Another Curiosity from the Henry Horner Lincoln Collection

By Kim Bauer

As the curator for the Henry Horner Lincoln Collection it is part of my job to oversee the maintenance of the various artifacts. Recently I was going through boxes in order to prepare for the move of the collection to the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library when I was struck by an object. It was a box, but not an ordinary one. Upon further inspection I realized that we had an item from a toy collector’s dream. Its title is “The Myriopticon, A Historical Panorama of the Rebellion.” The maker is the standard of toymakers, Milton Bradley. The date of original manufacture seems to be 1868. Inside the box is a long scroll that turns by wooden dowels/paddles. The scroll contains images of the Civil War taken from the pages of Harper’s Weekly. Such familiar war scenes as the “firing on Fort Sumter” and “The Sharp-shooter” by Thomas Nast grace the scroll’s pages. Oddly enough, there are no scenes that depict individuals. For example, there are no illustrations of Abraham Lincoln, Robert E. Lee, or any of the great military or civilian leaders of the conflict. While the scenes themselves tend to rely more toward the Union side of the war, one can only surmise that Milton Bradley, like any good businessman, did not want to limit sales to any one region of the country by possibly offending another region. Remember, the manufacturer’s date was 1868.

The object was both history lesson and educational narrative for the children. One can just imagine children scrolling through the scenes and narrating them to their proud parents.

Indeed, the box itself is designed to look like an Elizabethan stage. This would be in keeping with Milton Bradley’s philosophy: He believed that games should not only entertain but also be educational. An early advocate of the American Kindergarten movement, Bradley also published the first American book on the subject, Paradise of Childhood. 1

This toy is just one of a number located in the Horner Collection. Included in the collection are puzzles, a set of original Lincoln Logs, dolls, models, and games, including one of the most unusual games concerning Abraham Lincoln known to exist, Parlor Monuments to the Illustrious Dead. 4 It is the intention to eventually have an exhibit at the new Abraham Presidential Library and Museum to showcase some of these most unusual toys and games that were manufactured in response to the period of the Civil War and to Abraham Lincoln. Until then, please enjoy what the wonders of the new technology can afford and view the aforementioned Websites, preferably with a child. After all, Milton Bradley would have wanted it that way.

Owing to a dearth of toy-making reference works at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, the author has relied on online sources. Please see The United States Civil War Center at www.cwc.lsu.edu for the date of manufacture. To find the date, click on the Website and go to the Search page. Type in the term Myriopticon and it will take you to the relevant page.

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President’s Column

By Robert S. Eckley

Lincoln’s interests in science and technology went far beyond his early struggles with Euclid and applied geometry, as many scholars have noted in a passing way. They include persistent curiosity about astronomy, his still-born patent (the only one among our forty-three presidents), recurring explorations of agricultural equipment and modes of transportation evidenced in several of his cases as well as in the testimony of friends, the lecture on “Discoveries and Inventions,” and a plethora of sorties into military weapons during the Civil War, from guns to the USS Monitor.

An astronomer recently made a case for Lincoln witnessing an especially bright Leonid meteor shower, which recurs every thirty-three years, when he was a young man in New Salem in 1833. This was based on a story he told while in Washington many years later and described by Walt Whitman. A more certain fascination with Donati’s comet occurred on September 14, 1858, the night before his Jonesboro debate with Stephen A. Douglas, and described by Walt Whitman. A 1833. This was based on a story he told was a young man in New Salem in 1833. This was based on a story he told while in Washington many years later and described by Walt Whitman. A more certain fascination with Donati’s comet occurred on September 14, 1858, the night before his Jonesboro debate with Stephen A. Douglas, and described by Horace White, which Horace White reported in the Chicago Tribune, which Horace White reported in the debate with Stephen A. Douglas, 1858, the night before his Jonesboro comet occurred on September 14, and described by Walt Whitman. A 1833. This was based on a story he told while in Washington many years later and described by Walt Whitman. A more certain fascination with Donati’s comet occurred on September 14, 1858, the night before his Jonesboro debate with Stephen A. Douglas, and described by Horace White, which Horace White reported in the Chicago Tribune: “Mr. Lincoln greatly admired this strange visitor, and he and I sat for an hour or more in front of the hotel looking at it.” Earlier that year he had won the acquittal of Duff Armstrong in what has been described as his most famous criminal case. In the trial he was able to discredit the testimony of the key witness, who said he had seen the slung-shot blow by moonlight. Lincoln showed with the help of an almanac that the moon already was down.

Lincoln’s patent, number 6469, stemmed from his early frustration in having a flat-boat hung up on a dam at New Salem, and his ingenuity in freeing it, which so impressed the locals that he returned to live there. While in Congress he saw another demonstration of freeing a vessel run aground in shallow water in the Great Lakes and pursued the concept to an application in early 1849. While granted the patent, his idea lacked practicality and failed to attract interest for that reason.

His interest in mechanical inventions was extensive as shown in the McCormick v. Manny patent violation case in 1855. Lincoln was retained by Manny & Co. and prepared a brief, but was frozen out of the trial in Cincinnati by Manny’s eastern attorneys, including his future secretary of war, Edwin Stanton. Another illustration involves the Effie Afton case (Hurd v. Rock Island Bridge Co.) in which the steamboat Effie Afton rammed into the piers of the railroad bridge across the Mississippi River. Lincoln was defending the Rock Island Railroad and won dismissal of the case by the judge based on the lack of care exercised by the river pilot and the permanent importance of bridges for transportation to the west.

Lincoln’s most prodigious effort in science and technology found expression in his lecture on “Discoveries and Inventions” delivered in 1858 and 1859 in Bloomington, Jacksonville, and Springfield, and cancelled on a second Bloomington appearance for lack of interest. He must have sensed its shortcomings because he turned down other invitations to present this ranging panorama from Genesis to the wheel, language, writing, printing, patents, and steam power—Whiggery writ throughout history. It lacked the mastery and expression of his political utterances despite his efforts over more than a year. The significant point is in what he tried to do in casting a sweeping net over thousands of years of human development. The manuscript was left in Springfield along with others with the widow, Elizabeth (Aunt Lizzie) Todd Grimsley, when Lincoln departed for Washington. Somehow the fore and aft pages became separated when it was later sold. Subsequently, The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln identified these as two different lectures. This mistake was identified by Wayne Temple in 1982 and had been inferred as far back as William Herndon’s critical reference to the lecture. Nevertheless, a collection of Herndon’s sources in 1998 and an eminent Lincoln biography published the following year also carried the bifurcation, although David Donald got it right in his 1995 biography.

In a sense, all of these activities provided a prelude to the technology questions Lincoln would face as president. Especially frustrating was his relationship with stubborn Brigadier General James W. Ripley, Army Chief of Ordnance from April 1861 until he was retired in September 1863. He resisted breech loading, if not new weapons in general. A notion of Lincoln’s involvement in military ordnance is gained by the more than one hundred entries under “Ordnance” in Lincoln Day by Day. Fortunately, we have the doctoral dissertation that became an excellent book by Robert Bruce in 1956, Lincoln and the Tools of War, which has been recognized as a reliable and highly readable chronicle of this aspect of Lincoln for almost fifty years. Shortly after his inauguration, Lincoln struck up a friendship with Commander John Dahlgren, chief ordnance officer at the Washington Navy Yard, who accompanied him on May 9 to watch a demonstration of the eleven-inch Dahlgren gun. Similarly, Lincoln also developed respect for Colonel George Ramsay at the Washington Arsenal and made many visits there. Successful breech loading rifles had been developed well before the Civil War, but Army Ordnance people resisted their adoption because of their attachment to muzzle loaders. In continued on page 7
Did Lincoln Do the Hustle?
Lincoln Never Said That

By Thomas F. Schwartz

As we get closer to the magic date of February 12, 2009, publishers are gearing up with a regular stream of new books on all facets of the Lincoln story. Richard Carwardine provides a European perspective on Lincoln’s life in his one volume biography, Lincoln: Profiles in Power. Daniel Faber explores the many constitutional issues confronting the Sixteenth President in Lincoln’s Constitution. Guy Fraker provides a colorful local study in his pamphlet-length, Lincoln in Bloomington. Finally, Matthew Pinsker provides the first study of Abraham Lincoln’s time spent at the Soldier’s Home, the forerunner to Camp Lincoln in Bloomington. Finally, Matthew Pinsker provides the first study of Abraham Lincoln’s time spent at the Soldier’s Home, the forerunner to Camp Lincoln in Bloomington. Finally, Matthew Pinsker provides the first study of Abraham Lincoln’s time spent at the Soldier’s Home, the forerunner to Camp Lincoln in Bloomington. 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Richard Carwardine, Lincoln: Profiles in Power
Retail: $16.95 ALA member price: $13.55

Daniel Faber, Lincoln’s Constitution
Retail: $27.50 ALA member price: $22.00

Guy Fraker, Lincoln in Bloomington
Retail: $5.00 ALA member price: $3.00

Matthew Pinsker, Lincoln’s Sanctuary
Retail: $30.00 ALA member price: $24.00

Shipping/handling costs: Pamphlet only (Fraker) - .75
Orders $14.00 to $30.00 - $5.00
$30.01 to $70.00 - $7.50
U.S. dollars only
Albert Emile Bachelet and the Discovery of Lincoln Stereoscopic Images

By Thomas F. Schwartz

The stereopticon was the Lincoln-era version of the View Master, producing a three-dimensional effect from two-dimensional images. While several stereo cards of President Lincoln circulated in the late nineteenth century, it wasn't until well into the twentieth century that an electrical engineer with Bell Telephone Laboratories discovered that many more stereoscopic images existed in the National Archives.

Albert Emile Bachelet was born in Tacoma, Washington, on May 20, 1901. Having attended public schools, Bachelet took extension courses at Columbia University’s School of Engineering, providing him with the skills to assume a position as an electrical engineer at Western Electric, a division of Bell Telephone. Bachelet’s father was the well-known inventor, Emile Bachelet. A visionary who invented an electromagnetically levitated railway system, Emile held thirty-three patents for transmission circuitry and founded the Bachelet Magnetic Wave Company. Clearly, intellectual curiosity and inventiveness ran in the family, for Albert soon established his own expertise in long-distance telephone, radio broadcasting, television, and international satellite communication technologies. At the time of his 1998 death, Bachelet had been awarded thirty-six patents in these fields.

Bachelet’s interest in Lincoln stereoscopic images began as early as March 1944. It was at this time he began a correspondence with famed collector of Lincoln images Frederick Hill Merserve. At first Bachelet believed that all of the images were taken singly, but at short intervals to produce the small distortions required of a stereoscope. Later, he learned of the multilens cameras used by Mathew Brady and others. Convinced that many of Merserve’s images were stereoscopic, Bachelet then wrote to Josephine Cobb, who worked for Dallas Irving, Director of Photography at the National Archives. The Brady photographs, some five thousand, had been transferred to the Archives from the Signal Corps. Moreover, it was Cobb who identified the images of President Lincoln at the dedication of the Gettysburg National Cemetery among the National Archives materials. Cobb indicated in the initial correspondence: “Of the Lincoln negatives, twelve plates consist of two, three, or four simultaneous images but none are thought to be stereoscopic.” Bachelet obtained duplicate negatives of all the Brady Lincoln images in the National Archives and began a careful examination. The model shop at Bell Labs built a stereoscope to test Bachelet’s theory.

Bachelet needed to know if the multilens cameras used by Brady were to create a stereo effect or merely to facilitate the rapid production of commercial images. By June 10, 1947, Bachelet was convinced that “In the case of Brady’s eight lens camera, any two adjacent pictures in either horizontal row constitute a stereo pair of having all of the stereoscopic visual properties of a stereo pair taken with the conventional two lens camera.” He confidently concluded “Therefore, it can be incontrovertibly shown that these pictures of Lincoln form stereoscopic pairs, and that when viewed by lenses of proper focal length they will produce his image in full natural size and at the correct natural distance.”

Once Bachelet was certain of his discovery, he spent several years refining the results. He revealed his finding to a larger audience at the New York Stereo Club on March 22, 1955, and in articles published in the New York World-Telegram and Sun on February 9, 1956. By this time, other researchers were touting similar findings although it is unclear to what extent they relied on the initial findings of Bachelet. It is clear, however, that Bachelet was the first to discover the technique among the archive materials.

The Illinois State Historical Library was fortunate in receiving all of Albert Emile Bachelet’s research notes, negatives, and his stereoscope through the generosity of his widow, Janet Bower Bachelet. This collection will serve as an invaluable resource in studying photographic methods of the Lincoln era.
Using the Lincoln Symposium In the Classroom

By John Glen

Those of us in the education field are always looking for unique ways in which to “connect” our students to the topic. On-location learning is certainly nothing new, but clearly does accomplish this goal. Since Principia College, where I teach American history, is only about an hour-and-a-half by van from Springfield, I try to bring my Civil War class on an annual pilgrimage to the Illinois capital—on February 12, whenever possible.

Lincoln’s birthday is a special day in Springfield. On that day the Abraham Lincoln Association, the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency, and the Illinois State Historical Library, all working in concert, bring together some of the country’s foremost experts on the life of America’s sixteenth president. Past presenters have included Admiral William Crowe, David Blight, Brian Dirck, Kent Gramm, Allen Guelzo, Lerone Bennet, Brooks Simpson, Vibert White, Hans Trefousse, Bruce Tap, Byron Andreasen, Michael Beschloss, John Patrick Diggins, Barry Schwartz, Stewart Winger, John Ashworth, and Doris Kearns Goodwin, to name but a few.

Before we come to Springfield to hear from the distinguished panel, I send an e-mail to Tom Schwartz, the Illinois State Historian, to ask him for the e-mail addresses of the speakers. I then contact them to ask for suggestions for questions to further engage my students. I have gotten excellent topics for discussion from the participants. For example, Professor Brooks Simpson suggested that his comments and Lerone Benner’s would be at odds regarding Lincoln’s role in emancipation. Allen Guelzo thought that a discussion question regarding what personal or political reasons African Americans might have for attaching themselves to the memory of Lincoln, and whether or not Lincoln served as a role model for all races. Byron Andreasen’s talk was on the subject of religion becoming politicized during the Civil War, and his questions for my class dealt with the issue of religion and politics and what can morally justify a decision to go to war. Barry Schwartz wanted my students to consider Lincoln’s stature and reputation at the millennium. I then prepare a hand out of two or three questions from each speaker for the students to ponder and respond with a paragraph or two for our next class meeting.

We try to arrive in Springfield before 10 a.m. I have called the National Park Service in advance and arranged a special tour of the Lincoln home at Eighth and Jackson streets. They have been quite accommodating, even though one might expect them to be especially busy that day. After the Lincoln home tour we get the tour of the Lincoln-Herndon Law Offices. With luck and weather cooperation we can finish the two tours by noon when I turn the students loose for lunch. There are several fine places to have a meal near the Old State Capitol, including the infamous fast-food outlets. We reconvene in the balcony of the Old State Capitol just before 1 p.m., when the talks begin.

One of the requirements for the class is a twelve hundred-word thesis paper that has as its focus a single character trait of Lincoln’s. I try to make the due date for the essay to be the Monday following our trip to Springfield, which gives them the weekend to bring their thoughts together. By then they have finished either Mark Neely’s Last Best Hope of Earth, or Bill Gienapp’s Abraham Lincoln and Civil War America (the book I’m currently using), as well as twenty-odd chapters of James McPherson’s Battle Cry of Freedom, and have a semisolid grasp of the Lincoln basics. They have also read and written a review of The Killer Angels. Reading a Lincoln biography, writing their paper, the visit to Lincoln’s home and the law offices, the ambience of the Old Capitol, and listening to and responding in writing and orally to the talks all seem to help them “get right with Lincoln.” While the entire program is not without its challenges, I am convinced that our ability to be physically present at some of the places Lincoln lived and worked, as well as hearing acknowledged Lincoln experts’ views increase my students’ connection with our Sixteenth President, as well as my own.

Member News

Congratulations to former Association president Dan Bannister and Cornelia Dennis on their recent marriage. Our best wishes to the happy couple.

Professor Vibert White has assumed a new position on the faculty of University of Central Florida, leaving the University of Illinois at Springfield.

Gerald Prokopowicz is now part of the history faculty at East Carolina State University.

David Herbert Donald will have a new book out in November entitled “We are Lincoln Men”: Abraham Lincoln’s and His Friends exploring Lincoln’s friendships.

Our condolences go out to the family of William E. Keller. Bill held various positions at the Illinois State Historical Library and was a longtime supporter of the Association. He died after a long bout with cancer.
An Interview with Professor Richard J. Carwardine

By Thomas F. Schwartz

The Abraham Lincoln Association has a number of members who reside overseas. Richard J. Carwardine is Rhodes Professor of American History at Oxford University and a member of the ALA. After he published *Evangelicals and Politics in Antebellum America* (1993) he participated in the 1995 symposium on “Lincoln and American Religious Thought.” He heads the American Studies program at Oxford and has written an elegant and compelling biography of Abraham Lincoln and his use of power. The following exchange provides some insight into the project.

1. When did you first develop an interest for history? And why American Studies?

My father, who was a schoolmaster, and my early history teachers—to whom Lincoln is dedicated—were powerful influences, but only in my final year as an undergraduate at Oxford University, in the late 1960s, did I get the chance seriously to study the history of the United States. Don Fehrenbacher was the holder of the Harmsworth Professorship at the time, and he lectured on the course “Slavery and Secession,” which Allan Nevins had designed some years earlier. That introduced me to some of the great books in American history, including Fehrenbacher’s *Prelude to Greatness*, and thereafter I was hooked. I should add, too, that America held a natural fascination for anyone growing up, as I did, in the Welsh mining valleys, with their many transatlantic ties (I am descended from the family of the miners’ leader, John L. Lewis).

2. What led you to teach?

Inspirational teachers and a strong sense of the value of historical study. University teaching was the natural career path after I completed my graduate studies in Oxford and UC Berkeley.

3. How did you come to write a biography of Abraham Lincoln?

The idea was not mine. Two history editors at Longman suggested in the late 1980s that I write a compact political profile of Lincoln. Although there were then several large-scale biographies available, the only authoritative shorter study was Richard N. Current’s brilliant collection of essays, *The Lincoln Nobody Knows*. In fact, by the time I got down to working on my own book the wonderful renaissance in Lincoln scholarship of the 1990s was well underway. Perhaps this should have deterred me, but Lincoln proved too compelling a figure for me to want to give up the project.

4. What biographies of Abraham Lincoln have influenced you? Which biographies stand in your mind as being the most useful?

Nicolay and Hay’s ten-volume biography may be “court history,” but even so it remains impressive, enlightening, and indispensable. Like other readers, I have relished David H. Donald’s and Allen C. Guelzo’s marvellous recent biographies; I find myself more in sympathy with Guelzo’s understanding of Lincoln’s fatalism and “passivity” than with Donald’s. With respect to “usefulness,” Mark E. Neely’s and William E. Gienapp’s short lives provide the insights one would expect of two of the finest political historians of the Civil War era. Pride of place on my list of the best single-volume lives, however, goes to Benjamin P. Thomas’s remarkable *Abraham Lincoln*, still authoritative after half a century.

5. It must be difficult finding anything new to say about Abraham Lincoln, given the number of existing titles. How did you manage to do it?

I hope I *have* managed it! In part my concern has been to explore what I take to be Lincoln’s profoundly moral engagement with political power. Equally important, I have tried to look beyond Lincoln’s personal beliefs and qualities, placing him in his evolving political setting and exploring how he harnessed external sources of authority. In the world’s first mass democracy, success depended on the interplay of personal drive, the force of public opinion, and the mobilising power of the political party. One of Lincoln’s great achievements was to fathom the thinking of ordinary citizens and to reach out to them with uncommon assurance. Historians have often pointed to the skill with which Lincoln made himself indispensable to a range of conservative, moderate, and radical elements before and during the Civil War. Rather less well appreciated is his relationship with the most powerful of all the era’s subcultures, evangelical Protestantism. Alert to the power of religious opinion, Lincoln fused appeals to religious millennialism and Enlightenment rationalism. Lincoln did not subscribe to the orthodox...

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the summer of 1861, Lincoln and his secretary William Stoddard did their own comparative testing south of the Executive Mansion and then had Lieutenant Stephen Vincent Benet (the poet’s grandfather) try it out at West Point. General Ripley still resisted. Lincoln overruled him and ordered twenty-five thousand Marsh breechloaders on October 15. Before the end of 1861, Lincoln had ordered ten thousand Spencer seven-cartridge breechloader repeaters. Regrettably, these promising leads were not followed up aggressively, and as a result Bruce and some other historians believe the war was prolonged.

Lincoln’s attention included other weapons as well. His first discussion of three ironclad vessel plans, including the Monitor, which he heartily endorsed, occurred on September 10, 1861, production plans were approved less than a month later, and as we know, the encounter with the Confederate Merrimac took place in early March the following year. This was just in time to remove the latter vessel’s threat to Washington and George McClellan’s peninsular campaign. A month later he met and congratulated John Ericsson, one of its designers. Other ordnance projects attracting presidential attention included balloons, rockets, projectiles, explosives, flamethrowers, submarines, marine armor and mines, and especially machine guns. These were in addition to those mentioned earlier, including various types of artillery. The time and effort Lincoln expended in these directions was immense, particularly during the first half of the war. It could also be dangerous, as it was in November of 1862, when Lincoln, accompanied by Secretaries William Seward and Salmon Chase went to the Navy Yard to witness the test of the Hyde rocket, along with (now) Admiral Dahlgren. Instead of performing as expected, it blew up on launch, miraculously with no injuries.

Lincoln left one other legacy to future science that does not appear in the Lincoln literature (so far as I can ascertain). Recall that of the 620,000 lives lost on both sides in the Civil War, approximately two thirds to three quarters were due to disease rather than combat. The archives or tissue bank of the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology were created during the Civil War by an executive order of President Abraham Lincoln in the same decade that Louis Pasteur was establishing his critical research. Whatever role—and it would be insightful to know, that Lincoln played in issuing his order, proved to be prophetic.

Is it not time for a fresh look at the entirety of Lincoln’s interests in science and technology in order to form a more comprehensive picture of his curiosity, capabilities, and contributions in these arenas?

President’s Column

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

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

Railsplitter __________________ $35
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Web site: www.alincolnassoc.com
Christianity which underpinned the ethical stance of most Unionists, and which flourished especially in New England and its “Yankee” diaspora. But he proved able to use the power of that constituency to rally support behind his national vision and the war’s purposes.

It is worth stressing that historians have rarely given due attention to the Northern “home front,” though there are honourable exceptions and the general picture is now belatedly changing. I hope I have something new to say about how Lincoln worked (through his party, the army and the religious institutions) to sustain morale throughout the Union—an essential ingredient in the North’s ultimate victory in a protracted and gruelling conflict.

6. What do you hope the reading public will remember about this biography?

First and foremost, that it was enjoyable to read. Beyond that, I hope to have persuaded readers that Lincoln, in his encounter with slavery and secession, blended a breadth of moral vision with active, attentive, day-to-day political management; that his political career can only be understood by attention to his evolving and unorthodox religious ideas, and to his use of religion as a means of securing his political ends; that, though largely confined to the White House, he proved an effective and imaginative communicator; and that, though he made tactical mistakes, he got the strategic decisions right.

7. What is your next project?

I have an inaugural lecture to give in Oxford next year: Lincoln will be at the heart of it. But my main project now is a book on religion in the construction of the United States, from the Revolution to the Civil War.

Another Curiosity from the Henry Horner Lincoln Collection

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^For a wonderful viewing of all the scenes depicted in the game, please go to the Internet site at www.lib.virginia.edu and enter the term *Myriapton*. This will take you to the Paul Mellon exhibit, “Slavery and the Civil War.” Here you can view the entire scroll and the various images contained in the toy.

^For a good basic history on Milton Bradley, his company, and his philosophy about educational games, see www.quadrangle.org. The History Channel has further information concerning Milton Bradley at www.thehistorychannel.com. The printed work that was consulted for this article is, James J. Shea Jr., *The Milton Bradley Story* (New York: Newcomen Society in North America, 1973).

^For a wonderful article concerning this game as well as other related items, see Thomas F. Schwartz, “Grief, Souvenirs, and Enterprise Following Lincoln’s Assassination,” *Illinois Historical Journal* 83 (1990): 259–64.