If we do not occasionally look up from our concentration upon Lincoln and ask how his legacy might be useful to people outside our field of study—not just the fields of Civil War and American history, but also globally—we risk isolating ourselves to the point of irrelevance.

Of course, any comparisons drawn between Lincoln’s life and times and the Korean situation must be drawn carefully, and with an understanding of the limitations of such cross-cultural and cross-historical comparisons; an apples-and-oranges dissonance is a real issue here. Korea’s separation, and therefore the possibility of reunification, functioned in a much different context than Civil War Era America, with Cold War politics and foreign intervention playing a much more significant role.

Where Lincoln himself is concerned, John Wilkes Booth’s bullet rendered his vision of a reconstructed America a preliminary sketch, at best. We cannot know with any degree of confidence what Lincoln would have done to address the problems involved in knitting the nation back together following four years of war and an unprecedented bloodletting. We are left forever wondering how a second-term Lincoln administration might have approached sectional reconciliation, following the hard feelings engendered

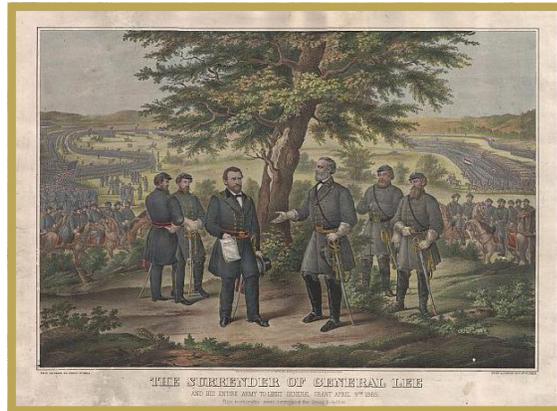
by the war and in the face of so many white Southerners’ implacable hostility towards the freedmen in their midst.

Nevertheless, Lincoln did begin to think seriously about these matters as the war—and, sadly, his life—drew to a close; and as I began to prepare for my trip, I settled upon reconciliation and forgiveness as the theme in Lincoln’s thought most likely to resonate with a Korean audience. I exchanged emails with Chulho Kim, Professor at Seoul National University and one of the founders of the Korean Abraham Lincoln Society. Professor Kim was enthusiastic about the idea. I also

discussed the matter at length with the man who invited me and who would be my companion on the trip, Fred J. Martin. Fred is a past president of the Lincoln Society of Washington, D.C., author of a fine book on Lincoln himself, a good friend and an all-around good guy.

I flew from my home in Indianapolis to San Francisco, where Fred and his wife Shirley acted as very gracious and generous hosts. Fred and I then flew from San Francisco for the thirteen-plus hour trans-oceanic flight to Seoul. We were hosted by Professor Kim, his wife Sunny, and the kind people at Seoul National University, who provided lodging and many excellent meals (I developed a real fondness for bibimbap, as well as Korean azuki red bean paste). While our stay was brief, we were able to do some exploring in daily walks around the university, and during an afternoon in downtown Seoul with Sister Catherine Oh of Seoul Episcopal Cathedral as our companion and guide.

Seoul is a city which has seen much of war. Sister Catherine showed us one of the city’s Eight Gates, built during the Joseon Dynasty in the fourteenth century as part of the city’s defense system from all sorts of potential enemies. Not far from the gate is a statue of General



The Surrender of General Lee and His Entire Army
71.2009.081.0609

Yi Sun-sin, a famous Korean naval commander who in 1597 repelled a Japanese invasion. And the city was at the heart of the Korean War, changing hands four times between Northern and Southern forces; by the war's end, Seoul lay devastated, thousands of its homes, factories and other buildings in ruins. While we toured the city, I was struck by its modern architecture, with many interesting and beautiful buildings erected upon the ruins of the old. Fred told me that Seoul looks quite different today from what it had been like during his time stationed in Korea sixty years ago.

The Korean people I encountered were unfailingly gracious and helpful, all the more so when they discovered that Fred is a Korean War veteran. One young man with whom we struck up a conversation while asking directions to a restaurant near the Samsung headquarters could not thank Fred enough for his military service when he learned of Fred's past. "Thank you! Thank you!" he kept repeating, an effusive smile on his face as he pumped Fred's hand and bowed. This young man could not have been older than thirty and possessed no living memory of the war, yet he was taught that American soldiers were liberators, and he carried that lesson with him even at his relatively young age; legacy of a hard war which nonetheless had (from his perspective at least) helped foster a democracy and lifestyle he valued.

Any war's legacy—the American Civil War, the Korean War, or any other major military conflict—is exceedingly complex. I thought of that young man expressing his appreciation to Fred, and I thought of the reception afforded many Northern soldiers from African Americans as Union armies marched through the South. There were tensions, misunderstandings and ugly incidents rooted in the white soldiers' endemic racism, to be sure, but quite often the newly freed slaves hailed these soldiers as liberators and joined their ranks when allowed to do so. Lincoln scholars and admirers are also familiar with Lin-

coln's visit to the fallen Confederate capital city of Richmond in April 1865, when he was surrounded by crowds of freedmen as he walked through the streets. Some knelt in displays of gratitude. "Don't kneel to me," the president replied, "that is not right."

Wars create lasting hatred and bitterness which can take generations to heal. Lincoln well knew this. "See our present condition," he told a group of African American leaders in August 1862, "the country engaged in war!—our white men cutting one another's throats, none knowing how far it will extend." Four months later the president issued his Emancipation Proclamation, and the government began officially recruiting African American soldiers; the throat-cutting would thenceforward be exacerbated by the omnipresent and deep-seated hatreds of racism. Lincoln knew this, too, as he also understood that his relentless press to vigorously prosecute the war—"chew and choke with a bulldog gripe [sic]," he urged General Ulysses S. Grant in the spring of 1864—must inevitably lead to still more suffering and death, and ever deeper and lasting acrimony North and South.

But Lincoln also knew that from the war would come the "new birth of freedom" afforded by emancipation and the Thirteenth Amendment. The same war that killed hundreds of thousands of people also afforded him the opportunity to end once and for all an institution which Lincoln had always found morally repugnant, but which before the war he reluctantly recognized enjoyed peacetime constitutional protection.

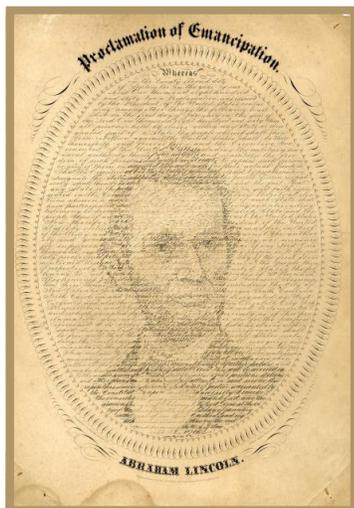
Herein lay one of the key moral conundrums of the entire Civil War. The war liberated even as it subjugated, it saved as it killed, and in doing so it both muddied and clarified the nation's moral waters. Did reconciliation mean acceptance of the South's views on race, the overall purpose of the war, and slavery? Did forgiving one's enemies also mean an implicit acknowledgement of their cause's righteousness?

Did forgive necessarily mean forget: and not just forgetting the human cost of the war itself, but the human cost of the institution of slavery for which the Confederacy fought? Was a forgiving embrace extended to ex-Confederates pre-conditioned in any way, and how tight must that forgiving embrace be?

Is this not also similar to the conundrum which exists at the heart of the Korean War's legacy for many South Koreans? North Korea's constant destabilizing presence in the community of nations, its brutal dictatorship, repressive regime, and manifest violations of human rights have been well-documented. "The people would realize that full human rights are exercised and enjoyed by one person only," observed a defector from North Korea, "the ruling Kim. He is the only figure in North Korea who exercises freedom of thought, freedom of speech, freedom of movement, his right not to be tortured, imprisoned, or executed without trial, and his right to proper health care and food."

Few South Koreans would willingly choose to live in such a regime, any more than Northerners might choose to live the life of an enslaved person or sharecropping freedman after the Civil War. Yet South Koreans also seem to harbor a nuanced and generational perspective regarding their northern neighbors, with older Koreans who came of age during and in the years immediately following the war harboring a deep mistrust of the North Korean government, while younger Koreans are either inclined towards some sort of peaceful rapprochement, or evince an apathy born of what is now seventy years of partitioning as their norm. Many express concerns regarding what reunification would look like given North Korea's relative paucity of resources and weaker economy, bringing to mind shades of Reconstruction and many Northern Americans' fears that in absorbing the post-slavery South back into the national fold they would be saddled with the South's economic problems. Asked about North Korea, a Seoul office worker bemoaned, "I don't want reunification. It is an expensive headache."

It is not difficult to imagine a similar reaction from an American living in, say, New York when asked about the post-plantation South, circa 1870. One thinks here of the North's war-weari-



Pratt Emancipation Proclamation
71.2009.081.2610

ness that manifested almost immediately upon Lee's surrender, with Northerners clamoring for demobilization of the Union army as quickly as possible. As Reconstruction's problems became ever more entrenched and seemed ever more intractable, white Northerners increasingly displayed an earnest desire to move on from the whole affair, seeing in the South their own version of an "expensive headache." "People are becoming tired of...The negro question, with all its complications, and the Reconstruction of the Southern States, with all its interminable embroilments, have lost much of the power they once wielded," one Northern newspaper observed.

Both South Koreans and Northerners in Reconstruction America therefore evinced a complicated attitude towards their counterparts. My feeling was that a South Korean audience could relate to the problems Lincoln and the North faced in 1865, as they confronted the postwar questions presented by the Confederacy's defeat and national reunification. Lincoln's assassination meant that he was not subject to much of this; still, his words and ideas about just what a postwar America might look like possessed relevance.

The conference occurred in Seoul's National Assembly Building, located in the Yeouido-dong province of the city, next to the Hangang River. Built in 1975, it is a large and stately modern structure, with twenty-four granite pillars upholding a roof with a beautiful blue dome, representing South Korea's many different peoples and communities (the pillars) coming together as one in a commitment to democracy (the dome). The Republic of South Korea's legislature meets here, but it also hosts a variety of other events and organizations, such as our conference. When we arrived it was quite crowded, with a variety of people moving about as they engaged in the business of government and other activities.

Called the Social Design Conference, the event was co-sponsored by the Korean Abraham Lincoln Society and IIPAC, or International IP ADR Center, a dispute resolution organization specializing in mediation and conflict resolution in matters related to patent laws and intellectual property rights. This would seem to belong in a different world from studying Abraham Lincoln, at least here in the United States, where presentations

about historical subjects tend to be isolated among historical roundtables and civic organizations as a recreational activity. But I was struck by how many business and political leaders were present. This included two former Korean prime ministers, an appeals court judge, and the former commissioner of the Korean Baseball League, who was seated next to me. This conference was a serious endeavor, involving accomplished people from all walks of Korean life.

My ruminations on forgiveness and reconciliation in the wake of a ruinous war had led me (perhaps inevitably) to Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address. Given the relatively brief time allotted for my speech—around fifteen minutes—and the necessity to remain focused (always a good idea for any audience) I chose that speech as the centerpiece of my presentation. In seven hundred and one words and around seven minutes, Lincoln would cut right to the heart of the war's meaning and its legacy. Most of all, in language that, according to a British observer, revealed "a grasp of principle, a dignity of manner, and a solemnity of purpose," Lincoln provided a profound moral coda to the rapidly ending war, what scholar William J. Wolf called "a charter of Christian statesmanship."

I began by painting a brief picture of the circumstances surrounding Lincoln's inaugural address on the afternoon of March 4, 1865: the crowd numbering in the tens of thousands, the ubiquitous presence of African Americans, including the then-novel sight of Black soldiers, the atmosphere of cautious hope with the recent capture of Richmond, Virginia. "The President had a somewhat care-worn look," one observer noted, "but a cheerfulness of manner, manifesting itself in occasional pleasantry....He had a genial word for occasional visitors, and a ready ear, as always, for whatever had a fair claim to his attention." Lincoln had forty-one days to live.



Abraham Lincoln Pres't U.S. OC-0230

I emphasized that the president could not know this would be his fate. To those of us in modern times who enjoy the benefit of hindsight, Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address is an ending, a great American president's last major speech. But to Lincoln and his audience that day his speech was a beginning, as much about the future and Reconstruction as it was about the past and the Civil War.

I next referenced the war's unprecedented level of material destruction, in terms anyone familiar with the ravages of the Korean War could readily understand: ruined towns and cities, bankrupted Southern farms and businesses, cropland laid waste and infrastructure (such as the slaveholding South possessed) heavily damaged or entirely eradicated. Most of all, there were the bodies, the hundreds of thousands of dead Americans North and South, a great expenditure of blood that made for an even more problematic foundation for peace than the expenditure of treasure. There are the raw statistics: 620,000 dead Americans, a figure that has only recently been revised dramatically upwards. But those numbers are so numbing as to lose their emotional impact. Each dead soldier was someone's son, or possibly someone's father, husband, or brother. I pointed out to my audience the fact that, for an untold number of families, the exact fate and whereabouts of their dead loved ones would never be known, Civil War governments on both sides being painfully ill-equipped to supply accurate casualty lists. Again, I was sure this would resonate with my Korean audience, since I had read that large numbers of Korean soldiers had likewise disappeared in the maelstrom of the Korean War, never to be heard from again—an estimated 135,000 men, as well as at least seven thousand U.S. servicemen whose remains and identity to this day remain missing.

I was not entirely sure about the level of knowledge in my audience regarding

the American Civil War and its horrendous casualties, but I was reasonably sure many knew of the big battles: Gettysburg, and possibly some of the other larger affairs like Antietam and Shiloh. I suspected Koreans possessed much the same images inhabiting Americans' mental Civil War landscape: long, serried ranks of soldiers marching across open ground, flags flying in all their glory. I wanted my audience to appreciate the terrible human sacrifice on the major Civil War battlefields, but I also wanted to nudge them away from this a bit. I pointed out that the Civil War—like the Korean War—was a dirty, atrocity-laden affair, far messier than our rather romantic ideas about Pickett's Charge and the like would have us believe. I referenced the guerrilla conflicts that plagued large portions of the South and the Border States during the war, particularly my home state of Missouri. Having been born in Waverly, Missouri (the heart of guerrilla territory, and once the home of Confederate cavalryman Joseph Shelby) my Civil War, the war I encountered in stories as a child, was the nasty and brutal anarchy of the "bushwhackers" and the "jayhawkers." I rather doubted many in my Korean audience knew of this war.

My point here was to drive home, as vividly as I could, the magnitude of the task Lincoln faced as he stood to deliver his Second Inaugural Address. He must find ways to reconcile bitter enemies, North and South, he must do so with death and destruction as a backdrop, and he must do so while not abandoning the four million freedmen who were hated, feared and relentlessly exploited by white Southerners. In doing so, he must not abandon principles he had himself established during the war, principles of liberty, freedom, and justice for all Americans, Black as well as white. It was a tall order.

So how, in a seven-minute speech, did Lincoln propose to do this? For that matter how, in a fifteen-minute speech, would I explain how Lincoln did this? I was only one of a series of speakers, during a packed afternoon of activity, and I had been asked to strictly adhere to my allotted time frame. For a college professor, this was also a tall order.

I told my Korean audience that Lincoln served his purpose in two ways. First, he embraced the war's sadness and

desolation, refusing to do a "victory dance" in his address and indulging no "mission accomplished" moments. "The progress of our arms, upon which all else chiefly depends, is as well known to the public as to myself," he declared, and in a masterful understatement continued, "it is, I trust, reasonably satisfactory and encouraging to all." Harkening back to 1861, he painted a picture of the war as a dread thing best averted but eventually omnipresent like a storm, describing it in four simple, powerful words that evoked a dreaded, unstoppable force: "and the war came."

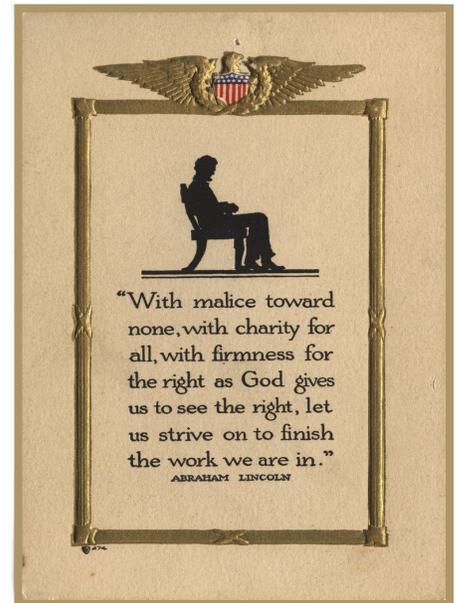
In this he followed a pattern established throughout the war; he had never blustered or posed as a conqueror. His occasional proclamations calling for thanksgiving and prayer were hopeful but sober documents. When for example he issued such a proclamation in September 1864, following General William Tecumseh Sherman's victories in Georgia and a string of Union military successes, he acknowledged the upward trajectory of the Union war effort and briefly referenced the "cruel war" being waged by the "insurgent rebels," but also cautioned humility with a "devout acknowledgment to the Supreme Being in whose hands are the destinies of nations." Lincoln's tone was restrained and his overall message that of a cautious optimism, rather than a victor's triumph.

Far from gloating or engaging in any fist-pumping, Lincoln struck those who saw him during the war as a man of profound sorrow and grief. He had always seemed something of a weary figure—"melancholy dripped from him as he walked" recalled his law partner William Herndon—and now that melancholy was palpable, borne down by the great weight of the war upon his shoulders. He even walked with an increasingly stooped figure, the lines of care and concern etched ever deeper into his craggy face: "the saddest man I ever saw," recalled one congressman who saw him.

In this he was the face of the war; and I argued that his embrace of the war's sadness was more than an expression of his natural predilection towards melancholy, or even the president's all-too-omnipresent war-

time burdens. It was also a brilliant political move. It meant he could seem to empathize with the war's many victims, North and South, and they might empathize with him. Even many white Southerners would eventually come to see him as this careworn man who might understand their plight. "I feel your pain," is a well-known expression favored by a future president; in 1865, Lincoln lived that phrase's meaning by quite literally looking the part.

Second, and I think most importantly, he sounded a note of humility. By this I particularly mean humility before God; he refused to say in his speech that his side had been God's side, or that either the Union or Confederacy had acted exclusively in accordance with God's wishes. "Each [side] looked for an easier triumph, and a result less fundamental and astounding," Lincoln declared, "Both read the same Bible, and pray to the same God; and each invokes His aid against the other."



With Malice Towards None ZPC-034

I also referenced an earlier document he had written, sometime during the war's darkest days in the early fall of 1862, one of those brilliant little private scraps of paper he sometimes penned, only for himself. "In great contests each party claims to act in accordance with the will of God," Lincoln wrote, "Both *may* be, and one *must* be wrong. God can not be *for*, and *against* the same thing at the same time." Here Lincoln's helplessness in the face of the war's great magnitude and God's unknown purposes became



The Martyr of Freedom LN-1112

painfully apparent. "In the present civil war it is quite possible that God's purpose is something different from the purpose of either party---and yet the human instrumentalities, working just as they do, are of the best adaptation to effect His purpose." Just as Lincoln could not comprehend God's will in allowing the war to commence, he also could not understand why God might allow the carnage to continue, with no end in sight. "By his mere quiet power, on the minds of the now contestants, He could have either saved or destroyed the Union without a human contest. Yet the contest began. And having begun He could give the final victory to either side any day. Yet the contest proceeds."

He never claimed to know God's will. Instead, in the Second Inaugural, Lincoln suggested that God's purposes were unknown, and unknowable: "The prayers of both could not be answered. That of neither has been answered fully. The Almighty has His own purposes." But I took pains to point out to my Korean audience that Lincoln's unwillingness to speculate upon God's will most certainly did *not* shade into moral relativism. Just as South Koreans recognized the immorality of North Korea's oppressive regime, so too did Abraham Lincoln clearly refuse to countenance a false equivalency between the Union and the Confederacy. "Both parties deprecated war," he noted, "but one of them would make war rather than let the nation survive; and the other would

accept war rather than let it perish."

Thus, a part of Southerners' war guilt lay in their failure to abide by the rules of democracy, choosing war rather than accepting the legitimate results of the 1860 presidential election. But the bulk of Lincoln's moral rejection of the Confederacy's cause lay elsewhere: in its embrace and defense of human bondage. "These slaves constituted a peculiar and powerful interest," Lincoln declared, and "All knew that this interest was, somehow, the cause of the war. To strengthen, perpetuate, and extend this interest was the object for which the insurgents would rend the Union, even by war; while the government claimed no right to do more than to restrict the territorial enlargement of it."

Forgive the South, yes; but that forgiveness could not and must not involve embracing a false equivalence regarding the war's meaning and its higher moral cause. When he noted that both sides prayed to the same God, he added an aside, one that was understated but biting in its indictment of the South's slaveholding ethos: "It may seem strange that any men should dare to ask a just God's assistance in wringing their bread from the sweat of other men's faces; but let us judge not that we be not judged."

"Let us judge not..." Here I pointed out that Lincoln avoided the pitfalls of laying entire blame for the war on the South's shoulders—and thus harming the cause of postwar reconciliation—by making of slavery not just a Southern sin, but an American sin. "If we shall suppose...[God] gives to both North and South, this terrible war, as the woe due to those by whom the offence came, shall we discern therein any departure from those divine attributes which the believers in a Living God always ascribe to Him?" Here Lincoln called upon his lifelong command of the English language in words that still thunder and roll over one hundred fifty years later: "Fondly do we hope—fervently do we pray—that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away. Yet, if God wills that it continue, until all the wealth piled by the bond-man's two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash, shall be paid by another drawn with the sword, as was

said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said 'the judgments of the Lord, are true and righteous altogether.'"

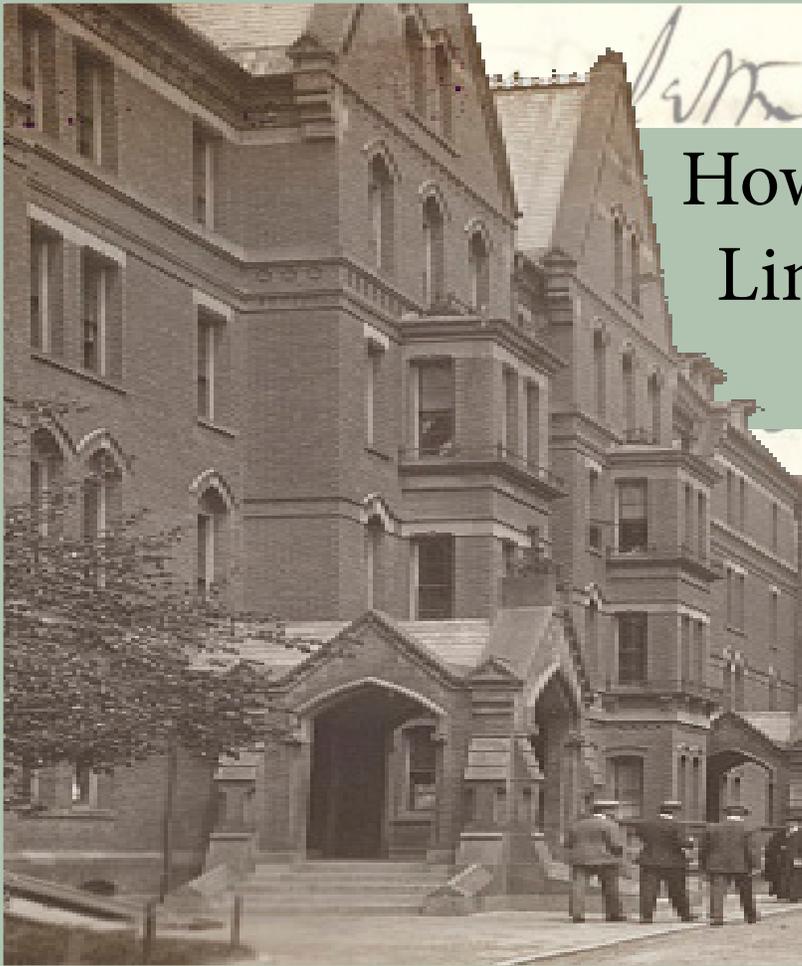
I had read that Christianity is the largest single religion in South Korea. I hoped my audience would appreciate, despite the limitations of my speaking skills and the language barrier, the power of those words in their Biblical cadence, and how this would resonate with his overwhelmingly Christian audience. In terms of its sheer lyrical beauty, Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address is truly one of the great documents in American history.

More generally, I hoped I was able to communicate the political and moral tightrope which Lincoln was trying to negotiate. He must forgive without forgetting, he must empathize without surrendering the Union's emancipation moral high ground; he must "bind up the nation's wounds," as he would state in the speech's conclusion, while acknowledging that those wounds had been inflicted upon Black as well as white Americans.

Would it have worked? Would Abraham Lincoln have found a way to win the new war, the war for Reconstruction, the war for American equality? I ended my speech with the observation that we will never know the answer to these questions; that, and a deep bow, eyes averted downward (I had noticed every other speaker doing so), signifying in Korean culture respect and humility. Somehow, I could imagine Abraham Lincoln, a man of humility and respect, doing so as well.

He is, to be sure, a significant American export, with people worldwide citing him as an example of democracy, freedom, human rights, the eradication of human bondage, and the ultimate triumph of victory during the Civil War. He is also a global figure with a more ambivalent legacy in some respects: a tardy emancipator, an overly powerful chief executive, an unapologetic spokesman for capitalism. My brief experience in Korea led me to discover another iteration of the Lincoln story that might also resonate beyond America's borders: Lincoln as a figure of reconciliation and magnanimity. Koreans face their own trials in this regard; perhaps they might find some insight into reconciliation's tribulations from America's sixteenth president.

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How and why did Robert Lincoln decide to go to Harvard?

Newly revealed letter gives the answer.

Jason Emerson

The earliest-known letter by Robert Lincoln has recently surfaced, and its contents answer the long-standing question of exactly how and why Robert ended up attending Harvard College in Massachusetts and exactly what role his parents played in the decision. The letter, written from Springfield in 1859 when Robert was 16 years old, shows that the oldest son of Abraham Lincoln was a typical teenager in that he didn't care where he went to college as long as he could escape the "dullness" of Springfield, and that his parents were the ones deciding on where he would ultimately attend. The letter also offers up a previously unknown acquaintance of Robert's, Louis James, who became a renowned Shakespearian actor as an adult.

The origin of Robert's attendance at Harvard has always been somewhat of a mystery to scholars desirous of understanding Abraham Lincoln's role as parent. Existing evidence has offered no explanation for the choice, so all scholars have had to offer was supposition that Robert chose Har-

vard because it was prestigious, all his friends and social peers were attending Ivy League schools in the East and he was following suit, and his parents wanted him to have the best education possible. In his early years, Robert did obtain the best education he could receive in Springfield. It began in 1849 with brief attendance at a Springfield day school. In 1850, he became a student at Abel Estabrook's Springfield Academy, a private subscription-based school, and three years later, at age 11, he entered the preparatory department of Illinois State University. Robert spent six years at ISU — attending today's equivalents of middle school and high school — and by the spring of 1859 he was considering college.

By March of that year, Robert was 16, the older brother to eight-year-old Willie and five-year-old Tad, his mother was a strong-willed educated woman raising the children, and his father was an attorney renowned throughout the Midwest who had only months before lost a U.S. Senate

race to Stephen A. Douglas, but had, in the process, gained national attention as a rising Republican politician.

Robert's story — in general and in regard to his education — has been one rarely investigated or told except as to how it related to his famous father. In the 1960s, historian John Goff wrote an article focused completely on Robert's education, which he followed with a full biography, *Robert Todd Lincoln: A Man in His Own Right*. I wrote a biography of Robert that was published in 2012 titled, *Giant in the Shadows: The Life of Robert T. Lincoln*. Neither Goff nor I found any information on exactly why Robert chose to attend Harvard. The only written evidence was something Robert wrote in his college autobiography that he "became aware that I could never get an education in that way [at Illinois State University] and resolved to enter Harvard College" — and that has been the extent of any known explanations. A few years ago, I was contacted by a man who was a descendant of an old acquaintance of Robert Lincoln who had a letter from

Robert and was curious to get my opinion of it as Robert's biographer. After seeing and reading it, I was astounded by its contents and the meaning it adds to the Lincoln family story.

The letter reads:
Springfield, Ill
March 4th/59
Friend Louis

I am ashamed of not having written to you before but I have been so busy at school that I have had no time for any thing else. We have had a gay time this winter, the legislature having favoured [sic] us with an extremely long session, so long, indeed, that the republican members got tired of it and went home. What has been going on in "The Garden City"? If it has been as dull there all winter as it is here just now, you have been having a sorry time.. [sic] Father came home yesterday from Chicago and told me your father would probably send you to Harvard University next fall. They have been thinking of sending me somewhere but have not made up their minds yet[.]

It is a matter of indifference to me where I go so I can get away from this place.. [sic] Are you certain of going? What class do you wish to enter? There is a young man who graduated at Harvard and wants me to go there. He gave me a catalogue, which, if you would like to see it, I will send to you. Hoping to hear from you soon I remain

Yours truly
R.T. Lincoln

The envelope is addressed to Louis James, Care of Benjamin James, Esq., Chicago, Ills., with a postmark of Springfield, Ill.

Historically, everything in the letter checks out:

Louis Levitte James, born in Tremont, Ill., on Oct. 3, 1842 (only two months after Robert Lincoln), was the son of Benjamin Franklin James. Benjamin James was a lawyer who practiced in Tazewell County, Illinois, and was the publisher of the short-lived *Tazewell Whig*. He was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1841 (Abraham Lincoln was on the committee that examined him for admission) where he practiced in

Tremont and participated in Whig politics. He moved his family to Chicago in the late 1850s and set up his law practice in that city. He was a strong supporter of Abraham Lincoln for Congress in the 1840s, Senate in the 1850s, and the presidency in 1860. He was appointed a U.S. patent examiner in Washington, D.C., during the war.

Abraham Lincoln and Benjamin James were definitely acquaintances and possibly friends. There are multiple letters between them in Lincoln's collected papers. In a letter from Lincoln to James, dated August 31, 1860, Lincoln thanks James for his congratulations on receiving the Republican presidential nomination, and adds, "How time gallops along with us! Look at these great big boys of yours and mine, when it was but yesterday that we and their mothers were unmarried. Make my respects to Mrs. James and Louis." Clearly, James knew Abraham Lincoln and their two boys became acquainted through their fathers.

It is also verified that Abraham Lincoln was in Chicago in late February 1859 and returned to Springfield on March 3, just as Robert declares in the letter. Lincoln was in Chicago on legal business for his client Jonathan

Haines. (This is likely the case of *Ruggs v. Haines*, in which Jonathan and Ansel Haines, inventors and manufacturers of the Illinois Harvester, hired Lincoln in 1856 to sue George H. Ruggs for patent infringement. Lincoln's clients won at trial and on appeal.) While in town, Lincoln also gave a speech at the city's Republican party headquarters to celebrate the party's victory in the municipal elections. Lincoln wrote a letter (to Peter H. Watson) from Chicago on March 2 and a letter from Springfield (to Hayden Keeling) on March 3.

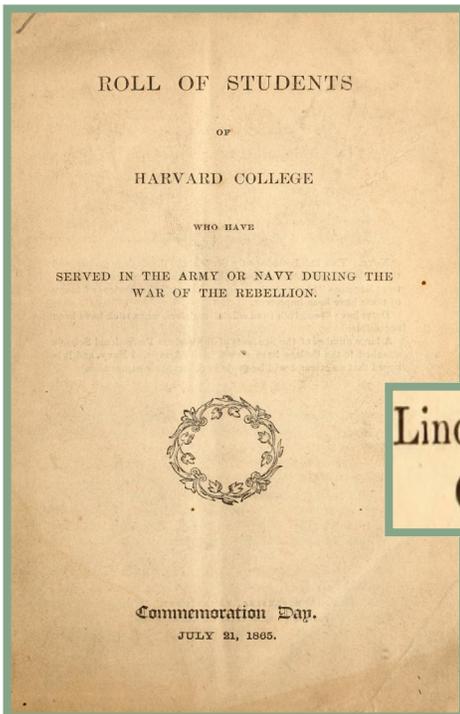
As to the contents of the letter of young Robert Lincoln to Louis James, there are many aspects of it that are fascinating and exciting to the study of the Lincoln family. First of all, this is the earliest known letter by Robert Lincoln to ever be seen. Prior to this letter, the earliest letter written by Robert was one to his mother on December 2, 1860, which he wrote from Phillips Exeter Academy in New Hampshire. (Robert obviously wrote many letters as a teen in Springfield, but none of them have ever been publicly found. Robert did burn many of his letters as an adult in the typical Victorian house cleaning procedure, and it is known that Mary Lincoln burned many family papers in 1861 while preparing to go to Washington, so his teen letters were probably destroyed during such events.)

Another interesting aspect to the letter is the neatness of the handwriting. Robert's handwriting as an adult is much more angular and tightly knit; it is also atrocious and difficult to read. Also, his adult signature was "Robert T. Lincoln" or "RTL" to friends, so his signature in the 1859 letter as "RT Lincoln" is rare and unusual. However, considering that he was 16 when this was written and in the midst of school, this makes sense that he would still be writing in a neat script and had not yet adopted his adult signature.

For me, as someone who spent nearly a decade researching and writing Robert's life, the most exciting



Robert Todd Lincoln LFA-0092



Roll of students of Harvard College who have served in the army or navy during the war of the rebellion, 71200908407656

(and valuable) aspect to the letter is the viewing of Robert's typical teen unhappiness in where he lives, and, most importantly, the information about Robert Lincoln's college plans. The fact that Robert talks about how "dull" life is in Springfield and how he just wants to "get away from this place" shows that Robert was a normal teenager despite his father's fame, and that the Lincoln family was a normal family. Robert's statement that his parents "have been thinking of sending me somewhere," and that his father was talking to the elder James about Harvard, shows for the first time that the decision for Robert Lincoln to attend Harvard College was one that was driven by Abraham and Mary Lincoln. Also, Robert's statement, "There is a young man here who graduated Harvard and wants me to go there," is interesting because there was a clerk in the Lincoln & Herndon Law Office named Charles B. Brown who not only graduated from Harvard in 1856 but also wrote a letter of introduction for Robert to Brown's former classmate William W. Burrage. When Robert went to Harvard in summer 1859 to take the exams, he visited with Burrage to get advice on how to proceed, he told a correspondent in 1909.

Interestingly, other than this letter, no other letter to or from Louis James

to Robert Lincoln is known to exist. It appears Louis never entered Harvard, but instead joined the Union army at the outset of the Civil War. "I served through the war and when it was over went to Louisville, where I got my first engagement ... in 1864," as he told one writer in 1902. James became a Shakespearean actor of some note (rated "second tier" by New York critics at the time). He toured with Lawrence

nomination as the Republican presidential candidate on May 18, 1860. In early July, he again attempted the Harvard entrance exams and this time passed easily. "After the commencement in 1860, I was able to inform my father that I had succeeded in entering College without a condition, quite a change from the previous year," Robert wrote in his college

Lincoln, Robert Todd. Captain and A. A. G. Vols., General Grant's staff, Feb. 20, 1865 : resigned, June 10, 1865.

Barrett's acting company from 1877 to 1886. "With a commanding vocal and physical presence as well as ease of emotional range, James earned respect in the profession and faithful audiences on the road, even if he never attained Broadway stardom," according to Felicia Hardison Londré in her book, *The Enchanted Years of the Stage: Kansas City at the Crossroads of American Theater, 1870-1930*.

James's first wife, Lillian Scanlon, died in 1876; he married his co-star Marie Wainwright in 1882, and divorced in 1889; he married Alpha Hendricks in December 1892. Hendricks (1868-1940) performed as Aphie James. She performed in vaudeville and on Broadway during her career. The couple trouped together in James's own company and had a large summer house at Monmouth Beach, New Jersey.

Louis died unexpectedly in Montana while touring with his company in 1910. Alphie passed in 1940. Their remains are buried in the Hendricks family plot in Kansas City, Missouri. Alphie was the aunt of the father of the letter's owner who made the correspondence available to me. He has since sold the letter to a private collector.

Robert Lincoln did attend Harvard College, but he did not enroll until 1860. When he took the entrance exams in 1859 he failed miserably and, upon receiving advice from Harvard President Dr. James Walker, undertook a year of preparatory work at Phillips Academy, in Exeter, New Hampshire.

Robert graduated from Phillips Exeter Academy not long after his father's



Robert Todd Lincoln LFA-0552

biography four years later. Abraham was pleased to brag about his son's achievements. He wrote to his friend Anson G. Henry, "Our oldest boy 'Bob' has been away from us nearly a year at school. He will enter Harvard University this month. He promises well, considering we never controlled him much." Robert Lincoln graduated Harvard in 1864, served briefly on General U.S. Grant's staff during the final months of the Civil War, and ultimately became a lawyer in Chicago.

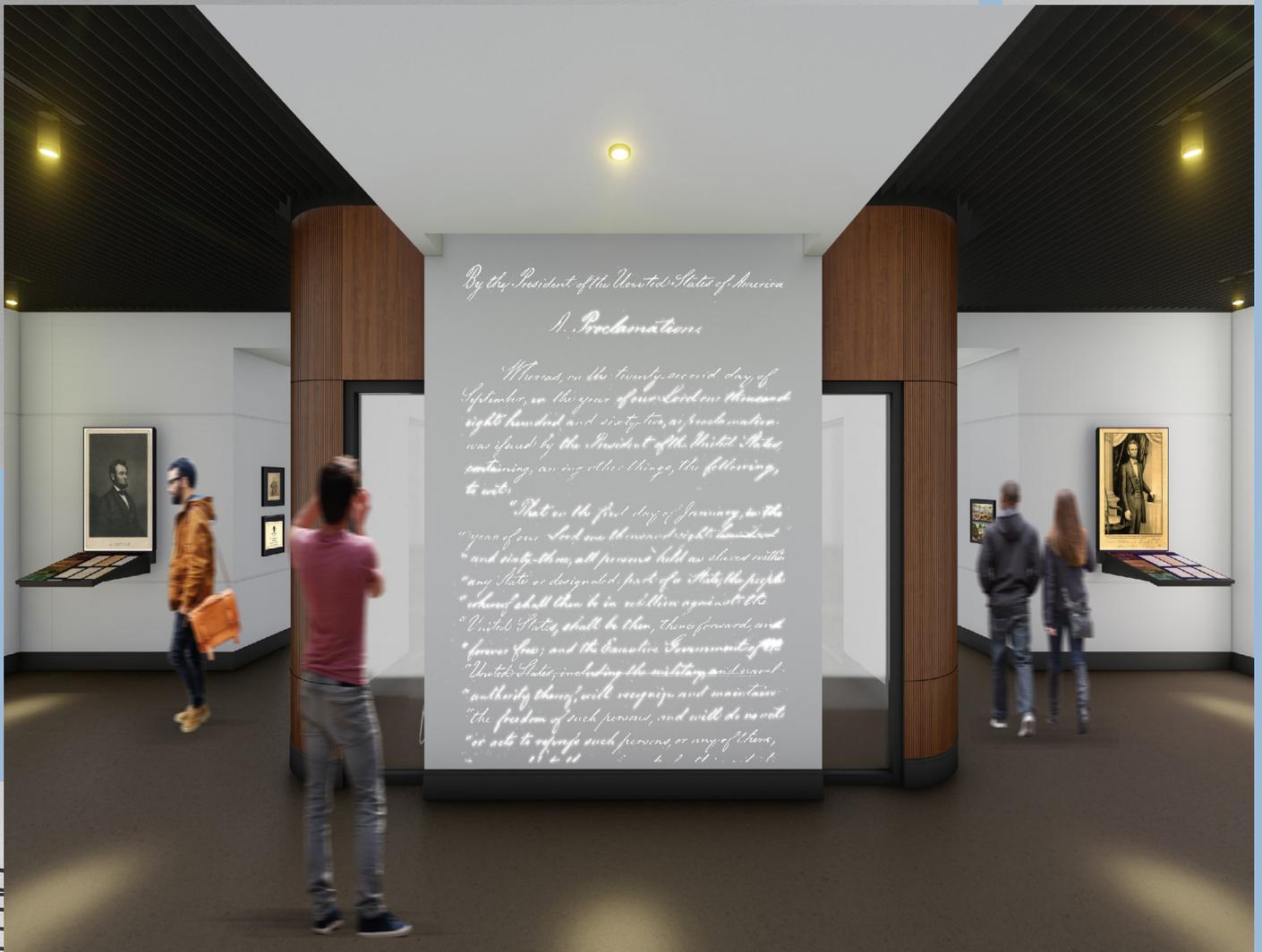
Jason Emerson is a journalist and historian. He is the author of *The Madness of Mary Lincoln*.

THE ROLLAND CENTER *FOR* LINCOLN RESEARCH

The Rolland Center for Lincoln Research will feature items from the Lincoln Financial Foundation Collection, one of the world's largest collection of items related to our 16th President. It will be made up of digital interactive exhibits that will engage all knowledge levels and allow them to interact with items from the Collection.



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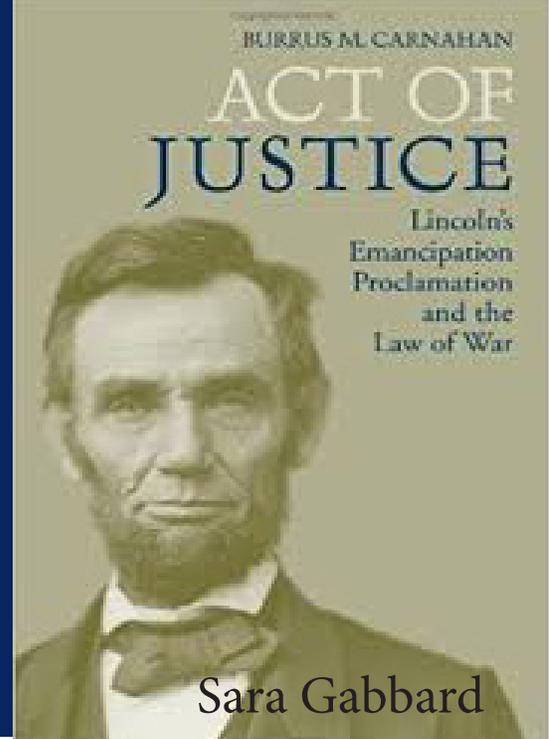
The Rolland Center will also contain a scholar-in-residence program which will expand existing Lincoln knowledge and inspire individuals of all ages to study and explore the life and times of Abraham Lincoln through access to primary documents and Lincoln Librarians.

The Rolland Center for Lincoln research will be located in the Allen County Public Library in Fort Wayne, Indiana. For more information, please visit www.FriendsOfTheLincolnCollection.org.

An Interview with Burrus M. Carnahan

regarding his book

Act of Justice: Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation and the Law of War



Sara Gabbard: Much has been written about the Emancipation Proclamation and Lincoln's decision to issue it. How is your book different and what does it add?

Burrus Carnahan: The book explores the international context of Lincoln's act. Americans think of the Emancipation Proclamation as a unique historical event. It was not. Lincoln's decree was actually the last great emancipation proclamation in Western military history.

The earliest emancipation proclamation I found in my research was issued by the king of Spain in 1699, following the founding of Charleston, South Carolina, by the British. Spain regarded the northern border of its colony in Florida as extending all the way to southern Virginia. Spanish authorities in Florida therefore regarded the founding of Charleston as an invasion of their territory. While they did not resort to military action, they did retaliate by issuing a decree that any British slaves who made it to Spanish territory would be given their freedom. When this action was reported to Spain, the king ratified and reissued the decision in his own name. The Spanish sent British slaves who escaped to Florida to Fort Mose, north of Saint Augustine. This settlement acted as a buffer between the English and Spanish colonies.

Thereafter, emancipation of the enemy's slaves was widely used as a weapon in the colonial wars of the eighteenth century, the Napoleonic wars, and the Latin American liberation wars. All the major colonial powers, including Great Britain, France, and Spain, as well as the Latin American leader Simón Bolívar, offered freedom to their en-

emies' slaves at one time or another. Most notably, Britain offered freedom to American slaves during both the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812.

By the beginning of the nineteenth century, emancipation proclamations were a common and well-established weapon during armed conflicts in the Western Hemisphere. If the Confederate States of America was what it claimed to be, that is, an independent, sovereign nation at war with another sovereign nation, it had little ground for objecting to Lincoln's Proclamation. The Confederate answer was to claim that the Emancipation Proclamation was really intended to incite an armed slave rebellion and the massacre of innocent white civilians. Historically, of course, this bloody rebellion never occurred. Enslaved people wanted their freedom, not revenge.

SG: You stated that "Not until April 1863 did the Federal government issue a formal statement declaring its intention to apply the law of war to Confederate forces." Please explain.

BC: Washington and Richmond had very different ideas about the nature of the war they were fighting. The Lincoln administration regarded secession as illegitimate, and the Confederate government as nothing more than a very large and well-organized criminal conspiracy. (Whenever President Lincoln had to publicly identify the enemy, he usually referred to it as the "so-called" Confederate States.) As noted above, the government in Richmond regarded itself as a sovereign nation at war entitled to all the rights and powers international law (also referred to as the "law of nations") accorded to a state at war. Concerned that it might

lend legitimacy to the Confederacy, the Union government was naturally reluctant to treat Confederate soldiers and sailors in accordance with the international laws of war.

The Lincoln administration's policy collided with reality very quickly. One of the president's earliest acts was to impose a blockade on the seaports of the South. A blockade was an international legal institution, and its invocation by the United States gave Great Britain and France grounds for declaring their neutrality in the Civil War. This also allowed these European powers to grant a limited recognition of the Confederacy as a "belligerent" in the war. Recognition as a belligerent gave Confederate merchants the right to trade with Britain and France, and access to their harbors by Confederate warships.

As a practical matter, it was physically impossible for the United States to charge all captured Confederate soldiers with treason and bring them to trial. Also, the Northern public wanted to ensure that Union soldiers in the hands of the South would be treated as prisoners of war under international law, and the Confederacy would only do that if their own soldiers were given comparable treatment. By January of 1862, the United States was quietly according Confederate armed forces all the rights of a sovereign belligerent in an international war. However, it was not until April 24, 1863, that the U.S. War Department issued General Orders #100, "Instructions for The Government of Armies of The United States in the Field," (also known as the "Lieber Code") formally acknowledging that the Civil War would be fought in accordance with the inter-



War Department Building OC-1132

national laws and customs of war.

If the Confederacy was to be accorded all the rights of an independent nation under the laws of war, then logically it should also be subject to all the internationally lawful methods and means of waging war, including the emancipation of its enslaved people. In a sense, Jefferson Davis' demand that international law applied in the Civil War backfired with the Emancipation Proclamation.

SG: Did President Lincoln ever refer to the law of war as a legal basis for the Emancipation Proclamation?

BC: The only time Lincoln offered a legal justification for the Proclamation was in his August 26, 1863, public letter to the Illinois politician James C. Conkling. There he expressly referred to the law of war as the basis of the Proclamation. Conkling had invited the president to speak to a mass meeting of "unconditional Union men" to be held at Springfield, Illinois. Unable to travel that far from Washington, the president sent Conkling a letter that dealt with many issues raised by the war, including the constitutionality of the Emancipation Proclamation. The pertinent language is the following:

I think the constitution invests its Commander-in-chief, with the law of war, in time of war. The most that can be said, if so much, is, that slaves are property. Is there--has there ever been--any question that by the law of war, property, both of enemies and friends, may be taken when needed? And is it not needed whenever taking it, helps us, or hurts the enemy? Armies, the world over, destroy enemies' property when they can not [sic] use it; and even destroy their own to keep it from the enemy. Civilized belligerents do all in their power to help themselves, or hurt the enemy, except a few things regarded as barbarous or cruel. Among the exceptions are the massacre of vanquished foes, and non-combatants, male and female.

The letter was frequently reprinted as a Republican campaign document in 1863 and 1864.

SG: What is the relevance of the Lieber Code to your study?

BC: As noted above, the Lieber Code, or General Orders #100, was the official document in which the United States announced its decision to generally apply the laws and customs of war in its relations with the Confederacy. The Code was developed to provide Army officers with information they would need to implement the policy.

When the Civil War started there were about 16,000 officers and enlisted men in the U.S. Army. By 1864 Lincoln had around a half a million men under arms. Obviously, most of the officers of the expanded wartime army were appointed from civilian life. Professional officers had learned the laws and customs of war from their study of military history and tactics at West Point, and on the job in the war with Mexico. Officers appointed from civil life on the other hand would typically know nothing about the laws and customs of war.

As it happened, Major General Henry Halleck, the commanding general of the Army, was himself an authority on international law, and realized that the Army needed a concise summary of the laws and customs of war for the guidance of officers in the field. For this he turned to another expert in this field, Dr. Francis Lieber of Columbia University.

Dr. Lieber had an interesting background. A native of Prussia, Lieber was old enough to have served in the final campaign of the Napoleonic Wars. Severely wounded at Namur, Belgium, he had been left to die on the battlefield. Persecuted in Prussia due to his democratic political beliefs he fled to England and later the United States. Unable to find academic employment in New England, he accepted a teaching position at a college in South Carolina, where he taught for three decades, carefully concealing his anti-slavery beliefs. Shortly before the war he accepted a position on the faculty of Columbia College (soon to be Columbia University) in New York. His eldest son remained in South Carolina and was mortally wounded in 1862 while fighting for the Confederacy. His other two sons joined the Union army and one was badly wounded in the Battle of Fort Donelson.

As a combat veteran, a strong Unionist and an enemy of slavery who also had ties to the South, with sons in both armies, Lieber appeared an ide-

al choice to draft a code of conduct for the Federal army. Appointed to a War Department board for this purpose, Lieber produced a draft codification of the international laws and customs of war. After minor changes by the two generals who were also on the board, and approval by President Lincoln, Lieber's work was issued by the War Department as General Orders #100, April 24, 1863.

Popularly known as the "Lieber Code," General Orders #100 covered most issues likely to be encountered by U.S. Army officers in the field, from the treatment of prisoners of war and enemy guerillas to dealing with civilian property. For our purposes, it codified the Emancipation Proclamation as permanent U.S. military policy. It declared slavery to be inconsistent with the law of war, and in any future conflict the U.S. Army would recognize the freedom of enemy slaves. Widely admired in Europe, the Lieber Code remained the Army's standard guidance on the laws and customs of war into the twentieth century.

SG: What impact did *Brown v. United States* have in establishing a precedent for the eventual seizure of slaves?

BC: The 1814 Supreme Court decision in *Brown* arose from a trivial incident during the War of 1812. Before the War, British merchants had purchased 550 tons of pine lumber in the United States and chartered an American merchant ship to transport it from Savannah, Georgia, to the English port of Plymouth. The lumber was still in the United States when Congress declared war, after which the British owners unloaded the lumber and sold it to Armitz Brown, an American citizen. The local U.S. district attorney sued to have the cargo seized for the U.S. government as enemy property, arguing that the sale to Brown was illegal, and that the cargo, therefore, would still be enemy property. The United States prevailed in the lower court and Brown appealed to the Supreme Court.

The Court's opinion, by Chief Justice John Marshall, stated that under international law "war gives to the sovereign," here the United States, "full right to take the persons and confiscate the property of the enemy, wherever found." In this case, however, the Court found that Congress had not enacted any law giving the federal courts jurisdiction to seize enemy property that was in U.S. territory at the outbreak of the war. The lower court ruling was reversed.

The Court did not address the question whether the contract of sale was void. Also, Chief Justice Marshall made a point of noting that the district attorney had acted on his own authority in bringing the lawsuit, and that President Madison had not authorized the seizure of the cargo. This suggested that the decision might have been different had the president himself ordered the seizure under his war powers.

The *Brown* case is important here because it established that under U.S. law the government had the right to seize enemy property in war. As Lincoln noted in his letter to James Conkling, even the most conservative men regarded slaves as property (the most extreme proslavery position would be that they were only property, not entitled to be treated as human beings). Enemy property, he then pointed out, could be taken or destroyed. There might be dispute over whether Congress or the president should properly exercise this power, but the federal power itself was clearly established.

It should be pointed out that enemy property included all goods subject to the power of the enemy government. Whether the owner of such property actually supported the enemy government or its war effort was irrelevant. The key was, could the property be used to support the enemy war economy? If yes, then it was subject to seizure or destruction.

SG: Were the Confiscation Acts in compliance with the Law of War? Were they constitutional?

BC: Yes to both. During the debates in Congress, supporters put forward two arguments for the constitutionality of the 1861 and 1862 Confiscation Acts. First, it was argued that seizure of property and freeing the slaves of disloyal owners were proper punishments for treason. Secondly, it was argued that inhabitants of the Confederacy could be treated as enemy persons under the law of war. If so, their property could be seized under the government's war powers.

The constitutionality of the Acts came before the Supreme Court in the 1871 case of *Page v. United States*. Page was the executor of Samuel Miller, a resident of the Confederacy who owned stock in two northern railroads. In 1863 the government successfully filed suit to seize his stock on the basis that it belonged to a "public enemy" who was aiding the Confederate government. After the War, Miller, who had not known about the trial, filed suit to reverse the seizure of his stock. (At some point he died and his executor continued the fight in the Supreme Court.)

Miller argued that the Confiscation Acts were intended to punish him for treason and that the trial court should have accorded him the rights of a criminal defendant under the Constitution. In reply, the United States argued that the Acts, and the forfeiture, should be upheld as an exercise of the government's war powers under the law of nations, where the constitutional rights of criminal defendants did not apply. The Court agreed with the government by a vote of six to three. The dissenting justices agreed with Miller that the Acts were punitive, not an exercise of war powers.

SG: References to John Quincy Adams are numerous. Please give an explanation of his role in the development of your history.

BC: With his father, John Adams, John Quincy Adams was one of only two anti-slavery presidents before 1860. After his presidency (1825-29), Adams served as a congressman from Massachusetts from 1831 to his death in 1848. One of his principal issues in Congress was opposition to the "gag rule" imposed on the House of Representatives by the slave states. This required that all citizen petitions related to slavery be permanently tabled and not debated. The argument of the South was that slavery was solely a state issue, of no concern to the federal government, therefore petitions regarding it were outside the jurisdiction of Congress.

Adams countered that, historically, slavery had been intertwined with issues of war and peace, definitely a federal concern. For this proposition he cited the cases of military emancipation by Great Britain, France, and Spain, discussed earlier. In an argument that surely must have led to great gnashing of teeth among his southern colleagues, he observed that if the slave states needed to call upon U.S. military resources to suppress a major slave uprising, the federal government might have to negotiate an armistice that granted freedom to at least some of the rebels.

For purposes of this study, Adams is important for the historical precedents he collected. In 1862 a Massachusetts lawyer named William Whiting drew heavily on Adams' speeches in writing a long pamphlet called *The War Powers of the President and the Legislative Powers of Congress in Relation to Rebellion, Treason, and Slavery*. While many learned arguments were published for and against the legality of emancipation, Whiting's work was the most influential publication in favor, and was admired by Lincoln. Whiting was rewarded by being appointed the first (1862-65) Solicitor for the War Department. Whiting expanded *War Powers* to a

full-length book that went through 43 editions, the last published in 1871.

SG: Please elaborate on the concept of "Military Necessity" as Lincoln understood it.

BC: The principle of military necessity is still a major source for the law of war. It is important to understand that it does not require true "necessity" to justify a military action. As a practical matter, all that is needed to establish military necessity is a rational relationship between a proposed action and the defeat of the enemy's armed forces. Also, the proposed action must not violate an established rule of the law of war (e.g., use of poison). That Lincoln had a similarly broad understanding of the concept is suggested by his defense of military emancipation in his 1863 letter to James Conkling.

President Lincoln had read and approved the Lieber Code. If he had been asked for a definition of military necessity, he might have referred to Articles 15 and 16 of the Code:

15. Military necessity admits of all direct destruction of life or limb of armed enemies, and of other persons whose destruction is incidentally unavoidable in the armed contests of the war; it allows of the capturing of every armed enemy, and every enemy of importance to the hostile government, or of peculiar danger to the captor; it allows of all destruction of property, and obstruction of the ways and channels of traffic, travel, or communication, and of all withholding of sustenance or means of life from the enemy; of the appropriation of whatever an enemy's country affords necessary for the subsistence and safety of the army, and of such deception as does not involve the breaking of good faith ... regarding agreements entered into

16. Military necessity does not admit of cruelty - that is, the infliction of suffering for the sake of suffering or for revenge, nor of maiming or wounding except in fight, nor of torture to extort confessions.

President Lincoln's decisions as commander in chief reflect this understanding of military necessity. He repeatedly warned his generals that they must avoid acting out of revenge or inflicting cruelty for cruelty's sake.

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The Convoluted and Controversial Journey of a Lincoln Statue

Charles Hubbard

The journey began with the idea of presenting a Lincoln statue as a gesture of friendship and peace between the United States and Great Britain in 1910. The International Commission to Celebrate the Hundred Years of Peace between two nations was established to consider the possibilities. The Americans for their part proposed presenting to the British a replica of the Saint-Gaudens *Lincoln* that was in Chicago's Grant Park. The British accepted and offered a splendid permanent site in Parliament Square. Robert Lincoln, the only surviving son of Mary and Abraham Lincoln, enthusiastically supported the idea. He lavished praise on the Saint-Gaudens statue and attended the dedication in Chicago. Unfortunately, the outbreak of hostilities in Europe leading to World War I intervened, and the commemorative effort collapsed.

This story is about the journey of a different Lincoln statue to England. In 1913 Charles P. Taft, a prominent Cincinnati lawyer and brother of the former president, commissioned the artist George Gray Bernard to create a statue of Abraham Lincoln. He planned to donate the statue to the people of Cincinnati. Taft's idea was to use the statute to celebrate 100 years of peace and friendship between the United States and Great Britain as originally planned in 1910. He also planned to send a replica of Bernard's creation to England as the original International Commission had proposed. Actually, the conflict between the two nations had concluded in December 1814 with the signing of the Treaty of Ghent. Therefore, the timing for the celebration was appropriate. Unfortunately for Taft's plan, the outbreak of World War I combined with Bernard's years of copious research postponed the event. Eventually, a replica of Bernard's *Lincoln* would complete its delayed and controver-

sial journey not to London, but from Cincinnati to Manchester, England.

Taft bought and paid for the statue and donated it to the people of Cincinnati in 1917. The statue still stands over 100 years later at its original location in Cincinnati's Lytle Park. It took Bernard, a well-established artist, almost four years of research and careful work to complete the bronze image of Lincoln. The finished work was unveiled on March 31, 1917. Over 20,000 Cincinnatians turned out to join in the celebration; 10,000 school-children, Boy Scouts and city officials paraded to the park. According to the *Cincinnati Enquirer* the crowd was so large that "some people hung out of second-story windows to catch a glimpse of Lincoln." Lincoln's admirers came from all corners of American society. A rabbi, a bishop, and even a former Confederate soldier participated in the official dedication of the statue. After the dedication ceremony and Lincoln's statue was unveiled, the first leg of the journey was finished.

Charles Taft hoped that the presence of Lincoln in Lytle Park would remind Cincinnatians and all Americans of the principles of Abraham Lincoln. Taft wanted to confirm the unity and devotion of the American people to Lincoln's vision of a united nation. Undoubtedly, Taft was pleased when the poet Milton Bronner hailed the statue as "a symbol of democracy." Certainly, one of Lincoln's principles was that all men are created equal under the law and should have an equal opportunity to rise and pursue their dreams and ambitions. Bernard wanted his creation to reflect the struggles and hardships often associated with the American experience.

From the very beginning of this un-



Statue of Abraham Lincoln, Manchester, England
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dertaking, Taft and Bernard wanted this statue to represent the "real Lincoln." They wanted a likeness that reflected the rugged individualism of a frontiersman. Lincoln was a man of the people and both men wanted to reflect that image. They believed that Lincoln should appear as a hard-working man who rose from humble beginnings as a farmer and rail splitter to the highest office in the land. Particularly for Bernard, the image needed to reflect, "the mighty man who grew from our soul and the hardships of the earth." Bernard believed that the retouched images, particularly the campaign photographs, frequently used by other artists did not accurately reflect Lincoln's appearance.

Bernard's approach was very different from other artists who took on the subject. A major difference was that Bernard did not study the fifty-year-old photographs of Lincoln. Instead he worked from life masks that were cast of Lincoln's face. To create the mask the artist Leonard Volk used wet plaster molded onto the face of Lincoln while he literally breathed through a straw until the plaster hardened and could be removed. The life masks of Lincoln done by Volk in 1860 and again in 1864 were avail-

able to Bernard. Volk also did molds of Lincoln's hands. In fact, Volk had suggested in 1860 that Lincoln hold a piece of broomstick to simulate holding a rolled-up document. Bronze castings were made from the original plaster molds in 1886, and Bernard relied on both for his research. Another life mask available to Bernard was done by Clark Mills in February 1865. The Mills mask shows Lincoln with the beard he had grown during his presidency. When comparing his casting of Lincoln to that of Volk, Mills commented that the Volk mask revealed an enthusiastic and energetic younger man while his 1865 mask reflected exhaustion and sadness. It appears that Bernard relied more on the Volk mask than he did on the later one done by Mills. The Bernard statue has no beard and reflects the higher cheekbones that Volk mentioned when commenting on his image. Bernard said he memorized the facial veins in the casts. He also paid attention to the castings of Lincoln's hands.

Bernard's approach was questioned and frequently criticized. However, his next step in preparing for the project proved even more controversial. He decided to advertise and try to locate a real - life model to pose for the statue. For over a year he interviewed various stand-in candidates. Eventually he found a man who lived just 15 minutes from Lincoln's birthplace in Kentucky. The man was a farmer like Lincoln and stood 6'4" tall just like Lincoln. He had big hands and wore a size 14 shoe. For Bernard, the similarities were remarkable. However, there were some notable differences. The model was 40 years old and unlike Lincoln was considered mentally slow with the mind of a child. One of Bernard's critics argued, "how could an uncouth Kentuckian with abnormally large hands and feet do anything but defile the sacred memory of Lincoln's great sacrifice." Nevertheless, Bernard proceeded to create his vision of the "Savior of the nation." By this time, Bernard had chosen a rather remarkable title for his creation, *Lincoln in Thought*. The title provoked more criticism and even the National Commission of Fine Arts and the National Academy of Design joined in the criticism.

Why were so many people and the country's most prominent fine art

and historical organizations so critical of Bernard's vision of the sixteenth president? People from every corner of the country felt compelled to share their opinion of the statue now residing in Cincinnati's Lytle Park. One reason was because this statue of Lincoln was not supposed to remain just in Cincinnati. Charles P. Taft proposed to send a replica of Bernard's vision of Lincoln to London. Taft proposed a tribute to the man who had led the country through war as a celebration of peace between the two countries. The great war in Europe was coming to an end and a celebration of peace was certainly in order. At least it was in Taft's view. Taft would cover all the cost and make copies and send them to England at a cost of \$100,000 (\$2 million in today's money); the British only needed to provide a prominent and suitable place to put Bernard's statue. And so began the second leg of the controversial journey.

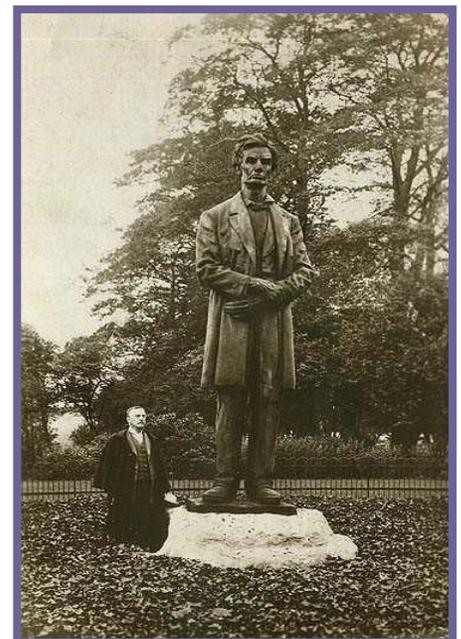
This is where the journey of the statue gets complicated and controversial. Despite the barrage of criticism, Bernard's statue was appreciated and even beloved by many working-class Americans. Many viewed the image of Lincoln as representing the rugged individualism and frontier spirit that was so much a part of the American experience. Bernard wrote that he believed that, "He must have stood as the republic should stand, strong, simple, carrying its weight unconsciously without pride in rank and culture." Taft was determined to proceed with this gift and opened negotiations with interested parties in England. As opinions on both sides of the controversy mounted, a New York newspaper summarized the dilemma as "the status of this gift statue, indeed, is complicated by so many considerations that it should be left to the Hague to determine its resolution."

Robert Lincoln was critical of the Bernard statue from the very beginning. However, when he heard of Taft's plan to send a replica to England he was so disturbed that he wrote a personal letter to former President William Howard Taft pleading with him to convince his brother to abandon this "awful ambition." In Robert Lincoln's view the statue was a "monstrous figure, grotesque as a likeness of President Lincoln and the inflammatory

as an effigy." Robert Lincoln was not without substantial influence in Congress and he persuaded one congressman to write to President Woodrow Wilson asking the White House to intercede to prevent the "atrocious gift that might jeopardize our good relations with the British." The insults continued to pour in and inflamed passions on both sides of the debate.

Robert Todd Lincoln served as Secretary of War for James Garfield and Chester Arthur and later as U.S. Minister to the United Kingdom from 1889 to 1893 and maintained a close relationship with Presidents Benjamin Harrison and Grover Cleveland. Throughout his time in government service, Robert Lincoln developed close friendships and a network of political support on both sides of the Atlantic. Therefore, he was a formidable opponent to Charles Taft's ambitious gift program. At the time of the controversy, Robert Lincoln was serving as President and Chairman of the Board of the Pullman railroad company in Chicago.

It was not until the dedication of the Bernard statue in Cincinnati, and after Charles Taft offered a replica of the Bernard *Lincoln* go to London, that tempers began to flare up. When the Centenary Committee was without funds or any good prospects for moving forward, they gratefully accepted Taft's offer, as did the British. The replica was scheduled



Abraham Lincoln Statue in Manchester, postcard
ManchesterHistory.net

for delivery before the end of 1918.

Robert Todd Lincoln wasted no time in organizing the opposition. He enlisted the support of Joseph Choate, a former ambassador like himself, along with Nicholas Murray and other influential friends. Bernard attempted to reason with Robert Lincoln. Bernard wrote to Robert Lincoln, "your father belongs to future ages, and all sculptors of this generation and those to come, must have as their birthright, as children of democracy and art, full liberty to express their interpretations of the life of Lincoln." Bernard went on to suggest that the 74-year-old son of Abraham Lincoln "simply did not remember the young, rough, beardless man who was his father." Despite the support of some prominent artists, popular opinion remained overwhelmingly negative. Bernard's portrait of a homespun, democrat from the working-class deteriorated into a "colossal clodhopper," wrote one critic.

Much of the criticism was reasonable and somewhat deserved. Kenyon Cox wrote "that Lincoln face is overly wrinkled and ugly much like his clothes. The elongated neck and prominent Adam's apple contribute to the ungainly impression." The sculptor's effort at authenticity does miss the mark with the oversized footwear. The hands are elongated and the effort to illustrate Lincoln's long arms results in a proportionately incorrect placement of the hands. In fact, a Massachusetts congressman, John Rogers, regaled his colleagues in October referring to the "stomachache statue". Rogers claimed the statue appeared more as a "tramp with the colic." After Rogers' speech, Congress voted on a resolution requesting the president to halt the shipment of the Bernard replica to England.

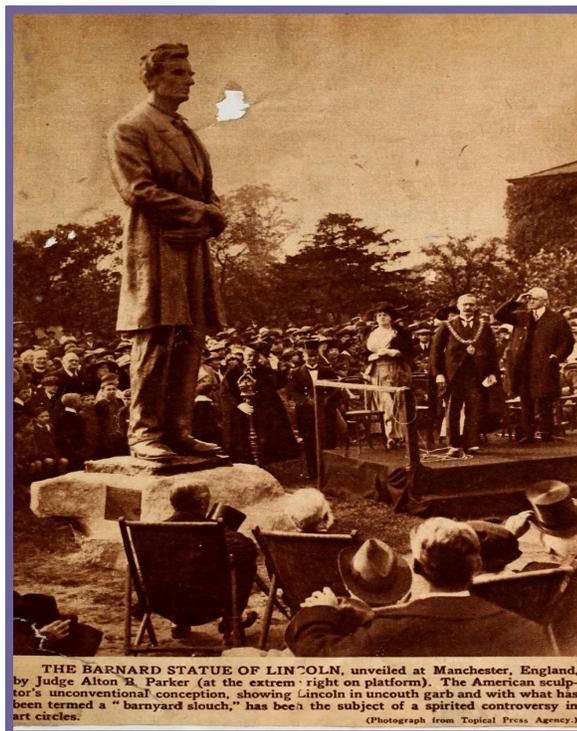
The resolution was unnecessary because the British, after the barrage of criticism, had withdrawn their offer to accept Taft's gift. The British wrote diplomatically that "despite the generosity of the American people the cost of ship tonnage cannot be spared to any statue during the war." The *Philadelphia Inquirer* conducted a referendum and concluded that the American people overwhelmingly preferred almost any statue to Bernard's *Lincoln*. Eleven months later the Centenary Commit-

tee voted to return to the original proposal to send a replica of the Saint-Gaudens' *Lincoln* to London. Robert Lincoln offered to pay for the replica, but instead the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace funded the gift on behalf of the American people. The Saint-Gaudens *Lincoln* was delivered and unveiled in Parliament Square where it stands today to commemorate lasting peace and friendship between the two nations.

The Taft family promptly offered their gift to Manchester, claiming that no statue of Lincoln could be more appropriate for a working-class city. The *Guardian* observed that, "here is a man who needs no sentimental treatment." The people of Manchester gratefully accepted and Bernard's *Lincoln* was delivered and still resides in Manchester. Why was Manchester an appropriate place for Bernard's *Lincoln*?

The people of Manchester had a unique historical connection to Abraham Lincoln. During the American Civil War, the textile workers in Manchester's cotton mills suffered from severe unemployment when raw cotton from the southern United States was withheld. However, they remained passionately opposed to the institution of slavery and wrote to Lincoln expressing their support for the abolition of slavery. Despite the hardships caused by the "cotton famine," workers of Manchester supported Lincoln. President Lincoln responded on January 19, 1863 acknowledging and sympathizing with the economic difficulties confronting the working people of Manchester. Lincoln wrote, "under the circumstances, I cannot but regard your decisive utterances upon the question as an instance of sublime Christian heroism which has not been surpassed in any age or in any country."

Bernard's *Lincoln* was unveiled in a ceremony in 1919 and placed in a garden area in Manchester known as Platt Fields. The commemorative purpose for the statue had changed from the original idea posed by Charles



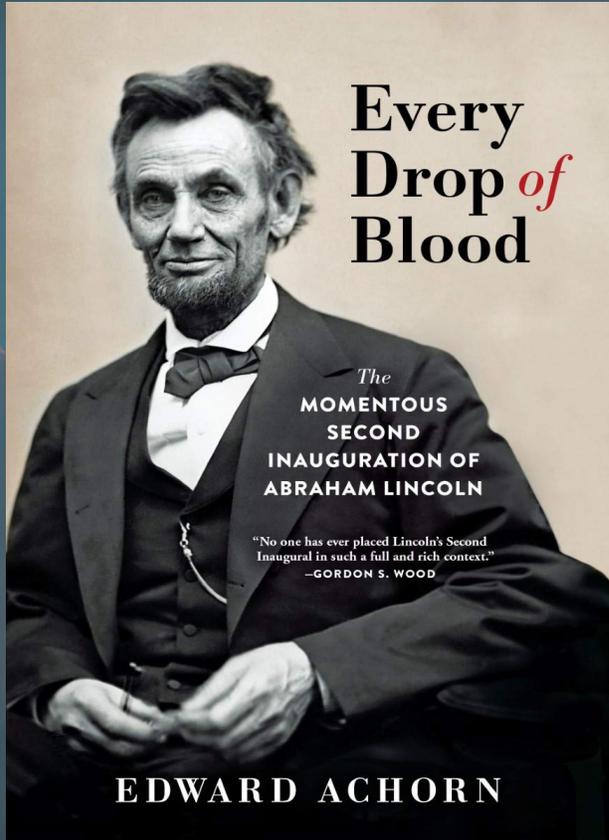
THE BARNARD STATUE OF LINCOLN, unveiled at Manchester, England, by Judge Alton B. Parker (at the extreme right on platform). The American sculptor's unconventional conception, showing Lincoln in uncouth garb and with what has been termed a "barnyard slouch," has been the subject of a spirited controversy in art circles. (Photograph from Topical Press Agency.)

Unveiling the Barnard Statue, Manchester, Topical Press Agency, 71.2009.085.02734

Taft. Manchester's Lincoln statue commemorated the liberal values and emphasized the noble sacrifices made by the workers of Manchester during the "cotton famine." Further, it confirms their support of Lincoln's dual objectives of abolishing slavery and preserving republican government.

Manchester's statue of Lincoln remained in Platt Fields Park until 1986 when it was transferred to its present location in Lincoln Square. A new base was provided with excerpts from the correspondence of December 1862 and January 1863. The dedication reads in part, "the support that the working people of Manchester gave to their fight for the abolition of slavery... By supporting the Union under President Lincoln... During a time of considerable unemployment throughout the cotton industry." Although the purpose and vision of Charles Taft for Lincoln's statue had changed, it nevertheless symbolizes the liberal values of freedom and popular government that Lincoln represents for both nations. The convoluted and controversial journey of Bernard's *Lincoln* was at last complete.

Charles Hubbard is Professor of History and Lincoln Historian at Lincoln Memorial University. He is the author of Lincoln, the Constitution, and Presidential Leadership.



Every Drop of Blood— The Momentous Second Inauguration of Abraham Lincoln By Edward Achorn

Review by E. Phelps Gay

Do we need another book about Lincoln's Second Inaugural? After all, didn't Ronald C. White, Jr. cover this ground in his excellent 2002 book, *Lincoln's Greatest Speech*? Having read Edward Achorn's entertaining new volume, my answers are Yes and No.

Yes, because Achorn attempts something different. With its diverse and colorful cast of characters—from Walt Whitman to John Wilkes Booth, Clara Barton to Frederick Douglass, Kate Chase Sprague to Alexander Gardner—*Every Drop of Blood* reads like

a gripping non-fiction novel. Achorn puts us there, in the muddy streets of the District, with its gaslights and brothels, in brick mansions where elegant soirées are held and gossip exchanged, and in hotels and boarding houses where plots are hatched. We are given vivid portraits of interesting (sometimes vain or villainous) people swirling around the city, learning what each person said and did as the day and hour of this most consequential presidential oration approached. In the pages of this book the Washington, D.C., of March 1865 comes alive.

Of course, in some respects the story is well-known. On the morning of March 4, 1865, Andrew Johnson gets drunk and makes a fool of himself. Alexander Gardner takes a timeless photograph. Walt Whitman watches from the wings and writes. Lincoln gives an unusually profound speech. Booth listens, seethes, and plots. Afterwards, at the White House, Frederick Douglass deems the oration a "sacred effort." Yet we also learn things we (or at least I) didn't know about people like Selden Connor (a Union soldier injured in the Battle of the Wilderness) and Louis J. Weichmann (John Surratt's roommate), Benjamin Brown French (Commissioner of Public Buildings) and George T. Brown (Senate Sergeant-at-Arms), Lucy Lambert Hale (daughter of an abolitionist Senator whose photograph is found in Booth's pocket) and Adolphe Pineton, Marquis de Chambrun (French diplomat and diarist).

A good deal of humor appears along the way, as when Ohio Senator Benjamin Wade offers this comment on the pompous Salmon P. Chase: "Chase is a good man, but his theology is unsound. He thinks there is a fourth person in the Trinity."

What is remarkable is that Mr. Achorn, an editor at the *Providence Journal* whose previous books focused on nineteenth-century baseball, has



Abraham Lincoln Delivering his Second Inaugural LN-1135



Lincoln's Reinaugural at the Capitol, March 4, 1865 71.2009.081.10128

pored over a mountain of evidence (letters, diaries, memoirs, books, newspaper accounts) and condensed it into a good story, well told, coming in at under 300 pages. Of particular interest is that in one form or another all of these characters seem to have known each other. For example, Alexander Gardner knew Walt Whitman and loved *Leaves of Grass*. Chase, unsurprisingly, hated the book. Whitman saw Booth play Shakespeare's *Richard III*, comparing his performance unfavorably to that given by his father, Junius Brutus Booth. Lincoln and Whitman seem to have nodded to each other frequently as Lincoln rode on horseback to and from the Soldiers' Home on warm summer days. Frederick Douglass knew and admired Chase, considering him much more anti-slavery than Lincoln. On the eve of Lincoln's inauguration, Chase invited Douglass to his home for tea.

Here are some of the interesting questions addressed (or dramatized) in this book. On the night before and the day of the inauguration, where was Lincoln? What exactly was going on in the Capitol? Did the legislators pull an "all-nighter," and was any significant legislation signed by the president? (The answer is yes, but I will say no more so as not to spoil your reading pleasure.) Was Lincoln presented with a last-minute peace plan (or process) that night to end the war? What did Edwin Stanton say about it, and what did Lincoln do?

On the morning of the inauguration, did Booth have a VIP pass? How close did he get to Lincoln before considered a threat and escorted away

from the rotunda? Who grabbed him by the arm? Did Booth intend to kill the president during the speech?

What was the weather like? Did the sun really "burst forth" the moment Lincoln began to speak? With thousands in the audience, could Lincoln be heard? Did the audience pay close attention? Did they cheer? Where exactly was Alexander Gardner standing when he photographed Lincoln delivering his speech? How did the envious Chief Justice Chase handle the job of administering the oath of office to his rival Abraham Lincoln? What did he write and send to Mary Lincoln afterwards?

How did people react to the speech? We know Lincoln believed the speech would not be "immediately popular." Was he right? What did the newspapers say? (Lincoln's prediction that the speech would nevertheless "wear well" may be the greatest understatement in American history.)

Unlike Ronald White's book, *Every Drop of Blood* does not purport to take a "deep dive" into the Biblical origins and theological meaning of the speech. At the same time, this reader found Achorn's analysis of the speech insightful and his appreciation of its literary qualities illuminating. We all know Lincoln read the Bible and Shakespeare, but what role did these reading experiences play in his drafting of the Second Inaugural? Achorn takes us through Lincoln's well-known regard for Hamlet's famous line: "There's a divinity that shapes our ends/Rough-hew them how we will." Moreover, he proper-

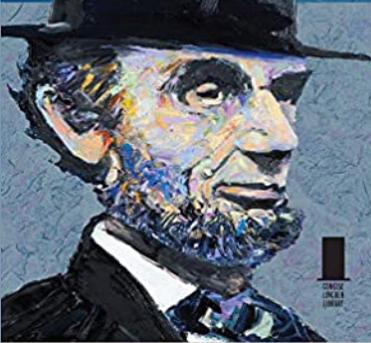
ly notes that in his 1862 "Meditation on the Divine Will," discovered and titled by John Hay after the president's death, Lincoln reflected that "The will of God prevails," adding: "In the present civil war it is quite possible that God's purpose is something different from the purpose of either party."

He also engages with Lincoln's references to the Book of Matthew ("but let us judge not that we be not judged"), and the 19th Psalm ("the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether"). With its unusually dense clauses suggesting God had given to both North and South this terrible war as the "woe" due to the "offense" of slavery, the speech wasn't easy to digest. And yet as Lincoln finished he was greeted with a "long burst of applause." Achorn duly notes the difference between the inaugural crowds of 1861 and 1865, the former containing many southerners (perhaps even "insurgent agents"), the latter containing a large number of African American supporters and servicemen.

If I had to note any weak points in the book, I would say that while it is structured as a dramatic "count-down" of the 24 hours leading up to the speech, in some chapters the author veers off into descriptions of older historical events. These can be interesting and provide context, but they also detract from the narrative momentum. At its best, the book sticks to what happened on March 3rd and 4th, 1865. In addition, Achorn occasionally weighs us down with a surfeit of newspaper excerpts.

On the whole, Achorn's book illustrates once more that the Lincoln story can and should be told by talented people in different ways from different perspectives. The novelist, screenwriter, and writer-journalist should have a place at the table beside the indispensable professional historian. To put it another way, we most certainly need Burlingame, Guelzo, Holzer, McPherson, and Wilson, but we should also welcome into this wide tent Tony Kushner, George Saunders, Gore Vidal, and now Edward Achorn.

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An Interview with Lucas Morel regarding his book

Lincoln and the American Founding

Sara Gabbard

Sara Gabbard: I have always been fascinated by the fact that Lincoln's "four score and seven" years spoken at Gettysburg referred back to 1776. I would have thought that bringing "forth a new nation" would have been established by the Constitution, not by the Declaration of Independence.

Lucas Morel: That's a timely question given all the hullabaloo over the 1619 Project, which strangely considers 1619 the true founding year of America because of the introduction of Black enslaved people at Point Comfort, near the English colony of Jamestown. Lincoln considered July 4, 1776, the birthday of the United States of America because on that day, the representatives of "the good people of these colonies" declared their independence from Great Britain upon the self-evident truth "that all men are created equal" and therefore did not deserve to be ruled without their consent. The diverse 13 British colonies first became a nation when they announced the reasons for their separation from mother England, and that announcement came on the Fourth of July, 1776.

As important as the U.S. Constitution was to Lincoln, it represented a means to something higher—namely, the ends spelled out in the Declaration of Independence. In this way, the Declaration represents the soul of America, what Lincoln once called "the spirit of seventy-six," while the Constitution represents the form. Therefore, the real heart of the nation is expressed by its principles whereas its operation is expressed by the mechanisms laid out in its constitution.

SG: Your first chapter is titled "Lincoln, Washington, and the Fathers." You give a detailed account of Lincoln's admiration for George Washington. Did he ever comment

on the fact that Washington owned slaves?

LM: Frederick Douglass famously observed that "Washington could not die till he had broken the chains of his slaves," alluding to Washington freeing the slaves he had legal control of in his will. I don't remember Lincoln making a similar observation about Washington specifically. His comments about the founders' decision not to emancipate immediately upon establishing their independence from Great Britain usually related to explaining their efforts to erect the institutions of self-government on proper principles and trust that their operation over time would lead to the abolition of slavery "as fast as circumstances should permit." Lincoln acknowledged that Taney and Douglas were correct when they pointed out that the founders "did not at once, actually place them [Black people] on an equality with the whites."

However, he went on to add that "they did not at once, *or ever afterwards*, actually place all white people on an equality with one or another." This alluded to the fact that most *white* men were not allowed to vote, let alone hold office, in the early days of the American republic. Lincoln called attention to the selective use of history on behalf of policies designed to make slavery more difficult to remove, not easier. In this light, by the mid-1850s Lincoln lamented that "On the question of liberty, as a principle, we are not what we have been." Ironically, he was arguing that Americans were never so devoted to freedom than when they were surrounded by slaves. Alas, as the founding receded from literal view in the form of living remembrances in families who traced their ancestry to the American revolutionary era, Lincoln observed that white Americans were growing increasingly indifferent towards the enslavement of people who did not look

like them. This made the northerner Stephen Douglas, not southerners like Jefferson Davis, Alexander Stephens, and Howell Cobb, the greatest threat to the eventual eradication of slavery. Viewed in this light, Lincoln believed that Washington's ownership of slaves, or Henry Clay's and Zachary Taylor's for that matter, posed less of an obstacle to emancipation in America than northern politicians like Douglas, who preached indifference towards the extension of slavery into federal territory.

SG: What did Lincoln mean when he referred to his "ancient faith?" Why did he frame it in that way?

LM: He spoke of "my ancient faith" and "our ancient faith" in 1854 to distinguish the longstanding principles of the Declaration of Independence from the popular sovereignty expressed in the recently enacted Kansas-Nebraska Act. Associating the fundamental political beliefs of Americans with "faith" or religion was a way for Lincoln to suggest how profound, even sacred, the central ideals of the American regime are or should be. To speak of it as "ancient" implied that it was not a new faith or understanding but traditional and orthodox as contrasted with the bowdlerized version of self-government that Stephen Douglas enshrined in his Nebraska bill, which Lincoln saw as a recent innovation and not the genuine article.

An ancient faith also suggested truths that were timeless and universal. This comported with their expression in the formative document of their national existence, the Declaration of Independence, as "self-evident."

Thus to lose one's faith in, or devotion to, these ideals would be to turn away from the only sure ground of one's individual liberty in a government that operated according to the opinion of the citizenry. In his Peoria Address of 1854,

Lincoln said his “ancient faith” taught him that “all men are created equal.” He went on to call government by consent of the governed “the sheet anchor of American republicanism.” Moreover, in his one term in Congress (1847-49), he referred to the right of revolution as “a most valuable,—a most sacred right—a right, which we hope and believe, is to liberate the world.” Taken together, these founding beliefs of the fathers of the American republic—whom he playfully called “those old-time men” who had famously worked in “old Independence Hall”—represented the original doctrines or creed of American self-government. Lincoln portrayed this political faith of “our revolutionary fathers” as a conviction he believed was necessary to perpetuate the American way of life. I should add that in his first great speech, delivered before the Young Men’s Lyceum of Springfield, Illinois, in 1838, he spoke of “reverence for the Constitution and laws” as “the political religion of the nation” (his emphasis), but that was the only time he ever used that phrase. Understanding that their government was founded to promote their civil and religious liberty, succeeding generations of Americans ought to express their gratitude by scrupulously obeying the laws and appealing to courts to secure justice and not resort to mob violence or lynch law.

SG: What was Lincoln’s assessment of Thomas Jefferson? What did he mean when he wrote “All honor to Jefferson”?

LM: Lincoln fervently believed that the political *principles* Jefferson laid out in the Declaration of Independence were, as he put it in 1859, “the definitions and axioms of free society.” No doubt he was looking ahead to the 1860 election year and was trying to recruit Democrats to the Republican fold by praising Jefferson, their chieftain of old. Lincoln was invited to Boston to commemorate Jefferson’s birthday at a festival but could not take the time to make the trip. Instead, he wrote a brief but incisive letter in April 1859 praising Jefferson, which would be read at the event. Having recently lost his bid to replace the nation’s leading Democrat, Stephen A. Douglas, in the Senate, Lincoln never flagged in his efforts to get his countrymen to reclaim or “re-adopt” the ideals of the Declaration as the surest means of preserving the union of the American states. He was concerned that “the principles of Jefferson” were being jettisoned not just south but also north of the Mason-Dixon line, and therefore he enlisted the name and reputa-

tion of the original standard-bearer of the Democratic party to indicate that what modern-day Republicans were preaching was essentially the original belief in “the personal rights of men” once held by Jefferson and his party. He would argue later that year that contrary to Douglas’s “don’t care” policy regarding the expansion of slavery into federal territories, “This was not the opinion held by the good men of the Revolution of it. It was not the expressed opinion of Mr. Jefferson.”

That said, we cannot forget that Lincoln was a Whig, and therefore did not subscribe to the political *policies* of Jefferson’s Democratic-Republican party. With Henry Clay as his “beau ideal of a statesman,” he believed in Clay’s American System, which envisioned a substantial role for the federal government to provide the infrastructure and monetary policy that would both enable individual citizens to prosper according to their own talents, industry, and initiative, and help connect and unite the disparate regions of the United States.

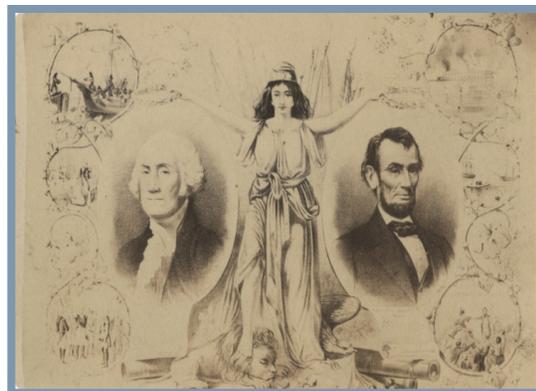
SG: Of the first four presidents, Adams, Jefferson, and Madison were truly scholars of history, philosophy, etc. Washington was not. Did Lincoln ever mention this?

LM: I don’t recall him noting Washington’s lack of formal education. Except for one or two occasions, Lincoln was all praise whenever he mentioned Washington (and the founders, in general). My good friend Allen Guelzo has observed that Washington’s description of his “defective education” was precisely how Lincoln described his own formal schooling when asked for a brief biography in 1858. (Lincoln once described Henry Clay’s education as “comparatively limited,” but only to offer Clay as an example of what anyone could achieve by dint of personal initiative and pursuit of “sufficient education.”) His many references to Washington were always for some political purpose, whether as an example of personal firmness, honor, morals, or courage, or in defense of a political principle or policy. I don’t recall him ever needing to mention Washington’s lack of a college education.

SG: Did the founders really believe that prohibition of the slave trade after 1808 would lead to eventual extinction?

LM: The great conundrum of 20th and 21st century Americans looking back to the founding is squaring their many statements affirming human equal-

ty and natural rights and condemning slavery on the one hand, and their continued practice of slavery on the other hand. Many today simply see this as rank hypocrisy and unwittingly find themselves agreeing with Chief Justice Roger B. Taney and Stephen A. Douglas, who concluded that the founding generation could not have meant “all” when they said “all” because they did not immediately free all American slaves. Therefore, in the words of Douglas, “this Government of ours was founded, and wisely founded, upon the white basis. It was made by white men for the benefit of white men and their posterity, to be executed and managed by white men.” How could Lincoln not draw the same conclusion? Lincoln did not believe the founders were hypocrites, generally speaking. As he put it, “We had slavery among us, we could not get our constitution unless we permitted them to remain in slavery, we could not secure the good we did secure if we grasped for more, and having by necessity submitted to that much, it does not destroy the principle that is the charter of our liberties.” In brief, he thought the founders did not think they could free themselves and free their slaves at the same time. However, once they had secured their independence, what did they do collectively with regards to the “domestic” or state institution of slavery? Did their federal constitution indicate a desire to strengthen slavery’s hold on the American people or did the



Columbia’s Noblest Sons LN-1110

framers attempt to reduce their dependence upon the peculiar institution?

Lincoln answered by observing that the U.S. Constitution, unlike the Articles of Confederation, empowered Congress to ban the importation of slaves in 1808. “A constitutional provision was necessary to prevent the people, through Congress,” Lincoln noted, “from putting a stop to the traffic immediately at the close of the war. Now, if slavery had been a good thing, would the Fathers

of the Republic have taken a step calculated to diminish its beneficent influences among themselves, and snatch the boon wholly from their posterity?" If the federal government did not possess the authority to abolish slavery right away, given its legality as a state institution, then the founders attempted to begin its eradication by preventing its continued supply. In addition, under the Articles of Confederation and the Constitution of 1787, Congress passed an ordinance banning slavery from the Northwest Territory, the only territory owned by the United States at that time. Taken together, these were early attempts at the national level to prevent both the supply and expansion of slavery on American soil. The expectation was that slavery would eventually wither on the vine and the nation would peacefully outlive the utility of slavery. I hasten to add that these actions and expectations all occurred prior to the invention of the cotton gin in 1793, which is to say prior to the enormous profitability of plantation-grown cotton as an export and what then became the extraordinary productivity of slave labor in harvesting that cash crop.

To be sure, South Carolina and Georgia were always resistant to national control over slavery in their states, and exercised outsized power as a minority of the American states when the states strove "to form a more perfect union." Thus to speak of "the founders" when it came to expectations regarding slavery over the long haul is to speak in general terms and not to affirm an opinion held by every significant political player in this tragic drama. This is what produced some of the debates at the convention and eventual compromises over slavery in the Constitution, but what

Madison expected would lead to the demise of slavery over time. Excellent books on this subject are West, *Vindicating the Founders*, Kaminisky, *A Necessary Evil?*, Ford, *Deliver Us from Evil*, and Wilentz, *No Property in Man*, and of course Harry V. Jaffa, *Crisis of the House Divided and New Birth of Freedom*.

Stephen Douglas supported the Kansas-Nebraska Act, were there counter-arguments that this action violated the concept of the Northwest Ordinance?

LM: Yes; in his justly famous speech at Peoria, Illinois, in 1854, in which Lincoln made multiple arguments against the Kansas-Nebraska Act, he gave a detailed account of how the early generation of Americans banned slavery from the Northwest Territory, and did so upon the basis of a version of the ordinance drafted by "the most distinguished politician of our history"—namely, Thomas Jefferson, himself a slaveholder, as Lincoln notes. More important than Jefferson's slaveholding is what he did despite that pernicious practice, which was to take steps towards the eventual eradication of slavery; as Lincoln put it, at a time when Americans breathed "the pure fresh, free breath of the revolution," whose principles for the new nation were best expressed by Jefferson in the Declaration of Independence.

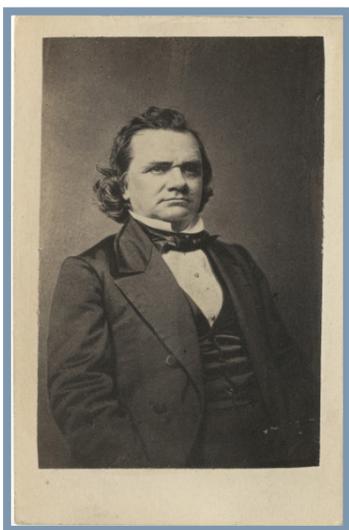
That said, Lincoln spent more time in his Peoria Address demonstrating why the Kansas-Nebraska Act violated the 1820 Missouri Compromise, which had long been respected by both parties. Moreover, Lincoln noted that as late as 1849, Douglas himself declared that the Missouri Compromise "had been canonized in the hearts of the American people, as a sacred thing which no ruthless hand would ever be reckless enough to disturb." Of course, with the Compromise Measures of 1850, Douglas assumed the mantle of the Great Compromiser Henry Clay and cobbled together various coalitions to get them passed as separate statutes rather than the omnibus bill initially proposed by Clay. In doing so, Douglas would later point to popular sovereignty in the territories of Utah and New Mexico as examples in 1850 that superseded the precedent set by the 1820 Missouri Compromise. Lincoln devoted his Peoria Address to rebutting Douglas's claim of the inauguration of a new national policy regarding the expansion of slavery, and pointed to the 1787 Northwest Ordinance and 1820 Missouri Compromise as signal examples of earlier generations of Americans who sought to keep the nation on the path of putting slavery on the course of ultimate extinction. In Lincoln's words, "Thus we see, the plain unmistakable spirit of that age, towards slavery, was hostility to the **principle**, and toleration, **only by necessity.**"

SG: Lincoln was born on the cusp between Enlightenment and Romanticism. I have always thought that his Lyceum Address carried elements of both "ages." Please comment on his reverence for the founders as expressed in the Address.

LM: That's a big question about a big and quite sophisticated speech of Lincoln's. While Lincoln certainly knew his Byron, his favorite poet by far was William Shakespeare, with Robert Burns an honorable mention. Moreover, as far as his political sentiments go, they were shaped most significantly by the Enlightenment best exemplified by John Locke. Although there's no evidence he actually read Locke (or Algernon Sidney or other Enlightenment thinkers that shaped the American founding), he got it honestly through deep reflection upon the writings of Thomas Jefferson. Stopping in Philadelphia en route to his inauguration as president, Lincoln declared, "I have never had a feeling politically that did not spring from the sentiments embodied in the Declaration of Independence." Are you tired of me mentioning the Declaration of Independence, yet? Take it up with Lincoln!

Conjoined with this classical liberal understanding of human nature and civil society, one must hasten to add not Romanticism so much as Lincoln's not-quite orthodox Christian sensibilities. Although never an official member of any church, even of those at which he rented a family pew in Springfield, Illinois or frequented as president in Washington, D.C., he knew his Bible as well as any preacher of his day and increasingly drew upon its truths late in his Illinois life and certainly as president. The example par excellence is his Second Inaugural Address, which was preceded by a revealing note he wrote to himself that has come down to us as his "Meditation on Divine Will."

Addressing more directly your question about "his reverence for the founders" in the Lyceum Address, Lincoln offers a qualified appreciation of the founding generation but closes with supreme praise for Washington. In short, while he appreciated what the founders achieved in establishing political independence and erecting the institutions of self-government, he implicitly takes them down a peg by observing that their task was made easier by the existence of an external foe, which naturally unites a people that would otherwise be "turned against each other" when



Stephen A. Douglas LFA-0237

SG: When

following the ordinary passions that beset mankind in times of peace. “And thus, from the force of circumstances,” Lincoln commented, “the basest principles of our nature, were either made to lie dormant, or to become the active agents in the advancement of the noblest of causes—that of establishing and maintaining civil and religious liberty.” Moving from the passions of the many to those of the few in every society who seek glory in a grand way, and Lincoln thereby identifies motives of the founding era that were not entirely noble or altruistic. At bottom, in a speech he titled “On the Perpetuation of Our Political Institutions,” Lincoln both praised the “fathers,” whom he described as “a *once* hardy, brave, and patriotic, but *now* lamented and departed race of ancestors,” and leavened that praise with some hard-nosed observations about human nature that were at work during that momentous era of American independence and liberation.

SG: Was Lincoln’s admiration for Henry Clay comparable to his feelings for the founders?

LM: Lincoln called Clay “my beau ideal of a statesman” and “our gallant Harry of the West” (possibly an allusion to Lord Byron’s description of George Washington—“The Cincinnatus of the West”). He saw in Clay a devotion to the United States that he believed derived from the goodness of the American regime. As Lincoln put it, Clay “loved his country partly because it was his own country, but mostly because it was a free country.” Despite being a slaveholder, Clay attempted to get his home state of Kentucky (Lincoln’s birth state) to adopt a gradual emancipation plan. That attempt impressed Lincoln, and although it was unsuccessful, Lincoln thought it was the only peaceful way that slavery could be abolished under the federal constitution.

After Clay’s death in 1852, Lincoln spent the rest of the 1850s trying to persuade Americans north and south that, at minimum, they needed to return to the founders’ view that slavery was wrong and should be put “on the course of ultimate extinction.” Lincoln, with Clay and the founders (like Jefferson and Madison), thought that immediate, mass emancipation would jeopardize the viability of the nascent republic, and therefore abolition could only be accomplished safely—for both the free and the enslaved—if done gradually. Moreover, emancipation would need to be coupled with dispersal or diffusion of

the slaves away from their former legal masters—namely, colonization either out west or Central or South America.

If he had to choose, he would go with the founders because the founding encompasses the very principles of the regime whereas Clay’s politics were chiefly practical (albeit guided by basic principles he drew from the founding).

SG: What is the subject of your next book?

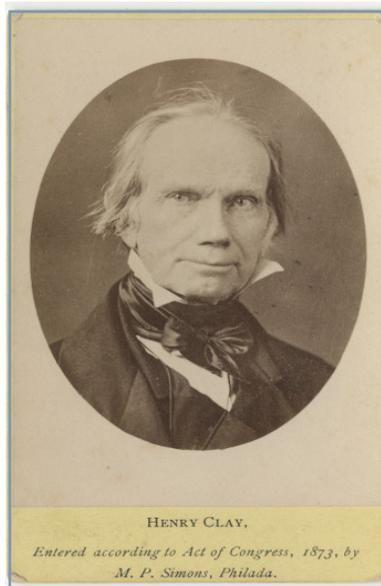
LM: The title of my current book project is “Lincoln, Race, and the Fragile American Republic.” I intend to argue that Lincoln’s most controversial statements and policies dealing with slavery and Black people must be understood in light of the tenuous or “fragile” status of self-government in antebellum America. The principles of the founding were losing their hold on many Americans, especially but not exclusively in the slaveholding South, and needed shoring up by the time Lincoln came into notoriety in the 1850s. The passage of Stephen Douglas’s Kansas-Nebraska Act in 1854, which would permit white settlers in the Nebraska Territory to decide without congressional intervention if enslaving Black people would be permitted, struck Lincoln as a betrayal of the longstanding Missouri Compromise of 1820 and a fundamental departure from what he considered was the founders’ intention to rid the nation of slavery “as fast as circumstances should permit.” His return to politics that year, after completing his one term in Congress in 1849, was devoted altogether to demonstrating what he called the “insidious” nature of local popular sovereignty. Without shoring up the now waning conviction that the enslaved Black people at least

possessed natural rights, Lincoln believed pressing for equal civil and political rights would be a fool’s errand.

Most of the free state of Illinois was infused with color prejudice; recall that it bordered slaveholding Kentucky and Missouri. Thus Lincoln chose to build a bridge from where white citizens stood on the race question to where he thought they should be according to the “central idea” of the regime, which he called “the equality of men.” Most of his arguments to them, as well as white southerners, were designed less to elicit their sympathy of enslaved Black people and more to show that the ground of the rights of white people was their common humanity and not their race. To do right by Black people was the surest route to the security of their own rights—at least that was what he attempted to argue. His debates with Douglas in 1858 demonstrate how difficult that task was, given that Douglas could and did trumpet his unabashed white supremacy before an Illinois citizenry that had recently banned Black people from entering the state.

Government by consent of the governed was an operative principle of America, and therefore the opinions of those consenting citizens mattered. “In this and like communities,” Lincoln said in his first formal debate with Douglas in 1858, “public sentiment is everything.” He sought to inform that sentiment, and therefore could not ignore the existing prejudices of his prospective constituents. If Lincoln’s most controversial remarks that year appear to show him playing the race card, the debates readily show that Douglas played the whole deck! Lincoln saw Douglas’s popular sovereignty, and not Jefferson Davis’s pro-slavery mindset, as the bellwether for American policy towards enslaved Black people. At bottom, if he could not persuade whites in the free states that Black people possessed natural rights, then it would be pointless to push for civil or political rights for Black people. His apparent slowness on the issue of civil rights had everything to do with his concern that a government owned and operated by the American people was losing sight of its true North, the natural rights of all human beings. Thus, Lincoln proceeded with due caution to pursue progress in securing rights consistent with the long-term viability of self-government.

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