

For the People

A Newsletter of the Abraham Lincoln Association
Volume 5, Number 2 Summer 2003 Springfield, Illinois

Keller Family Donation Honors Association

By Thomas F. Schwartz

Two recent donations to the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum were on display February 12 at the Abraham Lincoln Symposium to honor the memory of Oliver J. Keller Sr. and his leadership as president of the Abraham Lincoln Association in raising money to restore the Old State Capitol. Governor Otto Kerner asked former members of the Association to reactivate the organization and assist the State of Illinois in saving the Old State Capitol for future generations. Under Keller's leadership, the Association raised nearly \$300,000 to purchase period furnishings for the rooms in the Old State Capitol. Mr. and Mrs. O. J. Keller Jr. donated an original Lincoln letter dated April 13, 1863, and a signed 1858 Lincoln photograph in memory of O. J. Keller Sr. and the efforts of the Association in preserving

the Old State Capitol as a major Lincoln historic site. Both were the property of Oliver Dickey, Keller's great-grandfather. Copies of the originals will be placed in the Old State Capitol.

Lincoln wrote to Secretary of the Interior John P. Usher, urging him to: "Please see Mr. Dickey a friend, and son of a friend, of mine. He is a gentleman of very high standing; and I will be glad if you hear him patiently, and oblige him if possible." "Mr. Dickey" was Oliver Dickey, son of John Dickey who was Lincoln's roommate from 1847 to 1849 when both men served in Congress. Oliver Dickey served as the law partner of Thaddeus Stevens, the influential congressman from Pennsylvania. As a delegate to the 1860 Republican National Convention, Dickey also served in the delegation that traveled to Springfield to officially deliver the news to Lincoln that he had been nominated.



Recent donations by the Keller Family were on display at the Old State Capitol during this year's Abraham Lincoln Symposium.

The Lincoln Statue at Richmond Another View

As the line between news and entertainment continues to blur in our postmodern culture it is not surprising that a handful of protesters at the unveiling of a statue of Abraham Lincoln and Tad in the former Confederate capital of Richmond, Virginia, received national attention. Vitriolic statements comparing Lincoln to a conquering leader of a foreign power feeds the stereotype that the Civil War continues in the hearts and minds of Southerners. Like all stereotypes, however, the protesters hardly reflected the views of many, per-

haps even most of those in attendance. The following essay is by a native Virginian, Dr. Phillip C. Stone. For over two decades, Stone has taught at Bridgewater College in Bridgewater, Virginia, and currently serves as president. While his reasoned assessment is not the stuff for television cameras, it is well worth reading.

**Welcome to Richmond,
Mr. Lincoln!**

Under the conditions obtaining in April 1865, it is certainly understandable why the city of Richmond, except for African Americans and a handful of

Unionists, was less than receptive to a visit by President Lincoln. The war, then in its closing stages, had sapped the energy, life, and wealth of Richmond and the Confederacy. The burning of much of the city just days before Lincoln's appearance there was not only the most recent, but also the most devastating source of suffering for Richmonders.

Lincoln, however, was fully entitled to be in Richmond. He was entitled to enter the city because he was President of the United States. The

continued on page 6

President's Column

By Robert S. Eckley

In his book, *Life on the Circuit with Lincoln*, Henry Clay Whitney wrote: "When I first knew the eighth circuit, the great triumvirate consisted of Davis, Lincoln, and Swett: and their social consequence was in the order named." And so they were from the fall of 1849 until Abraham Lincoln stopped making the twice-a-year tour a decade later. They were the stalwarts most consistently making the tour, although there were others who joined periodically or for portions of the circuit, and each county usually had several local attorneys. There were fourteen counties in the circuit in 1849, eight from 1853 through 1856, and only five in the last three years of their joint enterprise as the population and caseload grew. David Davis had met Lincoln in Vandalia in 1835 as Jesse Fell, John Todd Stuart, and Lincoln stood visiting before the state capitol. During the next decade and one half, they occasionally met at the bar and even more frequently in the political hustings as fellow Whigs. They became much better acquainted once Lincoln rejoined the tour after his term in the Thirtieth Congress. This was on the second tour of the circuit for the newly elected Judge Davis, where he introduced Leonard Swett to Lincoln in a Logan County tavern. Swett had just been admitted to the bar after stopping and staying in Bloomington on his way home to Maine from the Mexican War.

The trio enjoyed a lifelong friendship in the practice of law and politics. According to the information assembled in *The Law Practice of Abraham Lincoln*, Swett was a party of record in ninety cases in which Lincoln was involved—usually with or opposed to Lincoln, and there were probably many more where the association was informal. In more than a few instances, Lincoln was the acting judge of choice in filling in for Davis when he could not be on the bench. Swett

appeared on the platform at many political meetings with Lincoln from 1852 through 1862, and when he failed to obtain the 1856 Republican nomination for Congress in the district, Lincoln wrote to Davis and Whitney, "It turned me blind." Davis and Swett played active roles in both of Lincoln's United States Senate campaigns and Swett ran for and was elected to the state legislature in 1858 in order to support Lincoln's candidacy.

In 1860 the Eighth Circuit bar proved to be one of the best political machines in the nation. Aside from the candidate Lincoln, Davis was its driver and Swett was his principal lieutenant. The second-choice strategy adopted by Davis at the Republican National Convention paid off on the third ballot. Immediately following adjournment of the convention, Davis and Swett went to the hotel of Thurlow Weed, William Seward's manager, and invited him to meet Lincoln in Springfield, which he did along with Swett. A following meeting occurred between Lincoln, Weed, Davis, and Swett after the election in December. In the campaign, Davis was constantly involved and traveled to the East to reassure disparate party leaders, including Pennsylvania Senator Simon Cameron, Horace Greeley, Maryland Congressman Henry Winter Davis, New York Governor Edwin D. Morgan, and others, of Lincoln's respect for them. Davis and Swett played important roles in the cabinet choices, especially for the War and Interior departments, and Lincoln dispatched Swett on December 25 to Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Washington, D.C., for three weeks of consultations regarding the cabinet and the deteriorating political situation. Before leaving Washington, Swett became seriously ill and spent almost eight weeks in all, at his own expense, before he was able to return to Bloomington in late February.

Like many campaign supporters before and after, there was an element

of unrequited devotion manifested by the two. Davis had been offended much earlier in 1848 when he wished to run for judge of the Eighth Circuit and Lincoln made no effort on his behalf, because Benjamin Edwards, brother of Ninian Edwards, husband of Mary Todd Lincoln's sister, also coveted the position. Ultimately, Edwards decided not to seek the judgeship and the issue disappeared. Lincoln's later delay in finding an appropriate appointment for Davis after the 1860 election was a more visible slight when a year and a half transpired before he was named to the United States Supreme Court. In the meantime Orville Browning, named to replace Senator Stephen Douglas after his death, was actively seeking the same office while Swett and other Eighth Circuit friends worked for Davis, assisted by prominent members of the St. Louis bar at Swett's urging, and by Mary Todd Lincoln.

Swett's own situation was another matter. He did not help his own cause by not knowing what he wanted or how to phrase his appeal, written in response to Lincoln's request on the day of the inauguration. Nevertheless, during the first two years of his administration, Lincoln offered him positions on three occasions, none particularly attractive, which he declined. Swett had sought the Republican gubernatorial nomination in the same state convention in Decatur of 1860 that nominated Lincoln, when Lincoln had avoided expressing any preference. His reasons were that each of the three candidates was his friend, but significantly he wished to avoid stirring an acrimonious Chicago argument, which might have deprived him of his unanimous selection. A wise political decision. In 1862 Swett was nominated for Congress in a newly arranged district and lost to Democratic candidate Stuart, Lincoln's first law partner and former congressman from a part of the new district, as a

continued on page 6

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Member News

It is with great sadness to learn of the passing of several beloved members of the Association.

The Reverend Lee Morehead was one of the most energetic and enthusiastic students in the Lincoln field. He sponsored an annual tour of the Lincoln sites, bringing a busload of

numerous articles and the 1976 best-selling book, *The Homosexual Matrix*. He completed a manuscript exploring Lincoln's sexuality before his death.

Charles Becker, husband of Molly Becker, died after a long illness. Those in Springfield associate Charles with The Franklin Life Insurance Company,



IHPA Educational Services Coordinator Keith Sculle presents the Abraham Lincoln Association Award to Priyanka Chaudhary during the Illinois History Exposition on May 1.

interested people to Springfield for several days of lectures and touring the Lincoln sites.

Irving Dilliard served on the board of the directors for several decades. As his health declined and trips to Springfield became difficult, the board voted to make Dilliard a "director emeritus." Known for his work in the newspaper field, especially with the *St. Louis Post Dispatch*, Dilliard loved people, loved history, and worked to better the shortcomings of society.

Dr. C. A. Tripp passed away after a long bout with cancer. After working with Alfred Kinsey, Tripp established himself as a leading scholarly sex researcher with the publication of

now American General. He loved to hunt, especially big game.

Our condolences go out to the all of the families and friends.

Two Abraham Lincoln Association Student Awards were presented at the May 1 Illinois History Day competitions. Roger Waite, a freshman at Lincoln Park High School, Chicago, was awarded \$500 for his essay, "Civil War Censorship and the Suppression of the Chicago Times." Priyanka Chaudhary, an eighth grader at Lincoln Magnet School, Springfield, also received \$500 for her essay "Lincoln's Changing Views on Slavery." The essays will appear in future issues of the newsletter and on the ALA Web site.

Hollywood Fools Some of the People Some of the Time Lincoln Never Said That

By Thomas F. Schwartz

Some of the most widely distributed spurious Lincoln utterances came out of Hollywood. In one instance, the screenwriter wrote a catchy line that needed to be attributed to a credible historical figure. In the second instance, the script called for Abraham Lincoln to represent the embodiment of all that is good and righteous so that an alien creature named Yarnek could learn that good conquers evil. In both cases, Lincoln's words were created by a screenwriter, not Lincoln himself.

Those of us who grew up during the 1950s and 1960s remember the child stars used by the Walt Disney studios. Perhaps the most memorable was Hayley Mills. In the movie *Pollyanna*, Mills plays an unflappable optimist who is able to win over an entire community to her rosy world view. The line that was used to emphasize the positive was a quote attributed to Abraham Lincoln: "When you look for the bad in mankind expecting the worse, you surely will." Members of the cast were taken with the Lincoln quote and a Disney product line of *Pollyanna* lockets could be bought with these wise words engraved inside. The quote is found on many Web sites carrying with it the attribution to Abraham Lincoln. It was only with the re-release of the film on DVD that the director and screenwriter David Swift admitted that he, not Lincoln, wrote that phrase. Indeed, Lincoln never said it. It was all a dramatic device required of the script.

Another example of Hollywood's creative use of Lincoln involves a quote that is frequently found on T-shirts: "There's no honorable way to kill, no gentle way to destroy. There is nothing good in war except its ending." A nice sentiment used most recently in the anti-Iraq war demon-

strations by peace activists. But did Lincoln really say it? Well, an actor playing Lincoln said it in a *Star Trek* episode but you won't find it in the *Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*.

The quote came from the *Star Trek* episode, "The Savage Curtain," that aired on March 7, 1969, and can be seen in reruns on cable channels or purchased on video tape or DVD. In 1972 Bantam Books serialized the screenplays in book form. *The Savage Curtain* is number six in the series. Gene Roddenberry and Arthur Heinemann coauthored the teleplay. The setting is Stardate 5906.4. The figure of a seated Lincoln à la Daniel Chester French is floating on the monitor requesting to board the *Enterprise*. Viewers discover that Abraham Lincoln is Captain James T. Kirk's favorite historical figure. But Lincoln is merely a representation of the embodiment of good that is recreated for a rock creature, Yarnek, who is unfamiliar with the concepts of good and evil. Famous historical figures rep-

resenting each are recreated to have a battle so that Yarnek can witness which is the stronger emotion. "There's no honorable way to kill, no gentle way to destroy. There is nothing good in war except its ending," is uttered by the actor Lee Bergere, who plays Lincoln in the episode, shortly before the character is killed by a spear.

Hollywood is a potent force in our culture and indeed throughout the world because it understands how to capture our imaginations and communicate messages effectively. People should remember that the words that come out of the mouths of screen characters—even characters based upon historical figures—are most likely the words of a screenwriter, not the historical figure. David Letterman always reminds his viewers, "It's only television," warning them about taking the medium too literally or seriously. We should apply Letterman's quip to Hollywood as well, especially when it comes to Lincoln utterances. After all, it's only Hollywood.

February 12, 2004 Abraham Lincoln Symposium/Banquet

The theme for the 2004 Abraham Lincoln symposium is "Abraham Lincoln and the Party System." Speakers include Mark E. Neely, Jr., McCabe Greer Professor in the American Civil War Era at Penn State University, Michael F. Holt, Williams Professor at the University of Virginia, and Mark Voss-Hubbard of Eastern Illinois University with comments by Graham Peck of St. Xavier College.

Martin Marty, Fairfax Cone Dis-

tinguished Professor at the University of Chicago Divinity School, will be the banquet speaker. Author of over fifty books, the most recent being *Visions of Utopia* (2003) with Edward Rothstein and Herbert Muschamp, Marty is one of the most thoughtful individuals commenting on modern society. He has been awarded sixty-seven honorary doctorates and received numerous awards including the National Humanities Medal and the National Book Award.

LaWanda Cox A Legacy of Scholarship

By Joseph E. Garrera

With the large volume of new Lincoln books published each year it has become common to overlook the enduring works previously published.

One noted example of important scholarship *Lincoln and Black Freedom: A Study in Presidential Leadership* (University of South Carolina Press, 1981) by LaWanda Cox ranks as a seminal achievement for the student of Lincoln studies.



In this room LaWanda Cox wrote many of her most important works, including Lincoln and Black Freedom. Note the rotary dial telephone. The instrument with the screen is not a computer, but a print enlarger for the visually impaired.

In April of 2001 I met with Professor Cox in her New York City residence that overlooks Central Park. When I confirmed the meeting, which for the record was April 4, 2001, Cox requested that I not be tardy, declaring, “I’m a stickler for punctuality.” Our meeting was set for 1 P.M. so I asked if I could bring anything. “Well don’t be late and, if possible, bring a good bottle of bourbon.”

It was a bright spring afternoon in

New York when I arrived. Amazingly friendly, she eagerly ushered me in with a stern word of caution, “If you’re here to pick my brain, forget it!” Then she asked, “Do you remember, use it or lose it? Well I haven’t been doing anything on Lincoln or black freedom for years, so I have nothing to tell you.”

I explained how much I valued her book, *Lincoln and Black Freedom*, which towers above so many others, and that it represents an enduring achievement. “You mean my book is

always been.” There they were, her reference books, everything from the 1953 collected works to reprints of noted diaries, journals, and reference sources that had previously served as a foundation for one of the most important Lincoln books ever published. For years they had occupied the exact same positions in her study—many yellowed with age and faded spines.

I asked if I could take her photograph. “What, photograph me? I’m too old to photograph,” said Cox. “But you can photograph this room where I wrote my books.” As we sat there sipping bourbon on that warm spring afternoon, I realized that I was visiting the sanctum where the intellectual dexterity of a great historian had been harnessed to the craft of scholarship.

Yet, it disappointed me to realize that Cox believed that her book no longer provided value to the study of Abraham Lincoln. As we sat there she leaped up exclaiming, “Come with me. I want to show you something important.” Instantly we were heading to another room where she began sifting through several small boxes. “There it is! I want you to have this book. Have you read it?” The book was a fresh copy of *Freedom, Racism, and Reconstruction: Collected Writings of LaWanda Cox*, edited by Donald Nieman (University of Georgia Press, 1997). Sadly, I confessed that I was unaware of the 425-page book that she was so eager to share with me. Undaunted by these candid remarks, Cox immediately went to work tastefully inscribing to me the capstone of her career as a noted scholar.

Today, at the age of ninety-four, Cox has long since retired from Hunter College and the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. And while her memory is failing, her eyesight deteriorating, and her physical well being aging, the scholarship of LaWanda Cox endures as a standard to be measured against.

The Lincoln Statue at Richmond Another View

continued from page 1

war had tested whether Lincoln was truly president of the entire United States. The defeat of the Confederacy settled the point.

Additionally, he had strong family connections to Virginia and was in effect coming to his ancestral home. Lincoln's Virginia connections were substantial. In the heart of the Shenandoah Valley, both of his Lincoln grandparents and several generations of his family lay buried in the "Lincoln Cemetery." Their homes (one called the Lincoln Homestead), built by his cousins, were still occupied by Lincolns. His grandfather, a resident of Rockingham County for about fifteen years, had married a local resident and there the president's father, Thomas, was born.

Lincoln was aware of his Virginia roots. In 1848, while in Congress, he wrote to a Lincoln cousin in Rockingham County to find out more about his Virginia family. He acknowledged that he was a descendant of Virginians.

Like so many other American families the Lincolns were also torn by the war. Some of his cousins, bearing the family name, fought for the Confederacy. One cousin, whose barn was burned by General Philip Sheridan's troops, expressed bitterness about his cousin in the White House. His Virginia cousins, further reflecting the irony of the time, owned slaves, two of whom are buried in the Lincoln cemetery.

Lincoln then was entitled to be in Richmond both as the President of the United States and to visit his ancestral home.

While the lack of hospitality of white Richmonders in April 1865 may be understandable, the hostile reaction of some would-be claimants to the Lost Cause heritage is neither understandable nor acceptable. In early April of this year, in a sun-drenched grassy field with the modern skyline of Richmond looming in the back-

ground, at the dedication of a Lincoln statue, some claiming historical kinship to one as courteous and noble as Robert E. Lee protested, waved Confederate battle flags, shouted, whistled and jeered, trying to compete with the ceremony to dedicate the Lincoln statue. It was an embarrassment. Though claiming to affirm the values of Lee and the Lost Cause, engaging in such rude and coarse conduct during a ceremony at which three former Virginia governors, a congressman, the city's mayor and other public officials were participants was simply bad manners and utterly incompatible with Lee-like virtue. More than embarrassing was the insensitivity of those protesting in the name of Confederate Heritage, reminding African Americans present of an earlier time—not sufficiently distant—when "Heritage People" showed up at the home of their parents and grandparents to terrify and persecute them with grotesque burning crosses.

These Heritage claimants may not wear sheets and burn crosses but their rhetoric and behavior have some of the same vulgarity and crudeness. Some of the rhetoric is simply silly. The claim that Lincoln was acting as a vile conqueror gloating and daring to sit at the desk of Jefferson Davis is really amusing. Lincoln came about as simply and humbly as one could come—at the end of the trip, he was in a rowboat with no entourage, no band, no victorious march, and in the company of his young son. Hardly Napoleonic!

Those of us from the Old Confederacy (I have lived my entire life in Virginia; my family had been here over two hundred years) need to put an end to the nonsense that we were victims of Lincoln. Before Lincoln was even inaugurated, most of the Confederate states withdrew from the Union; the Confederacy seized federal property, arsenals, and supplies; the Confederate government affirmed the morality and legality of owning other humans. To be blunt, we

were wrong!

In more recent times, some from our region who now claim the Stars and Bars to be "Heritage not Hate" stood by (if not actually compliant) while some of our fellow citizens intimidated, assaulted, even killed African Americans and civil rights workers under the waving Stars and Bars. By our moral passivity, if not outright complicity, we forfeited any claim of heritage. It passed over to the racists and hate groups.

So, 140 years later, as a Virginian who celebrates the Union that is America, who renounces the legacy of slavery, who celebrates the Union and who sees Lincoln as our greatest president, on behalf of almost all Virginians, I say, "Welcome to Richmond, Mr. Lincoln."

President's Column

continued from page 2

result of the unpopularity of the just-announced preliminary Emancipation Proclamation in addition to the absence of thousands of heavily Republican troops. It was Swett's last attempt for public office. Swett never publicly complained of the oversight.

Davis served as executor of Lincoln's estate and spent almost fifteen years on the Supreme Court. In 1872 he made a bid for the presidency as a Liberal Republican with Swett and Fell serving as his campaign managers. His effort was thwarted by five newspaper editors, and the convention chose Greeley, who was no match for President Ulysses S. Grant. The 1876 election controversy over the Rutherford B. Hayes-Samuel Tilden contest provided an opportunity for Davis to

continued on next page

be the deciding vote on the Electoral Commission set up by Congress to resolve the question, but he declined. Back in Illinois the legislature was struggling to elect a United States senator, and on the fortieth ballot, with total support by every Democrat and no Republicans, Davis was selected. Davis recommended that Robert Todd Lincoln be appointed as Secretary of War by President James Garfield in 1877, which he did. After Garfield's assassination, the evenly divided Senate had difficulty selecting new leadership, and this time, Davis was elected president *pro tem* by the Republicans. As next in line for the presidency, Davis served out his six-year term using the title vice president until 1883. When he died three years later, Swett gave the eulogy before the Illinois Bar Association.

Swett moved from Bloomington to Chicago shortly after Lincoln's assassination and spent the last quarter century of his law practice there. He was one of the founders of the Chicago Bar Association and gained a reputation as a criminal defense attorney, originally set in motion by winning a case in Bloomington in 1857 against Lincoln as prosecutor, although his principal practice was in civil cases, especially for insurance companies. The *Chicago Times* credited him with the defense of thirty-three alleged murderers and thirty-one verdicts for acquittal. He practiced fre-

quently in the Illinois Supreme Court and the federal courts and carried two appeals to the United States Supreme Court. He was Robert Lincoln's attorney in the insanity trial of Mary Lincoln and also arranged for her release a year later. His was the right blend of courage and audacity to carry the 1887 appeal of the Haymarket anarchists to the Illinois Supreme Court along with the trial attorney Captain William Black. That same year he made the principal dedicatory speech for the Saint Gaudens statue of Lincoln and he gave his last Lincoln lecture two months before he died in 1889. His last political role occurred a year before when he nominated Federal Circuit Judge Walter Q. Gresham for president at the 1888 Republican National Convention. Gresham lost on the eighth ballot to Benjamin Harrison.

The "Great Triumvirate" of the Eighth Circuit was joined again in the 1880s, at least through the sculptor's hands of Leonard Volk. Lincoln was cast in plaster even before he was nominated for the presidency in 1860. Later this bust became a popular image of Lincoln as many copies were made in stone and bronze by Volk and his copiers. When Davis died in 1886 Swett obtained the cooperation of the Davis family for Volk to make a death mask of him. This became the basis of a marble bust sponsored by twelve friends and family members for the

State of Illinois, donated in an early 1889 ceremony in the state capitol by Swett and received by Governor Richard Oglesby. Late in 1886 Swett sat for his own bust to be made by Volk. His widow donated it to the Art Institute of Chicago in 1901, which later deaccessioned it, perhaps because Volk's work was not well regarded by artists of the time. Subsequently, she gave it to the Chicago Historical Society to be "among his friends" in its gallery of prominent Chicagoans, where, ironically, it can no longer be found. Does this nugatory result, together with his prior disappointments, deny poor Swett, who worked so willingly for the benefit of his two mentors, his place in the pantheon of the Eighth Circuit?

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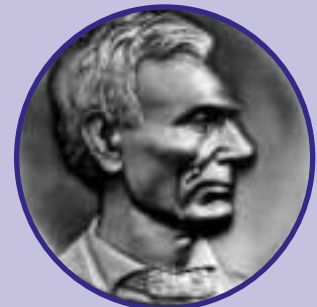
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A Recommendation and a Rejection

By Thomas F. Schwartz

As summer begins, many teenagers continue to scramble for employment. While the job market continues to be tight, it may be of some consolation that nineteen-year-old William H. Grigsby of Missouri tried and failed to find a position with family friend Richard Yates, who later became governor of Illinois. In this newly acquired letter by the Henry Horner Lincoln Collection at the Illinois State Historical Library, Yates indicates his reasons for not being able to accommodate Grigsby. He does, however, encourage Grigsby to write to the firm of Lincoln and Herndon to pursue his interest in studying law. In a four-page letter to Lincoln, Grigsby ignores his early claim to "tell my story as plain & simple terms as possible," seeking to ingratiate himself with the Springfield attorney. Lincoln's reply is no more satisfying than Yates's letter. In it, Lincoln encourages Grigsby to "get the books, sit down anywhere, and go to reading for yourself." No doubt, it was a long, hot summer for Grigsby.

Richard Yates to
William H. Grigsby

Jacksonville, July 7th, 1858

Wm H. Grigsby, Esq.

Dear Sir:

Yours of July 5, 1858 is recd. I regret that I am not in a situation to be of any service to you at the present time. I have abandoned the practice of the law & parted with my Library, and do not expect ever to resume the practice again.

In our Railroad business there is no place we can give you. I suppose we have had to reject at least 20 worthy applicants for situations among them some near relatives of my own.

I regret that I cannot be of service to you for I like your letter & style, and your good determination, and think I see in them the elements of success.

The office which I could recommend to you to try and get in as in my opinion preferable to any other in the State is that of Lincoln & Herndon in Springfield. They are both in full practice and both at the head of the bar in

the State. What will be your chance with them I don't know, but you might try.

Wishing you all success and prosperity.

I am

Yours very Resp'l'y,
Richd. Yates.

Abraham Lincoln to
William H. Grigsby

Wm. H. Grigsby, Esq. Springfield
My dear Sir: Aug: 3. 1858

Yours of the 14th July, desiring a situation in my law office, was received several days ago. My partner, Mr. Herndon, controls our office in this respect, and I have known of his declining at least a dozen applicants like yours within the last three months.

If you wish to be a lawyer, attach no consequence to the place you are in, or the person you are with; but get the books, sit down anywhere, and go to reading for yourself. That will make a lawyer of you quicker than any other way. Yours Respectfully,

A. Lincoln

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