



# FOR THE PEOPLE

A NEWSLETTER OF THE ABRAHAM LINCOLN ASSOCIATION

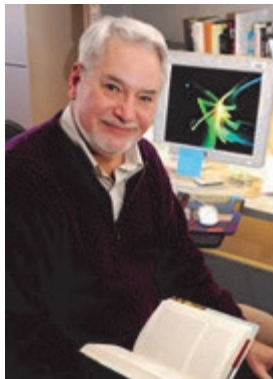
VOLUME 13 NUMBER 1

SPRING 2011

SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS

## “IT IS BEGUN!” McLEAN COUNTY REACTS TO FT. SUMTER AND PREPARES FOR CIVIL WAR

By Robert C. Bray  
R. Forest Colwell Professor of  
American Literature  
Illinois Wesleyan University



Within hours of learning, via telegraph, of the April 12, 1861, Confederate attack on Ft. Sumter, citizens of McLean County began planning for civil war. Some with a reluctance built of a deep understanding of what internecine conflict could do to a nation, but many more, perhaps most, with a sense that it was high time that a recalcitrant and now “rebel” South got punished. As the editor of the *Daily Pantagraph* exulted, “War is upon us at last!” What had been a protracted political and sectional dispute during the 1850s was suddenly a matter of southern treason, and no “Northern man will dare to stand up in our midst,” the April 13<sup>th</sup> editorial continued, “to palliate the hell-born treason of the Secessionists!” (DP 13 April 1861) In the weeks to come, more than one county citizen would find to his chagrin that the only really free speech left to him was to shout out in favor of the Union. No middle ground for discussion or debate was left: you were a patriot or you were a

traitor. Almost overnight, April 12-13, nearly everyone in Bloomington and the county became a Union man or pretended to while privately keeping his own counsel.

By the time church services ended on Sunday, April 14, the news had arrived, again by wire, of Sumter’s surrender. The very next day Abraham Lincoln issued his proclamation calling for 75,000 volunteers from across the north in order to suppress what he then and throughout the long Civil War called “the rebellion.” In Monday morning’s edition, the *Pantagraph* roared “to arms, to arms!!” from its mast head, and the call was taken up and amplified later that day, as “people instinctively met at the court house square,” where a distinguished veteran of the Mexican War, William H. Harvey, stuck his head out of the “south window in the west side of the court house” and called for recruits and declared he would lead them! One hundred and thirteen “young men pressed forward and signed their names to the enlistment papers,” a number that oversubscribed the useable number for an infantry company by nearly forty men. The surplus would be sent back home from training in Springfield; the rest would become Company K of the Eighth Illinois Infantry regiment (WRMC 32-3), ninety-day soldiers in what all hoped would be a short war, sweet for the Union.

By Tuesday, April 16, the palpable excitement generated by the fall of Ft. Sumter and Lincoln’s call for troops had intensified. On short notice there convened a “monster meeting” at Bloomington’s Phoenix Hall, “a most harmonious, enthusiastic and glorious

demonstration” that made manifest the fusion of old political differences into fervid Unionism. Of course there were speeches, from Democrats and Republicans alike, all punctuated by “tremendous cheers” from the overwrought audience; and of course there was patriotic music, including a version of “The American Eagle” from “Mr. and Mrs. Pearce,” the first stanza of which went like this:

*I build my nest on the mountain’s crest,  
Where the wild winds rock my eaglets to rest,  
Where the lightnings flash and the thunders crash,  
And the roaring torrents foam and dash!  
For my spirit free henceforth shall be  
A type for the sons of LIBERTY.*

But the musical highlight of the meeting must have been (ironically enough) “The Marseillaise,” sung by “Mr. Messer in splendid style, and chorused with tremendous effect by the audience.” (DP 17, 18 and 20 April 1861)

After the speeches and the prayers and the music, as was common at such public meetings, the resolutions committee of five (one of its members being Kersy Fell) reported just what the crowd expected them to: resolved, that the meeting thereby declared its allegiance to the United States government and pledged its support to restoring the Union. Now all that was needed was to get more young men of McLean County to enlist and do the fighting. At first, this posed no problem; to the contrary, far more men wanted to go to war than the state could manage. As noted

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above, what would soon be K Co. over-filled its roster in a matter of minutes and only one week later was formally mustered in Springfield and training begun. Another two local companies followed close on. In addition, Bloomington's German community desired a unit of its own, with the Irish right behind (DP 22 and 23 April 1861). The trouble, however, was that Illinois had a quota of six regiments (6,000 troops) in the original call (ICW 1; DP 18 April 1861), and though by the autumn of 1861, following disastrous Federal defeats at Bull Run and Wilson's Creek, many more Illinois regiments would be authorized by Lincoln and Illinois governor Richard Yates, in the war-fevered spring of the year there simply wasn't room in a mere six regiments for all those who were hot to join up (both the German and the Irish companies were soon rejected by the state).

But those who did get in were feted handsomely by their hometown. On Sunday, April 23, as the men of Captain Harvey's Co. K prepared to leave by rail for Springfield, they paraded around the courthouse square, listened to a speech from Leonard Swett (urging the immediate enrollment of another company, which happened on the spot), were regaled by music from several bands, had dinner and marched off to the Western depot, "escorted. . . by the new company. . . by the German company. . . by the two fire companies in uniform. . . and by an immense concourse of citizens." Among these were "numerous females who had accompanied their loved ones thus far on the way." Tears flowed from both the departing and the remaining: "then the whistle sounded, the cannon roared, the bands played, and amidst a tempest of hurrahs from the vast crowd, the vanguard of McLean's little army was fairly 'off to the wars'" (DP 23 April 1861). Little did they know. Nearly a year later, April 6, 1862, they would be under severe Confederate fire at Shiloh, several Co. K soldiers not surviving the first day of that "sanguinary affair" (WRMC 36).

The Protestant churches of McLean County actively supported the call to war. One of Bloomington's best-known ministers, the Rev. A. Eddy, twice gave a "war sermon" during the first flush of patriotism. In effect, he was a biddable sky-pilot preaching a crusade against heterodox rebellion. On

Sunday evening, April 21, to an overflow crowd of soldiers at Phoenix Hall (those who couldn't get admittance were preached to outside by A. Eddy's brother, H. J. Eddy), he assured the new troops that some wars were indeed justified—certainly including this one!—and that they might march off to battle confident that their work was ordained of God: "He closed with a touching exhortation to the company of volunteers, urging them to 'quit themselves like men,' but not to lose the Christian in the soldier" (DP 23 April 1861). They were Christians who had become soldiers: so onward!

In the turmoil of activity during this first month of war enthusiasm, daily life of course went on more or less as usual, punctuated by rallies and rumors and loud declarations of intent to put the rebellion down. A certain haberdasher by the name of Arnold, proprietor of the Baltimore Clothing Store just east of Thompson's drug store, many days ran an advertisement in the *Daily Pantagraph*, under the "Local Notices" heading. These ads, like feuilletons, presumably from the pen of Mr. Arnold himself, were often witty and literary, sometimes sentimental and poetic, and always aimed at getting custom for his clothes. Pleasant enough for ordinary times, yet on the occasion of Ft. Sumter the writer badly misjudged the hour. His April 15, 1861, effusion needs to be quoted freely if we are to see how egregiously the author erred. Under the lead "THE UNION.—Time cures all things," the sermonette set forth the proposition that "secession humbugs" have come on the scene but shall quickly be dispatched, as "the heart of the people is sound to the core" and the Union "disturbed but not demented." He continued with a little lesson to make the point:

*When, in the days of Nehemiah, the foundation of the second temple was laid on a basis smaller than the one on which the Temple of Solomon rested, the young shouted for joy, but the aged wept. The young had no old and hallowed remembrances, and only looked at the present and the future of the nation, but the old wept at the prostrate condition of their country, as seen in the reduced dimensions and beggarly magnificence of the temple to be built on the ruins of the Solomonian structure.*

Thus, the figure and the exemplum. Now followed the monitory application: "The young and the inexperienced in the South are now rejoicing at the temple of Southern

frenzy to be erected in Montgomery." What fools they! But "the young men of the North, particularly around Bloomington," are much wiser and have something more substantial to rejoice over: that there was now a place in town "where good, cheap and fashionable clothing could be found, and that place is Arnold's Baltimore Clothing Store. . ." (DP 15 April 1861)! (And, once they were stylishly attired, the beaux of Bloomington might step around to Maxwell & Getty's Book Store, where was available for their purchase and perusal *United States Infantry Tactics*—only \$1.25, and no doubt good reading for a nap whilst on the train to Camp Butler in Springfield [DP 27 May 1861])

Other local belles-letttrists filled the *Pantagraph's* columns with hortatory poems and short meditations on the dire times. A writer with the solid initials "O.A.K." contributed "A Call to Arms," a resounding march that began, "Ho! ring the bells for war's alarm/ And let the peal be loud and long; Call from the workshop and the farm/ Proud Freedom's sons, the bold and strong." The ordinary men of McLean County—from down on the farm and out in the shops—were evidently to do the fighting, while the community's "rich men" ought to bring their gold instead of their bodies to the cause (later in the war this would be called *hiring a substitute*), while the "old," like the Chorus of Elders in *Agamemnon*, remained at home to provide wise counsel to the young soldiers who were no longer there. And what of the women?

*O, Northern matron, strong of heart,  
Keep not your husband from the field!  
O, mother, let your son depart,  
For God will be to him a shield!  
O, maiden, bid your lover prove,  
By daring deeds, how true his love!*  
(DP 24 April 1861)

This is in fact what the women of McLean County did. Formal "flag presentations," made by "ladies" to men of the fast-forming companies and regiments, soon became notable ceremonial events in the area. The flags themselves were beautifully hand-sewn "Stars and Stripes"—with every state represented with a star, since this was a rebellion against the constituted Union—and these were proffered with great pomp and circumstance: music and oratory and full-dress parade for the soldiers. The

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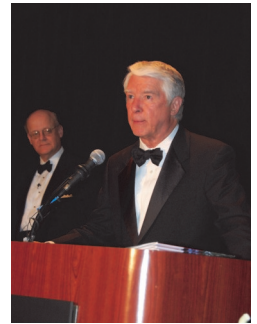
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# PRESIDENT LENZ'S GREETING

Dear ALA Members:

I thank everyone who took part in the nationwide events celebrating President Lincoln's birthday. ALA members were involved in many events across the country and around the world promoting the legacy of Abraham Lincoln.

The two day ALA Symposium in Springfield was a brilliant success thanks to participants Michael Holt, Jonathan Earle, Russell McClintock, Jonathan White and Brooks Simpson. I especially want to thank the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum, the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency, the University of Illinois Springfield and the Lincoln Home NHS for helping. It was a weekend to remember.



We are grateful to Dr. Allen Guelzo, our banquet speaker, whose address was titled *Does Lincoln Still Belong to the Ages*. Dr. Guelzo reminded us that, "We do need to step away from the arrogance of presumption, the presumption that we are the best judges of his own mind, that we are entitled to substitute our grievances for the real troubles of his time, that we are permitted to demand a perfection and orderliness and a level of insight from Lincoln which we can't even impose on our own checkbooks, Because only then we will recognize how very extraordinary the achievements of this man Lincoln really were."

Thanks as well to United States Senator Richard Durbin who addressed the banquet saying that, "The longer I'm in Congress, the more I see there is almost no challenge facing us today that can't be served by studying Lincoln's words that helped put it in perspective." I also want to thank Illinois Lt. Governor Sheila Simon for her inspiring words and reflections on her father, Senator Paul Simon, and his long association with the ALA.

We welcome five new Directors to the ALA Board of Directors: Bill Bartelt, Dr. Matthew Holden, Kay Smith, Vice Admiral N. Ronald Thunman and Jennifer Tirey. You can read more about each of the new Directors at page 5. I look forward to working with them.

Finally, thanks to all of the ALA members whose unflinching support enables the ALA to fulfill its mission "to observe each anniversary of the birth of Abraham Lincoln; to preserve and make more readily accessible the landmarks associated with his life; and to actively encourage, promote and aid the collection and dissemination of authentic information regarding all phases of his life and career."

Robert J. Lenz  
President

## WE INVITE YOU TO BECOME A MEMBER

Your membership is essential to the ALA's success. It allows the ALA to provide you with the *For The People* newsletter and the *Journal of the Abraham Lincoln Association* and to sponsor many worthwhile programs related to the life of Abraham Lincoln. Use the form below to enroll as a member.

William G. Shepherd, Membership Chairman

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

The Abraham Lincoln Association  
1 Old State Capitol Plaza  
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You may join through our website at:  
**www.abrahamlincolnassociation.org**  
Call toll free for more information:  
(866) 865-8500

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women put much effort into the flag-sewing and the speaking (which was really literary flag-waving), and understandably prided themselves on both.

The flags, alas, are no more seen, but the speeches remain. They show literary ability, seriousness of purpose and great good sense (the latter, however, somewhat obscured by rhetorical flourishing in the perorations). On Saturday, May 10, at the court house square, "Miss Lina Candlebaugh" addressed the men of Infantry Company B., under Capt. Pullen and a company of cavalry commanded by Capt. McNulta. Candlebaugh began by dismissing the usual sentimentality associated with such occasions:

*Generally the flag seems rather a part of a showy pageant; a gay toy, to be borne in the holiday mustering of a mimic soldiery on peaceful fields. . . while the dark terrors that are shadowed forth in the one dread word—WAR—are far from the thoughts of all. Not so do we meet you to-day. Neither we nor you are now thinking of anything less than the reality of conflict, the earnest struggle and agony of deadly battle. The colors we give you to-day are not to wear themselves out with flapping in the happy breezes of Illinois; but they go forth with you to return home torn by bullets and stained by battle.*

The tattered flags may return, she notes, but all the men shall not: "Our country asks of her sons even their lives."

Now a second speech, this one from Fanny McCullough, "graceful and eloquent" and less stark because more conventional: "You, sons of Illinois, worthy children of a noble mother, are preparing to march where duty points. We, mothers, daughters and sisters, come to cheer you on in the noble work you have undertaken." Then follows the call to bloody glory in an inefably great cause:

*Soldiers, you fight to preserve and maintain inviolate the liberties of your country; and though the contest be long, and the strife bloody, yet the result is not doubtful,—  
"For Freedom's battle once begun,  
Bequeathed by bleeding sire to son,  
Tho' baffled oft, is ever won."*

"Go forward then"—and here comes the filiopietism—as their Revolutionary great-grandfathers had against English tyranny,

and more recently their fathers in the Mexican War, considered as patriotic in the West as it was despicable to New England—"to the performance of a stern duty, never flinching, never yielding, until the enemies of our country are silenced" (DP 11 May 1861).

McLean County's most famous regiment, the 33<sup>rd</sup>, or "Teachers' Regiment" or "Normal Rifles," was recruited from the professors and students of the Normal University (ICW 8). Though not formally mustered until September, 1861 (WRMC 60), the Teachers' Regiment received a flag presentation on Monday, June 1, at Normal Hall. Following a performance of "Prof. Root's beautiful patriotic song—"The First Gun is Fired," by the ladies of the University," a student named Sophie J. Crist had the honor of addressing the president of the University, Capt. (later Col.) Charles E. Hovey, and more than fifty recruits to his regiment. Crist's was an *envoi* full of sentiment, yet not quite objectionably sentimental. She began by praising her teachers who were about to go: "In parting with you, we feel like travelers who are about to lose their guide and must find the way themselves as best they can; but in this dark time in our country's history, it is not befitting that we, the daughters of Freedom, by our sympathy and tears should stay your hands." Go, then, but stay connected: Crist imagined a scene to come, the new flag flying over the regiment encamped:

*[I]n the stillness of the night,  
when the camp-fire dimly burns, and  
the bayonet is at rest, when heaven's glittering  
canopy shall be your  
only shelter, it shall proudly float above you to  
the breeze, and as  
the mellow moonlight falls upon it, ever and  
anon its stars of beauty  
will peep from beneath its silken folds, as talismans  
of your holy  
mission; and, too, in that sacred hour will oft-times  
peer out from  
the depths of memory the scenes in which you  
have mingled here.*

Such "fancies" might bring the "manly tear" all unbidden; yet shall they, the soldiers of the University, "not falter," for some "sweet, invisible power" of sympathy from the women "shall encircle you, and you shall gather strength for each succeeding day" (DP 3 June 1861). The men of the 33<sup>rd</sup> would need all that strength and more as they began the assault on Vicks-

burg two years later, during which protracted fighting more than a dozen would fall, never to return to home and school (WRMC 62).

After sending their men to war with tears and cheers, these determined, staying-behind, home-front women could settle down to something else they did well besides flag-weaving and graceful oratory: a more practical, industrial-style sewing, in this case woolen uniforms and undergarments for the soldiery. The work had come about this way: one of the women who had participated in the May 10 flag presentation for Pullen and McNulta, observed to friends that "it seemed absurd to give silk flags to men who needed flannel shirts." She—it may have been Mrs. McCullough, the mother of orator Fanny—had a point. The notion took hold. A committee came to be and moved fast. The McLean County supervisors were successfully importuned for money for cloth, the work space procured gratis and sewing machines brought in; patterns were cut from the purchased wool, and by Tuesday, May 21, a group of "ladies of Bloomington" were busy in Royce Hall, "fighting" what the chief supervisor, Dr. Samuel Willard (who thought he was funny), deemed "the campaign against the flannel." At first matters did not go smoothly. Some of the women wanted to take the patterns home to sew; some wanted their handiwork to go to the "Cairo boys" (where Harvey's Co. K was already stationed). A few seamstresses balked at supervised sewing—too much like poor-folks' work?—and went home; but enough of the rest soon came to understand that proper uniforms had to be. . . well, uniform! And so the remnant of the "ladies of Bloomington" sat down together and set to work. Laboring on machines lent by the manufacturer, Wheeler and Wilson, in only three days they finished "one hundred and four shirts and seventy-six pairs of drawers for our soldier boys." The whole lot was inspected, approved and sent on its way to Pullen and McNulta. Inevitably, some grouching continued of the *cui bono* sort. A rumor was heard that "Dr. and Mrs. Willard were 'well paid' for their trouble in the matter." A malicious calumny, the Dr. responded in his official report to the McLean County Supervisors: "I disdain to deny it. . . but we trust that we may have our share in the general reward of all who worked, a consciousness that we

(Continued on page 5)

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did good to our patriot troops in their need” (DP 29 May 1861).

On Wednesday, May 1, 1861, Senator Stephen A. Douglas made his way by rail from Springfield to Chicago, stopping briefly at Bloomington. City and county turned out for him: troops, bands, and a swarming crowd of people. Douglas appeared in the vestibule of the last car of the Chicago and Alton train to give the expected brief speech. Unfortunately, “[t]he constant shifting of trains in the neighborhood. . . with the attendant ringing of bells and sound of whistles, made his remarks inaudible to much the greater portion of the crowd.” It didn’t matter. Many of the women weren’t interested in a speech anyway and rudely climbed aboard the train to get a glimpse of Mrs. Adele Douglas and what she was wearing (the senator’s wife seemed to take this unseemly attention without offense). And those who had tried and failed to hear Douglas’s words knew what he said anyway: spoken or unspoken, heard or unheard, he had said that it was too late for him, though perhaps not too late for the Union. Then the train pulled out and that was it. A month later the June 4, 1861, *Pantagraph* led with the news of Douglas’s death at home in Chicago: forgiving him his many Democratic sins, the Republican editor praised Douglas’s late but fervent unionism and mourned that a “giant mind and fearless heart” was gone from Illinois and the nation (DP 4 June 1861).

Works cited:

Bloomington *Daily Pantagraph* (DP)

*Transactions of the McLean County Historical Society*, vol. 2, *War Record of McLean County* (WRMC)

Victor Hicken, *Illinois in the Civil War*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Urbana IL: University of Illinois Press, 1991) (ICW)



## New ALA Board Members Welcomed

The Abraham Lincoln Association is governed by a Board of Directors. On February 12, 2011, the Board elected 5 new Directors:



**William E. Bartelt.** Retired social studies teacher in Evansville, Indiana, Adjunct Professor at the University of Southern Indiana, Seasonal Park Ranger Lincoln Boyhood Home. Home: Newburgh, Indiana.



**Kay Smith.** Interim Director of the Looking for Lincoln Heritage Coalition, Former Director of the Illinois Bicentennial Commission. Home: Springfield, Illinois.



**Jennifer Tirey.** Deputy Director of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum. Home: Springfield, Illinois.

**Vice Admiral N. Ronald Thunman.** Retired from the U.S. Navy, former President of the Valley Forge Military Academy. Home: Springfield, Illinois.



**Dr. Matthew Holden, Jr.** Wepner Distinguished Professor in Political Science at the University of Illinois at Springfield, past president of American Political Science Association. Home: Springfield, Illinois.



## NEW MEMBERS

We welcome our 26 new members.

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WELCOME

## Lincoln Day Events

### The Symposium and Round Table

*LINCOLN BECOMES PRESIDENT  
ABRAHAM LINCOLN AND THE CIVIL WAR*



Jonathan White, Russell McClintock, Moderator Brooks Simpson, Michael Holt, and Jonathan Earle at the Round Table held on the afternoon of February 12th in the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library.

### The Luncheon

*LINCOLN AND THE COMING OF THE WAR*



Dr. Russell McClintock addressing the Symposium Luncheon at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library on February 12th.

### The Evening Reception



Perry Knop, Senator Richard Durbin, ALA President Robert J. Lenz and Lieutenant Governor Sheila Simon



Robert and Patricia Davis



Robert and Margie Stuart and Robert Willard



Lieutenant Governor Sheila Simon and Wally and Brynn Henderson



Jan Grimes, Director, Illinois Historic Preservation Agency, and Eileen R. Mackevich, Executive Director, Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum



Bishop Thomas John Paprocki and Senator Richard Durbin



### *Lincoln in Illinois* ALA's Champaign Urbana Exhibit

Champaign County Courthouse  
101 East Main Street  
Urbana, Illinois

March 7-May 27, 2011

Open to the public 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

All photographs of the Symposium, luncheon, reception and dinner were taken by David Blanchette of the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency. David and IHPA generously share these photos with the ALA. Thank you David for capturing these moments that will become our visual historical record of the 2011 Lincoln Day Events.

## Lincoln Day Events: ALA Lincoln Day Banquet



President Robert J. Lenz presides at the ALA Lincoln Banquet at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Springfield, Illinois, on the evening of February 12, 2011. On the dais from left to right are: Vice President Robert Stuart, Jr., Banquet Speaker Dr. Allen C. Guelzo, President Robert J. Lenz, Bishop Thomas John Paprocki of the Diocese of Springfield in Illinois and Dr. Stewart Winger.

## ALA Lincoln Day Banquet: The Guest Speakers



Dr. Allen C. Guelzo



Senator Richard Durbin



Lieutenant Governor Sheila Simon

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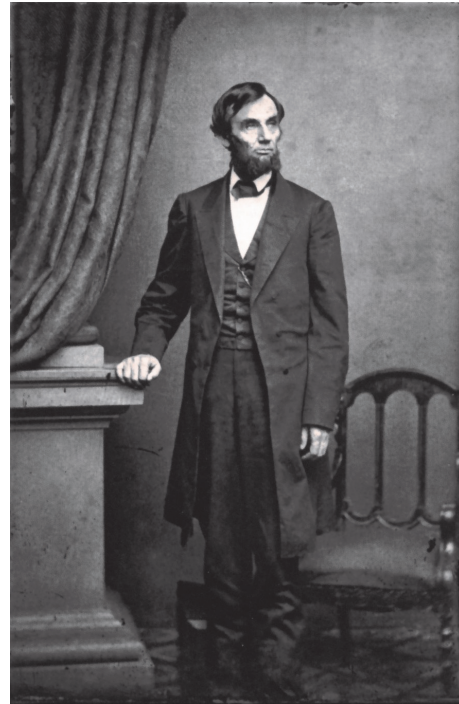
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## 150 YEARS AGO: FIRST WASHINGTON IMAGES



*Left photograph:* This photograph of Abraham Lincoln, the fifty-two year-old President-elect, is probably the first taken in Washington, D.C. It was taken about February 24, 1861, by Alexander Gardner at Mathew Brady's Gallery.



*Right photograph:* This is one of the earliest photographs of Abraham Lincoln as President. It was taken on May 16, 1861, by an unknown photographer at Mathew Brady's Gallery.