

For the People

A Newsletter of the Abraham Lincoln Association
Volume 2, Number 3 Autumn, 2000 Springfield, Illinois

Another Questioned Lincoln Photograph

When the J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles exhibited Jackie Napoleon Wilson's superb collection of African American daguerreotypes, ambrotypes, and tintypes, it became an instant success garnering national attention. The exhibition featured the best images from the collections of the Getty Museum and Wilson. If the show had any failing, it was the lack of an exhibit catalog. That omission was rectified last October, when St. Martin's Press published, *Hidden Witness: African-American Images from the Dawn of Photography to the Civil War*, presenting the same haunting images that captivated a nation in 1995. Since there is little to no information on either the photographers or the people portrayed in the images, the descriptions are mostly guesswork. Wilson obtained the images over several decades of devoted collecting, purchasing the images at flea markets, garage sales, and occasionally from dealers.

One of the images shows a tent with a group of people standing outside and an ambulance in the foreground. According to Wilson: "What I see on this plate is Abraham Lincoln in entourage: the only known photograph of the Great Emancipator in the company of a person of the African race—a young hospital orderly standing under his shadow at an encampment. They may be standing on a battlefield on Virginia soil, at Fredericksburg, at the Falmouth encampment in April 1863, in front of a large hospital tent surrounded by the president's private secretaries John Hay and John Nicolay, along with 'French Mary,' a vivandiere who braved thirteen battles. Two spent artillery shankle shells are

on the ground. The military ambulance in the foreground may have been the wagon Lincoln rode in. He risked his life by venturing so close to the battle lines, and his presence in such a vulnerable situation is in keeping with precedent. Though there is no documentation to this tintype, every time I see his face, this is the man who led us to the demise of American slavery and with that the beginning of the struggle

for complete freedom for a people, who before were caretakers for other people and not for themselves."

Ultimately, there is no evidence to support the image other than whether one believes the image looks like the people who are allegedly portrayed in the photograph. The image is reproduced with permission of Wilson, who is interested in knowing what others think of his photograph.



Items of Note

The Abraham Lincoln Association membership dinner will be on October 15, 2000, in Jacksonville, Illinois. It will be part of the continuing 175th anniversary celebration of the founding of Jacksonville. Cocktails will take place in historic Beecher Hall on the campus of Illinois College. Douglas L. Wilson, author of *Honor's Voice*, will be the featured speaker following the banquet.

For further information, telephone Greg Olson at 217.245.6121.

A scholarship is being established at Haverford College in memory of Robert E. Miller, former Abraham Lincoln Association treasurer from 1935 to 1942. Members interested in obtaining more information may write to Carolyn K. Tolles, Haverford College, 370 Lancaster Avenue,

continued on page 8

Ten “True Lies” About Abraham Lincoln

Part 2

by Allen C. Guelzo *

Part 1 of “Ten ‘True Lies’ About Abraham Lincoln” appeared in the Spring, 2000, issue of *For the People*.

LINCOLN WAS A WHITE HONKIE

Abraham Lincoln’s reputation as the author of the Emancipation Proclamation and the Thirteenth Amendment, which abolished slavery in the United States, suffered badly in the 1960s as African-Americans gradually came to resent the constant reminder that their freedom was owed to a white man. In the February, 1968, issue of *Ebony*, in the article, “Was Lincoln a White Supremacist?” Lerone Bennett attacked Lincoln as just another hypocritical white liberal, willing to make concessions to African-Americans only if it suited white political purposes.

Admittedly, Bennett did not have to work too hard to find damaging evidence, especially in remarks that Lincoln made during his famous debates with Stephen A. Douglas in 1858 about the racial and social inferiority of blacks to whites. In fact, Bennett missed the most damaging piece of evidence of all: Lincoln’s 1847 defense of slaveholder Robert Matson in a case that would have returned a family of runaway slaves to Matson’s control.

Lincoln has been defended on the fairly lame grounds that his comments during the Lincoln-Douglas Debates were no more racist than those of most white Americans in the 1850s—but given white racial attitudes in the 1850s, that is not saying much. A better way of understanding Lincoln on these terms is to see that Lincoln approached the problem of slavery as a problem of politics before he approached it as a problem of race. Lincoln was not exaggerating in 1858 when he claimed: “I have always hated slavery.” The Constitution,

however misguided, gave legal protection to slaveowning, which Lincoln felt could not be disregarded without endangering the Constitution itself. Moreover, Lincoln was convinced that slavery, if it was confined to the states where it was then legal, was an obsolete system of labor that would probably die out on its own.

It was not until 1854, when it became clear that slaveholders meant to spread slavery throughout the United States—to transform the entire American economy into one of slave-based labor—that Lincoln erupted into opposition against slavery. Even then, though, his constitutional caution made him hesitate for two years after the Civil War began to liberate black slaves. For one thing, he had no power even as president to meddle in what was, after all, a matter for individual states to decide, and any action he might have wanted to take would promptly be challenged in the federal courts. Even more of an obstacle, Lincoln could hardly have decreed abolition without provoking a white uprising behind his back. If Lincoln seemed slow to pull the trigger about the freedom of African-Americans, it was because he knew all too well that few other white Americans even had a finger *on* the trigger.

Once white public opinion was ready to accept it, Lincoln was remarkable for the decisiveness with which he moved toward emancipation, in part by arming the former slaves and encouraging movement by the states toward full black civil rights. By the end of the war, black abolitionist Frederick Douglass could marvel that Lincoln was the first white man he had met who never made him conscious of race. Lincoln was, said Douglass, “*emphatically the black man’s president.*”

LINCOLN FORETOLD HIS OWN DEATH

We have already seen that Lincoln’s religion had a pretty unorthodox shape. It gets even more unorth-

odox when we notice the unusual degree to which he added a thick layer of folk superstition that found the key to the future in dreams and portents.

It was during the 1860 election campaign that he saw what he believed was the first portent of his death. Noticing himself in the reflection of a mirror, he was puzzled why the mirror produced two images, one vivid and natural, the other pale and indistinct. Mary Todd Lincoln was frightened by the double image when Lincoln described it to her: “She thought it was a sign that paleness of one of the faces was an omen I should not see life through the last term.”

In April of 1865, after his election to a second term as president, Lincoln told his bodyguard, Ward Hill Lamon, of a dream in which he was awakened by weeping and crying in the White House, only to descend the stairs in his dream and find that a funeral was being conducted in the East Room. Lincoln’s dream-self asked one of the soldiers on guard: “Who is dead in the White House?” “The President,” came the answer, “he was killed by an assassin.” Lamon, who had a knack for embroidering a good story, might have manufactured this one, but there are a number of witnesses to a dream

continued on page 6

Unless otherwise indicated, photographs are courtesy of the Illinois State Historical Library, Springfield.

For the People (ISSN 1527-2710) is published four times a year and is a benefit of membership of the Abraham Lincoln Association
1 Old State Capitol Plaza
Springfield, Illinois
62701.

Edited and Designed by
William B. Tubbs
wbt60@earthlink.net

THE ABRAHAM LINCOLN
ASSOCIATION

DONALD R. TRACY
President

MOLLY BECKER
RICHARD E. HART
RICHARD MILLS
Vice-Presidents

THOMAS F. SCHWARTZ
Secretary

JUDITH BARRINGER
Treasurer

DAN W. BANNISTER
Immediate Past-President

Board of Directors
R-Lou Barker
Roger D. Bridges
Michael Burlingame
Sheldon S. Cohen
John Daly
Brooks Davis
Rodney O. Davis
Robert S. Eckley
Donald H. Funk
Allen C. Guelzo
Edith Lee Harris
Norman D. Hellmers
Earl W. Henderson, Jr.
Fred B. Hoffmann
Barbara Hughett
Robert W. Johannsen
Lewis E. Lehrman
Susan Mogerman
Georgia Northrup
Phillip S. Paludan
James W. Patton III
Mark Plummer
Gerald Prokopowicz
James A. Rawley
Brooks D. Simpson
Robert A. Stuart, Jr.
Louise Taper
John T. Trutter
Andy VanMeter
Margaret VanMeter
Daniel R. Weinberg
Robert Willard
Douglas L. Wilson
Kenneth J. Winkle

Honorary Directors
Governor George H. Ryan
Senator Richard Durbin
Senator Peter Fitzgerald
Congressman Ray LaHood
Congressman John Shimkus
Justice Benjamin K. Miller
Mayor Karen Hasara

Emeritus Directors
Willard Bunn, Jr.
John R. Chapin
Cullom Davis
Irving Dillard
James Myers
Sally Schanbacher

Distinguished Directors
Mario M. Cuomo
David Herbert Donald
John Hope Franklin
Garry Wills

President's Column

by Donald R. Tracy

Our numbers continue to increase. The *Journal* and *For The People* are both flourishing. We have another great speaker lined up for the February 12 Banquet, Michael Beschloss. The 2001 Symposium Panel—John P. Diggins, Barry Schwartz, Stewart Winger, and John Ashworth—is first rate. Thanks to Daniel Stowell and Stacy Pratt McDermott of The Lincoln Legal Papers, we are updating our website.

That is the good news. The bad news is that after announcing a Virtual Library—the *Collected Works* and *Lincoln Day By Day*—to much fanfare, our website search engine failed us. As a result, we are no longer online and have not been for some time. The reasons for this system failure are too technical, complex, and painful for me to explain in a column.

We are working on potential solutions, both short-term and long. The most promising involves one or more government partners. The least promising and most expensive is going it alone. Regardless, we remain firmly committed to making the *Collected Works* and other

Association publications available online at no charge in a searchable format.

This past summer, my wife, Wanda, and our four children traveled to Santa Monica, California, for a weeklong vacation. The trip included stops at the Nixon and Reagan Presidential Libraries. Both were fascinating, and easily surpassed our children's subterranean expectations. At the Nixon Library, they were most impressed with the boyhood home, rose garden, Watergate tape recordings, Nixon's videotaped answers to a multitude of foreign policy and domestic questions, and life-sized world leader statues. At the Reagan Library, they liked the interactive cabinet table questions, movie posters, and huge stored collection of presidential gifts. A few years from now, I wonder what my children's children will like best about the Lincoln Presidential Library.

Speaking of the Library, a number of you answered our call for letters of support for federal funding. Thank you, especially those of you who reside outside of Illinois. Every letter of support counts a thousand-fold.

New Membership Categories to Appear on October Renewal Forms

The Membership Committee has reviewed the current category levels as well as the financial needs for future Abraham Lincoln Association programs. Their recommendation, presented to and passed by the Executive Committee, was to increase every level except the basic membership category, which will remain at \$25. The Association wants to make the basic level affordable to those with a deep interest in Lincoln without the deep pockets. It is hoped that those at the basic level will increase their membership level when

possible. All the categories will undergo name changes. The new levels are: Railsplitter, \$25; Postmaster, \$75; Lawyer, \$200; Congressman, \$500; and Presidential, \$1,000. The Association held a strategic planning meeting at their February board meeting. A number of very exciting ideas were discussed as well as a reexamination of the mission statement and current programs. Ultimately, the success of any organization depends upon the active support of its members. Any comments or ideas may be sent to Donald R. Tracy or Thomas F. Schwartz.

The Evolution of a National Cemetery Program

Anyone who has been involved with planning an event knows that one of the most difficult

in putting together a presidential event.

The first draft shows both an

the organizations and audience on the procession to the speakers platform, followed by the order of the program. The unfortunate use of the word "Celebration" appears in the full title, "Order of Arrangement for the Celebration At Gettysburg, On the 19th of November, 1863." This is corrected in the second draft, replacing the word "Celebration" with the more somber phrase "Consecration of the Soldiers' Cemetery." "Order of Procession" is replaced with the simple word, "Programme."

The final program is the most revealing in both the additions and changes in wording. The event was no longer a "Celebration" or a "Consecration," but rather an "Inauguration of the National Cemetery at Gettysburg, Pa." The "General-in-Chief of the Army, and Staff," were demoted as the "Assistant Secretaries of the Several Executive Departments," were added above them. Other notable additions to the procession were the Vice-President of the United States and the Speaker of the House of Representa-

Order of Arrangement	Order of Procession
FOR THE CELEBRATION AT GETTYSBURG, ON THE 19TH OF NOVEMBER, 1863. BAND. MILITARY. Under Command of Maj. Gen. Couch. Maj. Gen. Meade and Officers and Soldiers of the Army of the Potomac. Officers of the Navy and Marine Corps of the United States. Aids. Marshal-in-Chief. Aids. PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES. Cabinet Officers and General-in-Chief of the Army. Judges of the Supreme Court of the United States. Lieut. Gen. Winfield Scott and Admiral Charles Stewart. ORATOR AND CLERGYMAN. Governors of States, their Staff and Commissioners of States. Senators and Representatives in the Congress of the United States, and Officers of Congress. Mayors of Cities and City Authorities. Gettysburg Committee of Arrangements. Members of the Sanitary Commission. Christian Commission. Adams' Express Company Hospital Corps. Other Soldiers' Relief Associations. Knights Templar. Masonic Fraternity. Independent Order of Odd Fellows, and other Benevolent and Charitable Associations. Literary, Scientific and Industrial Associations. Fire Companies. Editorial Corps. Citizens of the State of Pennsylvania. Citizens of the other Loyal States of the Union, in the following order, viz.: Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, Western Virginia, Kentucky, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, Iowa, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Kansas, California, Oregon. Citizens of the District of Columbia and Territories of the United States. Loyal Citizens of other States.	Order of Procession AT GETTYSBURG, ON THE 19TH OF NOVEMBER, 1863. -- The Military will form at 9 o'clock, A. M., on Carlisle street, North of the Square, its Right resting on the Square opposite McClellan's Hotel. The Marshals will assemble in the Public Square, at the same hour. All the Civic Processions, except the States, will assemble according to the printed Programme, on York street, at the same hour. The Pennsylvania Delegation will form on Chambersburg street, its Right resting on the Square, and the other Delegations, in their order, will form on the same street, in rear of the Pennsylvania Delegation. The Marshals of the several States are charged with seeing that their several Delegations are duly formed, and that they wheel into the Column of March, in their proper order. The head of the Column will move at precisely ten o'clock, A. M. Its route will be up Baltimore street, to the Emmitsburg road, thence to the junction of the Taneytown road, thence by the latter road to the Cemetery, where the Military will form in Line, as the General in Command may order, and present arms, when the President of the United States, and all who are to occupy the Stand, will pass in front of the Stand. The Military will then close up and occupy the space on the left of the Stand. The Civic Procession will then advance and occupy the area in front of the Stand, the Military leaving sufficient space, between them and the line of graves, for the Civic Procession to pass. The Ladies will occupy the right of the Stand, and it is desirable that they be upon the ground as early as ten o'clock. Silence having been ordered, the Exercises will take place, as follows: MUSIC. PRAYER. MUSIC. ORATION. MUSIC. DEDICATORY REMARKS. By the President of the United States. DIRGE. BENEDICTION. After the Benediction, the Procession will be dismissed, and the Marshals will form on Baltimore street and return to the Court House, where a meeting of the Marshals will be held. WARD H. LAMON, Marshal-in-Chief.

tasks is putting together a printed program. Certain details are fixed at an early date, such as the date, time, and place of the event. Other details remain in flux until several weeks before the event. In some cases, the final program will not reflect the actual event because illness, family emergencies, and inclement weather prevent program speakers from attending. In short, printed programs evolve, reflecting the ever-changing conditions affecting the event.

Ward Hill Lamson was placed in charge of planning what eventually became known as the "Programme of Arrangements and Order of Exercises for the Inauguration of the National Cemetery at Gettysburg, On the 19th of November, 1863." President Lincoln's two private secretaries, John G. Nicolay and John Hay, assisted him, in part, in crafting the final printed program used at the dedication ceremonies. Among the many treasures at the Illinois State Historical Library are two early drafts of the program. A closer look reveals the dynamic process

"Order of Arrangement," listing participating groups such as the Knights

Order of Arrangement	PROGRAMME.
FOR THE CONSECRATION OF THE SOLDIERS' CEMETERY AT GETTYSBURG, ON THE 19TH OF NOVEMBER, 1863. BAND. MILITARY. Under Command of Maj. Gen. Couch. Maj. Gen. Meade and Officers and Soldiers of the Army of the Potomac. Officers of the Navy and Marine Corps of the United States. Aids. Marshal-in-Chief. Aids. PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES. Cabinet Officers and General-in-Chief of the Army. Judges of the Supreme Court of the United States. Lieut. Gen. Winfield Scott and Admiral Charles Stewart. ORATOR AND CLERGYMAN. Governors of States, their Staff and Commissioners of States. Senators and Representatives in the Congress of the United States, and Officers of Congress. Mayors of Cities and City Authorities. Gettysburg Committee of Arrangements. Members of the Sanitary Commission. Christian Commission. Adams' Express Company Hospital Corps. Other Soldiers' Relief Associations. Knights Templar. Masonic Fraternity. Independent Order of Odd Fellows, and other Benevolent and Charitable Associations. Literary, Scientific and Industrial Associations. Fire Companies. Editorial Corps. Citizens of the State of Pennsylvania. Citizens of the other Loyal States of the Union, in the following order, viz.: Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, Western Virginia, Kentucky, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, Iowa, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Kansas, California, Oregon. Citizens of the District of Columbia and Territories of the United States. Loyal Citizens of other States.	PROGRAMME. -- The Military will form at 9 o'clock, A. M., on Carlisle street, North of the Square, its Right resting on the Square, opposite McClellan's Hotel. The Marshals will assemble in the Public Square, at the same hour. All the Civic Processions, except the States, will assemble according to the printed Programme, on York street, at the same hour. The Pennsylvania Delegation will form on Chambersburg street, its Right resting on the Square, and the other Delegations, in their order, will form on the same street, in rear of the Pennsylvania Delegation. The Marshals of the several States are charged with seeing that their several Delegations are duly formed, and that they wheel into the Column of March, in their proper order. The head of the Column will move at precisely ten o'clock, A. M. Its route will be up Baltimore street, to the Emmitsburg road, thence to the junction of the Taneytown road, thence by the latter road to the Cemetery, where the Military will form in Line, as the General in Command may order, and present arms, when the President of the United States, and all who are to occupy the Stand, will pass in front of the Stand. The Military will then close up and occupy the space on the left of the Stand. The Civic Procession will then advance and occupy the area in front of the Stand, the Military leaving sufficient space, between them and the line of graves, for the Civic Procession to pass. The Ladies will occupy the right of the Stand, and it is desirable that they be upon the ground as early as ten o'clock. Silence having been ordered, the Exercises will take place, as follows: MUSIC. PRAYER. MUSIC. ORATION. MUSIC. DEDICATORY REMARKS. By the President of the United States. DIRGE. BENEDICTION. After the Benediction, the Procession will be dismissed, and the Marshals will form on Baltimore street and return to the Court House, where a meeting of the Marshals will be held. WARD H. LAMON, Marshal-in-Chief.

Templar, Masonic Fraternity, and the Editorial Corps, and an "Order of Procession," detailing instructions to

tives, along with the U.S. Military Telegraphic Corps, their officers, and
continued on page 8

One or Two Lincoln Forgeries?

By Thomas E. Schwartz

President Abraham Lincoln allegedly wrote one of the frequently cited forgeries to an old Springfield acquaintance, Colonel Edmund D. “Dick” Taylor. The letter lacks both the voice of typical Lincoln correspondence and the original has never been located. The text of the forgery is as follows:

[Chicago, Illinois December 1864]

My Dear Col. Dick:

I have long determined to make public the origins of the greenback and tell the world that it is one of Dick Taylor’s creations. You had always been friendly to me, and when troublous times fell on us, and my shoulders, though broad and willing, were weak, and myself surrounded by such circumstances and such people that I knew not whom to trust, then I said in my extremity, “I will send for Col. Taylor; he will know what to do.” I think it was in January 1862, on or about the 16th, that I did so. You came, and I said to you, “What can we do?” Said you, “Why, issue Treasury notes bearing no interest, printed on the best banking paper. Issue enough to pay off the Army expenses, and declare it legal tender.” Chase thought it a hazardous thing, but we finally accomplished it, and gave to the people of this Republic the greatest blessing they ever had—their own paper to pay their own debts, and I take great pleasure in making it known. How many times have I laughed at you telling me plainly that I was too lazy to be anything but a lawyer.

Yours truly,

A. Lincoln,

President.

The original letter, upon which this text is based, has never surfaced. The text first appeared in the House of Representatives’ Report No. 380. Edmund Taylor’s wealth went up in flames with the Great Chicago Fire of 1871. By 1888, he was appealing to

the Committee on War Claims, arguing that he had carried dispatches from Lincoln to General Grant’s headquarters at Cairo early in the Civil War. All of his expenses for this courier service were paid out-of-pocket. Taylor felt that the government should reimburse him for his services, now that he was in need. The text of Lincoln’s letter was presented in evidence to support his claim that Lincoln was a close confidante. Among the other supporting documents were a letter from John A. McClernand and a petition signed by the leading citizens of Chicago. Notables such as meatpacking mogul Philip D. Armour, cattle and land baron John Dean Gillett, *Chicago*



Tribune editor Joseph Medill, and a rising young lawyer and son of the late President, Robert Todd Lincoln, signed the petition.

The claims made by Taylor are questionable on a number of grounds. Telegraph lines operated between Washington, D.C. and Cairo throughout the war. There was no reason to use a courier to send messages that were readily transmitted over the wires. Taylor does not appear as a correspondent in the Lincoln papers throughout the war years nor does he appear in the Grant papers. While he was a leader in the Democratic party during Lincoln’s early political career,

Taylor’s business matters remove him from the political scene by the 1850s. Moreover, Bray Hammond identifies the creation of the greenbacks originating from the efforts of Samuel Hooper and John B. Alley, both successful businessmen and congressmen from Massachusetts. Hammond’s, Irwin Unger’s, Otto Gresham’s, or any other serious study of the greenbacks does not mention Edmund D. Taylor.

How did this spurious text gain widespread currency? Some of the claims, such as Taylor being the “father of the greenbacks,” were repeated in his 1891 obituaries, prompting John G. Nicolay to declare the letter “an unblushing forgery.” Emil Ludwig’s 1930 Lincoln biography embraces the text as authentic. The following year, Emanuel Hertz also included it in his two-volume work, *Abraham Lincoln: A New Portrait*. The editors of the *Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln* rightly place this letter in the appendix identifying it as “spurious.”

In doing so, they made the mistake of eliminating another note written by Lincoln on January 16, 1862, introducing “Mr. Taylor” to Secretary of the Treasury Salmon P. Chase. The editors mistakenly identify “Mr. Taylor” as Col. Edmund Dick Taylor and declare the note of “doubtful authenticity.” The note first appeared in the Nicolay and Hay transcripts of the *Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln*. It reads “The Secretary of the Treasury will please consider Mr. Taylor’s proposition. We must have money and I think this is a good way to get it.” The “Mr. Taylor” is most likely David Taylor from Ohio. David Taylor is mentioned in the diaries of Salmon P. Chase and is also mentioned in Don Piatt’s account of the origins of the greenbacks in a *North American Review* article. Although David Taylor fairs no better by historians when evaluating his role as “the father of the greenback,” his letter of introduction at least deserves to be brought back into the Lincoln canon.

Ten “True Lies” About Abraham Lincoln

continued from page 2

that Lincoln had even closer to his assassination. The morning of the assassination, Lincoln met with his cabinet and related to them a dream that he had the night before, of standing on the deck of a ship that was rushing “on some vast and indistinct expanse toward an unknown shore.” This dream was peculiar, Lincoln said, because he had it several times before, and always before “some important event or disaster.”

Lincoln did not, by this means, exactly foretell his own death. He explained that he thought the dream meant that they would soon have good military news about the final collapse of Southern resistance in the war. The story of the dream was in fact followed by what may well be the greatest disaster of the war, the murder of Abraham Lincoln.

LINCOLN’S ASSASSINATION WAS ARRANGED BY MEMBERS OF HIS OWN CABINET

Five days after the principal Southern army under General Robert E. Lee had surrendered and made the end of the Civil War a matter of a few days away, Abraham Lincoln was shot from behind on the evening of April 14, 1865, while he and his wife were watching a play, *Our American Cousin*, at Ford’s Theatre in Washington, D.C. Lincoln died the next morning without regaining consciousness. His assassin escaped in the confusion, but he was immediately identified as an actor, John Wilkes Booth. Two weeks later, Booth was hunted down and shot to death by federal cavalrymen.

Booth was a sometime Confederate agent whose plans for the assassination were so ludicrously haphazard that it hardly seemed possible for them to have succeeded—unless, of course, there had been inside help. In the weeks after the assassination, conspiracy theories blossomed on every hand, most of them linked to the shadowy influence of the dying Confederate government. In the end, four accused

conspirators were hung, and many others were clapped into federal prisons. In 1937, however, the accusing finger of conspiracy was pointed by a wealthy chemical manufacturer and amateur historian, Otto Eisenschiml, at members of Lincoln’s own cabinet. Eisenschiml pointed out two apparently ominous facts. First, from the beginning of the war, Lincoln had been fending off the influence of radicals within his own party who wanted him to deal more drastically with the South than Lincoln was inclined to. Among those radicals was Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton. Second, Eisenschiml noticed: (1) that Stanton had allowed Lincoln to go to Ford’s Theatre with only one guard that night, a guard who promptly wandered off to a bar next door; (2) that Stanton had closed all the roads out of Washington except the very road Booth used to escape; and (3) that Booth was conveniently shot by soldiers under Stanton’s direction before he could be brought to trial. All of this brought Eisenschiml to a historical eureka: Stanton and the radicals, knowing that they could never push their agenda for the radical treatment of the defeated South past Lincoln, arranged to have Lincoln assassinated so that they could get their way.

It needs to be said that there is not a shred of reasonable evidence for Eisenschiml’s theory. Stanton sympathized with the radical Republicans, but he was not one of their inner circle. The guard, John Parker, did not wander away from the theatre, although he *was* sitting in the front row of the theatre’s dress circle—too far from the Lincolns to have stopped anyone himself. It was not Parker, but Lincoln’s footman, Charles Forbes, who sat by the door of the private box where the Lincolns were sitting, but who was smooth-talked by Booth into allowing him access to the box. Booth was shot because he was shooting at the federal troops and had vowed not to be captured alive. Above all, none of the conspirators arrested after the

assassination ever implicated Stanton, although they had every incentive to do so. And yet, Eisenschiml’s theory continually gets updated, most recently in the 1970s movie *The Lincoln Conspiracy*, in calls to exhume Booth’s body, and in *National Enquirer* articles. We only await Oliver Stone to give it a new lease on life.

LINCOLN’S BODY IS MISSING

At Mary Todd Lincoln’s direction, Lincoln was buried not in Washington but in Springfield, on May 4, 1865, after a bizarre two-week cross-country exhibition of the body that had the embalmers working overtime at the end. Lincoln was first buried in a receiving vault in Springfield’s Oak Ridge Cemetery, then in December, it was reburied in a temporary vault. In 1871, Lincoln’s body was moved yet again, this time to a major new monument in the cemetery. Then, in 1876, five hoodlums attempted to steal the coffin from the monument, hoping to demand a ransom for it. Quick action by private detectives and the Secret Service snuffed out the would-be body snatching in the act.

But the plot worried enough of Lincoln’s family and friends that they arranged to have the coffin moved out of the grave in the monument and then, as if this made it any safer than it had been, stored it under some boards in the cellar of the monument for two years. This only gave rise to talk that Lincoln’s body had been stolen or lost. So, in 1886, the coffin was reburied in a new brick-and-mortar vault in the monument. A local plumber opened the coffin and a group of Lincoln’s friends leaned over to peek in and confirm that Lincoln was still there. In 1899, however, the monument itself had to be rebuilt, since its foundations were settling and cracking. The coffin was once again moved out into a temporary vault until 1901.

This time, Robert Todd Lincoln, Lincoln’s only surviving son, was determined to put his father securely to rest. A steel cage was sunk into the floor of the monument, and after

plumber Leon Hopkins drilled one more opening and the now-elderly friends took one last peek to be sure that Lincoln was still there, the coffin was lowered into the cage and several tons of concrete were sloshed in all around it. There Lincoln rests today: three feet behind and eight feet below the stone marker that bears his name.

LINCOLN WAS OUR GREATEST PRESIDENT

Every time a newspaper or magazine announces that it is taking a survey to determine who Americans regard as their greatest president, it is almost a foregone conclusion that Lincoln will wind up at the top, perhaps sharing space with Washington.

What seems more difficult for Americans to determine is why Lincoln should be regarded as a great president. Oddly, Lincoln was probably one of the least-well-prepared presidents we have ever elected; he had no administrative or managerial experience whatsoever. He had served one term as a United States Representative in 1846, but he had never been a cabinet member, a governor, or even a mayor. What he had, however, were those magical gifts of leadership—ambition, eloquence, confidence, intelligence, compassion, and creativity—that trump mere managerial paper shuffling anytime. Although it took over two years of trial and error, Lincoln managed to assemble a winning military team behind Ulysses S. Grant. He also managed to secure a

number of notable domestic policy achievements in other areas—Lincoln sponsored the revival of a national banking system; he installed import tariffs on foreign goods, which protected American businesses from cut-throat competition; he opened the Great Plains to settlement by means of the Homestead Act; he pioneered government support for higher education through the Morrill Act; and he promoted legislation to subsidize a railroad system to cross the entire North American continent. Perhaps his greatest accomplishment was to establish once and for all the unity of the United States as a single and forever-after indivisible nation. He insisted, unlike his Democratic counterparts, that America was not a diverse collection of sections or states or ethnicities, but a single nation of only one people, a people dedicated to a proposition “that all men are created equal.”

But as soon as we put the question of Lincoln’s greatness in those terms, we find that what we thought were simple historical statements from long ago are still the themes that resonate with Americans today. Americans continue to believe that economic opportunity is the principal theme of the American dream, and that government should be in the business of encouraging opportunity rather than promoting subsidy and dependence. Americans continue to think of themselves as one nation, and would prefer that we remain one nation, rather than disinte-

grate into a froth of interest groups. Americans continue to believe that the choices that affect us all cannot be made purely on technical or procedural political grounds, but have to pass a test of moral value—of right or wrong. As soon as we begin itemizing the things that made Lincoln great, we find that we are talking about issues and choices that still face us.

All of which is to say that any statement about Lincoln’s greatness is also a statement about our political values and goals for the future. It is surprising, but when looked at in the long view, the basic political attitudes and ideology of Americans still line up on either side of Lincoln. In the end, to decide if Lincoln’s greatness is a lie or a truth cannot really be found in Lincoln alone, it has to be found in us, as well. The challenges and the vision that Lincoln threw out in the midst of the Civil War have not, in many ways, changed for us as a people. What we need to ask about Abraham Lincoln is what we need to ask about ourselves: whether the vision of America that moved Lincoln is our vision, or merely our own “true lie.”

*Allen C. Guelzo is the Grace E. Kea Professor of American History and the dean of the Templeton Honors College at Eastern College in St. Davids, Pennsylvania. He is the winner of the Lincoln Prize for his book, *Abraham Lincoln: Redeemer President* (1999).

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

Please enroll me as a member of the Abraham Lincoln Association in the category indicated:

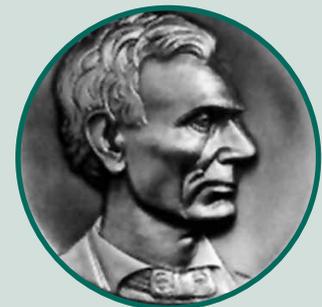
- ___ Railsplitter \$ 25
- ___ Postmaster \$ 75
- ___ Lawyer \$ 200
- ___ Congressman \$ 500
- ___ Presidential \$ 1,000

Members residing outside the U.S add \$3.00

Mail this application (or a photocopy) and a check to:

The Abraham Lincoln Association
1 Old State Capitol Plaza
Springfield, Illinois
62701

Name _____
 Street _____
 City _____
 State _____
 Zip _____



Website: www.alincolnassoc.com

The Evolution of a National Cemetery Program

continued from page 4

the officers and members of the Loyal League, the group that advanced the Republican cause through political pamphlets. The citizens of the states, previously identified as "Loyal," simply became citizens in the final program. And the "Editorial Corps" were reduced to "The Press." One other

noticeable difference can be found in the final program. Silence was ordered before the program would begin in the two working drafts. The final program begins "as soon as the military and civic bodies are in position."

The final program was printed on blue paper by the firm of Gideon and Pearson, who were also the publishers

of the *Washington Chronicle*. All three drafts are reproduced here for comparison.

Items of Note

continued from page 1

Haverford, PA 19041, or telephone her at 610.896.1128.

Students of Lincoln are in for a great treat with the forthcoming publication of a number of wonderful studies. Harry Jaffa's *A New Birth of Freedom*, the sequel to *Crisis of the House Divided*, is out in prepublication review copies. It promises to produce the same major impact that his first book left upon the historical profession. Other books by John Diggins, *On Hallowed Ground: Abraham Lincoln and the Foundations of American History*, Gordon Leidner, *Lincoln on God and Country*, and Barry Schwartz, *Abraham Lincoln and the Forge of National Memory*, are either out or will be soon. If you are interested in purchasing a Lincoln book for that special person, a selection of these titles will be offered in the winter issue at discount prices.

ORDER OF PROCESSION FOR THE INAUGURATION OF THE National Cemetery at Gettysburg, Pa. ON THE 19TH NOVEMBER, 1863.	Programme of Arrangements and Order of Exercises FOR THE INAUGURATION OF THE NATIONAL CEMETERY AT GETTYSBURG, ON THE 19TH OF NOVEMBER, 1863.
<p>Military, under command of Major-General Couch. Major-General Meigs and Staff, and the officers and soldiers of the Army of the Potomac. Officers of the Navy and Marine Corps of the United States. Aids. CHIEF MARSHAL. Aids. PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES. Members of the Cabinet. Assistant Secretaries of the several Executive Departments. Generals-in-Chief of the Army, and Staff. Lieutenant-General Scott and Rear-Admiral Sigsbee. Judges of the U. S. Supreme Court. Hon. EDWARD EVERETT, Orator of the day, and the Chairman. Governors of the States, and their Staffs. Commissioners of the States on the Inauguration of the Cemetery. Bearers with the Flags of the States. Vice-President of the United States and Speaker of the House of Representatives. Members of the two Houses of Congress. Officers of the two Houses of Congress. Mayors of Cities. Gettysburg Committee of Arrangements. Officers and members of the United States Sanitary Commission. Committees of Different Religious Bodies. U. S. Military Telegraphic Corps. Officers and Representatives of Adams Express Company. Officers of Different Telegraph Companies. Hospital Corps of the Army. Soldiers' Relief Associations. Knights Templar. Masonic Fraternity. Independent Order of Odd-Fellows. Other Benevolent Associations. Literary, Scientific, and Industrial Associations. The Press. Officers and members of Loyal Leagues. Fire Companies. Citizens of the State of Pennsylvania. Citizens of other States. Citizens of the District of Columbia. Citizens of the several Territories.</p>	<p>The military will form in Gettysburg at 9 o'clock a. m., on Carlisle street, north of the square, its right resting on the square, opposite McClellan's Hotel, under the direction of Major General Couch. The State Marshals and Chief Marshal's aids will assemble in the public square at the same hour. All civic bodies except the citizens of States will assemble, according to the foregoing printed programme, on York street at the same hour. The delegation of Pennsylvania citizens will form on Chambersburg street, its right resting on the square, and the other citizen delegations, in their order, will form on the same street in rear of the Pennsylvania delegation. The Marshals of the States are charged with the duty of forming their several delegations so that they will assume their appropriate positions when the main procession moves. The head of the column will move at precisely 10 o'clock a. m. The route will be up Baltimore street to the Emmitsburg road; thence to the junction of the Taneytown road; thence, by the latter road, to the Cemetery, where the military will form in line, as the General in command may order, for the purpose of saluting the President of the United States. The military will then close up, and occupy the space on the left of the stand. The civic procession will advance and occupy the area in front of the stand, the military leaving sufficient space between them and the line of graves for the civic procession to pass. The ladies will occupy the right of the stand, and it is desirable that they be upon the ground as early as ten o'clock a. m. The exercises will take place as soon as the military and civic bodies are in position, as follows: Music. Prayer. Music. Oration. Music. Benediction. After the benediction the procession will be dismissed, and the State Marshals and special aids to the Chief Marshal will form on Baltimore street, and return to the Court-house in Gettysburg, where a meeting of the marshals will be held. An appropriate salute will be fired in Gettysburg on the day of the celebration, under the direction of Maj. Gen. Couch. WARD H. LAMON, Marshal-in-Chief.</p>

For the People

A Newsletter of the Abraham Lincoln Association
1 Old State Capitol Plaza
Springfield, Illinois 62701

FORWARDING AND RETURN POSTAGE GUARANTEED
ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Nonprofit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Springfield, Illinois
Permit No. 263

