

Chapter Three Her Six Months in the White House

February 1861

Elizabeth Todd Grimsley Invited to Travel to Washington With the Lincolns

In February 1861, Elizabeth Todd Grimsley, “Cousin Lizzie,” was invited to travel to Washington, D. C. with Abraham and Mary Lincoln. She accepted the invitation. Her two boys, John age 13 and William age 8, stayed in Springfield with their grandparents, Dr. John age 74 and Elizabeth Todd age 68.¹³² She had been divorced since Halloween 1859, and had been living with her parents on South Sixth Street.

My wife and I are of ages similar to the Todd grandparents and we have grandsons of the same age as Elizabeth’s sons. While we love them dearly and they are wonderful boys, it would be a considerable responsibility to take them for a solid six-month period without their parents. But, then we are not Todds and we do not have live-in servants.

February 11, 1861

Train Leaves Springfield For Washington, D. C.

The train carrying President-elect Lincoln from Springfield to Washington left from Springfield’s Great Western Station on the morning of February 11, 1861. Before the train left, Abraham Lincoln gave his Farewell Address to the citizens of Springfield from the back of the train. Dr. John and Elizabeth Todd and Elizabeth’s sons were most probably present to hear this poignant good bye and say good-bye to Elizabeth.

Elizabeth Grimsley was one of a number of Mary Lincoln’s relatives on board. Others included Mary’s sisters, Elizabeth Todd Edwards (Mrs. Ninian Edwards) and Margaret Todd Kellogg (Mrs. Charles Kellogg). It also included Edward L. Baker, editor of the *Illinois State Journal*, and his wife Julia, who was Ninian and Elizabeth’s daughter; Elizabeth Edwards, also a daughter of Ninian and Elizabeth; and Mrs. Clement B. White (Martha Todd). But did some of these travel with Mary to Indianapolis?

February 12, 1861

Mary Lincoln and Sons Join Train at Indianapolis

The day after Abraham Lincoln left Springfield, Mary Lincoln and two of her sons, Tadd and Willie, joined the President-elect in Indianapolis. Rather than traveling with Abraham from Springfield, Elizabeth Grimsley may have traveled with Mary and her two boys.

February 19, 1861

Abraham and Mary Lincoln Leave Albany for New York City

The Lincolns left Albany at 7:45 a.m. and arrived at New York City’s 30th Street Station at 3 p.m. The Presidential Party occupied 11 carriages in a procession to the Astor House.

February 23, 1861

Abraham Lincoln Telegraphs Mary of His Safe Arrival at 6 a.m.¹³³

¹³² She had been divorced on October 31, 1859.

¹³³ *Day by Day*, p. 21 of 1861.

Mary Lincoln left Harrisburg, Pennsylvania at 9 a.m. on the Presidential train to Washington. She arrived about 4 p.m. and rode to the Willard Hotel with Seward and Washburne.¹³⁴

Last Week in February, 1861
Elizabeth Todd Grimsley at Metropolitan Hotel, New York City

The last week in February 1861, found a party of Illinoisans, eighteen or twenty in number domiciled in the comfortable old Metropolitan Hotel, New York,¹³⁵ enroute to Washington, the ladies of this party being Mrs. Edwards, sister of Mrs. Lincoln, her two daughters, Mrs. Baker, and Miss Edwards, and myself, [Elizabeth Todd Grimsley, a cousin] being invited guests to the White House.

The Presidential party had preceded us on the 23rd. The well-known story of Mr. Lincoln's secret journey to the Capitol, the rumors of assassination, the peril of the President elect, and his safe arrival, were on every lip, and eagerly discussed from the various standpoints of interest, for or against. At a table near ours, in the dining room, quite a party of New Yorkers were discussing the qualifications and fitness of the man for his position, "could he with any honor, fill the Presidential Chair?" "Would his western gaucherie disgrace the Nation?" and many other such questions. At length one gentleman, striking the table, with much emphasis exclaims, "Well! If nothing more is effected, it will help civilize the Illinoisans." There were four army officers and eight or ten besides who were "Native," and that rather roused our resentment. Did we not know of our charming Springfield society, composed of choice spirits gathered from many cultured, refined centers and could we not boast of many names even then prominent in political, intellectual life—our Douglas, Trumbull, Stuart, Logan, Baker, Hardin, Browning, Davis, Hay, Shields and Lincoln?¹³⁶

Elizabeth Todd Grimsley

Saturday, March 2, 1861
Elizabeth Todd Grimsley at Willard Hotel, Washington, D. C.

Consoling our State pride with these reflections, we bade adieu to New York, March 2nd, and joined the Presidential party that evening at Willard's Hotel. All was in commotion, the parlors and corridors being thronged, and this continued all through the Sabbath.¹³⁷

Elizabeth Todd Grimsley

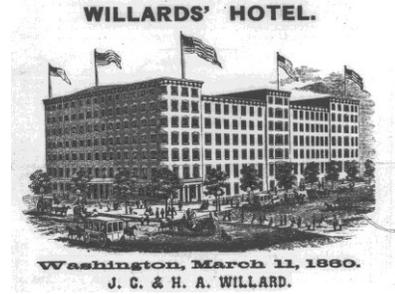
¹³⁴ *Day by Day*, p. 22.

¹³⁵ The Metropolitan Hotel in New York City was a Manhattan hotel opened on September 1, 1852 and demolished in 1895. It was built at a time of a "hotel boom" in response to the opening of the New York Crystal Palace exhibition of 1853. It occupied a three-hundred-foot brownstone-faced frontage of four floors above fashionable shopfronts occupying a full city block on Broadway and two hundred feet on Prince Street. The site, formerly that of Niblo's Garden, was owned by Stephen Van Rensselaer, and the architects were Joseph Trench and John Butler Snook, who designed the hotel in the "grand commercialized style reminiscent of Roman palazzos," with many of its furnishings imported from Europe, including the largest plate-glass mirrors in the United States: the interior decorations and furnishings were claimed in 1866 to have cost \$200,000. It could shelter six hundred guests, in steam-heated rooms and in "family apartments" with private drawing rooms.
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Metropolitan_Hotel_%28New_York_City%29

¹³⁶ Elizabeth Todd Grimsley, "Six Months in the White House," *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society* 19, Oct.-Jan., 1926-27, pp. 43-44. (Hereafter referred to as *Six Months*.)

¹³⁷ *Six Months*, p. 44.

On Saturday, March 2, 1861, the train from Springfield arrived in Washington, D. C. All the family members were the Lincolns' guests at the Willard Hotel until after the inauguration, and then several would stay at the White House. Mrs. Lincoln saw to it that everyone was comfortable. The little clan would be a support to her as she navigated the unfamiliar rapids of Washington society and protocol. Saturday night she held a reception for ladies at Willard's, which the crème of Washington society avoided. According to Mrs. Howard Taft, who did show up that evening, "The Lincolns were not welcome in the capital."¹³⁸



Monday, March 4, 1861
Abraham Lincoln's First Inaugural

President-elect Abraham Lincoln rode with President Buchanan in an open carriage to the Capitol.

The usual calls of etiquette had been exchanged between President Buchanan and Mr. Lincoln, so when the former appeared on Monday, March 4th, to take his seat in the carriage with Mr. Lincoln, and escort him to the capitol, as is the usual custom for the outgoing President, it was not as strangers they met. But it was not with the usual ceremonies of escort, with bands gaily playing, and flags flying they made the length of Pennsylvania Avenue, but through files of cavalry, troops of infantry, riflemen, and a battery of artillery, all under the watchful eye of Gen. Winfield Scott, and all betokening the feeling of unrest and possible danger.¹³⁹

Elizabeth Todd Grimsley

The Vice President Takes Oath of Office in Senate Chamber

Upon arrival at the Capitol, we found a dense throng in the Senate Chamber, where the Vice President was to take the oath of office. Judges in their silk gowns, Senators, Members of the House, and the members of the diplomatic corps, in their brilliant uniforms, were assigned prominent places, while the galleries were filled with beautifully costumed ladies lending brightness to the scene. Mrs. Lincoln and her party occupied the diplomatic gallery.¹⁴⁰

Elizabeth Todd Grimsley

Lincoln took the oath of office on the East Portico. Chief Justice Roger Taney administered the executive oath for the seventh time. The Capitol itself was sheathed in scaffolding because the copper and wood "Bulfinch" dome was being replaced with a cast iron dome.

As Lincoln rose, "calm, collected and serene in manner, and put on his spectacles," Mrs. Grimsley, seated with Mrs. Lincoln, observed how much of Springfield had made its way to the center of the tableau. Here on the platform behind Mr. Lincoln were his wife and sons, Mary's sisters Elizabeth and

¹³⁸ Epstein, p. 310.

¹³⁹ *Six Months*, pp. 44-45.

¹⁴⁰ *Six Months*, p. 45.

Margaret, and his cousin Elizabeth Todd Grimsley; Edward Baker, after whom Lincoln had named his late son; Stephen Douglas, who stepped forward to take Lincoln's hat, saying if he could not be president, he could at least be the president's hat-bearer.¹⁴¹



Inauguration of Abraham Lincoln, March 4, 1861.¹⁴²

The Presidential ceremonies are probably too familiar to be dwelt upon, yet, never a President elect took his stand upon that eastern portico of the Capitol, and looked down upon such a sea of upturned faces, representing every shade of feeling; hatred, discontent, anxiety and admiration, so beget about with crucial difficulties. We must recall, what history has so fully rerecorded, eleven states had already seceded, withdrawn from the Union, disclaiming all allegiance, and the “the Confederate States of America”, had elected their President, established their executive department, organized their Army and Navy without firing a gun, or shedding one drop of blood, and no attempt had been made by the government to arrest this wonderfully rapid movement, which was strengthened by the idea that the North were cowards, and would not fight, and the equally strong conviction that “King Cotton” must control the markets of the world, and thus secure foreign recognition. Washington was divided into strong factions. Many of the army officers who had served under the braved and gallant General Scott in Mexico and felt a certain sense of loyalty due to a government which had educated and trained them, could not resist the call state pride made upon them, yet had not openly acknowledged their position, so were suspected. Avowed and bitter secessionists were not slow in proclaiming their stand, and so they stood, friend and foe alike waiting for the first official words of President Lincoln.

Upon the front of the platform were the Senate Committee, President Buchanan, Chief Justice Taney and Mr. Lincoln, while behind them were seated Mrs. Lincoln, her sons, myself and other relatives, the rest of the platform being filled by judges, senators, and other distinguished guests. After Chief Justice Taney had administered the oath on the Bible, which Mr. Lincoln reverently kissed, and which was

¹⁴¹ Epstein, p. 312.

¹⁴² Library of Congress.

afterwards presented to him, Judge Douglas stepped forward and claimed the honor of holding the President's hat, as he had playfully remarked, "If I cannot be President, I can at least be his hat bearer."

Senator E. D. Baker of Oregon, a former fellow townsman and tried friend of years, introduced Mr. Lincoln, who made his inaugural address with all the dignity, calmness and composure of one accustomed to delivering presidential inaugurals.

And who shall say that address will not go down the ages as a model of clear diction, dispassionate dealing with live issues, and tender poetic appeal?¹⁴³

Elizabeth Todd Grimsley

The Lincolns Arrive at the White House

At the close of these ceremonies the procession was reformed, Ex-President Buchanan escorting President Lincoln to the vestibule of the Executive Mansion, where, after courteous words of welcome, he left him.¹⁴⁴

Elizabeth Todd Grimsley

The parade of the presidential party to the White House... provided a raucous transition from ceremony to an elusive privacy... When the procession arrived at the curving driveway before the Executive Mansion and the military gave their parting salute, then the family at last could begin to relax. "The gate closed upon Mr. Lincoln and his suite, and he was safely and comfortable installed in his new home," observed the *Tribune* reporter.¹⁴⁵



The White House, by Mathew Brady, c. 1860s.¹⁴⁶

Elizabeth Todd Grimsley Moves into the White House With the Lincolns

¹⁴³ *Six Months*, p. 45.

¹⁴⁴ *Six Months*, pp. 45 and 46.

¹⁴⁵ *Epstein*, p. 312.

¹⁴⁶ http://www.whitehousehistory.org/whha_publications/publications_documents/whitehousehistory_24.pdf

This photograph is affixed to a decorative Brady mount and shows the bronze statue of Thomas Jefferson that was a prominent fixture in front of the Executive Mansion during the mid-nineteenth century. Made in 1833 by French sculptor Pierre-Jean David (1788–1856), it was a gift to the United States Capitol by Uriah Phillips Levy (1792–1862), a naval officer and Jefferson admirer who purchased the late president's home, Monticello, in 1834. At the request of President James K. Polk, the statue was moved to the North Lawn of the White House in 1847. It was returned to the Capitol in 1874 when President Ulysses S. Grant had it replaced by a fountain.

On March 4, 1861, following Lincoln's inauguration, Elizabeth Todd Grimsley joined the Lincolns in the White House where she would remain as their guest for over six months. Elizabeth described her temporary home.

The mansion was in a perfect state of readiness for the incomers—A competent chef, with efficient butler and waiters, under the direction of the accomplished Miss Harriet Lane, had an elegant dinner prepared, and it is needless to say, after the excitement and fatigue of the day, it was most thoroughly appreciated. But physical fatigue was of minor account—we went out not knowing what the day might bring forth. Bristling guns, mounted artillery, and belching cannon were too fearfully suggestive of what might be apprehended, and it was a moment of intense relief when “Old Edward”, who had served through many administrations, opened the doors of the Executive Mansion, admitted us, and our President was safely housed.¹⁴⁷

Elizabeth Todd Grimsley



White House North Drive, 1860s¹⁴⁸

So the young family found the turmoil in their new home almost incessant, and the Lincolns persuaded the sturdy, matronly Mrs. Grimsley to stay on until they found their bearings. It would be six months before that kind lady returned to her husband and teenage son in Springfield.¹⁴⁹

There were seven bedrooms on the second floor. The President and Mary Lincoln each occupied one. Lincoln's secretaries, John Nicolay and John Hay, occupied another one. After Willie died, only Tad needed a bedroom on a regular basis and he often slept with his father. Robert occupied

¹⁴⁷ *Six Months*, p. 46.

¹⁴⁸ http://www.whitehousehistory.org/whha_publications/publications_documents/whitehousehistory_24.pdf

This is a carte de visite showing Lincoln's White House from the northeast, looking up the broad stone sidewalk beside the graveled drive. This was the public entrance to the president's office and residence. The two lanterns in front of the corner of the building were added to the stone piers of an interior gate in 1852. The gates were removed in 1872 along with the northernmost lanterns and piers; the remaining lanterns were taken down in 1902. The southern gate piers remain to the present day.

¹⁴⁹ *Epstein*, p. 318.

one of three guest bedrooms when he was home from college. So, there was always room for relatives and old friends, whom the Lincolns often encouraged to stay with them. As Elizabeth Grimsley explained, “Mary hated to be alone” and “urged and urged” her to postpone her departure.

Conoly book about white house map

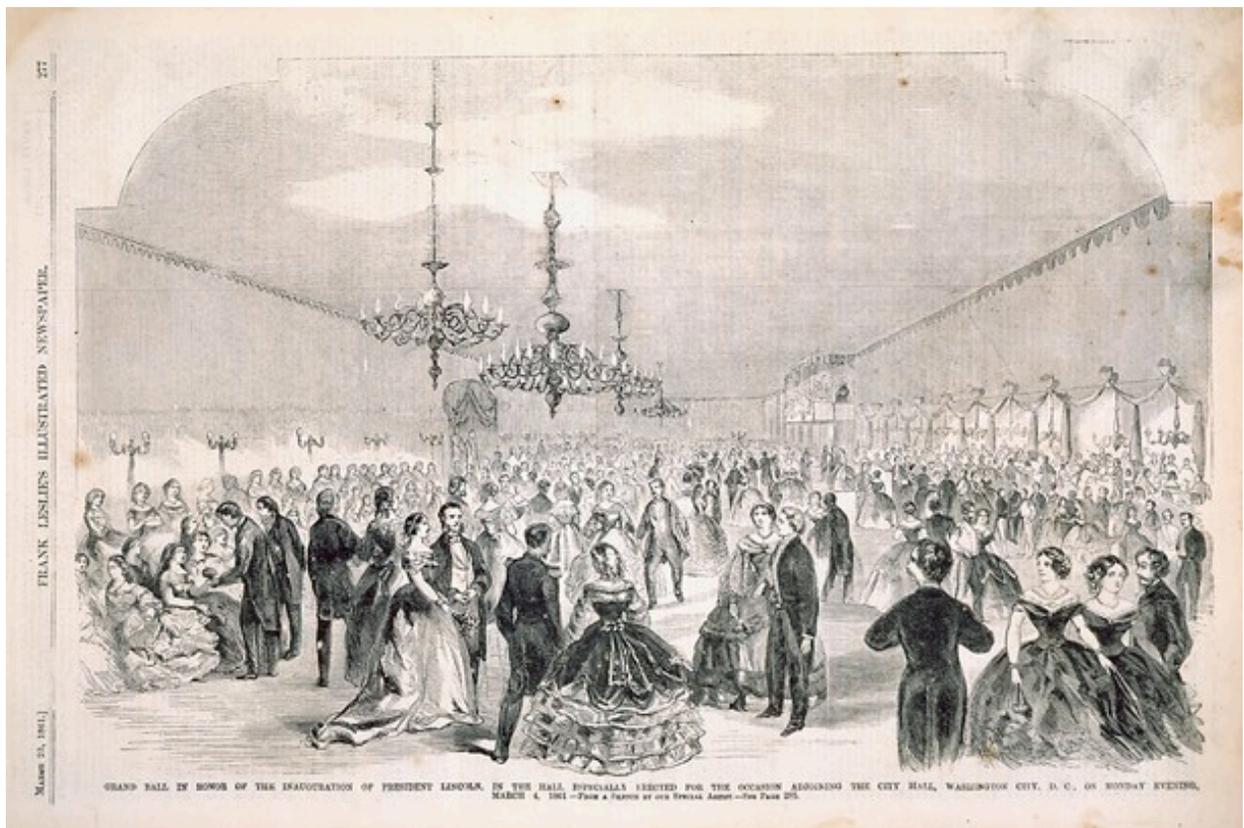
Inaugural Balls on the Evening of March 4, 1861

After dinner, to which about seventeen sat down, we scattered to our various rooms, for a short rest before preparing for the Inaugural Ball, which as to be on a grand scale in a building especially arranged for the occasion. The cards of invitation which bore the names of distinguished Senators, Representatives, and those high in army and navy circles had been eagerly sought after, and a brilliant assemblage was gathered there.

Like all similar functions it was more of a reception, and “dress parade” where the President is on exhibition, and he and his family march through the ranks of observers and critics, and are then at liberty to leave the scene, after witnessing the attack of the hungry skirmishers on the supper table, and of this permission we most gladly availed ourselves at an early hour.

And I think this was the beginning of that system of gossipy journalism, known as “Jenkinsism”, and which has been in vogue ever since; that minute and extravagant detail of ladies dress. There was a “chief among us, taking notes”, one of our own party, a guest in the house, an editor himself, of no mean ability, who having free access to dressing rooms, and garrulous maids, could impart all desired information of dress and gossip to New York reporters, with whom he became a great favorite.¹⁵⁰

Elizabeth Todd Grimsley



¹⁵⁰ *Six Months*, pp. 46-47.

Lincoln's first inaugural ballroom.
Frank Leslie's Illustrated, March 23, 1861.

Tuesday, March 5, 1861
The First Full Day in the White House

March 5th opened on a busy household, as would naturally be the case with an incoming administration. The family regime had to be adjusted, rooms selected for our, then, large family, and the house inspected, and this was most faithfully done by the irrepressible "Tad" and observant Willie, from dome to basement, and every servant interviewed by these same young gentlemen, from Edward the door keeper, Stackpole, the messenger, to the maids and scullions.

And the tour of observation was a disappointing one, as the only elegance of the house was concentrated on the East, Blue and Red rooms, while the family apartments were in a deplorably shabby condition as to furniture, (which looked as if it had been brought in by the first President), although succeeding house-keepers had taxed their ingenuity and patience to make it presentable.

At the East end of the Mansion, Cabinet making, and announcing the results was in order, and to many, the selection of men who had been rival aspirants for Presidential honors, was a genuine surprise, but to far seers, an evidence of the recognition of brain and diplomacy needed in the critical situation of National affairs. Sec. Seward, accomplished, courtly statesman and diplomatist; Sec. Chase, stately astute, polished as steel; Sec. Cameron, clear headed and cool; Sec. Welles, cautious and deep; Attorney General Bates, wise and a combination of grand attributes—all recognized leaders.

The day was not half spent before the house was full of office seekers, halls, corridors, offices, and even private apartments were invaded; and this throng continued and increased for weeks, intercepting the President on his way to his meals; and strange to say, about every tenth man claimed the honor of having raised Mr. Lincoln to the Presidency, until he was fain to exclaim "Save me from my friends."

The ladies of the family were not exempt from marked attention and flattery, but soon had their eyes opened to the fact that almost every stranger that approached us "hoped we would use our influence, with the President in his behalf." And it was a hard matter to persuade them they would stand a better chance without our interference, "we (to quote Mr. Lincoln), having no influence with this administration".

Our family, in addition to Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln, and their three sons, consisted of Mrs. Ninian Wirt Edwards (Elizabeth Todd), Mrs. Charles Kellogg, (Margaret Todd) sisters of Mrs. Lincoln, Mr. Charles Kellogg, Mr. and Mrs. E. L. Baker, Miss Elizabeth Edwards (Mrs. Eugene Clover) niece, myself (Mrs. Grimsley), a cousin, who was to remain six months with them. Also Capt. Lockwood Todd, John G. Nicolay and John Hay, the private secretaries, Col. E. E. Ellsworth and Col. Ward H. Lamon. Robert, then a Harvard student, was home with us of course, a manly, dignified youth, unspoiled by petting and adulation, and giving promise of the man into which he was to develop; a credit and an honor to his father's name and to the nation; which he afterward served as Secretary of War, and later as Minister to the Court of St. James.

Willie, a noble beautiful boy of nine years, of great mental activity, unusual intelligence, wonderful memory, methodical frank and loving, a counterpart of his father, save that he was handsome. He was entirely devoted to Taddie who was a gay, gladsome, merry, spontaneous fellow, bubbling over with innocent fun, whose laugh rang through the house, when not moved to tears. Quick in mind and impulse, like his mother, with her naturally sunny temperament, he was the life, as also the worry of the household. There could be no greater contrast between children.¹⁵¹

¹⁵¹ *Six Months*, pp. 46, 48, 49, 54, 57, and 73. Justin G. Turner and Linda Levitt Turner, editors, *Mary Todd Lincoln: Her Life and Letters*, p. 187 (Letter from Mary Todd Lincoln to Mercy Levering, November 19, 1864) p. 159. Michael Burlingame, editor, *With Lincoln in the White House: Letters, Memoranda, and Other Writings of John G. Nicolay, 1860-1865*, p. 32 (Letter to Ozias M. Hatch, March 31, 1861). Roy P. Basler, editor, *Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, Volume IV, p. 303. Harry E. Pratt, editor, *Concerning Mr. Lincoln*, pp. 73-74, p. 84. Ronald C. White, Jr., *A. Lincoln: A Biography*, p. 164.

Elizabeth Todd Grimsley

Wednesday, March 6, 1861

Elizabeth Todd Grimsley and Lockwood M. Todd Remain at White House

Journal, Saturday, March 9, 1861.

Telegraph Correspondence of the Cincinnati Commercial

Washington, March 6

From Washington

The Senate will probably remain a couple of weeks, for the purpose of confirming the principal Executive appointments.

Bob Lincoln has returned to Harvard College.

Notwithstanding the enormous exodus yesterday, the crowd of office-seekers at Willard's appeared great as ever. Most Southern Congressmen have left—but few Northern ones as yet. Willard dined one hundred and twenty-one persons yesterday.

The family at the White House consists of the following persons: Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln of Springfield; Mr. and Mrs. G. H. Kellogg of Cincinnati; Mr. and Mrs. Baker, of Springfield; Mrs. Grimsley, of Springfield; Mr. Lockwood Todd, of Springfield; Dr. Long, of Springfield; Mr. Nicolay, Private Secretary; Col. Ward H. Lamon, formerly Mr. Lincoln's law partner; Capt. John Cook, and Don Pyatt, of Ohio.



Lockwood M. Todd, the brother of Elizabeth Todd and the cousin of Mary Todd Lincoln, in White House with Willie and Tad Lincoln, the children of Abraham and Mary Todd Lincoln.

Mary Lincoln Gives First Ladies Reception

Mrs. Lincoln gave her first ladies' reception at the Presidential Mansion this afternoon. She performed the part of hostess with much grace and dignity, being gracefully supported by her

sisters, Mrs. Edwards and Mrs. Kellogg. Mr. Lincoln holds his first Presidential levee on Friday evening.¹⁵²

Friday, March 8, 1861

Elizabeth Todd Grimsley Attends Lincoln's First White House Reception/Levee

On Friday evening, March 8, 1861, the Lincolns were overwhelmed in their first White House reception/levee for what Attorney General Edward Bates called "a motley crowd" that required President Lincoln to shake hands for two and a half hours.

Soon the subject of our first reception came up for settlement, as Mr. Seward indicated that he proposed to lead off. To this Mrs. Lincoln objected, urging that the first official entertainment should be given by the President. There was some little discussion from which it could perhaps be seen that Mr. Seward had even in so small a matter the same idea of taking precedence which he expressed as to larger ones in his famous letter of the same month. (April the first), to which the President made so prompt a reply. The question was, however, soon settled and the reception announced for the 8th of the month, at the Executive Mansion.¹⁵³

Elizabeth Todd Grimsley

John G. Nicolay wrote: "For over two hours the crowd poured in as rapidly as the door would admit them, and many climbed in at the windows. It was withal more 'tonish' than such things usually are. Of course in such a crowd crinoline suffered, and at least fifty men have been swearing worse than 'our army in Flanders,' ever since they got home that evening, over the loss of new hats and valuable overcoats."

On March 8, after supper, the bedrooms upstairs bustled with the activities of five ladies and one gentleman, attended by various maids and valets, getting dressed for the first public levee, which was to commence at eight o'clock. The ladies had conferred, seeing to it that their dresses were varied in color and appropriate to the occasion. Miss Edwards's embroidered Paris muslin, and the little diamond cross she wore around her neck, were becoming to a very young lady. Tall Mrs. Grimsley, in a headdress of white roses, wearing blue watered silk, her long train studded with turquoises and pearls, was yet not overpowering.¹⁵⁴

Elizabeth Todd Grimsley was dressed in a blue, embroidered silk, with ornaments of turquoise, and with white japonicas in her hair. She recalled the reception:

"And what a crush and jam it was!"

"But the young private Secretaries Nicolay and Hay managed the introductions to the President and the receiving party wonderfully well. The hand shaking was a thing long to be remember by the President, and while it was gratifying, we must confess to a sigh of relief when we heard the marine Band strike up 'Yankee Doodle', the signal for retiring. The President took me on his arm and we made the circuit of the East room, a custom as old as the house itself, I believe, and a silly one, in that the wife of the President is relegated to the escort of another gentleman."

¹⁵² *Journal*, Saturday, March 9, 1861, p. 2.

¹⁵³ *Six Months*, p. 49.

¹⁵⁴ *Epstein*, p. 314-315.

“We were amused at the many remarks we overheard — such as, ‘The President bears himself well, and does not seem the least embarrassed.’ ‘How much alike the President and Mrs. Grimsley are!’ ‘Yes! Brother and sister. They must belong to a very tall family.’

“And so ended that memorable reception, the last in which north and south would mingle for many years.”¹⁵⁵

Elizabeth Todd Grimsley

PRESIDENT LINCOLN'S FIRST LEVÉE.—A crowd was anticipated at the White House last night, but we suppose few expected quite such a jam, after an adjournment of Congress. So dense was the pressure that hundreds, after Herculean efforts to worm their way through the throng, gave it up in despair, and went home without seeing the new President. Captain Goddard was present with his police, regulating the inseting current as far as possible, but not much could be done where the assault was so fierce and persistent. It would have facilitated ingress and egress much if the mode of letting out the crowd through one of the large windows of the East Room, sometimes adopted heretofore, had been followed last last.

Entering the oval (Reception) room, we found Marshal Selden at his usual post. Deputy Marshal Phillips was thereabout, also, and his tact and energy was being strained to the utmost in keeping the eager, jostling crowd “in the line of safe precedents,” and so on to the East Room.

Commissioner Blake, too, had his hands full in attending to the press of applicants for presentation to Mrs. Lincoln, but performed the duty with his usual unruffled politeness.

But the downright, serious, hard work of the evening was that performed by President Lincoln, who for more than two hours (i. e. from quarter past eight o'clock till half-past ten) shook hands in right good earnest with all comers, at the rate of twenty-five per minute, (as timed by a gentleman in his vicinity,) or one thousand five hundred per hour. At his left stood Mr. Lamon, of Ill., understood to be an aspirant for our District Marshalship, and who, mayhap, was looking on to “learn the ropes.” At the President's right was Mr. Lincoln's urbane private secretary, Mr. J. S. Nicolay.

Yet further to the right stood Mrs. Lincoln, and in her vicinity were the ladies of her party, relatives and others. Mrs. Lincoln seconded her husband to very good purpose in giving a cordial, smiling welcome to all comers, and they both certainly made many friends last night among those not heretofore favorably inclined to them.

Our lady readers will not forgive us if we do not furnish some particulars of the appearance of the Presidential party, and for their benefit we may say that Mr. Lincoln was dressed in black, with white gloves, turn-down collar, and with his luxuriant black hair parted down the middle. Mrs. Lincoln wore a rich bright crimson watered silk, with point lace cape, white and red camellias in her hair, pearl band and necklace, and other ornaments of pearl.

Mrs. Kellogg (sister of Mrs. Lincoln) wore a chaste ashes-of-roses brocade silk, with diamond ornaments, and hair tastefully dressed with white and red camellias.

Mrs. Edwards (sister of Mrs. Lincoln) wore a brown satin brocade dress, with rich crimson flowers and white feathers.

Miss Edwards (niece of Mrs. Lincoln) was dressed in a fine, embroidered, needle-work robe, with appropriate ornaments, characterized by a simplicity and elegance becoming her youth.

Mrs. Baker (niece of Mrs. Lincoln) wore a tasteful, lemon-colored, watered silk, with point lace trimmings, pearl ornaments, and cherry-colored verbenus head-dress.

Mrs. Grimsley (cousin to Mrs. Lincoln) was dressed in a blue, embroidered silk, with ornaments of turquois, and with white japonicas in her hair.

Evening Star, Washington, D.C., Saturday, March 9, 1861.¹⁵⁶

Sunday, March 10, 1861

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¹⁵⁶ *Evening Star*, Washington, D. C., Saturday, March 9, 1861, p. 2.

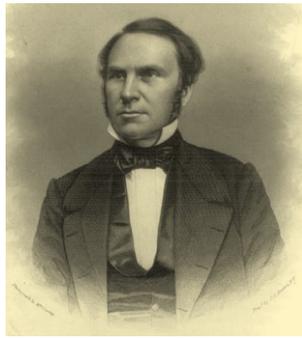
Elizabeth Todd Grimsley and the Lincolns Attend New York Avenue Presbyterian Church

March 10, 1861 was the Lincolns first Sunday in the White House. Elizabeth Todd Grimsley described the day.

Our first Sunday in the White House (March 10, 1861), we all went to the New York Avenue Presbyterian Church, Dr. Phineas D. Gurley’s, which had been decided upon as the church home, and ever after, the boys attended the Sabbath School, Willie conscientiously, and because he loved it, Tad as a recreation, and to be with Willie.¹⁵⁷

Elizabeth Todd Grimsley

The Lincoln “family” included not only the President, his wife and three sons, and Elizabeth T. Grimsley, but also Mary’s sister, Elizabeth (Todd) Edwards, and half-sister, Margaret (Todd) Kellogg, her niece Elizabeth Edwards, her cousin and Elizabeth Grimsley’s brother, Capt. Lockwood M. Todd, Nicolay and John Hay, and Col. Ward Hill Lamon. On that Sunday, they all went to the New York Avenue Presbyterian Church, where Dr. Phineas D. Gurley was pastor.



Dr. Phineas Gurley¹⁵⁸



New York Avenue Presbyterian Church

Elizabeth Todd Grimsley Observes Willie Lincoln’s Sunday Conduct

That Sabbath, after lunch, Willie sat down at the piano in the Red room, where there were quite a number of persons, and began strumming some popular air; when opportunity came I said to him, “No one is without example, and as you father’s son, I would remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy”. “I will” was the answer, and he faithfully kept his word, never even joining the family in their afternoon drives, when he found I preferred remaining at home.¹⁵⁹

Elizabeth Todd Grimsley

Elizabeth Todd Grimsley Writes of Julia Jayne Trumbull

In March 1861, Elizabeth Todd Grimsley wrote of Julia Jayne Trumbull, one of the bridesmaids at the Lincoln wedding and now married to Lyman Trumbull, Senator from Illinois:

¹⁵⁷ Six Month, p. 49.

¹⁵⁸ Preached at Lincoln’s funeral?

¹⁵⁹ Six Months, p. 49.



Julia Jayne Trumbull

I have not seen Mrs. Trumbull [Julia Jayne]—she sent me word she expected me to call, as that is etiquette, but I concluded in the present state of affairs, that as Mrs. Crittenden, McLean, Foster & various other senators wives had called specially to see me that Mrs. Trumbull might waive ceremony also, if she wished to see me. Trumbull is exceedingly unpopular here and particularly so with the conservative portion of the Republican party.¹⁶⁰

Elizabeth Todd Grimsley

My word Elizabeth. Julia Jayne now Trumbull was your friend in Springfield and the two of you were bride's maids in the Lincoln wedding. And you stand on the social rules of Washington to determine where you meet – my place or your place. You have come a long way, baby. And this is not becoming. It reveals your assumption of societal rules not true to your home place and your assuming the trappings of a White House insider, a position that does not flatter your character.

Monday, March 11, 1861

Mary Lincoln and Friends Visit Washington Navy Yard

On Monday, March 11, 1861, Mary Lincoln and friends visited the Washington Navy Yard, Eastern Branch, Potomac River.¹⁶¹

Tuesday, March 12, 1861

President and Mary Lincoln Give Party

On Tuesday, March 12, 1861, President and Mary Lincoln gave a party with music and dancing.¹⁶²

Wednesday, March 20, 1861

Todd Family Office Seekers

Historian Michael Burlingame described the kinds of dilemmas which Illinois patronage presented. “When the speaker of the Illinois House of Representatives, Shelby M. Cullom, asked Lincoln in March for control of the postmastership and the revenue collectorship of Springfield, the president replied, ‘Now you can have the collectorship, but the Post Office I think I have

¹⁶⁰

¹⁶¹ *Baltimore Sun*, March 13, 1861.

¹⁶² Nicolay to Bates, March 14, 1861, John G. Nicolay Papers, Library of Congress, Washington, DC.

promised to old Mrs. [Seymour] Moody for her husband. I can't let you have the Post Office, Cullom; take the collectorship.' 'Now Mr. President,' replied Cullom, 'why can't you be liberal and let me have both?' 'Mrs. Moody would get down on me,' Lincoln said. Moody didn't get the appointment and over a year later, the President sent a telegram to Seymour B. Moody: "Which do you prefer – commissary or quartermaster? If appointed it must be without conditions." First, Moody said he wanted "Commissary located in Springfield" and a few days later he declined either position.

Competition for the postmaster's position in Springfield was particularly keen — and included some of Mrs. Lincoln's relations – like her cousin Elizabeth Grimsley. Even presidential aide John G. Nicolay got involved in trying to resolve the dispute: "I am only writing a few words now to suggest to you the propriety of ending the Post Office squabble in Springfield by having our boys take up Mrs. Lizzie Grimsley (who is here) as their candidate, and with her beating the whole pile of the other contestants? Wouldn't the other aspirants there be more easily reconciled to be beaten by a woman than by one of themselves? I think the President would be pleased to have the riddle solved in that way."

In 1861, Dr. William Wallace had accompanied the Lincoln's to Washington, D. C. There he was appointed Paymaster for the United States Army. His duties were split between Springfield and Missouri and later, at the front on the lower Mississippi River. It was during his tour in Mississippi that he contracted dysentery from which he never fully recovered.

Elizabeth Todd Grimsley Pursues Appointment as Springfield Postmaster

Elizabeth Todd Grimsley was intent on being appointed postmistress at Springfield, Illinois. She was not motivated by a desire to do public service. Postmasterships were by far the largest category of federal jobs before the Civil War. Applicants and recommenders barraged Lincoln with mail in pursuit of these positions. 'Cousin Lizzie' was an opportunist with access to President Lincoln who appointed postmasters. If appointed, her sinecure would bail her out of difficult financial circumstances. She had no independent wealth and was forced to live with her parents as a divorcee with two small children. But alas, Elizabeth was not appointed. The story of her pursuit of the postmastership is testament to her perseverance and aggressiveness.

Patronage was the bonding element of the nineteenth-century party system, and there were more appointments and contracts to be obtained from the Post Office than from all other departments of the federal government combined. But patronage is only part of the story. In every community, the post office was the center of communication, and thus a center of local political power. It was responsible not only for the transmission of letters and other private mail, but also for the circulation of newspapers, periodicals, and government documents — then the principal media of mass information. To an extent now difficult to comprehend, postmasters of that era, even while performing their official duties, served as active agents of party enterprise," wrote Don E. Fehrenbacher.¹⁶³

Elizabeth Todd Grimsley Writes to John Todd Stuart

¹⁶³ Don E. Fehrenbacher, *Lincoln in Text and Context*, p. 24.

On March 20, 1861, Elizabeth Todd Grimsley wrote to her uncle John Todd Stuart about the number of Todd office seekers:

The rush for office continues unabated the applicants being more than the offices. Dr. [Samuel Long] goes out as commissioner to one of the Sandwich Islands. He has telegraphed for his wife to come directly on. Beecher Todd [relationship?] is to be post-master in Lexington, Kentucky. And [Thomas Campbell] in Boonville. The papers announce the presence of 100 Todds and all wanting office. Levi Todd [relationship] has been here. I think Brother John [John Blair Smith Todd] will fail in getting Wm. Jayne appointed governor. The other appointments he wishes will be made. I have heard nothing about my appointment as post-mistress except Mary often suggests it is to be. I have said nothing at all to Mr. Lincoln about it. Mary can have no influence with him in regard to her friends and of course I would expect nothing.¹⁶⁴

Elizabeth Todd Grimsley

“There are nearly one hundred applicants for the post office here. Mr. [E. B.] Hawley is one. Dame rumor says Mr. L. will give it to Mrs. [Elizabeth] Grimsley, she is now at Washington. Dr. [William M.] Reynolds want to be sent to Bremen. [George M.] Brinkerhoff is expecting some office, and just think! Adam Johnston is at Washington trying to get the Superintendence of public buildings. Mr. Lincoln will have something to do to gratify all from this place, to say nothing of any other part of our vast country.”¹⁶⁵

Mercy Conkling

Wednesday, March 20, 1861

Willie and Tad Lincoln Have Measles: Elizabeth Grimsley Nurses Them

On Wednesday, March 20, 1861, Willie and Tad Lincoln had the measles, contracted while visiting soldiers in their camps.¹⁶⁶ Elizabeth Grimsley took on the duty of taking care of the boys.

The mother, always over-anxious and worried about the boys and withal not a skillful nurse, was totally unfitted for caring for them. They disliked their attendant maid, and by degrees, I was inveigled into the nursery, and by way of a pet name, was dubbed ‘Grandmother,’ though a younger woman than the mother.¹⁶⁷

Elizabeth Todd Grimsley

Elizabeth Grimsley was a favorite with the Lincoln children and greatly influenced them. Mary was very close Elizabeth and described her as “very sweet” and “noble.” “She is a noble, good woman & has been purified, through much trial.” For Mary, Elizabeth exemplified “the memory of those who were so kind to me on my desol ___ childhood.” Their relationship was particularly important when Mary was sick or in grief. Elizabeth, sister Elizabeth Edwards and half-sister Emilie Helm played this role for the longest periods. But Mary was sometimes trying and her relatives could be demanding of jobs and favors.

Friday, March 22, 1861

Elizabeth Todd Grimsley Again Writes to John Todd Stuart

¹⁶⁴ ALPL, E. T. Grimsley, SC608.

¹⁶⁵ Harry E. Pratt, *Concerning Mr. Lincoln*, p. 66-67 (Mercy Conkling to Clinton L. Conkling, March 1, 1861).

¹⁶⁶ Nicolay to Bates, March 20, 1861, John G. Nicolay Papers, Library of Congress, Washington, DC.

¹⁶⁷

One of the franked letters from Elizabeth Todd Grimsley to cousin John Todd Stuart discussed the post-office appointment, and thus vaguely counted as ‘government business.’¹⁶⁸



Friday, March 22, 1861
Second White House Reception

On Friday, March 22, 1861, President and Mary Lincoln greeted guests attending the second White House reception of the season. The Marine Band played under the direction of Prof. Francis Scala, who dedicated the “Grand Union Inaugural March” to Mary Lincoln.¹⁶⁹

Circa Wednesday, March 27, 1861
Plans to Visit Mount Vernon Thwarted by Abraham Lincoln

Lady Georgina, Mrs. Clifford, Mr. Willis and I arranged for a pilgrimage to Mount Vernon, going out by carriage and returning at our leisure, which we could not do by boat. I very quietly announced at the breakfast table that we expected to go to Mr. Vernon the next day and regretted that Mrs. Lincoln and the boys could not be of the party, as it might be unsafe for them to expose themselves, as the lines had not been extended. Mr. Lincoln rose from his chair, looked at me silently an instant, then said gently, as was his wont when speaking to women, “Cousin Lizzie, have you taken leave of your senses? I thought I could better rely on your judgment. Can you compute the amount of trouble you would involve General Scott and myself in, if a member of my family should be captured? And the enemy would be only too glad to get you in their clutches particularly your cousin David Todd, now in charge of the rebel prison, in Richmond.” I instantly apologized for want of thought, we did not go to Mr. Vernon, nor did I ever get there. We had always enjoyed the drives in the vicinity, but it was deemed prudent that our carriage should not be seen beyond.¹⁷⁰

Elizabeth Todd Grimsley

Thursday, March 28, 1861
First State Dinner

¹⁶⁸ [http://www.alplm.org/blog/2011/12/who-used-the-white-house-frank/Cornelius James Cornelius](http://www.alplm.org/blog/2011/12/who-used-the-white-house-frank/Cornelius%20James%20Cornelius): In 2010 we acquired two empty envelopes, both addressed in a fine hand to Hon. John T. Stuart /Springfield/Illinois and sent by free frank “From the President of the United States/ Priv. Sec.” and the signature of John G. Nicolay. As private secretary to the president, Nicolay signed many hundreds of these. The postmarks confirm the privilege: ‘Washington, D.C., FREE’ and the respective dates, March 22 and May 8, 1861. Who was sending these? The address line is not the hand of Nicolay, nor his assistant John Hay, nor those of Abraham, Mary, Robert, nor even the precocious Willie Lincoln. (Mr. Nicolay did frank Willie’s outgoing letters.) Should one suspect Nicolay of abusing the franking privilege for some friend? Nothing we know of this scrupulous and tireless Bavarian-born public servant, orphaned at 14, suggests that he did anything but work hard his whole life. Furthermore, no letter by Abraham or Mary to her cousin John was known to date from those weeks. So, who else had this access?

The answer: Mary’s cousin, and Stuart’s cousin also, Elizabeth Todd Grimsley. Married to a man who died young, who never quite provided for her in the manner a Todd might expect, she did need a hand. She traveled with and moved into the Executive Mansion alongside the Lincolns on March 4, 1861. In addition to helping the family get settled, and using her schoolgirl French — as did Mary Lincoln, one night in dinner conversation with the Danish minister to the U.S. — ‘Lizzie’ Grimsley was trying to get appointed as a postmistress. President Lincoln alone had the power to appoint her.

¹⁶⁹ *Baltimore Sun*, March 25, 1861. *National Intelligencer*, March 23, 1861.

¹⁷⁰ *Six Months*, p. 69.

On Thursday, March 28, 1861, President and Mary Lincoln held their first state dinner for the Cabinet, the vice president, their wives and special guests including Gen. Scott. During the evening, Lincoln informed the Cabinet that Scott recommended evacuation of Fort Sumter, South Carolina, and Fort Pickens, Florida.¹⁷¹

The first state dinner, March 28th as I remember it, was not a very gay affair, as there were very few ladies of the Cabinet there in Washington. Sec. Seward's house was presided over by Mrs. Fred Seward, his daughter-in-law, a lovely charming woman. Sec. Chase had not then brought his fascinating daughter, Miss Kate, afterward wife of Governor Sprague of Rhode Island. Mrs. Bates, the wife of the Attorney General, a dear domestic, motherly woman, left her daughters to represent her. Besides the lady guests in the Mansion, who were soon to leave us, there were few others.¹⁷²

Elizabeth Todd Grimsley

Saturday, March 30, 1861
Mary Lincoln's Saturday "At Home"

On Saturday, March 30, 1861, Mary Lincoln established a White House "at home" between 3 and 4 p.m. each Saturday until further notice.¹⁷³

John G. Bergen Writes to Abraham Lincoln

On March 30, 1861, John G. Bergen wrote to Abraham Lincoln.

This copy of the following letter I give to my young friend Master Lockwood Todd, [Elizabeth's brother] at his earnest request.

Honored friend.

I hope this may reach you -- and, that you will have a moment of leisure, amid the pressure & responsibilities of these unprecedented times in our country, to let it lie on your heart to encourage & strengthen it in the way in which the God of providence seems to be leading & ruling your mind & the minds of your counselors.

From our long acquaintance, I have no fear that you will appreciate my motives wrongfully.

We both felt deeply & I trust rightfully when we check our hands & hearts at the door of the Sanctuary of our God, in that day & week of prayer.

In accordance with my parting word, at your Levee, my heart's best desires & hopes -- heavenward -- on you & your associates followed you & there abide.

The measures taken to evacuate Sumter by your Administration, as we are lead to believe, I am fearless to say culminate in the loftiest art of National Magnanimity on record -- a sublime peace-offering -- rather than civil war-- It is unparalleled in all past history -- sacred or secular. It is the crowning evidence of the pervading influence of the Power of Prayer -- the influence of the principles of religion throughout this nation among all orders & classes, according to the Prince of Peace.

¹⁷¹ Russell, *Diary*; Randall, *Lincoln*, 1, p. 332. Erasmus D. Keyes, *Fifty Years' Observation of Men and Events, Civil and Military*, New York, Scribner, 1884, p. 377.

¹⁷² *Six Months*, p. 50.

¹⁷³ *Collected Works*, p. 31 of 1861.

So far as the sentiments of the good & virtuous of the living & of posterity are valuable & to be desired, the act is stamped with immortality.

“Kind words” & I may add kind acts, “never die.” Allow me to repeat & write that prayer, and, May the God of our fathers grant to you & your Heads of Departments that “Wisdom that is from above, & above all, that is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of good fruits, without partiality & without hypocrisy.”

Please give my kindest desires to Mrs. Lincoln -- Mrs. Grimsley [Elizabeth Todd Grimsley] -- and others of your household with whom I have had long acquaintance -- and, accept my high regard for yourself, for the peace, union & welfare of our whole country. Let us never cease to hope, pray & trust in the God of our salvation.

Your friend
J. G. Bergen
Springfield
March 30th 1861

P. S. Do with this letter what you please.
J. G. B.--¹⁷⁴

John Todd Stuart Writes to President Lincoln About Cousin Lizzie

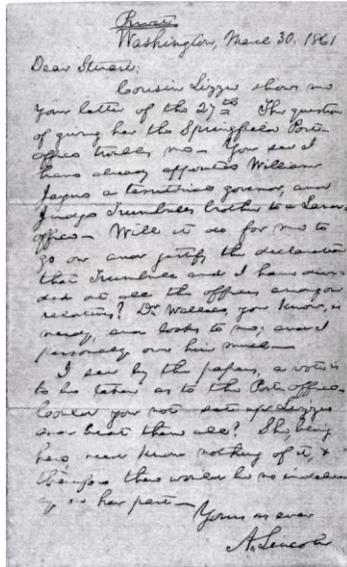
By March 30, 1861, Lincoln had given out jobs to two relatives of Illinois’s junior senator, Lyman Trumbull. People criticized Lincoln’s penchant for appointing his old friends as well as Mary’s relations to federal positions. Beecher Todd had just been named postmaster of Lexington, Kentucky. John Todd Stuart advised Lincoln not to “let the case of Cousin Lizzie trouble ... you.” But Elizabeth was one among many. A Washington newspaper snarkely reported that 100 Todds were in the city looking for jobs.¹⁷⁵

President Lincoln Writes to John Todd Stuart Regarding Appointment of Elizabeth Grimsley as Postmaster of Springfield

The President was worried, however, about Elizabeth Grimsley’s—and Mary’s—desire that she be appointed as Springfield’s postmaster. The President wrote John Todd Stuart on March 30, 1861, about his problems finding jobs for his friends and family.

¹⁷⁴ J. G. Bergen to Abraham Lincoln, Saturday, March 30, 1861 (Support from Springfield; Fort Sumter) Abraham Lincoln Papers at the Library of Congress. Transcribed and annotated by the Lincoln Studies Center, Knox College. Galesburg, Illinois.

¹⁷⁵



Private

Washington, March 30, 1861

Dear Stuart.

Cousin Lizzie shows me your letter of the 27th. The suggestion of giving her the Springfield Post-office troubles me. You see I have already appointed William Jayne a territorial governor, and Judge Trumbull's brother to a Land-office. Will it do for me to go on and justify the declaration that Trumbull and I have divided out all the offices among our relatives? Dr. William Wallace,¹⁷⁶ another Lincoln brother-in-law, you know, is needy, and looks to me; and I personally owe him much.

I see by the papers; a vote is to be taken as to the Post-office. Could you not set up Lizzie and beat them all? She, being here, need know nothing of it, & therefore there would be indelicacy on her part.

Yours as ever

A. LINCOLN¹⁷⁷

Sunday, March 31, 1861

**John G. Nicolay Writes to Ozias M. Hatch
Urging Cousin Lizzie for Postmaster of Springfield**

On Sunday, March 31, 1861, John G. Nicolay wrote to Illinois Secretary of State Ozias M. Hatch suggesting that Elizabeth Todd Grimsley might be a good compromise choice: "Wouldn't the other aspirants there be more easily reconciled to be beaten by a woman than by one of themselves?"

Private. The mail is about ready to go, and I am only writing a few words now to suggest to you the propriety of ending the Post Office squabble in Springfield by having our boys take up Mrs. Lizzie Grimsley (who is here) as their candidate, and with her beating the whole pile of the other contestants? Wouldn't the other aspirants there be more easily reconciled to be beaten by a woman than by one of themselves? I think the President would be pleased to have the riddle solved in that way.

If this reaches you before the election is held, and you think it expedient, suggest the matter to prudent friends — without letting it be known however that the plan originates here.¹⁷⁸

Tuesday, April 2, 1861

Presidential Family Pays Unexpected Visit to Navy Yard

On Tuesday, April 2, 1861, Mary and President Lincoln paid an unexpected visit to the Navy Yard. They spent two hours there and received a 21-gun salute.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁶ In

¹⁷⁷ *Collected Works*, p. 31 of 1861.

¹⁷⁸ *With Lincoln in the White House, Letters, Memoranda, and Other Writings of John G. Nicolay, 1860-1865*, edited by Michael Burlingame, Southern Illinois University Press, Carbondale and Edwardsville, 2000, p. [redacted].

¹⁷⁹ *National Intelligencer*, April 3, 1861. *Evening Star*, Washington, D. C., April 3, 1861, 3:1. *New York Herald*, April 3, 1861.

Wednesday, April 3, 1861
John T. Stuart Letter to Abraham Lincoln,
Recommends Cousin Lizzie for Postmaster of Springfield

All I feel that I can properly say now is what I said to Cousin Lizzie [Elizabeth Todd Grimsley] that the emoluments of the office would be a great source of comfort to her and to Uncle & Aunt [Dr. John and Elizabeth Todd] If they live a few years they will be dependent.

John Todd Stuart

Private

Springfield Illinois
April 3rd 1861

Dear Lincoln:

I have received your favor of the 30th ultimo. I would not let the case of Cousin Lizzie trouble me if I were you No one will complain of you if you do not give her the appointment while very many doubtless would complain of her appointment and would have much show of reason because the appointment of a lady would be unusual. All I feel that I can properly say now is what I said to Cousin Lizzie [Elizabeth Todd Grimsley] that the emoluments of the office would be a great source of comfort to her and to Uncle & Aunt If they live a few years they will be dependent In my letter to Cousin Lizzie I said that I did not expect you would give her the appointment

So far as the election is concerned (I mean for Postmaster) it will amount to nothing. I understand that all the applicants but Ellis are opposed to submitting to a vote and it is charged that Ellis' friends on the North side of the town are anxious to have Ellis appointed so as to remove the office to that side of the town I have no reason to believe that there is any truth in this I only refer to it to show the feeling-- There is a good deal of feeling among the different candidates and their friends and no appointment you can make would be very satisfactory and if I were you I would please myself—

All that I can say is that I cannot urge upon you her appointment yet I would be glad if she is appointed- - I do not feel that her appointment would subject you to more remark than anyone else while a very large portion of our community would be very much gratified by it—

I hope you will give Dr. Wallace [Dr. William S. Wallace, Mary Todd's brother-in-law, was appointed an army paymaster in 1861.]¹⁸⁰ some good appointment and the appointment of both will do you no great harm I believe I have said enough to explain my feeling on this subject—

I wish to say one thing more that my personal attachment and respect for you which I have maintained for thirty years -- is as sincere now as it ever was -- notwithstanding our difference in politics and I hope you every success for you -- and our common country

Yours truly John T. Stuart

Samuel H. Melvin Writes to Abraham Lincoln

Samuel H. Melvin, a Springfield, Illinois physician and entrepreneur, owned the largest retail/wholesale medical supply and drug business in the city. On April 3, 1861, he wrote to President Lincoln.

¹⁸⁰ In 1861, Dr. Wallace accompanied the Lincoln's to Washington, D.C. There he was appointed Paymaster for the United States Army. His duties were split between Springfield and Missouri and later, at the front on the lower Mississippi river. It was during his tour in Mississippi that he contracted dysentery from which he never fully recovered.

Springfield Ills April 3d 1861

Dear Sir

I only arrived at home this morn -- having been detained in Ohio longer than I expected. I now hasten to send you the Pills as requested. I send you 5 Boxes made by Mr. Canedy and one box of my own manufacture.

While in Ohio I met an old friend who has just returned from Santa Fe N. M. He states that Col Loring, who was recently sent out by the last Administration to take charge of the Military department in New Mexico, is an avowed secessionist, and that several of his subordinates "are tarred with the same stick." My informant is an intelligent gentleman -- formerly a congressman from Ohio. He says he feels confident that Loring [William W. Loring resigned from the U.S. Army in May 1861 and became a general in the Confederate Army.] will betray his trust the first opportunity that presents itself.

I have felt it my duty to give you the above information to use as you may deem proper.

I believe there is nothing new here of a local character that would interest you.

Please remember me to Mrs. Lincoln & Mrs. Grimsley.

Yours truly
S. H. Melvin

Dry & Mrs. Todd are in usual health¹⁸¹

President Lincoln Attends Wedding of Commandant Franklin Buchanan's (USN) Daughter at Navy Yard

DATE

but arrives too late for ceremony.¹⁸²

...Commodore Franklin Buchanan, then in command of the navy guard, insisted upon the honor of the President's presence at the marriage of his daughter. Though without precedent, Sec. Seward advised the acceptance of the invitation -- White House etiquette demanded that the President's wife should not appear at social functions of the Mansion, so the President and I attended by Sec. of State, and the private secretaries went to the marriage feast, in due formality.

It was a gay, brilliant affair, where we met the "crème de la crème" of society, and were feasted and toasted as only distinguished guests could be. But it was only a seeming of cordiality and respect, for in less than three weeks Commodore Buchanan, most unceremoniously, left the Navy Yard in command of Com. J. A. Dahlgren, and went in the Confederacy. Com. Dahlgren was one of our most noble, trusted, staunchest friends, a frequent visitor in our parlors, and always a welcome guest.

Friday, April 12, 1861 Fort Sumter Bombarded and Union Forces Surrender

On April 12, 1861, Confederate artillery fired on the Union garrison at Fort Sumter. This was the First Battle of Fort Sumter and the first shots of the war. The battle continued all day and was watched by many civilians in a celebratory spirit.

¹⁸¹ Abraham Lincoln Papers at the Library of Congress, Transcribed and Annotated by the Lincoln Studies Center, Knox College, Galesburg, Illinois.

¹⁸² Bruce, *Tools of War*, 9, 15.

The next day, the Fort having been cut off from its supply line, the Union forces surrendered and this was the fall of Fort Sumter, the first overt act of the Confederate government, compelling the evacuation by brave, gallant, true, major Robert Anderson.

The call of the President for 75,000 troops, the speedy response of Massachusetts and New York troops, the riot and blood-shed in Baltimore, the burning of bridges, and the cutting off of all railway communication with the north, followed in rapid succession; but history cannot tell of the great gloom over the city as we recognized the danger we were in.¹⁸³

Gloom at the Executive Mansion

All public buildings were barricaded and guarded by sentinels, no business transacted, and no places of amusement were open, all strangers and visitors who could get away, hurried to a place of safety. So imminent seemed the danger that Gen. Jim Lane of Kansas organized the "Frontier Guards" and camped with them in the East room and corridors, while General Cassius M. Clay, with his Home Battalion was stationed in Willard's Hall. Most anxiously did general Scott and Mr. Lincoln look for the promised relief, in the coming of the regiments detained in Baltimore, and more than one were heard to exclaim, "Why don't they come?"¹⁸⁴

Saturday, April 13, 1861

Mary Lincoln's Saturday Afternoon Reception

On Saturday, April 13, 1861, it rained heavily on Mary Lincoln's Saturday afternoon reception, as if the weather were commentary. ..." The Maryland and Virginia families who had always held sway, and dominated Washington society," avoided the White House.¹⁸⁵

Louis Rosette Letter to John G. Nicolay, Concerning Elizabeth Grimsley's Appointment

Many of us Republicans here wish Lincoln would appoint Mrs. Grimsley to the P. O. of this City.

Springfield Ill. 13th April 1861

Friend Nicolay--

Reports here say the war has begun. In case the President needs assistance we hope he will first call on Illinois -- for we have fought for him once & now and will do it again. True muskets & ball are not torches and oil but we are ready with either. We were whipt out at the City election by traitors in our camp -- some who are applicants for federal office are not true Republicans so their votes on the 9th say-- Many of us Republicans here wish Lincoln would appoint Mrs. Grimsley to the P. O. of this City. I believe there could be nothing said to it & think it would give general satisfaction Of course he will do as he please & would not take my advice. Senator Trumbull arrived here this A.M. Things remain Status quo -- no body getting married or dying-- The Zouave Greys still flourish & are spoiling (some of them) for a fight. I think after Court I will put a shirt in my pockets & come down & see the City. What condition is John Hays black eye in? Give him my respects-- Excuse this scrawl and believe me -- your brother soldier & friend

¹⁸³

¹⁸⁴

¹⁸⁵ Epstein, p. 327.



The boy standing on the roadway in front of the north façade of the Executive Mansion is the Lincoln's youngest son, Thomas "Tad" Lincoln. Soldiers appear in the background and may well be members of Company K, the 150th Pennsylvania Volunteers, also known as "Bucktails." The Bucktails, so nicknamed because of deer tails worn on their hats, provided protection for the president and his family during the war. Tad was popular with the soldiers, and as a memento, the Bucktails presented him with an album containing their autographed photographs.¹⁸⁷

**John C. Breckinridge Invites Elizabeth Grimsley
to Stay On at White House After Confederates Take Possession**

Former Vice President John C. Breckinridge sided with the Confederacy and told "Cousin Lizzie, I would not like you to be disappointed in your expected stay at the White House, so I will now invite you to remain here as a guest, when the Confederation takes possession."

**Saturday, April 27, 1861
Afternoon Serenade on the South Lawn**

On April 27, a clear, warm Saturday afternoon, the Seventh New York Regiment band serenaded the President and his family on the South Lawn. The band of brass horns, drums, and fifes played "soul-stirring national airs," as the President, Nicolay and Hay, Simon Cameron, Mary Lincoln, Elizabeth Grimsley, Julia Taft and the children came out on the portico to listen.¹⁸⁸

**Monday, April 29, 1861
Elizabeth Todd Grimsley Letter to Mary Stuart**

Washington April 29th

Dear Cousin Mary,

¹⁸⁶ Abraham Lincoln Papers at the Library of Congress. Transcribed and Annotated by the Lincoln Studies Center, Knox College. Galesburg, Illinois.

¹⁸⁷ http://www.whitehousehistory.org/whha_features/feature_press-lincoln.html

¹⁸⁸ Epstein, p. 328. *National Republican*, Washington, D. C., April 29, 1861, p. 3, cl. 2. *Evening Star*, Washington, D. C., April 29, 1861, p. 3, cl. 1.

I thank you very much for your long welcome letter which I received on Saturday, and I the more as I know what an effort it is for you to write. And I thank you for your kind solicitude in regard to me at this time of danger, not that it was unexpected for I have always been assured of your love toward me. Brother John will have told you before this his reasons for advising me to remain a while longer as I was quite ready to go out home with him My visit has been very pleasant and on no occasion has Mary failed to do all she could to make it agreeable to me, and urge me to remain longer. As it is I don't know how I am to get away from her solicitations the middle of the last of May, as I now intend doing. I want to pay a short visit to Philadelphia and Cousin Charles Smith (who is ordered to Governors Island) insists upon my visiting him there. Mr. Lincoln says there will be less obstructions on the road a month hence than now. The Government have taken possession of the road to Annapolis and ___ a packet to Horace de Grace so that part of the trip will be very pleasant. I want to see you all very much indeed, and think I will enjoy home very much. I have made some very agreeable acquaintances here, among them a daughter of Chas Wickliffe of Ky. Mrs. Merrick. And I have seen so many disagreeable ones, who value themselves & others people only by their laces && diamonds. But after all there are some so very elegant as to make me wish myself at home or in a corner. The intense excitement has blown over and with the exception of the presence of the troops Washington is very quiet and pleasant We enjoy the beautiful drives around the city. I am sorry I shall not be able to go down to Mr. Vernon. But Cousin Mary I find I shall have to stop writing as my eyes ache and past pone our chat for a little while. Much love to cousin John and the children (including Bettie's family) also to Father & Mother and my children and believe me

Your affect. Cousin.

E. J. Grimsley¹⁸⁹

May 1861

Cousin Lizzie Overstays Visit

“Whenever I mention my return home Mary instantly objects.”

By May, Elizabeth Grimsley felt that she had overstayed her welcome, but confided to her cousin John Todd Stuart that her own brother, John Blair Smith Todd, as well as Mary Lincoln “insisted” or “urged and urged” her to stay. Mary prevailed on her to delay her departure as long as possible. “Whenever I mention my return home Mary instantly objects,” Elizabeth wrote to cousin Stuart.

¹⁸⁹ *The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library*, Elizabeth Todd Grimsley SC 608.



Elizabeth Todd Grimsley
Photograph Taken While Visiting the White House in 1861¹⁹⁰

Wednesday, May 1, 1861
Seventh New York Regiment Band Gives an Evening Concert at White House

On the evening of Wednesday, May 1, 1861, the Seventh New York Regiment band gave a concert at the White House. President Lincoln spoke briefly from the portico.¹⁹¹

Tuesday, May 7, 1861
Col. Elmer Ellsworth Visits White House

During the morning of Tuesday, May 7, 1861, Col. Elmer Ellsworth visited the White House.¹⁹²

Military Salute Declined

We were out shopping on yesterday, [May 7, 1861] and before us were aware there was nearly a regiment of R. Island soldiers drawn up in double file around the door and two of young officers came in and told Mary they wished to give her military salutes she passed to the carriage, which honor she most respectfully declined. [missing a portion]¹⁹³

Elizabeth Todd Grimsley

¹⁹⁰ Photograph taken by J. A. Keenan, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, Springfield, Illinois.

¹⁹¹ *Evening Star*, Washington, D. C., April 30, 1861, p. 3, cl. 1, May 2, 1861, p. 3, cl. 1. *National Republican*, Washington, D. C., May 2, 1861, p. 3, cl. 2. Remarks at a Band Concert, May 1, 1861, *C.W.*, vol. 4, p. 352.

¹⁹² Hay, Letters and Diary.

¹⁹³

Major Anderson Visits White House

Major Anderson called to see us last evening. [May 7, 1861] He is quite a lion here.¹⁹⁴

Elizabeth Todd Grimsley

Wednesday, May 8, 1861

Edward Baker Breakfasts at White House



On the morning of May 8, 1861, Edward Baker joined them for breakfast. Their old friend, now a senator from Oregon, found his patriotism so rekindled that he wanted Lincoln to appoint him major general of the volunteers. Balding, and showing a double chin above his winged collar, the veteran campaigner looked older than his fifty years. He liked his liquor and a hand of cards, but now Baker wanted more than anything to vacate his Senate seat and go to war. Elizabeth Grimsley found the senator bombastic and patronizing, but Mary continued to admire and love him for his enduring loyalty, as a man she could trust and confide in.¹⁹⁵

Elizabeth Todd Grimsley Writes to Uncle John Todd Stuart Describing Breakfast With Edward Baker

On May 8, 1861, Elizabeth Grimsley wrote a letter to her Cousin John Todd Stuart.

Washington May 8th 1861

Dear Cousin John

Taking it for granted you have almost forgotten me. I insist upon reminding you of my existence & claiming my usual amount of love even if I am away. I have been looking for an answer to my last note

¹⁹⁴ Robert Anderson (June 14, 1805 “Soldier’s Retreat,” near Louisville, Kentucky – October 26, 1871, Nice, France, age 66) was an American military leader. When South Carolina seceded in December 1860, Major Anderson, a pro-slavery, former slave-owner from Kentucky, remained loyal to the Union. He was the commanding officer of United States Army forces in Charleston, South Carolina — the last remaining important Union post in the Deep South. Acting without orders, he moved his small garrison from Fort Moultrie, which was indefensible, to the more modern, more defensible, Fort Sumter in the middle of Charleston Harbor. South Carolina leaders cried betrayal, while the North celebrated with enormous excitement at this show of defiance against secessionism. He is often referred to as Major Robert Anderson, referring to his rank at Fort Sumter. Anderson’s actions in defense of American nationalism made him an immediate national hero. He was promoted to brigadier general, effective May 15. Anderson took the fort’s 33-star flag with him to New York City, where he participated in a Union Square patriotic rally that was the largest public gathering in North America up to that time. “He graduated from the United States Military Academy (West Point) in 1825 and received a commission as a second lieutenant in the 2nd Regiment of Artillery. He served in the Black Hawk War of 1832 as a colonel of Illinois volunteers, where he twice mustered Abraham Lincoln in and out of army service. Returning to the Army as a first lieutenant in 1833, he served in the Second Seminole War as an assistant adjutant general on the staff of Winfield Scott, and was promoted to captain in October 1841. In the Mexican-American War, he was severely wounded at Molino del Rey, for which he received a brevet promotion to major. He eventually received a permanent promotion to major of the 1st Regiment of Artillery in the Regular Army on October 5, 1857. He was the author of *Instruction for Field Artillery, Horse and Foot* in 1839. Major Robert Anderson is honored with his likeness inscribed in a monument atop Fort Sumter in Charleston harbor.

¹⁹⁵ Epstein, pp. 328-329.

to you, or did you think it not worthy an answer? We are on the ____ line this recording in anticipation of the troops marching into Baltimore. We hear they are to march from four points into the city--Take possession peaceable if they can in any case establish a military depot there. How true it is I cannot say, as Mr. Lincoln will not tell us. Co. E. D. Baker [Edward D. Baker]¹⁹⁶ breakfasted with us. His military order is all aroused and he is making application to Mr. Lincoln and others have to be appoint ____ Major General of the ____ particularly those from the west; and more particularly from Illinois. I cannot bear that man. He seems to have such a _____ contempt for lesser intellects, that it quite lowers his own in my estimation. Mary has always admired very much the city is very full of troops and other constantly arriving. The papers speak of the Lincolns and Genl. ____ wishing many to return to Springfield, while the contrary is the case as far as Mr. Lincoln is concerned and I don't suppose Genl. Scott has given it a thought for all the officers think Washington a place of perfect security. Mary is to have a reception tomorrow, Thursday, evening for the commissioned officers, and of course for any of the citizens who may wish to attend. I suppose it will be quite large and pleasant. On Friday we speak of going to New York to spend a few days. Col. Thomas offered to place a war steamer at our disposal so that we might go by sea but I am afraid we might be made so sea sick as that we could not enjoy our visit & would much prefer returning in that way. I feel more like starting home than taking any other trip just now, but I promised to remain until the last [portion missing]... for the little fellows. I supposed that Lock [her brother Lockwood Todd] had left home, but he never writes so that one could guess what he is about. He has not written me a line since he left here, indeed my last letter from home was dated the 24th. We were out shopping on yesterday, and before us were aware there was nearly a regiment of R. Island soldiers drawn up in double file around the door and two of young officers came in and told Mary they wished to give her military salutes she passed to the carriage, which honor she most respectfully declined. [missing a portion]

Major Anderson called to see us last evening. He is quite a lion here.

Won't you write?

E. J. G.¹⁹⁷

Thursday, May 9, 1861 Afternoon at the Navy Yard

On Thursday, May 9, 1861, a White House party, including the President, spent the afternoon at the Navy Yard where they viewed a dress parade of the 71st New York Regiment and attended a band concert. The President boarded the steamer USS Pensacola and watched

¹⁹⁶ Edward D. Baker (1811-1861) Friend of Abraham Lincoln and lawyer who came in second in the 1843 Whig Convention for Congress, Edward D. Baker subsequently took the following Congressional term and Abraham Lincoln took the third. Baker resigned from Congress to serve in the Mexican-American War; he had earlier served in the Black Hawk War. Later, Baker was elected to Congress from another congressional district in northwest Illinois. He helped lead California Republicans before he became a Senator from Oregon (Republican, 1860-61) after less than a year's residence in the state—through the help of another former Illinoisan, Anson Henry. His oratorical abilities helped carry California and Oregon for Lincoln. Though a new senator, he was one of two Senate escorts for the President-elect on the way to Lincoln's inauguration in 1861 and it was Baker who introduced "Abraham Lincoln, the President-elect of the United States."

Senator Baker liked to make Senate speeches against the Confederacy while wearing his Army uniform. Baker was an unrestrained and impulsive advocate of the Union cause: "I want sudden, bold, forward determined war; and I do not think anybody can conduct war of that kind as well as a Dictator!" Baker told the Senate.

As an Army colonel, Baker precipitated a major congressional investigation when he was killed at the Battle of Ball's Bluff on October 22, 1861. He had been visiting with President's family the day before and relaxing with the President on the White House lawn. According to John Hay, Baker "came down to Washington and settled all his affairs. He went to say farewell to the family of the president. A lady—who in her high position is still gracefully mindful of early friendships—gave him a bouquet of flowers. 'Very beautiful,' he said, quietly. 'These flowers and my memory will wither together.'"¹⁹⁷

Baker had been commissioned a general but would have had to resign from the Senate if he had accepted the commission so he opted to continue as a colonel and a Senator. President Lincoln learned of Baker's death at McClellan's headquarters from General George B. McClellan. He was so upset that on leaving the headquarters, Mr. Lincoln "almost fell as he stepped into the street."

¹⁹⁷ *The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library*, Elizabeth Todd Grimsley, SC 608.

target practice by an 11-inch Dahlgren gun. At 7 p. m., the Presidential party left the Navy Yard to a customary salute of thirty-four guns.¹⁹⁸

**Elizabeth Todd Grimsley Attends Evening
Military Reception at White House and Dinner at Swards'**

On the evening of Thursday, May 9, President and Mary Lincoln hosted a levee in the East Room for the cabinet, all the commissioned officers of the Army, Navy, and Marine Corps and the Volunteer Militia that had thus far arrived in Washington and their families. They showed up in parade dress, a thousand or more crowding the cavernous East Room of the White House.

The Military Reception.

The reception this evening in honor of the officers and men on duty here was a great success. Everybody was there. The marine band played splendidly. The President looked well. The Madame looked better, and a more joyous, happy, patriotic gathering probably never convened before at the Presidential mansion. For the benefit of the fair sex I will state that Mrs. Lincoln wore a very elegant blue silk, richly embroidered, and with a long train' also pint lace cape, and a full set of pearl ornaments, in which she well entertained the dignity of her station; while the only lady of her household, Mrs. Grimsley, wore a blue watered silk, with lace cape and appropriate trimmings. The officer and all were delighted with their reception.

New York Herald-Tribune, Friday, May 10, 1861.¹⁹⁹

The Reception – Last night the President and Mrs. Lincoln gave a reception to the commissioned officers, and their families of the Army, Navy, and Marine Corps and the Volunteer Militia now in this city. The assemblage was large, and it may readily be imagined that the scene was a brilliant one indeed, where the gathering was made up of gaily uninformed men and women in full evening costume. The reception served an excellent purpose in enabling the officers to make a general acquaintance. The welcome by Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln was hearty and cordial, indeed Marshal Lamon, Deputy Marshal Phillips, Commissioner Blake, captain Goddard, and the President's Private Secretary, Mr. Nicolay, were at their posts, also siding and abetting to make the visitors feel at home in the White House. Mrs. Grimsley, relative of Mrs. Lincoln's, was present with Mrs. L., assisting to do the honors of the reception room. Of the members of the cabinet present we noticed Messrs. Seward, Cameron and Blair.

Between nine and ten o'clock Major Anderson dropped in so quietly that at first few were aware of his presence. He paid his respects to Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln, and then fell back to the rear of the oval room, where his medium figure was soon eclipsed by the taller proportions about him. Meantime, there was a buzz of inquiry as to his whereabouts. The President seemed to think that a bird that can sing and won't sing should be made to sing, for he hastened in quest of the Major, and leading him forward placed him by his side, where the eager crowd could have an opportunity; of taking him by the hand. For the remainder of the evening Major Anderson divided the honors. The two younger sons of the President, Masters Willie and Tommy, --fine, lagenuous little fellows of 8 and 10 years, --seemed especially "to cotton" to the Major and it was mentioned of one of them that in sitting for his photograph lately he insisted upon having it taken with a picture of Major A. in his hand.,

The press of New York sends its representatives to the wars. Amongst the Zouaves officers present last night was Mr. Winsor of the New York Times; Mr. Alcock of the Sunday Atlas, and Mr. Leverich of the N. Y. Lender. Mr. Howard, a newly arrived "special" of the Tribune was also present.

¹⁹⁸ *National Republican*, Washington, D. C., May 10, 1861, 3:1; Bruce, *Tools of War*, 17-18; Nicolay to Bates, May 10, 1861, John G. Nicolay Papers, Library of Congress, Washington, DC; *Baltimore Sun*, May 10, 1861.

¹⁹⁹ *New York Herald-Tribune*, Friday, May 10, 1861, New York, New York, Volume: XXI, Issue: 6253, p. 5.

Scala, with the Marine band, contributed their usual quota of fine music; in fact, we Washingtonians flatter ourselves that this favorite band is an institution not to be best anywhere. So said competent judges last night.

Evening Star, Friday, May 10, 1861, Washington, D.C.²⁰⁰

Major Robert Anderson, whose forces strove to repel the Confederate attack on Ft. Sumter, arrived unnoticed. A newspaper reported, “The President . . . hastened in quest of the Major, and leading him forward placed him by his side.” Lincoln’s sons Willie and Tad “especially” admire Anderson, “and it was mentioned of one of them that in sitting for his photograph lately he insisted upon having . . . a picture of Major A. in his hand.” The Marine Band provided music.²⁰¹

“Looking around disdainfully at the ripped and threadbare curtains and battered carpet of a ballroom that had been ravaged by the boots and rifles of the Kansas guardsmen who had lived there for a week, Mary Lincoln resolved to reclaim and restore her home. Mary Lincoln and Elizabeth Grimsley would leave the next morning for the great northern cities to purchase the necessary materials.”²⁰²

We had a great treat in a matinee given at the navy yard barracks, May 9th by the 71st New York Regiment, Dodworth’s Band, which was attended by the President and family, Cabinet Officers, and many other invited guests. And this was followed by an elegant dinner party given by Secretary Seward, for the Cabinet Officers and families. Secretary Hay and I were the representatives from the Mansion, and we had a laughable experience in trying to get into it again, as the secretary had failed to get the password, and we had to pass through much red tape, before the sentinels would admit us. It was hard for us to remember we were living under military rule.²⁰³

Elizabeth Todd Grimsley

Friday, May 10, 1861
Talk of Going to New York City

On Friday we speak of going to New York to spend a few days. Col. Thomas offered to place a war steamer at our disposal so that we might go by sea but I am afraid we might be made so sea sick as that we could not enjoy our visit & would much prefer returning in that way...²⁰⁴

Elizabeth Todd Grimsley

Saturday, May 11, 1861
Elizabeth Todd Grimsley and Mary Todd Lincoln
Leave By Steamer For New York City Shopping Trip

At 10:00 a.m. on Saturday, May 11, 1861, Mary Lincoln left on a shopping trip to Philadelphia and New York, accompanied by Elizabeth Grimsley and William S. Wood, the commissioner of public buildings.²⁰⁵ She was invited to go by sea, but concluded that the route

²⁰⁰ *Evening Star*, Friday, May 10, 1861, Washington, D. C., p. 2.

²⁰¹ *Evening Star*, Washington, D. C., May 10, 1861, 3:1; *National Republican*, Washington, D. C., May 10, 1861, 3:1; *Baltimore Sun*, Baltimore, Maryland, May 10, 1861, 1:4; Michael Burlingame, ed., *With Lincoln in the White House: Letters, Memoranda, and Other Writings of John G. Nicolay, 1860-1865*, Carbondale, Southern Illinois University Press, 2000, pp. 41-42.

²⁰² Epstein, p. 329.

²⁰³ *Six Months*, p. 58.

²⁰⁴

²⁰⁵ *Goodwin*, p. 359.

adopted was the most expeditious, and could and would be all as comfortable. They arrived in Philadelphia and departed for New York at 2 p. m.²⁰⁶

While communication with the North by railroads was cut off, Mr. Lincoln proposed we should go to New York by steamer, the district commissioner, W. S. Wood, arranging the trip, upon which several gentlemen friends accompanied us as far as Perth Amboy, where we took the train.²⁰⁷

Elizabeth Todd Grimsley

Elizabeth Todd Grimsley and Mary Lincoln Arrive in New York City and Stay at Metropolitan Hotel²⁰⁸

Personal Intelligence.
Mrs. Lincoln, accompanied by Mrs. Grimsley, and an escort of several friends, arrived in this city from Philadelphia, at half-past six o'clock yesterday afternoon, and are occupying a suite of apartments at the Metropolitan Hotel. Mrs. Lincoln is in the best of health and spirits, and is rejoiced at the opportunity of enjoying a couple of weeks relaxation in New York, from the arduous cares and duties of the White House.

New York Herald, Sunday, May 12, 1861.²⁰⁹



Metropolitan Hotel, New York City

Elizabeth Todd Grimsley and Mary Todd Lincoln Call on Colonel Anderson in New York City

MILITARY MOVEMENTS IN NEW YORK Movements of Colonel Anderson

During yesterday [Sunday] Col. A. was engaged writing letters and receiving visitors at the Bresort House. Among those who called on the Colonel yesterday were Mrs. Lincoln and Mrs. Grimsley, who spent a short time chatting with colonel and Mrs. Anderson.



Major Robert Anderson

New York Herald, Wednesday, May 15, 1861.

²⁰⁶ *New York Tribune*, May 13, 1861.

²⁰⁷ *Six Months*, p. 58.

²⁰⁸ The Metropolitan Hotel in New York City opened on September 1, 1852, and was demolished in 1895. It occupied a three-hundred-foot brownstone-faced frontage of four floors above fashionable shopfronts occupying a full city block on Broadway and two hundred feet on Prince Street. The site, formerly that of Niblo's Garden, was owned by Stephen Van Rensselaer, and the architects were Joseph Trench and John Butler Snook, who designed the hotel in the "grand commercialized style reminiscent of Roman palazzos," with many of its furnishings imported from Europe, including the largest plate-glass mirrors in the United States: the interior decorations and furnishings were claimed in 1866 to have cost \$200,000. It could shelter six hundred guests, in steam-heated rooms and in "family apartments" with private drawing rooms. The Metropolitan, operated on the "American plan" that included three meals a day, was owned by the Leland brothers, organizers of the first American hotel chain. The Metropolitan Hotel closed and was demolished in 1895.

New York Public Library, Stephen A. Schwarzman Building / Photography Collection, Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints and Photographs Catalog Call Number: MFY Dennis Coll 91-F209, Record ID: 624495, Digital ID: G91F209_034F

²⁰⁹ *New York Herald*, Sunday, May 12, 1861, New York, New York, Issue: 9011, p. 5.

Monday, May 13, 1861

Mary Lincoln Purchases Items for Executive Mansion and Carriage

On Monday, May 13, 1861, in New York City, Mary Lincoln purchased items for the Executive Mansion. She also purchased a carriage for \$900.²¹⁰

Our objective point was “Brewster’s”, for an open carriage, as the weather was growing warm for the coach. We selected the carriage, took a drive in it, spent the whole of the next day at the cemetery, Greenwood, returning only in time for dinner. Some friends joined us in the evening, and the next day we left for Washington. The reporters did not hear of us until after we had left the city, but what was our amazement upon taking up the New York papers, after our amazement upon taking up the New York papers, after our return home, to find we had been on an extensive shopping trip; the Lord & Taylor, Arnold and Constable, and A... T. Stewart had been largely patronized, that Mrs. Lincoln had bought, among other things, a three thousand dollar point lace shawl, and Mrs. Grimsley had also indulged, to the extent of one thousand, in a like purchase, (and parparentesis, this was the nearest I ever came to having one,) where as we had not even driven by the stores.²¹¹

Elizabeth Todd Grimsley

Unattended for years, the White House had come to look like “an old an unsuccessful hotel.” Elizabeth Grimsley was stunned to find that the family apartments were in a deplorably shabby condition as to furniture, which looked as if it has been brought in by the first President.

Most of Mary Lincoln’s purchases during that first year involved her planned redecoration of the White House, for which \$20,000 had been appropriated by Congress. Biographer Ruth Painter Randall wrote: “Old receipted bills in the National Archives show the vast array of objects bought. There is every possible item of furniture for Victorian interiors: bedsteads, chairs, sofas, velvet hassocks, ‘Bell Pull Rosets & Cords,’ washstands, ‘Ewers & Basins,’ ‘Covered Chamber,’ ‘foot bath,’ and — to strike a modern note — ‘Patent Spring Mattresses.’ One almost wades through costly fabrics: damask, brocade, pink tarlatan, ‘French Brocatelles,’ ‘French Plushes,’ ‘French Satin DeLaine.’ There is even an item for ‘hanging 221 pieces of velvet paper.’ It took 508 yards of blue and white “Duck” for the tent placed on the White House lawn for the use of the Marine Band in their Wednesday and Saturday concerts.”²¹²

Our next trip to New York was after the called session, and an appropriation had been made for re-furnishing a few of the be rooms, and this time we did not escape the reporters so well, for we could not step in or out of a carriage without one of that fraternity being at our elbow, and various were the devices made to escape recognition.

As is well known, Mrs. Lincoln was fond of dress, had fine taste, and her husband enjoyed seeing her in full dress, but she did indulge in the one hundredth part of the extravagance with which she and I were credited, on that occasion.

When she bout the dinner set, for the Executive Mansion, she ordered a set made for herself, with her initial, and this latter, I know, was not paid for by the district commissioner, as was most unkindly charged when it was stored away. Unfortunately, too many presents, were sent marked “personal gifts”, and were accepted, but Mr. Lincoln was not in this respect “worldly wise” and Mrs. Lincoln could not anticipate the storm of censure which fell upon her.

²¹⁰ *Baltimore Sun*, May 9, 1861, May 20, 1861.

²¹¹ *Six Months*, p. 58.

²¹² <http://www.mrlincolnandnewyork.org/mr-lincolns-visits/mrs-lincolns-shopping/>

It was a great delight to purchase new carpets and furniture, as the large north room, the best in the family suite was most shabby. A mahogany French bedstead, split from top to bottom, was the best piece of furniture, in it, and all looked as if it had survived many Presidents and worn out the patience of many servants trying to keep it in reputable order.²¹³

Elizabeth Todd Grimsley

Mary Lincoln Entertains at Metropolitan Hotel

In the evening of Monday, May 13, 1861, Mary Lincoln entertained at the Metropolitan Hotel.²¹⁴

Wednesday, May 15, 1861 Mary Lincoln Buys Barouche Carriage

On May 15, 1861, Mary Lincoln purchased an open barouche carriage in New York for \$900.²¹⁵

Thursday, May 16, 1861 Elizabeth Todd Grimsley and Mary Todd Lincoln Select Dinner Service For White House

On Thursday, May 16, 1861, two months after the inauguration, Mary Lincoln and Elizabeth Grimsley visited F. V. Haughwout & Co. in New York City where Mary ordered a dinner service for the White House, solferino and gold dinner service with the arms of the United States emblazoned on each piece.²¹⁶ She also selected some handsome vases and mantel ornaments for the Blue and Green Rooms and ordered a seven-hundred-piece set of Bohemian cut glass. New York merchants welcomed these visits with open lines of credit.²¹⁷

A DINNER SERVICE FOR THE WHITE HOUSE.—Mrs. Lincoln, accompanied by Mrs. Grimsley, spent the principal part of this morning in the establishment of F. V. Haughwout & Co., corner of Broadway and Broome street, where she ordered a magnificent dinner service for the White House. The color is Solferino and gold, with the arms of the United States emblazoned on each piece. The purchases also included some handsome vases and mantel ornaments.—*N. Y. Post*.

New York papers think it worth mentioning that Mrs. Lincoln, accompanied by Mrs. Grimsley, ordered a magnificent dinner service for the White House. The color is Solferino and gold, with the arms of the United States emblazoned on each piece. The purchases also included some handsome vases and mantel ornaments. We are glad Grimsley was present.

Boston Post, Monday, May 20, 1861

Evening Star, Friday, May 17, 1861, Washington, D. C.

The Empire City Regiment band serenaded Mary Lincoln at the Metropolitan Hotel in New York.²¹⁸

Friday, May 17, 1861 Mary Lincoln Visits Encampment in City Hall Park

On Friday, May 17, 1861, Mary Lincoln and her party visited an encampment in City Hall Park.²¹⁹

²¹³ *Six Months*, p. 59.

²¹⁴ *New York Tribune*, May 14, 1861.

²¹⁵ *Evening Star*, Washington, D. C., May 18, 1861, 3:3. *National Republican*, Washington, D. C., May 20, 1861, 3:1.

²¹⁶ *New York Times*, May 16, 1861. *National Republican*, Washington, D. C., May 18, 1861, 3:3.

²¹⁷ Historian Leech. *Evening Star*, Friday, May 17, 1861, Washington, D. C., p. 2. *Boston Post*, Monday, May 20, 1861, Boston, Massachusetts, Volume XXVI, Issue 27, p. 4. <http://www.mrlincolnannewyork.org/inside.asp?ID=28&subjectID=2>

²¹⁸ *Baltimore Sun*, May 18, 1861. *National Republican*, Washington, D. C., May 18, 1861, 3:2.

²¹⁹ *New York Times*, May 18, 1861.

According to biographer Jean Painter Randall, not all of the criticism of Mary Lincoln's shopping during the first year was warranted. "Like flashes on a screen are the frequent newspapers items about her shopping trips to Philadelphia and New York that first year. The reporters sometimes showed excess of zeal." Elizabeth Grimsley reported on the May trip to New York with Mary Lincoln. They 'had not even driven by the stores. To their amazement after their return they read in the papers that they had been 'on an extensive shopping trip with the names of the various stores visited, that 'Mrs. Lincoln had bought, among other things, a three thousand dollar point lace shawl, and Mrs. Grimsley had also indulged, to the extent of one thousand, in a like purchase...' Mrs. Grimsley remarked dryly that was the nearest she ever came to having such a shawl."

At 5 p.m. on May 17, 1861, Mary Lincoln and Elizabeth Grimsley left New York for Boston to visit Robert Lincoln at Harvard.²²⁰

Saturday, Sunday and Monday May 18-20, 1861: Trip to Boston

May 18, 1861

Mary Todd Lincoln and Elizabeth Todd Grimsley Arrive in Boston Visit Robert Lincoln at Harvard

On May 18, 1861, after a week of New York shopping for items to refurbish the dilapidated White House, Mary Lincoln made her first visit to her son Robert at Harvard.²²¹ Mary and Elizabeth Grimsley arrived in Cambridge on the evening of Saturday, May 18, and left on the afternoon of Monday, May 20.²²²

We were entertained most pleasantly by personal friends, had a beautiful dinner given us at A T. Stewart's and afterwards went up to Boston to spend a couple of days with Robert. Through Senator Sumner, who was a warm friend and admirer of both President and Mrs. Lincoln, our coming was anticipated, and everything arranged for a charming reception at the Revere House, dinners and drives, and we met many of the most distinguished men of Boston and Harvard; saw all that could be seen in so short a time, and returned to Washington, delighted with our jaunt, yet rather reproaching ourselves for having left Mr. Lincoln alone.²²³

Elizabeth Todd Grimsley

Monday, May 20, 1861

Mary Todd Lincoln and Elizabeth Todd Grimsley Return to New York City After Visit With Robert Lincoln at Harvard

On May 20, 1861, Mary Lincoln and Elizabeth Todd Grimsley returned to New York City from their visit with Robert at Harvard in Cambridge, Massachusetts.²²⁴

²²⁰ *Baltimore Sun*, May 20, 1861.

²²¹ *Baltimore Sun*, May 20, 1861.

²²² *New York Herald*, May 16, 1861, p. 4 and May 18, 1861, p. 5. *New York Tribune*, May 18, 1861, p. 8. *Turner and Turner*, pp. 87-89. Emerson, *Robert Todd Lincoln*, p. 70.

²²³ *Six Months*, p. 59.

²²⁴ *Baltimore Sun*, May 20, 1861.

Thursday, May 23, 1861
Flag Presentation Ceremony at Camp Cameron

In the afternoon, President and Mary Lincoln and many others ... attended a flag presentation ceremony at Camp Cameron, located near Washington, D. C. A newspaper reported that the “patriotic ladies of New York” presented “a beautiful and rich National flag” to the New York Seventh Regiment. “The raising of the flag was of course greeted with deafening huzzas, accompanied by the music of the regimental band to the tune of the Star-Spangled Banner.”²²⁵

Friday, May 24, 1861
Death of Colonel Elmer Ellsworth

From the time the Lincolns moved into the Executive Mansion, Elmer Ellsworth was a constant, welcome visitor.²²⁶

A real sorrow was brought into the White House, with the body of Col. E. E. Ellsworth, who fell a martyr to his rash zeal in hauling down a confederate flag, at Alexandria. He had been a member of the family ever since we went to Washington, having gone on with Mr. Lincoln from Springfield, and was much beloved. He was a magnetic, brilliant young fellow, over-flowing with dash and spirit. He was in command of the New York Zouaves, fireman, picked men, and grandly trained and disciplined by him, and it was his great pride to parade his men in front of the Mansion every day, not only for the President’s inspection, but every member of the family was expected to approve, applaud, and admire and this we did, as the Zouaves were new to us, and did great credit to their dashing Colonel. His body was brought to the East room, and funeral services held there, May 26th, 1861.²²⁷



Colonel Elmer Ellsworth

Elizabeth Todd Grimsley

**Elizabeth Todd Grimsley Writes to John Todd Stuart:
Expenses a Concern**

Washington May 24th, 1861

My dear Cousin John,

Upon my return from our trip north I found your welcome letter of May 14th for which I thank you very much. It is needless to tell you how delightful that trip was to one who had never been so far East, and every attention we received (and therein ___ is Legions) added to our enjoyment. We had expected to be absent only a week but were gone nearly two. I regretted only one thing about it, which was that I did not see as much of Lock [her brother Lockwood W. Todd] as I had wanted and feared he might feel

²²⁵ *Evening Star*, Washington, D. C., May 24, 1861, 3:2. *The Sun*, Baltimore, Maryland, May 24, 1861, 2:3. *National Republican*, Washington, D. C., May 24, 1861, 3:1.

²²⁶ Colonel Elmer Ephraim Ellsworth (April 11, 1837 – May 24, 1861) was a law clerk and United States Army soldier, best known as the first conspicuous casualty and the first Union officer killed in the American Civil War. Before his death, as tension built up toward the war, he had been the leader of a famous touring military drill team known as the “Fire Zouaves” and was a close personal friend of Abraham Lincoln. He was killed while removing a Confederate flag from the roof of the Marshall House Inn of Alexandria, Virginia, at Lincoln’s behest, as the flag had been visible from the White House as a defiant sign of the growing rebellion. Lincoln called him “the greatest little man I ever met”, and his body lay in state at the White House after his death. Following his death, “Remember Ellsworth” would become a Union rallying cry.
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elmer_E_Ellsworth

²²⁷ *Six Months*, p. 56.

badly about it. But I could not help it, as I was not the principal person of the expedition. We met Lock on Monday evening in New York and he sailed on Tuesday noon. He seemed rather sad about leaving and I felt terribly to have him go. This world seems made up of meetings and sad partings.

This is a sad morning to us here on account of Col. Ellsworth's death of which you will hear before this reaches you. He was a great pet in the family and Mr. Lincoln feels it very much. He was shot immediately after having taken down the Secession flag in Alexandria and while tearing it in strips. Shot in the back the ball reaching the heart. He expired immediately. This is only the beginning of terrible scenes I fear, through which we shall have to pass. I have never felt the least alarm but the quiet of home will be very agreeable. I have overstayed my time so long because Mary has urged and urged and seemed to feel hurt at the idea of my leaving her, and now I am no nearer getting away than I was six weeks ago. You all write you are getting along so well.... that Mary thinks are very selfish if I speak of going home. The only way will be for Father or Mother to write me word to come home--that is if you all --- me. I don't know that I can feel very much flattered by your ready consent that I should remain. Mary now talks of one trip to the White Mountains after the adjournment of Congress. You are so thoughtful dear Cousin John of me. Brother John [her brother John Blair Smith Todd] insisted upon my remaining with Mary until this time and longer if I could. *I told him my expenses necessarily would be larger than I was willing he should bear, he silenced me instantly & told me he wished me to stay. When he got ready to go home, he found the money he had with him useless, so my bill of \$125 was left unpaid until as I thought he should reach St. Louis. But it seems he spoke to Mr. Lincoln and asked him to furnish me with what money I wanted and he would remit it immediately to him. Now Mr. Lincoln is very kind to me but I would rather not apply to him for money & on your suggestion will ask you to send it to me, thereby making Brother John your debtor instead of Mr. Lincoln. This is if you can make it convenient ___ agreeable to do so. The sooner I can pay my debts the sooner I shall go home. Cousin Mary will remember her advice to me when I spoke of coming, "to count the expense well and ___ how I was to get home." I did so to a nicety if Brother John had allowed me to go at the expiration of the time, I should not have had to call for another cent, but enough of this. Much love to dear Cousin Mary and all your family as well as ours and much for yourself from your affect sister.*

Elizabeth Todd Grimsley²²⁸

Tuesday, May 24, 1861

Harrison J. Grimsley Enlists in Union Army

On **May 24**, 1861, Harrison J. Grimsley enlisted in Quincy, Illinois as a private in Company E, 16th Illinois Infantry Regiment. He gave his residence as Mt. Sterling, Brown County, Illinois and his nativity as Bath County, Kentucky. On the enlistment documents, his age was 40, he was married and his occupation was a clerk. He was 5' 8 1/2" in height. His hair was brown, his eyes grey and his complexion fair. He enlisted for a period of three years and re-enlisted as a veteran at the end of his first term.²²⁹

Saturday, May 25, 1861

Colonel Elmer Ellsworth Funeral at Executive Mansion

President and Mary Lincoln attended the funeral services for Col. Elmer Ellsworth at 11 a. m. in the East Room, where his body had lain in state since early morning. Mary Lincoln placed Ellsworth's picture and a wreath on the casket.²³⁰

²²⁸ The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, Elizabeth Todd Grimsley, SC 608.

²²⁹ Illinois State Archives, Illinois Civil War Detail Report. *New York Herald*, Wednesday, May 15, 1861, New York, New York, Issue: 9014, p. 8.

²³⁰ *Evening Star*, Washington, D. C., May 25, 1861, 3:1. *National Republican*, Washington, D. C., May 27, 1861, 3:1. Margaret Leech, *Reveille in Washington 1860-1865*, New York, Harper, 1941 p. 81. ICHi—Originals.

Monday, May 27, 1861

Robert Lincoln Home From Harvard on Vacation

On Monday, May 27, 1861, Robert Lincoln was at the Executive Mansion on vacation from Harvard.²³¹

Tuesday, May 28, 1861

Lincolns Host Reception for Civil and Military Dignitaries

On Tuesday, May 28, 1861, President and Mary Lincoln hosted a reception for various “civil and military dignitaries.” A newspaper reported, “President Lincoln looked in good health and spirits, and welcomed his friends with that genuine expression of pleasure which makes all feel perfectly at ease in his presence. Mary Lincoln also looked exceedingly well, and did the honors of the White House with easy grace . . . Before breaking up, President Lincoln and Mary Lincoln passed among their visitors in the East Room, and entertained a pleasant little company some time after the hours of the levee had closed.” The Marine Band provided music for the event, “as usual.”²³²

Saturday, June 1, 1861

Lincolns Hear Marine Band Concert From Executive Mansion Balcony

From the balcony of the Executive Mansion, the President and his family heard afternoon music by the Marine Band. A brisk firing (musket practice) on the Virginia side of the Potomac interrupted the program.²³³

Monday, Friday, June 3, 1861

Mourning Death of Stephen A. Douglas

On June 3rd, the White House was again draped in mourning, and the President sincerely mourned the death of Senator Stephen A. Douglas. He had proved himself a noble, magnanimous man, pledging his influence and fidelity to a rival who had, in love and politics, supplanted him. “The Little Giant” as he was sometimes called, and acknowledged to be, in Illinois, had pitted his whole strength against the antagonist; and when defeated, yielded gracefully, and even thus early, was showing himself to be a tower of strength to Mr. Lincoln; and one who could be trusted in this dire national emergency; rising above all party or personal considerations, to lend his efforts to the maintenance of the Union.

He has planned a series of addresses to be delivered at various points, for the cause, when suddenly laid low in death.²³⁴

Tuesday, Friday, June 4, 1861

Diplomatic Dinner at White House

So disturbed had been the state of affairs, that the usual function of the White House, had been omitted by the President, but a comparative lull set in, and invitations were issued and a general acceptance was returned by the entire diplomatic corps, ministers, charge d’affaires, and Secretary of legations, with their ladies, nine in number, our own home party with Secretary Seward, Assistant Sec. Fred Seward, Mrs.

²³¹ *Baltimore Sun*, May 31, 1861.

²³² *Evening Star*, Washington, D. C., May 29, 1861, 3:1. *National Republican*, Washington, D. C., May 29, 1861, 3:2. *New York Herald*, May 29, 1861, 1:2. *New York Daily Tribune*, May 29, 1861, 5:1.

²³³ Nicolay to Bates, June 2, 1861, John G. Nicolay Papers, Library of Congress, Washington, D. C. *New York Times*, June 2, 1861.

²³⁴ *Six Months*, pp. 60-61.

Seward, and Secretaries Nicolay and Hay comprised the party. England, France, Russia, Austria, Prussia, Spain, Sardinia, Brazil, Costa Rica, Netherlands, Denmark and New Grenada were all represented.

The glitter of the gorgeous decorations and the exquisite court dresses of the ladies, and the gay clatter of conversation, (for diplomats do not dine with the solemnity common to American) all combined to render the occasion a very delightful one.

Thanks to Mr. John G. Nicolay, I can give you a clipping from the “Washington Star” of June 7th, 1861.

“The President, on Tuesday evening gave a dinner to the Diplomatic Corps, (here follows a list of the guests) which was, in many respects, the most brilliant affair of the sort that has ever taken place in the Executive mansion. Through the good taste of Mrs. Lincoln, the stiff, artificial flowers heretofore ornamenting the Presidential tables were wholly discarded and their places delightfully supplied by fragrant, natural flowers. The blue room was decorated with cut flowers; and the chandeliers gracefully festooned with wreaths and flowers, indeed the senses of sight and smell were delighted at every turn by beautiful and fragrant pyramids and wreaths from the floral riches of the White House conservatories and grounds. The dinner was served in a style to indicate that Mrs. Lincoln’s good taste and good judgment had exercised supervision in this department also.”

I will spare you the detail of dress on that occasion except to say it was all fashionably correct and elegant. That gage seemed vergin on to the style of full dresses, amplitude of skirt which required hoop skirts to display them, and large bonnets laden with flowers. However, décolleté was not then so pronounced as at present.

The private secretaries Nicolay and Hay, covered themselves with glory in the management of the arrangements, which involved so much when precedent is to be observed, as in the case of foreign dignitaries. And although there is a book of etiquette always at hand, it requires a cool head, quickness to grasp situations, and ease of manner to carry out detail successfully on first experience, which these gentlemen developed in an eminent degree. Perhaps because we were all reared in the free air of the prairies, with a certain sense of independence modulated by certain refinements, inherited or otherwise acquired, we entirely forgot we were expected to be embarrassed and addressed ourselves to the pleasure of entertaining, and being entertained.²³⁵

Monday, June 10, 1861

Lincolns Host Army Chaplains

In the evening of Monday, June 10, 1861, President and Mary Lincoln entertained a group of army chaplains.²³⁶

Tuesday, June 11, 1861

Dr. James A. Smith Visits Executive Mansion

On Tuesday, June 11, 1861, Dr. James A. Smith, Lincoln’s former pastor at the First Presbyterian Church of Springfield visited the Executive Mansion.²³⁷

Friday, June 14, 1861

President Lincoln and Boys Meet Mary at Train Depot on Her Return to Washington

On the afternoon of Friday, June 14, 1861, President Lincoln and his two sons went to the depot to welcome Mary home from her travels.²³⁸

²³⁵ *Six Months*, pp. 61-62.

²³⁶ *Baltimore Sun*, June 12, 1861.

²³⁷ *Baltimore Sun*, June 12, 1861.

Wednesday, June 19, 1861
President Lincoln Writes to Ninian W. Edwards

On Wednesday, June 19, 1861, President Lincoln wrote to Ninian W. Edwards, who lived in Springfield, Illinois and was married to Elizabeth Todd, Mary Lincoln's sister. Edwards had written to Lincoln seeking a government position. Lincoln replied, "I thought I would inquire into the thing and write you, but the extraordinary pressure upon me diverted me from it, and soon it passed out of my mind. . . . I am unwilling, of course, that you should be deprived of a chance to make something, if it can be done without injustice to the Government, or to any individual."²³⁹

President Lincoln and Mary Attend Drill at Navy Yard

In the evening, President Lincoln and Mary visited the Navy Yard, where they watch New York's 71st Regiment perform drills. A newspaper reports, "The usual salute was fired."²⁴⁰

Friday, June 21, 1861
Carriage Accident

On June 21, 1861, Elizabeth Grimsley was with Mary, Willie and Tad when they visited the camp of the New York Twenty-fifth Regiment on the Virginia side of the Potomac. On their return, the tongue of their carriage broke, and the horses ran, throwing the driver from his seat. Nearby soldiers prevented an accident to the carriage.²⁴¹

On June 21, while visiting soldiers' encampments, the pole of her [Mary Lincoln's] carriage broke, and after the driver was thrown from the vehicle, only the quick wit of soldiers saved Elizabeth Grimsley, Mary Lincoln, and her two young sons from injury. The *New York Times* reported that members of the New York Twenty-fifth Regiment witnessed the runaway carriage and came to the rescue..." Mrs. L. clung to her youngest boy and leaped to safety."²⁴²

"I am confident had it not been for General [Hiram] Walbridge who was with us, that Taddy would have been crushed by the wheel. You will certainly think Mary and I have changed characters as the papers represent her as acting with great coolness while I had to be assisted from the carriage. So much for reporters," Elizabeth Grimsley wrote John Todd Stuart.

Saturday, June 22, 1861
Elizabeth Todd Grimsley Rides to Arlington Heights

On Saturday evening we rode over to Arlington Heights & certainly never had a more romantic ride-- Genl. Lee would be glad to return it is thought.

²³⁸ *Baltimore Sun*, June 15, 1861.

²³⁹ Abraham Lincoln to Ninian W. Edwards, June 19, 1861, CW, 4:412.

²⁴⁰ *New York Daily Tribune*, June 20, 1861, 4:6.

²⁴¹ *Evening Star*, Washington, D. C., June 22, 1861, 3:2; *Baltimore Sun*, Baltimore, Maryland, June 22, 1861.

²⁴² *Clinton*, p. 143.

Elizabeth Todd Grimsley's June 23, 1861 Letter to John Todd Stuart

Sunday, June 23, 1861

Elizabeth Todd Grimsley Writes to John Todd Stuart About Money Matters

Washington June 23rd 1861

My dear Cousin

I was very glad indeed to receive your letter on Saturday evening for the longer I am from home the more I appreciate the kind remembrances and affectionate regard of my friends particularly of my family. You are correct in your surmise that I intend remaining until after the meeting of Congress, which will ___ soon be upon us. I hope it may not be a protracted session for I wish to get home and I have promised Mary to go to Long Branch for a week or two. So you see there is something constantly on hand to prolong my stay. I do hope Brother John will be elected. [John Blair Smith Todd ran for Congress from _____ in 186_ and was _____] If so he will soon be here. We are looking for Mr. Edwards in the course of a day or two and I rather hope Willie will be with him. Mary and the children have been so urgent for him to come on and think it would be so nice for him to go to Long Branch with us. The city is full of strangers already. Senators and members are constantly arriving and many are here whose sole business it is to "invigorate the war" Like you we are constantly on the look-out for a battle, but the Southern Army do not seem disposed to breach (?) our troops in open manly (?) conflict and if many more Genl's Pierce and Schenck are **deleated** to lead our troops right upon mashed batteries we cannot hope to effect anything for of course the soldiery will lose confidence in themselves as well as leaders. Genl Scott continues well and has perfect faith in the success of our arms. I suppose you saw by N. Y. papers the narrow escape we made on Friday evening. I am confident had it not been for Gen. Wallridge who was with us that Taddy would have been crushed by the wheel. You will certainly think Mary and I have changed character as the paper represents her as acting with great coolness while I had to be assisted from the carriage. So much for reporters. That was my first experience on Virginia soil. On Saturday evening we rode over to Arlington Heights & certainly never had a more romantic ride--Genl. Lee would be glad to return it is thought. He and Genl. Beauregard have had a difficulty and Davis sides with the latter. Both Sam and David Todd are with Davis indeed George too as Surgeon. Were any of our friends in the engagement at Boonville? I dread to hear from there. I received a letter from Mother yesterday. She seems well and had just gone up to take care of you. Quite a surprise to Aunty Lockwood to find Cousin Mary away. Give her much love for me if she is still with you. I will answer Betties' letter very soon. My eyes do not feel well this morning. I suppose it is the heat affects them. There is a physician here very anxious to undertake my case, but I am afraid to make any experiments. I said he was here, he is Mary's family physician, but was captured last week by the secessionists--Much love to Father & Mother, also your own family and believe me as ever

Your affectionate sister.

E. J. G

About money matters, you are correct. Brother John [John Blair Smith Todd] will be on to supply me in time to go home. I hear from every quarter there is great difficulty in Ills.²⁴³

Tuesday, June 25, 1861

**President Lincoln, Mary Todd Lincoln and Elizabeth Todd Grimsley
Attend Funeral of Hungarian Private**

President and Mary Lincoln, Elizabeth Grimsley and Hon. Schuyler Colfax attended by invitation the funeral of a private conducted with military honors and Hungarian obsequies at the

²⁴³ *The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library*, Elizabeth Todd Grimsley, SC 608.

camp of the Garibaldi Guard. They reviewed the Thirty-Seventh New York Volunteer regiment, encamped near the Garibaldi Guard.²⁴⁴

On Tuesday, the President, Mrs. Lincoln, Mrs. Grimsley, and the Hon. Schuyler Colfax attended, at the camp of the Garibaldi Guard, the funeral of a private, who was buried with military honors, and the Hungarian obsequies.

Commercial Advertiser, Wednesday, June 26, 1861.²⁴⁵

The President, Mrs. Lincoln, Mrs. Grimsley and Hon. Schuyler Colfax attended this afternoon by invitation, the funeral of a private at Camp Garibaldi, who was buried with impressive military honors. The President afterwards reviewed the 37th N. Y. Regiment and was most enthusiastically cheered.

Boston Herald, Wednesday, June 26, 1861.²⁴⁶

Friday, June 28, 1861
Mary Todd Lincoln and Elizabeth Todd Grimsley
Visit Camp of New York Thirty Seventh

On Friday, June 28, 1861, the Camp of 37th New York Volunteers was named Camp Mary in honor of the First Lady. A bottle-breaking ceremony was attended by Mary Lincoln, Elizabeth Grimsley and others.²⁴⁷

CHRISTENING THE CAMP OF THE NEW YORK THIRTY SEVENTH.

A very interesting scene occurred this afternoon at the camp of Col. McCunn, Thirty-seventh New York regiment. Mrs. Lincoln, accompanied by Mrs. Grimsley, Hon. Mr. Colfax, and Gen. Walbridge, visited the camp. In honor of Mrs. Lincoln the encampment was christened Camp Mary, that being her Christian name. The Colonel made the announcement to Mrs. Lincoln, as she was sitting in her carriage, by breaking a bottle of champagne upon the wheel, at the same time announcing the name of the camp, accompanied by other remarks. Mr. Colfax and Gen. Walbridge responded on behalf of Mrs. Lincoln in brief and spirited speeches.

New York Herald, Friday, June 28, 1861.²⁴⁸

²⁴⁴ *National Republican*, Washington, D. C., June 26, 1861, 2:5. *Evening Star*, Washington, D. C., June 26, 1861, 3:2.

²⁴⁵ *Commercial Advertiser*, Wednesday, June 26, 1861, New York, New York, p. 1.

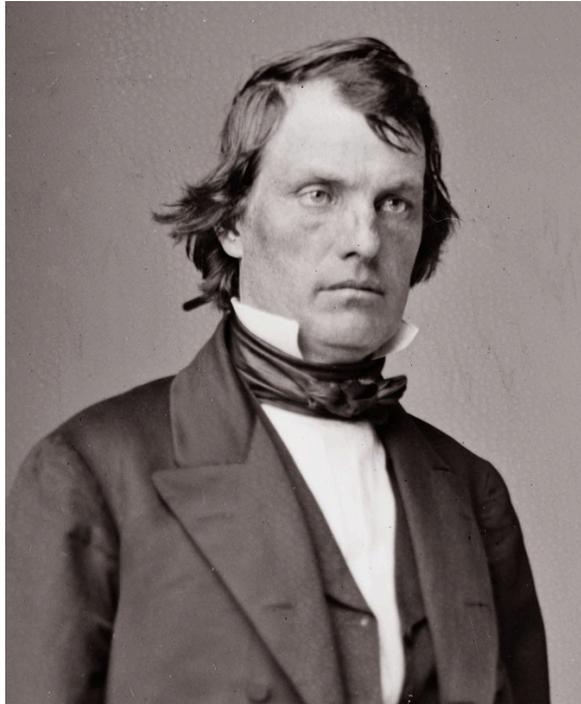
²⁴⁶ *Boston Herald*, Wednesday, June 26, 1861, p. 2.

²⁴⁷ *New York Times*, June 28, 1861.

²⁴⁸ *New York Herald*, Friday, June 28, 1861, New York, New York, Issue: 9058, p. 1.

Visit of the President and Mrs. Lincoln to Col. McCunn's Regiment.

A very interesting ceremony took place this evening at the camp of the Thirty-seventh New York Volunteers, under the command of Col. McCunn. During the evening parade the Presidential equipage drove on the ground, the occupants being Mrs. Lincoln, Mrs. Grimsley, Hon. Schuyler Colfax, Gen. Walbridge, of New York, and Mr. Swoeny. After the parade was dismissed, the regiment formed a line of battle in front of the Colonel's headquarters, while Mrs. Lincoln and her friends partook of his hospitality within. When the party reentered the carriage, Col. McCunn, in a patriotic speech, christened the tented field by breaking a bottle of champagne on the carriage wheel, calling it Camp Mary, in honor of the lady of the White House. Uproarious cheers were given by the regiment for the President, for his accomplished lady, and for the Union. In answer to repeated calls, Hon. Schuyler Colfax made an eloquent oration. Gen. Walbridge, in the name of Mrs. Lincoln, presented Col. McCunn with a very handsome cockade, and in doing so drew forth repeated bursts of applause by the truly national sentiments which fell from his lips.— Mrs. Lincoln, who looked remarkably well, wore a beautiful silk bonnet sent her as a present from Massachusetts; the Stars and Stripes were never more artistically delineated than they are in its construction.—*N. Y. Times*, 28th.



Journal, July 8, 1861²⁴⁹

Col. John H. McCunn

Wednesday, July 3, 1861

Senator Orville H. Browning Visits President at Executive Mansion

On the evening of July 3, 1861, Illinois Senator Orville H. Browning was at the Executive Mansion to discuss Lincoln's War Message to Congress. "Since my return from Illinois (June 18) the President has been engaged almost constantly in writing his message, and has refused to receive any calls whatever, either of friendship or business, except from members of the Cabinet, or high officials."²⁵⁰

Lincoln's War Message, communicated to Congress as a formal government document, "comprised a history of events, a report of stewardship, a constitutional argument, and an exalted commentary on fundamentals."²⁵¹

Friday, July 5, 1861

President Reviews 26th and 27th Pennsylvania Regiments

In the afternoon of Friday, July 5, 1861, President Lincoln with family and friends reviewed the 26th Pennsylvania Regiment under Col. William F. Small and the 27th Pennsylvania Regiment under Col. Einstein.²⁵²

Saturday, July 6, 1861

Senator Orville H. Browning at Executive Mansion

²⁴⁹ *Journal*, July 8, 1861, p. 2.

²⁵⁰ Nicolay to Bates, July 3, 1861, John G. Nicolay Papers, Library of Congress, Washington, D. C.

²⁵¹ Randall, *Lincoln*, 1:381.

²⁵² *New York Times*, July 6, 1861.

On the morning of July 6, 1861, Senator Browning was at the Executive Mansion to interview Lincoln. He met Secs. Seward and Smith for the first time.²⁵³ In the evening, he accompanied Mary Lincoln to a concert by Meda Blanchard at Willard's Hotel.²⁵⁴

Tuesday, July 9, 1861.

President and Mary Lincoln Host Executive Mansion Reception

In the evening of July 9, 1861, President Lincoln and Mary hosted an Executive Mansion reception. A newspaper reported, "The military display was very brilliant, and the ladies never made a finer appearance. Mary Lincoln attracted universal attention by her graceful bearing and high social qualities. Vice President [Hannibal] Hamlin and Speaker [of the House Galusha A.] Grow were among the guests. Generals and colonels were as thick as blackberries."²⁵⁵

Wednesday, July 10, 1861.

Mary Lincoln Visits Camp of Rhode Island Regiment

On the afternoon of Wednesday, July 10, 1861, Mary Lincoln visited the camp of a Rhode Island Regiment.²⁵⁶

Monday, July 15, 1861

Lincoln Appoints John Armstrong Springfield Postmaster

By July 15, 1861, President Lincoln had decided to appoint John Armstrong²⁵⁷ as Postmaster at Springfield, Illinois. Morris Lindsay, a Buchanan-era Democrat, held the Springfield Postmaster job until mid-August, 1861, when Lincoln's appointment of John Armstrong became effective. This must have been a great disappointment to Elizabeth Grimsley who so much wanted the appointment and who had lobbied through others so aggressively for the appointment.

Executive Mansion
July 15, 1861
Hon. Postmaster-General
My dear Sir
Please send
me a nomination for John
Armstrong, as Postmas-
ter at Springfield, Illinois.
Yours truly
A. Lincoln

Executive Mansion
July 15, 1861
Hon. Postmaster General

My dear Sir

Please send me a nomination for John Armstrong, as Postmaster at Springfield, Illinois.

Yours truly,
Lincoln

²⁵³ Browning, *Diary*.

²⁵⁴ *National Republican*, Washington, D. C., July 8, 1861, p. 3, cl. 5. *Evening Star*, Washington, D. C., July 8, 1861, p. 3, cl. 3.

²⁵⁵ *New York Herald*, July 11, 1861, p.1, cl. 1. *Baltimore Sun*, Baltimore, Maryland, July 11, 1861, p. 4, cl. 5. *Evening Star*, Washington, D. C., July 10, 1861, p. 2, cl. 1.

²⁵⁶ *New York Times*, July 11, 1861.

²⁵⁷ Powers, p. . John Armstrong was born on November 14, 1814, in Chester County, Pennsylvania. He came to Springfield, Illinois on August 1, 1837, and was married on November 14, 1839, to Chloe E. Abel. They had eight children, two of whom died young. John Armstrong was a contractor and builder for many years. He was appointed by President Lincoln, in 1861, to the office of Post Master in Springfield, and held the office until August 5, 1865.

Abraham Lincoln's Appointment of John Armstrong as Springfield Postmaster²⁵⁸

Tuesday, July 16, 1861.
Lincoln Hosts Reception
General Winfield Scott in Attendance

In the evening of Tuesday, June 16, 1861, President Lincoln hosted a “reception.” A newspaper reported, “Mrs. Lincoln never looked better, and drew around her a large circle of friend[s] and admirers.” The “appearance of the old veteran, Gen. [Winfield] Scott” highlighted the evening. “The seventy-five-year-old Scott was the Commanding General of the U.S. Army. The report continues, “No sooner was it whispered through the east room that . . . Scott was with the President than everybody rushed in that direction, and for a few moments the pressure of the crowd was really ‘awful.’”²⁵⁹

Sunday, July 21, 1861
Battle of Bull Run

In the early-morning hours of Sunday, July 21, 1861, what became known as The Battle of Bull Run began. As the roar of the artillery reached the Executive Mansion, Elizabeth Grimsley recalled, “The excitement grew intense.”²⁶⁰ The North was routed.

Who can ever forget that fateful Sunday of July 21st? The most memorable day ever known in Washington since it was captured by the British arms, in the last war.

The regiments so long encamped about the city, had at midnight, marched to the Potomac, amid cheering, enthusiasm, and hopefulness, for the general feeling was that this March was to be “On to Richmond”, to be crowned with brilliant victory; “the backbone of the rebellion was to be broken,” and the war ended.

Early in the morning the roar of the artillery at “Bull Run” could be heard, and the excitement grew intense, all conveyances were pressed into service, filled with those eager to go to the battle field, those left behind, all impatient to catch at any flying rumor. General Scott, cool and collected, opened dispatches, read them, announced contents, and gave orders amidst the excited throng.

First came good news, “Bull Run, the key of the enemy’s position had been taken, and the enemy completely routed.” The delight caused by this was changed to consternation by the tidings of the recapture of Bull Run, with terrific loss of life on both sides. The impression rapidly gained ground that the enemy’s forces were advancing on Washington, and the city was to be shelled and captured at once. It was also feared that Alexandria and Baltimore would join the Confederates, as the regiments which had kept them in subjection had been removed. It was a time of intense anxiety. And can you wonder at it.

Yet in the midst of all this, that beautiful moonlit Sabbath evening there was a wedding in Dr. Gurley’s church. His daughter was married to a young army officer, amid flowers, music and light. They left the church together, and then separated in the course of an hour—she to wait in her father’s house the results of the war, he to join his regiment on the battle-field. The streets echoed the clattering hoofs of hurrying cavalry, regiments marched to and fro, bayonets glistening in the moonlight, and the heavy sound of rolling army wagons dispatched for the wounded soldiers, and army baggage, were the sights and sounds we heard and met as we went home from that sad church wedding.

At last a telegram came saying, “The day is lost! Save Washington and the remnant of the army”. The crowd remained up all night—the President among them. At two o’clock a.m. a special army

²⁵⁸ *ALPL* John Armstrong Postmaster July 20, 1861.

²⁵⁹ *Evening Star*, Washington, D. C., 17 July 17, 1861, p. 2, cl. 1.

²⁶⁰ *Goodwin*, p. 371.

correspondent came in from the field bearing the news that a body of New Jersey troops had arrested the flight of the fugitive demoralized troops, and that body of eleven thousand men, who were not in the fight at Centreville, had made a stand with a battery against the advance of the enemy. This brought comparative relief. General Scott came to the White House, and insisted upon the family retiring, but it was not for rest, as at any early hour in the morning the troops came pouring into the city, the rumble of the ambulances bearing the wounded to the hospitals, and the tramp of the troops was rendered still more dismal by the sound of rain, which lasted thirty-six hours. This, however, did not prevent Mr. Lincoln from visiting camps, forts, and hospitals to speak words of cheer to the weary, disheartened troops.²⁶¹

Monday, July 22, 1861

Mary Lincoln and Boys Requested to Vacate Executive Mansion and Move North

At 2 o'clock a. m., on Monday, July 22, 1861, with rain pouring down, General Scott arrived at the Executive Mansion and urged Mary to take the children to the North until Washington was deemed safe from capture. Mary refused to leave.²⁶² Elizabeth Grimsley recollected the event.²⁶³ At 3 a. m., the President had a long talk with Gen. Meigs, who had just returned from Bull Run, (Manassas.)²⁶⁴

Then General Scott insisted upon it that Mrs. Lincoln, the children and I should be sent north for a time, until the Capitol should be safe. Mrs. Lincoln turned to her husband saying, "Will you go with us?", and his speedy answer came "Most assuredly I will not leave at this juncture"; and the response was just as prompt. "Then I will not leave you at this juncture"; and the General found he had met as determined, brave, and fearless wife, as he was an officer. He then asked "Will Mrs. Grimsley take the boys and go?" but of this I felt there was no need, and we all remained with the President, and I cannot believe in his heart of hearts, he was sorry at not being left alone, or of his wife's devotion to him thus proved, as she was a very timid woman, usually in time of trial. Nor was this the only occasion when it was thought best for her to leave the Capitol for a place of safety, but always with like results.

History has told us what effect this defeat at "Bull run" and the imperiled condition of Washington had on the aroused nation, and the great wave of enthusiasm which swept over the land, when the President, the next day, issued his call for three hundred thousand more troops and also the speedy response which was given. And now was born one of our stirring war songs "Rally round the flag". Geo. F. Root of Chicago wrote the song and before the ink was fairly dry on the score, went to the Court House steps and sang it to the assembled squadron of soldiers, who were answering heartily, "We are coming Father Abraham, three hundred thousand more." The Lombard Brothers popularized battlefields, touching alike officers and men, and even our President... who did not know one tune from another, caught the spirit of it. Applicants for army appointments were very numerous, foreigners, lords and marquises among them.²⁶⁵

Elizabeth Todd Grimsley

Friday, July 26, 1861

Orville Hickman Browning Visits White House

Friday July 26, 1861 ... At night met Genl. Rollins of Mo: and his son James at the Presidents for the purpose of presenting them to Mrs. Lincoln & Mrs. Grimsley which I did — We made a call there of an hour or more. Met there a

²⁶¹ *Six Months*, p.

²⁶² Helm, Mary, 179.

²⁶³ *Goodwin*, p. 373.

²⁶⁴ Extracts from Meigs Diary, 21 July 1861, John G. Nicolay Papers, Library of Congress, Washington, DC.

²⁶⁵ *Six Months*, p. 67.

Mr. Beecher of New York, quite an agreeable gentleman — a cousin of Henry Ward Beecher.

Orville Hickman Browning²⁶⁶

Saturday, July 27, 1861
Lincolns Visit 27th New York Regiment and Wounded

On Saturday, July 27, 1861, President and Mary Lincoln visited the 27th New York Regiment and visited with the wounded.²⁶⁷

Sunday, July 28, 1861
Lincolns Attend New York Avenue Presbyterian Church

On Sunday, July 28, 1861, President and Mary Lincoln attended the New York Avenue Presbyterian Church services where they met Senator Browning, who accepted an invitation to dinner at the Executive Mansion.²⁶⁸

Tuesday, July 30, 1861
Lincolns Attend Executive Mansion Levee

On the evening of July 30, 1861, President Lincoln appeared in good spirits and hopeful at an Executive Mansion levee. Congressman and former Senator John J. Crittenden (Kentucky) promenaded with Mary Lincoln.²⁶⁹

During these tense days, Mary Lincoln tried to distract her husband. Initially Lincoln was irritated to be taken from his work, but then he would grudgingly sit down and begin exchanging stories. His “mouth would relax, his eye brighten, and his whole face lighten,” Elizabeth Grimsley recalled, “and we would be launched into a sea of laughter.”²⁷⁰

A Morning in August 1861
French Prince Napoleon to Visit Washington

Secretary Seward called one morning in August to tell the President and Mrs. Lincoln of the expected visit of the French Prince Napoleon, and suite, and arrange for his reception at the Executive Mansion, and after ceremonials, a dinner must be given, some receptions, drives, etc., and if the President preferred, he, Mr. Seward, would give the dinner the evening following the Prince’s arrival. Mrs. Lincoln did not fail to make a prompt objection to this suggestion, which seemed an echo of an earlier one which I have already mentioned, and she at once caused one of the Private Secretaries to be summoned and charged with arranging for a formal dinner on the day of the Prince’s presentation to the President. It was at the same time settled that Mr. Seward should give an evening reception in honor of the Prince on a subsequent day.²⁷¹

Elizabeth Todd Grimsley

Saturday, August 3, 1861

²⁶⁶ *The Diary of Orville Hickman Browning*, Vol. 1, 1850-1864. Pease and Randall, Illinois Historical Collections, Volume XX, p. 387.

²⁶⁷ *New York Tribune*, July 28, 1861.

²⁶⁸ Browning, Diary. at White House levee. Russell, Diary.

²⁶⁹ *Evening Star*, Washington, D.C., July 31, 1861, 2:2. *National Republican*, Washington, D.C., August 1, 1861, 3:1. *N.Y. Tribune*, July 31, 1861.

²⁷⁰ *Goodwin*, p. 384.

²⁷¹ *Six Months*, p. 69.

**Elizabeth Todd Grimsley Writes to John Todd Stuart
Acknowledges Receipt of Money**

Washington August 3rd [1861]

My dear Cousin John.

Your kind favor both by mail and ___ Conklins' kindness were received last night for which allow me to thank you. I am both sorry and mortified to be obliged to trouble you in this way, and I should not have left home had I thought I should have been placed in this position. But you are aware how it is. Cousin John. I really begin to fear from the tone of your letter during this absence that you do not love me as you used to do. There seems to be a coolness in your manner of writing. I have observed before. Is it fancy? I do hope so--I am not aware of having done anything to forfeit that love. We had expected your John would be here today from what Mr. Edwards said. I hope very much he will come before we leave which will be next Thursday positively that is, as far as we can now see. Today Mary has a large dinner party for the Prince Napoleon and suite. There will be no ladies except Mary and myself. I wish it was over. My right eye is very weak this morning so that I am not able to write a letter, but thought I had better acknowledge the receipt of the draft immediately. Again allow me to thank you Dear Cousin John for your kindness the degree of which follows me and has done so all my life. The draft is amply sufficient. I am happy today to take me home. Tell Cousin Mary she could scarcely realize there was to be a dinner company of 30 in the house today. What a comfort to be able to entertain and feel no care over it. I think probably I will find a difference when I get home, and I shall enjoy my own quiet home. I know for there is heart and feeling there. Love to Father-Mother, boys, Cousin Mary & children and believe

Your affectionate sister.
E. J. Grimsley.²⁷²

Saturday, Washington, August 3, 1861

Lincoln Meets Prince Napoleon at White House

At noon on Saturday, August 3, 1861, Prince Napoleon [Napoleon Joseph Charles Paul Bonaparte called "Plon Plon"] of France, traveling in the United States as a private citizen, visited the Executive Mansion and Count Mercier, the French Minister, presented "Plon Plon," to President Lincoln.²⁷³ Prince Napoleon was the nephew of Napoleon I and the cousin of Napoleon III.

The Prince was an inveterate traveler who was said to be "a good copy of the first Emperor dipped in German grease." His mother was German and his wife, Princess Clotilde, was the daughter of Italian King Victor Emmanuel II. Together, they lived on the *Jerome Napoleon* as their permanent, floating hotel. When they visited Washington, they were invited to stay at the White House, but declined. His visit to Washington was relatively short compared to the extensive trips that the prince and his entourage made through northern States in the summer and fall.

On August 3, the French visitors—without Princess Clothilde who was left in New York—came to the White House and were presented to Mr. Lincoln in the Blue Room by Secretary of State William Seward. "The Prince, arriving with Baron Mercier [the French ambassador], found no one—neither

²⁷² *The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library*, Elizabeth Todd Grimsley, SC 608.

²⁷³ *Six Months*, p. 70. *Evening Star*, Washington, D. C., August 3, 1861, p. 2, cl. 1.

butler nor doorman— at the main entrance to show him in, or at least to open the door. I do not remember which employee, who happened to be passing by, took care of this duty,” wrote Camille Ferri Pisani, a military aide to Napoleon. “Heaven forbid that I complain of the simplicity of habits and mores of anyone, even of the chief of a great Nation! I cannot, however, prevent myself from noticing that it is illogical to live in a great palace and not to have a doorman. The princely appearance of the White House implies a staff, modest perhaps, but still a staff of servants, butlers, and doormen destined to inhabit this splendid dwelling. Republican austerity is quite compatible with the upkeep of an ordinary, but still decent household.”

Pisani wrote:

“Our meeting was not so gay. The President shook our hands, after sharing the Prince’s. I feared, for a moment, that the interview would end with this silent demonstration. Mr. Lincoln gained a few more minutes by asking the Prince to sit down and by sitting himself, the whole affair being done with a great moving of chairs. But, once these new positions were acquired, the two parties sat opposite each other silently, without troubling to go any further. The Prince, impatient because he had to wait, took a cruel pleasure in remaining silent. Finally, the President took the risk of speaking of Prince Lucien, his father. Mr. Lincoln was on the wrong track and he was warned [Prince Napoleon was Jerome Napoleon’s son, not Lucien’s]. This incident made him lose his confidence, still further. A few words were then exchanged on the rain, the weather and our crossing. The Prince still maintained his polite but cold front—as he customarily does when he does not care to help the conversation. Finally, Mr. Lincoln once more resorted to the handshaking; as we were seven on our side, and they were two on the other, the ceremony lasted long enough so that we soon reached the time limit usually assigned to this kind of meeting. Everyone retired, glad to have completed the official presentation, for these customs are generally boring, and their annoyance is only compensated by the hope for the more intimate and interesting relationships of which they are the necessary prelude.”²⁷⁴



Lincoln Greets Prince Napoleon at the White House, Awkwardly, as Seward Introduces Them.

His irritation was growing by the minute. Prince Napoleon Joseph Charles Paul Bonaparte — son and grandson of kings, nephew and cousin of emperors, bearer of the century’s most famous name — had come to call on the ruler of the American republic, to bestow his imperial favor upon the beleaguered president at a moment when the president needed all the favors he could get. But now it seemed that no one was home.

The prince and his companions (various counts, barons, and lesser lackeys) had been impressed enough by their first glimpse of the White House: “a rather nice palace,” one of them noted. On ascending the grand steps, however, they found no valet or butler to greet them; not even a doorman of the sort to be found at any decent American hotel. Finally, after being admitted unceremoniously by a passing clerk, they were left standing in the vestibule, wondering when — or if — President Lincoln might deign to emerge and greet them.

²⁷⁴ Camille Ferri-Pisani, *Prince Napoleon in America, 1861: Letters from His Aide-de-Camp*, translated by Georges J. Joyaux, Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1959, pp. 94, 100.

True, His Highness' visit was, at least officially speaking, unofficial. He had crossed the Atlantic not as an emissary from his cousin Emperor Napoleon III of France, but as a private gentleman, a career military officer curious to witness firsthand the emerging conflict in America. He had stepped onto the wharf in New York a week earlier dressed not in ermines or epaulettes, but like an ordinary tourist, in a white linen suit and straw hat.

Yet most Americans, and more than a few Frenchmen, suspected that he was just playacting for discretion's sake. Prince Napoleon was known to be especially close to the emperor, especially as an adviser on foreign relations and military affairs. With both North and South holding their breath to see whether the European powers would publicly favor Union or Confederacy — and with Napoleon III known to harbor private sympathies for the rebels — the slightest bow or nod from this imperial traveler might be momentous. Any report he brought back to Paris might tip the balance of French policy, and thus even of American history.

All this made it thoroughly bizarre that it took more than 15 minutes before Lincoln, preceded by Secretary of State William H. Seward, finally came ambling into the reception room that morning. The infuriated prince, one of the Frenchmen wrote later, had been on the verge of turning on his heel and departing.

Nor did the visitors' first impressions of the president leave them much better disposed. This homely man seemed graced with none of the rustic frontier charm they had hoped for, the sort that had so endeared Monsieur Franklin to his Parisian hosts almost a century earlier. Lincoln, the dapper Frenchmen noted with disdain, stood awkwardly holding a pair of white gloves that were clearly much too small for his "large, hairy hands," while the cut of his beard "would make Jupiter himself look vulgar." After shaking hands with the visitors, the president, who spoke no French, seemed at a total loss for words, even English ones.

"Mr. Lincoln gained a few more minutes by asking the prince to sit down and by sitting himself, the whole affair being done amidst a great movement of chairs," wrote one of the French aides, Camille Auguste Anatole Ferri-Pisani. "But, once these new positions were acquired, the two parties sat opposite each other silently, without troubling to go any further. Mr. Lincoln was visibly uncomfortable; the prince, unhappy because he had been made to wait, took a cruel pleasure in remaining silent."

Then Lincoln came up with a way to break the ice: he asked kindly after the health of his guest's father, Lucien Bonaparte. Unfortunately, the president's handlers had not briefed him well: Lucien was actually Prince Napoleon's uncle — and, worse, had been dead for more than 20 years. Swiftly corrected by the Frenchmen, Lincoln fumbled for more pleasantries: Had they had a pleasant journey? Wasn't the weather hot today? Napoleon, in heavily accented English, replied monosyllabically. At last, mercifully, the president began shaking everyone's hands again, allowing them to depart.

Perhaps Lincoln's anxiety grew out of some degree of awe. Emperor Napoleon I — the most famous of the Bonapartes, and the prince's uncle — towered over 19th-century history like a colossus, especially in the minds of Americans, who regarded him with a strange mixture of abhorrence and admiration. Indeed, Lincoln had spoken of Napoleon in his very first significant public address, when he himself was just a 28-year-old Illinoisan with vague ambitions of greatness. "Towering genius distains a beaten path," he had told an audience of young men at the Springfield, Ill., lyceum, ranking Bonaparte (then dead just 17 years) alongside Julius Caesar and Alexander the Great. Such men had won eternal fame, but they had also turned the free societies of Greece, Rome and France into autocracies.

Yet for millions of ambitious young Americans — as Lincoln himself had been then — the obscure Corsican artilleryman turned emperor remained a role model. Ralph Waldo Emerson hailed Napoleon as the hero of "young, ardent and active men, everywhere," who had nobly transformed "old, iron-bound feudal France" into "a young Ohio or New York."²⁷⁵

Elizabeth Todd Grimsley Has Dinner at Executive Mansion With Prince Napoleon

After visiting the Capitol, Prince Napoleon returned to the Executive Mansion. In the evening of August 3 President and Mary Lincoln hosted a state dinner at 7 p.m. in Prince Napoleon's honor. The affair was unusually sociable and enjoyable . . . a fact much due to the tact of Mary Todd Lincoln in arranging the guests so as to bring parties together who were likely to enjoy each other's society and conversation."²⁷⁶ A newspaper reported that, "Prince Napoleon was seated at the right of Mrs. Lincoln and opposite General [Winfield] Scott, who was at the President's left. Gen. [George B.] McClellan was at the right of [the] Prince . . ." The twenty-seven guests included Elizabeth Todd Grimsley and Robert Lincoln at what was described as a most brilliant affair. Despite the hostilities of the Civil War, Washington social life continued as though no such events were happening.

Mary — who adored French fashions and even prided herself on speaking a few words of the language— personally chose the menu, the flowers and even the vegetables from the Executive Mansion garden, all with an eye toward enchanting the Parisian sophisticates.

Mary failed to impress the Prince. Half a century later, excerpts from his private diary were published in a French magazine, revealing his true feelings. "Mrs. Lincoln was dressed in the French mode without any taste; she has the manner of a petit bourgeois and wears tin jewelry." He described the meal as "a bad dinner in the French style."

President Lincoln had a second chance to try to impress the Prince. Yet if there were any French term that seemed to summarize the occasion, it would seem to have been *faux pas*. Upon Prince Napoleon's arrival, the Marine Band struck up the "Marseillaise" — inappropriate for a man whose family had quashed the republican revolution. At the dinner table, the massive Gen. Winfield Scott made a favorable impression on the guests — he had fought valiantly against the hated English in the War of 1812. But then he dropped hints that they might compare his own career to Napoleon's. Meanwhile, Gen. George McClellan, himself a "Young Napoleon" already scheming to replace Scott, sat nearby courting the French officers by lavishing praise on their army, and blushing discreetly when someone suggested that he might be next in line for the presidency.

The prince described President Lincoln as "badly put together, in a black suit," with "the appearance of a bootmaker. What a difference between this sad representative of the great republic and her founding fathers!" The middle-aged prince himself was pudgy, dumpy and dour. "Lincoln, he concluded, was "a good man, but one without greatness nor very much knowledge."

At seven o'clock they returned and were ushered into the blue room just as the Marine Band struck up "Yankee Doodle", with which the usual Saturday afternoon crowd was dismissed. The whole party was invited out to the balcony, much to the gratification of the people, who feasted their eyes on His Imperial Highness, while he, in turn, had a view of the "American Sovereigns". The grouping was effective. The Prince, in full dress, his breast a flame of decoration, over which was crossed the broad

²⁷⁶ *Evening Star*, Washington, D. C., August 5, 1861, p. 2, cl. 1. *National Republican*, Washington, D. C., August 5, 1861, p. 3, cl. 2. George B. McClellan, *McClellan's Own Story: The War for the Union*, New York, Charles L. Webster & Company, 1887, p. 84. Camille Ferri Pisani, *Prince Napoleon in America, 1861: Letters from His Aide-de-Camp, Georges J. Joyaux*, trans., Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1959, 103-114.

crimson sash of a marshal of the Empire, stood in the centre of his suite, in the attitude always assumed by his uncle, the first Consul, so easily recognized.

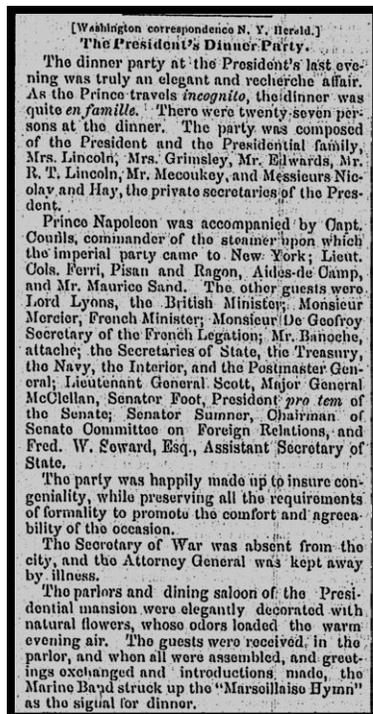
W. H. Russell, the "London Times" war correspondent, was also present.

After their return to the drawing room the home party composed of the President, Mrs. Lincoln, Robert, myself, and the private secretaries, Nicolay and Hay, entered the room, when presentations and conversation was in order, before the other dinner guests should appear. Soon came the Cabinet officers, and the last to enter was General Scott, magnificent old man, leaning on the arm of McClellan. Six foot four expressed it, "History waiting on prophecy, memory upon Hope." Then came the entrance to the dining room, the President leading. I upon his arm, Mrs. Lincoln with the Prince, the other guests following in the usual order of precedence. A beautiful dinner beautifully served, gay conversation in which the French tongue predominated, led Prince Napoleon to mark gallantly, that after enjoying the elegant hospitality of Washington, and especially of those presiding in the Executive Mansion, he should be forced to confess that "Paris is not all the world."

While General Scott said to the President, "I have dined with every President since Jefferson and that in my mind, the last should be first."

Elizabeth Todd Grimsley²⁷⁷

At the end of the evening, all seemed to have gone well. Prince Napoleon made gracious farewells. Newspaper editors compared the First Lady favorably to Queen Victoria and Empress Eugenie, noting that her elegant but unassuming manners "made republican simplicity seem almost regal."



Dinner With Prince Napoleon: Journal, August 9, 1861.²⁷⁸

DINNER TO PRINCE NAPOLEON—Prince Napoleon found time on Saturday, after seeing the Capitol, to pay a visit of some length to the Patent Office. At 7 o'clock Saturday evening a dinner was given to the Prince at the White House. The following guests were invited: the cabinet officers, all of whom were present except the Secretary of War, who is out of town, and the Attorney-General, who declined on account of illness; Gens. Scott and McClellan; Senator Foot of Vt. President pro tem of the Senate; Senator Sumner, Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs; Lord Lyons and M. Mercier, the British and French Ministers; Assistant secretary of State F. W. Seward; The president's private Secretaries Messrs Nicolay and Hay; Prince Napoleon's suite; Capt. Bontis of the French Navy; Lieut-Cols Ferri, Pisana, and Rager, Adi-de-Camps; and M. Marucie Sand, son of George Sand, together with Ma. De Coffrex, First Secretary of Legation, and M. Baroche, confidential agent of the French Government here.

The dinner was an elegant one, and the fine supervisory taste of Mrs. Lincoln was apparent in all its appointments as well as in the beauty of the floral embellishment, &c, of the table, and of the reception and other rooms. Upon the distinguished company leaving the reception room for the dining room the Marine Band struck up *Paran: pour la Syrie* and other national airs of France, and upon their return performed a number of our own national airs.

At the table Prince Napoleon was seated at the right of Mrs. Lincoln and opposite General Scott, who was at the President's left. Gen. McClellan was at the right of Prince Napoleon. Next Mrs. Lincoln to the left was secretary Chase, and opposite him Mrs. Grimsley, who occupied a seat to the right of President Lincoln.

For the benefit of our lady readers we may record that Mrs. Lincoln was costumed in a very elegant white grenadine over white silk, and with long train. Mrs. Grimsley wore a salmon tulle dress, with exquisite flowers, (natural)

The affair was unusually sociable and enjoyed able for a state dinner, a fact much due to the tact of Mrs. Lincoln in so grouping the guests as to bring parties together likely to enjoy each other's society and conversation.

The Prince seemed in fine spirits, and enjoyed himself heartily, apparently; and the same was noticed of Gen. Scott and others of the notables present.

²⁷⁷ *Six Months*, p. 70.

²⁷⁸ *Journal*, August 9, 1861, p. 1.



Evening Star, Monday, August 5, 1861,
Prince Napoléon Joseph Charles at age 43, 1865
Washington, D. C.²⁸⁰



Prince Napoleon²⁷⁹

**Tuesday, August 6, 1861
Secretary Seward’s Reception for Prince Napoleon**

Secretary Seward’s Tuesday evening reception was a brilliant entertainment, worthily in honor of his Princely guests, and gave “Plon Plon” some new ideas perhaps, of the elegance, beauty, and refinement to be found in American society.

In close proximity to such gaiety came harrowing scenes of wretchedness, full of pathos, and indeed, we all felt as if it were no time for “eating, drinking, and making merry,” but policy demanded a show and pretense of cheer and hopefulness we were far from feeling.²⁸¹

Elizabeth Todd Grimsley

Several days after the state dinner, Prince Napoleon left Washington and headed south across Confederate lines in Virginia where he visited the headquarters of the Confederate Gen. G. T. Beauregard.

The Bill for the Prince’s State Banquet Arrives

Several weeks after the state banquet for Prince Napoleon, the caterers’ bill arrived. The sum was extravagant, far beyond the Lincolns’ means and Mary was taken aback. With a bit of creative bookkeeping — and, perhaps, a sardonic sense of humor about the true nature of

²⁷⁹ Library of Congress, Prince Napoleon several years before his visit. To distinguish him from his more famous uncle and cousin, he was commonly known as “Plon-Plon” based on his childhood pronunciation of his own name.

²⁸⁰ *Evening Star*, Monday, August 5, 1861, Washington, D. C., p. 2. *A Peevish Prince, a Hairy-Handed President, a Disastrous Dinner Party*, Adam Goodheart.

²⁸¹ *Six Months*, pp. 70-71.

diplomatic entertaining — Mary charged the entire dinner to an obscure White House gardening account called the Manure Fund.²⁸²

Springfield Postmaster Appointment Finalized

In mid-August 1861, Lincoln appointed John Armstrong as postmaster for Springfield, Illinois, and thus crushed any hope Elizabeth had for that appointment.

Tuesday, August 13, 1861

Gen. Anderson, appointed to command in Kentucky on completion of his convalescence, dined with President. Gen. McClellan spends most of evening at White House.²⁸³

Robert Lincoln in New York to Arrange Mother's Stay at Long Beach, New Jersey

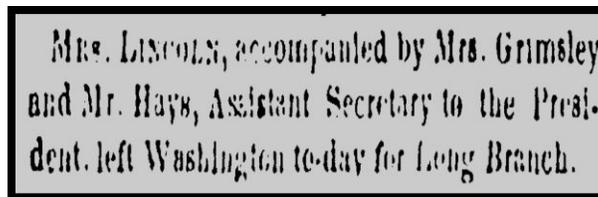
On August 13, Robert Lincoln, “the Prince of Rails,” was off to New York, where he stayed at the Metropolitan Hotel. Robert’s trip may have been made to arrange a vacation for his mother at Long Branch, New Jersey, as she came north a few days after Robert arrived in New York.²⁸⁴

Wednesday, August 14, 1861

Mary Todd Lincoln, Robert Lincoln, John Hay and Elizabeth Todd Grimsley Leave Washington for Long Branch, New Jersey

In August 1861, just after the Union Army was routed at Bull Run on July 21, Mary Lincoln deemed it “absolutely necessary to her health that she should enjoy a release from her arduous responsibilities in the more invigorating air of the sea shore,” the *New York Times* reported.²⁸⁵ At the suggestion of Dr. William A. Newell, the Lincoln family physician, she chose Long Branch, New Jersey.

On Wednesday, August 14, 1861, Mary Lincoln accompanied by her cousin, Elizabeth Todd Grimsley, and John Hay, Assistant Secretary to the President, left Washington, D. C. for Long Branch, New Jersey with a stop in New York City.²⁸⁶



Evening Star, Washington, D.C., August 14, 1861.²⁸⁷

²⁸² Camille Auguste Anatole Ferri-Pisani, *Lettres sur les États-Unis d'Amérique*. *Richmond Examiner*, August 9, 1861. *New York Times*, March 13, 1862. David Herbert Donald and Harold Holzer, eds., *Lincoln in The Times*. Marcus Cunliffe, *Soldiers & Civilians: The Martial Tradition in America*. Jean H. Baker, *Mary Todd Lincoln: A Biography*. Doris Kearns Goodwin, *Team of Rivals: The Political Genius of Abraham Lincoln*. Michael Vorenberg, *Liberté, Égalité, and Lincoln*, in Richard Cawardine and Jay Sexton, eds., *The Global Lincoln*. Daniel Mark Epstein, *The Lincolns: Portrait of a Marriage*. Michael Burlingame, *Abraham Lincoln: A Life*. Adam Goodheart is the author of *1861: The Civil War Awakening*. *William Howard Russell's Civil War: Private Diary and Letters, 1861-1862*, William Howard Russell.

http://books.google.com/books?id=0fPpJl6DVK0C&pg=PA101&lpg=PA101&dq=William+Grimsley+springfield+illinois&source=bl&ots=pqvCj_DG&sig=wUpzyNrhxfH_76eFkfeYC6vVC1Q&hl=en&sa=X&ei=2TUGUvZKpaDIAdyvgVg&ved=0CE8Q6AEwCDgK#v=twopage&q=William%20Grimsley%20springfield%20illinois&f=false

²⁸³ Anderson to wife, August 13, 1861, Robert Anderson Papers, Library of Congress, Washington, D. C. *New York Tribune*, August 14, 1861.

²⁸⁴ *Robert Todd Lincoln*, John S. Goff, University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, 1969, p. 47.

²⁸⁵

²⁸⁶ 1861, p. 60. *Evening Star*, Washington, D. C., August 14, 1861, p. 2, cl. 1.

²⁸⁷ *Evening Star*, Washington, D.C., August 14, 1861, p. 2.

Thursday, August 15, 1861
Mary Lincoln in New York City at Metropolitan Hotel

On Thursday, August 15, 1861, Elizabeth Grimsley was in New York City where she spent the night at the Metropolitan Hotel. She was with Mary Lincoln on their way to Long Branch, New Jersey. While in New York City, Mary visited Princess Clothilde, wife of Prince Napoleon.²⁸⁸

Friday, August 16, 1861
Mary Lincoln and Elizabeth Grimsley Arrive
at Long Branch, New Jersey

Mrs. Lincoln, accompanied by her sister, Mrs. Grimsley, left the Metropolitan Hotel yesterday morning at 9 o'clock, for Long Branch, where she intends staying until Monday. We shall send our bill for this advertisement to the hotel at that place.

Boston Evening Transcript, Saturday, August 17, 1861.²⁸⁹

Long Branch, a once-famous Atlantic coast resort town, was the place to go for cool ocean breezes and no “malaria-causing mosquitoes.” It was a fashionable resort—a rival to Newport and Cape May and a destination for Parisian dress designers scouting the latest American styles. It had long been a “summer colony” for nineteenth century actors and actresses, many of whom owned homes there. Among the famous performers of the day who spent time at Long Branch were Edwin and Joseph Booth, (brothers of John Wilkes Booth), and Edwin Forrest, Lillian Russell, Lily Langtry, and Diamond Jim Brady. Buffalo Bill’s associate, Nate Salsbury, the brains behind his Wild West Shows, owned a home in Long Branch.²⁹⁰

Mary and her entourage stayed at the grandest hotel in town, the Mansion House, whose gingerbread piazzas stretched along the beach like an elongated version of the steamboats that brought many of the vacationers. Mary Todd Lincoln’s visit would give it lasting presidential cachet. Her visit was followed in all of the national papers and spearheaded Long Branch’s rise as travel destination for the rich and famous.

The August 22, 1861, *New York Times* noted, “There are subdued complaints that the wife of the President is not as accessible as she should be, and that she has only taken one or two airings on the beach since she arrived,” and was turning away many prominent guests who wanted to meet her.

²⁸⁸ *Evening Star*, Washington, D.C., August 17, 1861, cl. 2, p. 1.

²⁸⁹ *Boston Evening Transcript*, Saturday, August 17, 1861, p. 2.

²⁹⁰ <http://garfieldnps.wordpress.com/2012/07/29/long-branch-new-jersey-the-resort-town-that-hosted-president-garfield/>



Journeys Into New Jersey

Nowadays it's not considered all too fashionable inside the Beltway to vacation in New Jersey. But once it was. Before there was Kennebunkport, Martha's Vineyard and Hawaii, there was Long Branch.

Having first become a beach resort town in the late 1700s, in the 1800s it was considered a "Hollywood" of the east, where some of the greatest theatrical and other performers of the day gathered and performed. So it became a natural draw for presidents.

By one recent narrative, Mary Todd Lincoln, wife of Abraham Lincoln, is credited with raising the profile of Long Branch among Washington, D.C. types. Eager to escape the humidity (and the political heat) of the Nation's Capital, D.C., she stayed in the Mansion House during the summer of 1861. Her seal of approval added to the city's cachet.

"Long Branch was already becoming fashionable, but once she was in the paper here, it became a big deal,"

...At the height of the summer, with the Civil War going on, she wanted to get away from Washington, D.C., for a while for her health. Dr. William Augustus Newell, a friend of Abraham Lincoln and head of the U.S. Lifesaving Service (the precursor to the Coast Guard), suggested Long Branch.

"She had her choice of three hotels offering her free vacations," The hotels knew that if the first lady stayed there, it would be wonderful publicity. In the end, Lincoln chose The Mansion House Hotel, located where Pier Village currently is. Just like nowadays when the first family takes vacations, there were some special shows put on for her, as the Lifesaving Service demonstrated its cutting-edge rescue equipment.

... Mrs. Lincoln certainly enjoyed herself here. She recommended a Long Branch vacation to her friend Julia Dent Grant, who brought her husband, Ulysses. He would be one of seven Presidents to visit the city.

The Mansion House Hotel, a four-story structure which could accommodate 600 guests, was one of many noted luxury hotels in the city. It burned down on Dec. 20, 1884.²⁹¹

Monday, August 19, 1861

John Hay Leaves Mary Lincoln and Returns to Executive Mansion

²⁹¹ Tuesday, July 13, 2010, 08:51, eric model, newjerseynewsroom.com=

On Monday, August 19, 1861, John Hay, assistant secretary to President, returned to his post at White House from his trip north to Long Branch with Mrs. Lincoln.²⁹²

Thursday, August 22, 1861
Mary Todd Lincoln Attends Demonstration of Lifesaving Equipment

On the afternoon of August 22, 1861, Mary Lincoln and her party attended a demonstration of lifesaving equipment at Long Branch, New Jersey. They were escorted by former New Jersey Gov. William A. Newell, who gave a “grand hop” in her honor in the evening at the Mansion House.²⁹³ On August 24, 1861, the *New York Times* reported on the visit.

FROM LONG BRANCH. Exhibition of Life-saving Apparatus
 Mrs. Lincoln Witnesses the Methods of Saving The Ball in the Evening.

LONG BRANCH, Thursday, Aug. 22.

Mrs. LINCOLN, during her brief sojourn at Long Branch, has manifested much interest in that class of its residents who are so famous for their daring exploits as surfmen, of whose heroic efforts in saving the lives of passengers and seamen wrecked upon this exposed part of the coast she had heard much. Having expressed a desire to be made acquainted, with the methods adopted for rescuing the crews of shipwrecked vessels, Ex-Gov. NEWELL, who is now the superintendent of the life-saving stations on the New-Jersey coast, got up an exhibition which was witnessed with great apparent interest by Mrs. LINCOLN, and was also attended by nearly all the habitués of the place.

The life-saving apparatus consists of a life-boat built of cedar, lap-streaked, about 22 feet long, almost crescent-shaped, with air chambers in each end, and manned by four oarsmen; the metallic life-car, which is used for hauling to and from the stranded vessel, with the passengers securely fastened inside; coils of light line, and of a stout Manila rope; a small mortar for throwing a 12-pound shot and a few heavy rockets -- these were all brought from the boathouse, near the village, on a truck constructed for the purpose, and the trial took place directly opposite the Mansion House.

Governor NEWELL escorted Mrs. LINCOLN and her lady friends to convenient seats upon the beach. Mr. WADDELL and several others assisted in the experiments. The first movement was the launching of the boat, which was handsomely executed through a heavy surf, by five boatmen, the veteran JOSEPH WEST, as usual, holding the steering oar. The dexterous manoeuvre by which the boat was pulled through the breakers, sometimes showing half her length above their crests, drew forth expressions of admiration, from Mrs. LINCOLN and her friends. Having attained a distance of some two hundred yards from the beach, the boat was anchored, and some twenty fathoms of a line with a buoy attached, was played out over the stern, corresponding in length to that of a ship's hull. The small line, with one end attached to a stout twisted wire which was fastened to a 12-pound shot, was now laid up and down on the smooth beach so that it would follow the flight of the ball without the parts getting foul. The mortar was then planted, a charge of six ounces of powder, with the ball was placed in it, and at a signal from “Capt. JOE” it was fired. The flight of the shot was very beautiful, carrying after it some sixty fathoms of the small line, which, as it fell, was caught upon the line and buoy played out from the boat. In a few moments the line was in the hands of the boatmen, who, typifying the shipwrecked mariners, pulled away and soon established their connection with the shore. The life-car was now attached to the shore end of the hawser, and being launched through the surf, went careering on its way to the boat. It was then hauled to and fro, illustrating how the passengers from a ship could be placed securely inside, and, half-a-dozen at a time, safely landed on the beach through the roughest breakers.

²⁹² *Evening Star*, Washington, D. C., August 19, 1861, p. 2, cl. 4.

²⁹³ *New York Times*, August 24, 1861.

Mrs. LINCOLN expressed the highest admiration for the courageous exploits of the hardy boatmen, and of the ingenious methods which have been adopted for saving life. She was informed of the terrible shipwreck of the *New Era*, which occurred near the place where she stood, in September, 1855, when over one hundred and seventy-five poor German emigrants found a watery grave; more than 150 of whom were buried in the churchyard at Long Branch. In that case the mortar and line were brought into requisition, but the officers and most of the crew having cowardly escaped to the shore when the ship first struck, the passengers were ignorant of the object of the persons on the shore, and did not avail themselves of the only means offered for saving their lives. As a fitting recognition of his early exertions to establish these life-saving stations on the coast, and for obtaining, while a Member of Congress, the first appropriations for carrying out the humane designs of the Government, Ex-Gov. NEWELL has been appointed to superintend the life-saving stations from Sandy Hook to Cape May. He reports that the serious defects formerly existing have been remedied, and that all the apparatus and boats are now in excellent condition.²⁹⁴

Mary Todd Lincoln Attends Grand Hop in Evening

All was forgiven at the “grand hop” held in Mary Lincoln’s honor. A report described the affair, “excelled in the brilliancy of its appointments, and threw into the shade all previous entertainments of the kind.” A band played patriotic airs. Gentlemen wore white cravats and white kid gloves. Mary Lincoln arrived at 10 p. m. with a wreath of white flowers in her hair. She left at midnight, but the echoes of her visit reverberated for decades.

The ball which was given last evening by the guests at Long Branch, in honor of the wife of the President of the United States, was the great event of the season at this favorite watering-place. There have been frequent reunions and “hops” here during the season, -- impromptu affairs; social, familiar and chatty, which have been enjoyed by the boarders, and the comers and goers at Long Branch; but the “grand hop” which came off last evening excelled in the brilliancy of its appointments, and threw into the shade all previous entertainments of the kind. With one exception, the programme, which I have already sent forward, was carried out to the letter, and reflected much credit upon the good judgment and refined taste of the Committee of Arrangements. The fireworks did not go off, owing to a sudden northwest squall which came up, accompanied with a pouring rain, just at the hour appointed for the pyrotechnic display. The exhibition will be given on a future occasion.

The last evening train brought some twenty or thirty additional guests from New-York, swelling the numbers at the Mansion House considerably beyond its capacity for comfortable accommodation, nearly every room being previously full, and cots and other hotel contrivances having been brought into use for the guests. The storm prevented the country people from assembling in the usual numbers, notwithstanding the piazzas and other sheltered places contained goodly number of curious persons of both sexes from the neighboring villages, who came to see the doings and, if possible, to obtain a glimpse of the lady of the White House. To the credit of the villagers it should be said that their curiosity was not obtrusive generality contenting themselves with side long glances at the ladies as they passed from their several apartments to the ball-room. Only one hundred cards were issued, admitting a gentleman and two ladies. The apartment commonly occupied as the dining room was handsomely fitted up, the Stars and Stripes being considered the most appropriate ornamentation. A profusion of beautiful bouquets set off the other simple decorations. The guests began to assemble at 9 o’clock, but it was near 10 P.M before dancing commenced -- there being a somewhat prolonged waiting for Mrs. LINCOLN to open the ball. Shortly after 10 o’clock Mrs. LINCOLN appeared, and passed into the ball-room, leaning on the arm of Ex-Gov. NEWELL, the entire party extending a dignified yet cordial greeting to the guests of the evening. DODWORTH’s splendid band played patriotic airs. The ceremonies were then fairly inaugurated, and from this time the festivities progressed in the most satisfactory manner. Mrs. LINCOLN wore a simple wreath of white flowers in her hair, and was

²⁹⁴ *New York Times*, August 24, 1861.

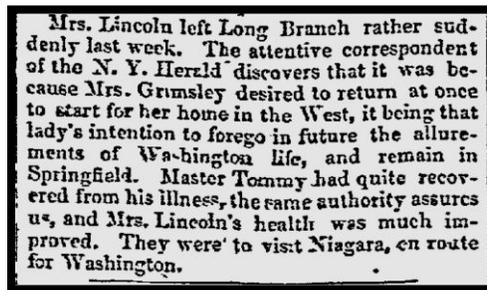
dressed with elegance. She withdrew about 12 o'clock, but the festivities continued until 3 o'clock A.M. The "Grand Hop" in honor of Mrs. President LINCOLN was a success.²⁹⁵

Saturday, August 24, 1861.
Tadd Lincoln III in Long Branch

On Saturday, August 24, 1861, Robert Lincoln arrived at White House with instructions for John Hay, assistant secretary to the President, to join Mrs. Lincoln in New York. Tad Lincoln, in Long Branch, New Jersey, with his mother, is ill, delaying their departure from Long Branch until Monday.²⁹⁶

Late August 1861
Mary Todd Lincoln Leaves Long Branch
Elizabeth Todd Grimsley Wishes to Return Home

In late August 1861, Elizabeth Grimsley wanted to start for home immediately. The President had appointed a Postmaster for Springfield and her efforts for herself in that regard had been for naught. As a newspaper report put it "it being that lady's intention to forego in future the allurements of Washington life, and remain in Springfield." The paper also reported that Tadd was better.



Pittsfield Sun, Pittsfield, Massachusetts, Thursday, August 29, 1861.²⁹⁷

Tuesday, August 27, 1861
Mary Todd Travels From Albany to Auburn, New York

On August 27, 1861, Mary Lincoln traveled from Albany to Auburn, New York, with Secretary of State William H. Seward.²⁹⁸ Mary stayed with Mrs. W. H. Seward in Auburn, New York.²⁹⁹ Elizabeth Grimsley was with her.

Wednesday, August 28, 1861

Sometime between August 28 and September 2, 1861, Elizabeth Grimsley started home to Springfield.

²⁹⁵ *New York Times* report of Mrs. Abraham Lincoln's visit 150 years ago on Monday August 22, 1861. From Long Branch.; Exhibition of Life-saving Apparatus Mrs. Lincoln Witnesses the Methods of Saving The Ball in the Evening. Published: August 24, 1861, Long Branch, Thursday, August 22.

²⁹⁶ *National Republican*, Washington, D. C., August 26, 1861, p. 1, cl. 1.

²⁹⁷ *Pittsfield Sun*, Pittsfield, Massachusetts, Thursday, August 29, 1861, Volume: LX, Issue: 3180, p. 2.

²⁹⁸ *National Republican*, Washington, D. C., August 29, 1861, p. 3, cl. 3. *Evening Star*, Washington, D. C., August 29, 1861, p. 3, cl. 6.

²⁹⁹ *New York Tribune*, August 30, 1861.

Mary and Robert Lincoln and Elizabeth Grimsley at Niagara Falls, New York

On Wednesday, August 28, 1861, Mary and Robert Lincoln traveled with Elizabeth Grimsley from Rochester to Niagara Falls, New York.³⁰⁰ Elizabeth regarded Robert as “a manly, dignified youth, unspoiled by petting and adulation, and giving promise of the man into which he was to develop.”³⁰¹ In Niagara Falls, Mary Lincoln purchased “2 sets of Mat & Cushion \$30.00,” and “1 Worked Table Cloth \$25.00.” from Mrs. James Davy.³⁰²

The *Niagara Falls Reporter* newspaper of Wednesday, September 4, 1861, reported the following:

Mrs. Lincoln, wife of the president, arrived here from the east Wednesday [August 28] and took rooms at the International. She was accompanied by her son Robert and several other gentlemen and ladies. Mrs. Lincoln desired to avoid any formal public demonstration of respect by her friends but received all who chose to call in a quiet unostentatious manner befitting the wife of the head of the nation. Mrs. Lincoln left for the east the following Monday morning [September 2].³⁰³



Niagara Falls, NY: International Hotel
(mid to late 1800's)

International Hotel, Niagara Falls, New York

Thursday, August 29, 1861 John Hay Returns to Illinois From Niagara Falls

John Hay, assistant secretary to the President, left the Mary Lincoln party at Niagara Falls for Illinois to overcome illness.³⁰⁴

Monday, September 2, 1861 Mary Lincoln Leaves Niagara Falls

On Monday, September 2, 1861, Mary Lincoln left Niagara Falls and returned to Washington, D. C. via New York City.

September — Fall 1861 Elizabeth Todd Grimsley Returns to Springfield From Niagara Falls

³⁰⁰ *National Republican*, Washington, D. C., August 30, 1861, p. 3, cl. 4. *Evening Star*, Washington, D. C., August 30, 1861, p. 3, cl. 6.

³⁰¹ *Six Months*, pp. 72 & 48.

³⁰² DNA—RG 217 General Accounting Office 141-686.

³⁰³ <http://www.niagarafallsreporter.com/kostoff10.5.10.html>

³⁰⁴ *Evening Star*, Washington, D.C., August 29, 1861, p. 2, cl. 1.

The time having arrived for me to return to my home in Illinois, Mrs. Lincoln and Robert decided to go with me as far as Niagara Falls, where my cousin General Charles F. Smith³⁰⁵ was to meet me and escort me home. It was a sad parting with Mr. Lincoln. A strong attachment had sprung up between him and myself, as a six months intimacy, under such trying circumstances had developed unsuspected qualities in both of us. I had, from a child, known him, he was intimate and a valued kinsman in my father's family, I had been much with my cousin Mary, in our girlhood, was one of the bridesmaids, saw the ring bearing the motto, "Love is eternal", placed upon her finger, and always a welcomed guest in their home, yet so reticent was Mr. Lincoln, so deferential to ladies, so introspective, if I may use that word, that when I was thrown closely with him in his family relations, I felt as if I had been almost a stranger to his true character. I could readily understand how his wife, the constant recipient and witness of his manly characteristics and tenderness, should have been so devoted to him. I can not feel as if it were a betrayal of hospitality to speak thus of the inner life of a household, of which I had been so long a favored guest, and under such circumstances which threw personal traits into strong prominence. As Mr. Lincoln put his arm around me with a fervent "God bless you, my cousin," little did I anticipate the sad changes which should come over that household before my next visit at the second inauguration, March 4, 1865.³⁰⁶

Elizabeth Todd Grimsley



Charles Ferguson Smith

Monday, September 2, 1861 Mary Lincoln Buys China For White House

³⁰⁵ Charles Ferguson Smith was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, the son of Samuel Blair Smith, an army surgeon and a grandson of the celebrated Presbyterian minister Rev. John Blair Smith. He graduated from the United States Military Academy in 1825, and was commissioned a second lieutenant in the 2nd U.S. Artillery. As he rose slowly through the ranks of the peacetime army, he returned to West Point as an instructor and was appointed Commandant of Cadets as a first lieutenant, serving in that position from 1838 to 1843.

As an artillery battalion commander he distinguished himself in the Mexican-American War, serving under both Zachary Taylor and Winfield Scott, at Palo Alto, Resaca de la Palma, Monterrey, and Churubusco. He received brevet promotions from major through colonel for his service in these battles and ended the war as a lieutenant colonel in the Regular Army. In Mexico City, he was in charge of the police guard from the end of the war until 1848. During this time he became an original member of the Aztec Club of 1847.

He commanded the Red River Expedition (1856) into the future State of Minnesota in 1856–57, and served under Albert Sidney Johnston in Utah (1857–60), commanding the Department of Utah himself from 1860 to 1861, and the Department of Washington (at Fort Washington, Maryland) very briefly at the start of the Civil War.

After the outbreak of the war and through the summer of 1861, Smith served on recruiting duty as commander of Fort Columbus, New York. He was commissioned a brigadier general of volunteers (August 31, 1861), and as colonel in the Regular Army, commanding the 3rd U.S. Infantry regiment, as of September 9. He was soon transferred to the Western Theater to command the District of Western Kentucky. He then became a division commander in the Department of the Missouri under Brigadier General Ulysses S. Grant, who had been one of his pupils at West Point. This potentially awkward situation was eased by Smith's loyalty to his young chief.

The old soldier led his division of raw volunteers with success at the Battle of Fort Donelson in February 1862. During the attack on the Confederate right flank, which he led personally, he saw some of his men waver. He yelled to them, "Damn you, gentlemen, I see skulkers! I'll have none here! Come on, you volunteers, come on! This is your chance! You volunteered to be killed for love of country, and now you can be!"

Smith's experience, dignity, and unselfish character made him Grant's mainstay in the early days of the war. When theater commander Major General Henry Halleck became distrustful and perhaps jealous of Grant, he briefly relieved him of field command of the Army's expedition up the Tennessee River toward Corinth, Mississippi and gave that responsibility to Smith. However, Halleck soon restored Grant to field command (intervention by President Abraham Lincoln may have been a factor).[a] Grant's restoration was fortunate because by the time Grant reached Savannah, Tennessee,[citation needed] Smith had already met with an accident while jumping into a rowboat that seriously injured his leg, forcing him out of field duty. His senior brigadier, W.H.L. Wallace, led his division (and was fatally wounded) at the Battle of Shiloh.

Smith died of an infection following his foot injury and chronic dysentery at Savannah, Tennessee, and is buried in Laurel Hill Cemetery, Philadelphia.

³⁰⁶ *Six Months*, pp. 72-73.

On Monday, September 8, 1861, in New York City, Mary Lincoln purchased from E. V. Haughwont and Co., 488-92 Broadway, “One fine Porcelain Dining Service of One Hundred and ninety pieces . . . decorated Royal Purple, and double gilt, with the Arms of the United States, on each piece, for the Presidential Mansion. . . . \$3,195.00.”³⁰⁷

September 5, 1861
Mary Todd Lincoln Returns to White House

Mary Lincoln and her children returned to the White House on September 5, 1861, “to the smell of paint, the racket of hammers, and a cloud of plaster dust.”³⁰⁸

³⁰⁷ DNA—RG 217, General Accounting Office, 141-541.

³⁰⁸ *Epstein*, p. 341.