



FOR THE PEOPLE

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Commemoration of 150th Anniversary of Lincoln's Springfield Funeral

The 150th anniversary of the funeral of Abraham Lincoln was commemorated in Springfield on May 2 and 3, 2015. Thousands of people participated in the various events that included lectures and church services, luncheons and teas, school children visits and open houses, exhibits and receptions and encampments and a reenactment of the arrival of Lincoln's body and the funeral procession from downtown Springfield to Oak Ridge Cemetery's receiving vault. The emotion engendered by the hearse and procession entering Oak Ridge Cemetery, as shown in the photograph to the right, was extraordinary. A 200-voice choir quietly sang, a sole drummer beat out a slow tempo, the slow and deliberate clip-clopping of the horses and the tolling of the Oak Ridge Cemetery bell in the tower (shown in the photograph) combined to create a solemn mood seldom experienced. The entire commemoration cannot be adequately described in words, but the photographs printed on pages 10 and 11 will give a sense of the events.



Illinois Politics and Lincoln's 'Least Man'



By Reg Ankrom

Stephen A. Douglas, a 20-year-old Vermonter who had lived three years in New York, arrived alone in Jacksonville, Illinois, on November 14, 1833. Ambition and impatience to become a lawyer brought him. Although he was halfway toward satisfying New York's requirement for seven years of classical and legal studies, Douglas had learned that Illinois required only that a candidate be a 21-year-old white male resident who could obtain testimonials of fitness

from two lawyers. Most of Jacksonville's 12 lawyers judged him unfit to practice, but Douglas was able to get recommendations from the community's two Jacksonian-Democratic lawyers. He was licensed on March 4, 1834.

Abraham Lincoln's first sighting of Douglas was in December that year at the state capital in Vandalia. Douglas was promoting a self-serving bill to change the way state's attorneys were appointed. Lincoln did not think much of the Vermonter. He told a colleague he thought Douglas—at 5'4", a foot shorter than Lincoln—was "the least man I ever saw."

Douglas's Morgan County neighbors found more to like about him. An impassioned defense of President Jackson, whom Jacksonville lawyer Josiah Lamborn had just attacked in a courthouse speech, was a turning point in the county's politics. His denim-clad listeners lifted Douglas from the courthouse porch to their shoulders, carried him twice around the city square, and knighted him "The Little Giant."

If Douglas knew of Lincoln's "least man" assessment, he was little bothered by it. In February 1835, only days after the legislature passed the "Douglas Bill" and overrode its veto, Douglas, 22, became state's attorney of the First Judicial District, the largest in Illinois. Lincoln voted against Douglas's nomination.

In taking office, Douglas ousted Jacksonville's leading anti-Jackson man, John J. Hardin, the shirttail nephew of anti-Jacksonian U.S. Senator Henry Clay. It was a blow to Hardin and his party. In little more than two years, Hardin had changed the politics in Morgan County from whole-hog to anti-Jacksonianism. The accomplishment quickly elevated Hardin to state's attorney and to leadership of his party in Illinois. Douglas's first political accomplishment just as quickly humbled Hardin and elevated Douglas to the top of his party.

Douglas had not intended to stay in Jacksonville. He had wanted only to see the town

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named for his hero since boyhood, Andrew Jackson. Taking the advice of Jacksonville lawyer Murray McConnel, one of the two Democratic lawyers in Morgan County, Douglas started for the new Illinois River city of Pekin. McConnel suggested he could get on-the-job experience in law there as a justice of the peace, which did not require a law license. The steamboat he was to take to Pekin, however, had blown up and left him stranded in Meredosia. It would be spring before the next boat arrived.

Although drained of funds, Douglas made a fortuitous connection that took him to Winchester. There he taught school for three months and in his off-hours studied law. In March 1834, he returned to Jacksonville with earnings of \$100. Justice Samuel Drake Lockwood licensed Douglas to practice law, suggesting, however, that he continue its study.

Douglas hung his shingle from the front of the Morgan County courthouse. Opposition party lawyers conspired to “starve him out” of business, though there was little evidence Douglas had any. No matter. Although he loved the law—in 1841 at 27 years of age he would become a Supreme Court justice under a bill he wrote to pack the court — Douglas by this time had developed a consuming interest in politics. From his organization of Jacksonians in Morgan County, Douglas established a statewide party organization, engineered his own appointment as chairman of the central committee, and led Democrats of Illinois for the next quarter century.

Events gave Douglas his strategy for his next goal: election to Congress from Western Illinois. In 1838 Missouri Governor Lilburn Boggs ordered Mormons out of Western Missouri or face extermination. Thousands fled across the Mississippi River into Quincy that winter and moved north into Hancock County during the following year.

Douglas got Governor Thomas Carlin to appoint him secretary of state. He resigned after only three months. That was all the time he needed to promote and sign the charter for the Mormon City of Nauvoo—and ingratiate himself with Church founder Joseph Smith. After his reorganization of

Illinois’s courts, Douglas next got Carlin to appoint him justice of the Fifth Judicial District at Quincy, from which he expected to win the Mormon vote. Redistricting prevented that, but Douglas won the 1843 election to Congress without it.

For the 26 years before his election as president in 1860, Abraham Lincoln found himself pursuing his “least man.” Asked by five leading Whigs in 1840 to run for governor in 1842, Lincoln declined. A Whig could not win statewide office in Illinois, he said. It was an awareness of Douglas’s pre-eminence in Illinois politics. Sixteen years later, in 1856, Lincoln would write:

“Twenty-two years ago, Judge Douglas and I first became acquainted; we were both young then—he a trifle younger than I. Even then we were both ambitious, I, perhaps, quite as much as he. With me, the race of ambition has been a failure—a flat failure. With him, it has been one of splendid success. His name fills the Nation, and it is not unknown in foreign lands.”

2015 Annual Lincoln Colloquium

Lincoln College and the Lincoln Heritage Museum will host the **2015 Colloquium** on October 2 & 3, 2015. The title of this year’s Colloquium is *The Better Angels of our Nature: the Influential Legacy and Character of Abraham Lincoln*.

Douglas Wilson on *Abraham Lincoln: Character or Calculation?*
William Pederson on *Lincoln Without Borders: Lincoln’s International Legacy*. **John Barr** on *Loathing Lincoln’s Legacy*.

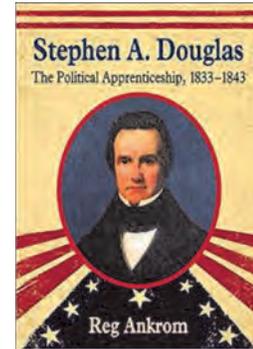
James Cornelius, Guy Fraker, Sarah Watson, Sara Gabbard, and Anne Moseley on *The Tangible Legacy in the Lands of Lincoln*.

Noted Abraham Lincoln interpreter **Fritz Klein** as he goes *Fritz Klein Unplugged*.

To register, call
(217) 735-7399 or e-mail
museum@lincolncollege.edu

Stephen A. Douglas by Reg Ankrom

Reg Ankrom will discuss and sign copies of his new book, *Stephen A. Douglas: The Political Apprenticeship, 1833-1843*, from 1 to 3 p.m., Sunday, July 12, 2015, at the Quincy History Museum, 332 Maine St., Quincy, Illinois.



The book, published in April 2015 by McFarland Press of Jefferson, North Carolina, proposes that Douglas’s first ten years in Illinois provided a political education that served to make him the nation’s most powerful politician by mid-19th century. Douglas lived in Quincy for six years after his arrival on March 3, 1841, to serve as a Supreme Court justice and circuit judge. At 27 years of age, he remains the youngest justice in Illinois history.

Quincy voters in 1843 elected the Democrat Douglas to Congress over Quincy Whig Orville H. Browning, and re-elected him twice before the Illinois General Assembly elected him to the U.S. Senate in March 1847. Douglas moved to Chicago shortly afterward.

Ankrom is well known for his research and writing about local history. He is a former director of the Historical Society of Quincy and Adams County and is a regular contributor to the society’s weekly column in the *Quincy Herald-Whig*. His new book is the first of three volumes he is writing about Douglas.



ABRAHAM LINCOLN IN VERMONT, ILLINOIS OCTOBER 26-27, 1858



By John D. Bybee

An elderly John W. Proctor wrote on March 2, 1904, "I shall never forget the night of June 16, 1858. At that time, I was the chairman of the Fulton County Republican Delegation to the state senatorial convention in Springfield. I was lying on one of the forty cots squeezed into a large room at the City Hotel. It wasn't the crowded, airless room that caused me to toss and turn — it was Mr. Lincoln's 'House Divided Speech'."

Earlier in the day, the convention body with a unanimous vote passed a resolution that declared, "Abraham Lincoln is the first and only choice of the Republicans of Illinois for the U.S. Senate as successor of Stephen A. Douglas." Following his nomination, Mr. Lincoln was requested to address us on the issues of the day. At 8 p.m., he began his "House Divided" speech. Many had never heard Mr. Lincoln before, and they were stunned by the eloquence of his prophetic speech in which he stated, "I believe this government cannot endure, permanently half *slave* and half *free*."

The following morning, John W. Proctor, accompanied by Uncle Billy Allen of Mason County and other friends, called on Mr. Lincoln. The small group invited Mr. Lincoln to visit Lewistown, the county seat of Fulton County. They also presented a written invitation from John D. and Bethiah (Wharton) Derry, Robert and Mary (Kirkpatrick) Dilworth, Thomas R. and Harriet (Johnson) Hamer, and Hiram Starr and Mary (Witchell) Thomas to speak in their South Fulton hometown of Vermont. In due course the Republican Central Committee notified Lewistown Republicans that Mr. Lincoln would

speak in their city on August 17, a day after Mr. Douglas. Abraham Lincoln's appearance in Vermont would be on October 27, following the conclusion of the August 21 to October 15 debates scheduled in Ottawa, Freeport, Jonesboro, Charleston, Galesburg, Quincy, and Alton.

On Saturday, October 16, Mr. Lincoln traveled by rail to Lincoln, Illinois, and delivered a two-hour speech to a crowd of 5,000. He returned to Springfield on Sunday.

On Monday, October 18, he departed by train for Naples and Meredosia. At Naples, Mr. Lincoln spied fifteen Irish "gentlemen" carrying black carpet sacks joining the crowd of listeners. Edward Lusk of Meredosia alleged in front of the crowd that Lincoln was a member of the anti-Catholic / anti-Irish immigrant Know-Nothing Party.

Lincoln responded, "I am not, nor have ever been connected with the party called the Know-Nothing party or calling themselves the 'American Party'."

On Tuesday, October 19, Mr. Lincoln left Mt. Sterling for Rushville in a buggy driven by law student Charles H. Sweeney. Approaching Rushville, a procession of supporters 1.5 miles long escorted him to the home of William H. Ray.

On Wednesday, October 20, arriving on the Rushville public square, Mr. Lincoln saw a black flag flying above the steeple of the Rushville Courthouse. The black flag was a visible symbol of the dissent of the Democrats and Know-Nothing Party with Lincoln's platform. Three years prior on June 20, L.D. Erwin of Rushville attended a directors meeting of the Peoria and Hannibal Railroad at Vermont. Over \$15,507 had been subscribed to the building of the road. Rumors had reached Lincoln's ears that 400 Irish immigrants were being brought to Rushville to work on the Peoria and Hannibal Railroad and their foremen would vote them as Democratic.

Mr. Lincoln started his speech at 2 p.m., before a crowd of 2,000-3,000 guests, the

majority of whom were women. Mr. Lincoln presented his platform on slavery. A prearranged corps of young men and women heckled Lincoln into defending his "House Divided" speech against Douglas's criticisms. The hecklers became so intense that Mr. Lincoln was compelled to request them to be quiet and let him finish. The Rushville newspaper recounted that, "In spite of the problems, the day passed off pleasantly and successfully."

Friday, October 22, at Carthage, 2,000 women joined the procession leading Mr. Lincoln's carriage into town. The *Chicago Press and Tribune* correspondent wired his paper, "Lincoln gave us the best speech ever made in Hancock County."

Saturday, October 23, Mr. Lincoln visited with relatives in Fountain Green and delivered a speech in Dallas City. In the evening, he addressed the citizens at the LaHarpe Methodist Church.

Sunday, October 24, brought candidate Lincoln to a rally at Blandinsville. Aware of the impact of the deal between Douglas and the Buchanan Democrats in Hancock County, he telegraphed to Norman B. Judd, Republican Central Chairman in Chicago, "The race is tight, with chances slightly in our favor."

Monday, October 25, Mr. Lincoln arrived on his third visit to Macomb. He checked into a room at the Randolph House (built by McDonough County's leading Whig / Republican William H. Randolph and owned by former state legislator William Harrison). At 2 p.m., a crowd of over 4,000 stood in the mud and endured the fog and drizzle to hear Abe speak. Twice locomotive whistles drowned out his voice. Lincoln only smiled at the interruptions.

Early on the morning of October 26, Mr. Lincoln checked out of the Randolph House when Thomas Ray Hamer, Hiram Starr Thomas, and two other Vermonters arrived to drive him (and possibly his stenographer Robert R. Hitt of the *Press and Tribune*) to Vermont. Lincoln's car-

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riage was pulled by a pair of Dr. E.P. Hamer's matched gelding trotters. By mid-morning, the Lincoln party arrived at the Joseph Smith home about four miles northwest of Vermont. The party transferred to a new rig and fresh team and descended into the Sugar Creek Valley. Beyond the road's narrow margins the wilderness was aptly named "Mud Acres."

The team pulled the carriage up the small rise west of the William Kimball home, and turned southeast, descended, and crossed Sugar Creek a second time. On level prairie again, the carriage was met by a cortège of 60-plus somber-suited men on horseback and their ladies in fancy frocks on side saddles. Closer to Vermont, 20 wagons carrying citizens and others afoot increased the size and enthusiasm of Mr. Lincoln's escort.

Sixteen-year-old Hester (Kirkbride) Hoopes and 12 other belles of Vermont, dressed to represent the 13 colonies, met Mr. Lincoln and his followers on the final south turn into Vermont (now the Vermont Foundry Corner). The 13 young ladies had arranged themselves on a hay ladder to avoid the mud and muck below their feet. The Vermont Band broke into "Columbia the Gem of the Ocean" and stepped off to lead the parade. The "Plucky 13" dismounted and fell in behind the band. The belles waded through the mud and ruined their fancy frocks, but never missed a step.

The procession marched down North Main past "The Tavern" (Vermont's first hotel), the Benjamin and Sarah (Hamer) Swartz and widow Sarah Stapleford homes on the east side. They continued past the two-story brick National Hotel and Thomas R. Hamer's home (now Vermont mayor Brian Mercer's home and a former stop on the Underground Railroad) on the west side. Opposite the Hamer home was the two-story frame building that housed the press of the Democratic newspaper the *Vermont Banner*. Much to the disgust of the newspaper's staff, unknown local members of the "Know-Nothing" Party had snuck in the night before and printed "Know-Nothing" ballots. After transiting the two-block-long business district, the parade made a half circle of the village park, then marched on to North Liberty past the home of Henry and Izilla Mershon. Lin-

coln's carriage turned right on to West Third Street and at Dilworth's Hardware corner turned left down North Main to Thomas Hamer's home.

The noonday dinner was cooked by Mrs. Hamer and her 34-year-old sister-in-law Elizabeth "Lizzie" (Hamer) Doebler. After dinner, Mr. Lincoln walked up the west side of the business district. Hester (Kirkbride) Hoopes recalled that she had just bought a glass tumbler at the Hamer Store. As she was coming out of the store, Abraham Lincoln was coming along the board sidewalk and he stopped long enough to shake hands with her. Hester later recalled he had coarse black hair and deep-set gray eyes.

J.W. "Will" Webster and his sister Sarah tagged along behind Mr. Lincoln and Thomas Hamer. The two men, followed by the Webster children, crossed Main Street and rounded the corner in front of Joab Mershon's Mercantile Store. Mr. Lincoln waved to the members of the Ipava Delegation. The Webster children fell behind and sat down in the doorway of Joab Mershon's warehouse.

Shortly before 2 p.m., Mr. Lincoln arrived at the slight rise in front of Alfred Hart's cabinet shop (just south of the south door of the current Vermont Hardware). Lincoln's audience numbered 1,000. John W. Proctor recalled, "The day was lowering and when Mr. Lincoln commenced to speak, rain began to fall. I remember Thomas Hamer stood beside Mr. Lincoln and held an umbrella over him through his entire speech."

Mrs. Armon Hannon remembered she was eight years old at the time and to the embarrassment of her parents, "I and several other young girls played about his long gangly legs." Parents tried to entice the girls away, but Mr. Lincoln only motioned the parents to desist, saying it did not bother him in the least.

Edward P. Durell, then a teenaged printer's devil, recalled, "When I saw Lincoln, I had never seen such a homely ungainly man. He had no beauty of face nor figure and his clothes never looked as if they were his." Ed added, "As soon as Lincoln began to speak he was transformed in the eyes of at least one lad. I stood spellbound to the end."



Lincoln Monument in Vermont City Park. The white-painted home directly behind the monument was the "Vermont Hotel" where Lincoln stayed overnight on October 26, 1858.

Fifteen-year-old future Union soldier and judge William H. Prentice was standing ten feet from Mr. Lincoln. He remembered Thomas Hamer standing behind Lincoln, who was taller and about 20 pounds heavier than Thomas Hamer, who stood 6 feet tall and weighed 160 pounds. Lincoln delivered his speech in a high-pitched tone that became almost shrill when he emphasized a point. Prentice smiled from the start to the conclusion of Lincoln's speech.

At the end of his address, Mr. Lincoln, Thomas Hamer, Hiram Starr Thomas, and others walked down the east side of the business district. In the January 14, 1932, edition of the *Vermont Union* Forrest S. Green imparted, "During the Lincoln-Douglas campaign my parents (James and Naomi Green) lived on Main Street in what was later the Sidwell property, just across the street from Thomas Hamer's residence. [Now the residence of Pat & Patricia McGinty.] A procession headed by Lincoln and several friends passed along the east side street. Lincoln was only a few feet away from mother, who was standing inside their gate. As he passed she looked at Lincoln with a friendly smile and jokingly said, "Hurrah for Douglas!" in a loud whisper. Lincoln smiled broadly and raised his high plug hat in acknowledgment."

Mr. Lincoln overnighted in Vermont and early the next morning the Hamer party returned Mr. Lincoln to Macomb where he boarded a C.B.Q. train which transported him the 75 miles to Galva via Galesburg. Lincoln traveled overland the 15 miles to Toulon and delivered a speech there on the afternoon of October 27, 1858.

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Vermont never hosted Abraham Lincoln again. What was contained in Lincoln's Vermont speech? Correspondents from Vermont's two rival newspapers were among the crowd. The *Vermont Banner*, Democratic in its views, was published by L.G. Groves and Samuel D. Sawyer. The *Fultonian* was Republican in tone and was published by Dr. W. H. Nance and Hiram Starr Thomas (Hiram was a prominent Abolitionist and Temperance leader). At present the text of Lincoln's speech remains unknown.

During the Civil War, Vermont contributed two full companies, B and F, to the 84th Illinois Vol. Infantry and is reputed to have sent more soldiers than any other Illinois town of equal population. Storekeeper Thomas Hamer was appointed as Lt. Col. of the 84th Illinois Infantry and joined the war in August 1862. He was wounded at Stones River, Tenn., in December 1862. He was discharged with a medical disability on July 24, 1863. Upon learning of President Lincoln's assassination, Col. Hamer painted the exterior of his two-story brick home a dead black and it remained so until 1952.

In the early summer of 1925, to commemorate the 67th anniversary of Lincoln's visit to Vermont, a Lincoln Memorial Committee was organized with Supervisor Ulysses Grant Tingley and Lewis S. Edie and Benjamin F. Merson as executive members. Harry F. Chick was the treasurer of the committee. The spot where Abraham Lincoln spoke was now nearly in the center of the paved road which circled the city park. A temporary wooden sign was erected southwest of the Nelson Hardware near the pump. Plans were drawn and a plea for donations of money and labor were issued.

October 27, 1925, was a sunless day. The temperature was 40 F. and the low gray clouds threatened imminent snow. The concrete tablet base was erected in the city park, 50 feet southwest of the spot where Lincoln spoke. Near 9:30 a.m. a large crowd began to gather around the monument, which was festooned with red, white, and blue bunting and surrounded by American flags whipping in the chill wind.

At 10 a.m., the bronze tablet embossed with a likeness of Lincoln as he appeared in 1858 was dedicated. It is engraved with

these words, "Let us have faith that right makes might and in that faith let us to the end dare to do our duty as we understand it." Bolted to the base of the monument were his 1865 words "With malice toward none, with charity for all."

On the occasion of the Lincoln Monument's dedication, J. Ross Arnold, editor of the *Vermont Union*, wrote, "In 1858, feeling was growing more bitter every day over the question of slavery and state's rights. So Mr. Lincoln probably left bitter enemies and staunch friends behind when he passed through Vermont on that day. He never came to Vermont again, but walked our streets but once and when the Lincoln Monument was erected and dedicated with ceremony, Vermonters here and elsewhere felt — *It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.*"

John D. Bybee was born in Galesburg, Illinois in 1951. He grew up on the banks of Spoon River at Dahinda where he attended the first six grades in a two-room school. After graduating from Williamsfield in 1969, he went to Knox College where he studied Asian Studies at Waseda University in Tokyo, Japan. He received his B.A. from Knox College in 1973 and majored in history. While he developed an interest in Abraham Lincoln in fifth grade, his working career of almost 40 years was in insurance, the last 29 years with Pekin Insurance Company. He is active in local history, genealogical, and Civil War organizations.

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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. Please join.

William G. Shepherd,
Membership Chairman

If you have not renewed your membership for 2015, please do so now.

Give a gift membership to someone you think might enjoy the ALA.

It is easy to do so by using the ALA website at:

abrahamlincolnassociation.org

Or call the ALA personal shopper Mary Shepherd toll free at (866) 865-8500.

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PRESIDENT ROBERT A. STUART'S GREETING

Dear Members of the Abraham Lincoln Association,

What a solemn and inspiring spring it has been for all of us in the Lincoln Community. The ALA sponsored several special events surrounding the anniversary of the assassination and burial of President Lincoln.

First, congratulations for a job well done to ALA members Katie Spindell as CoChair, and Kathryn Harris and James Cornelius as directors on the board of the 2015 Lincoln Funeral Coalition.

The ALA worked with Board Member Robert Davis co-sponsoring a special production of the play titled *My Whole Soul is in It*, written by ALA Board Member Ron Keller. The cast was made up of youth from Springfield and was a wonderful event.

We sponsored the 2015 Lincoln Funeral Coalition Keynote Speaker, ALA Board Member Dr. Edna Greene Medford. Her excellent presentation was titled *Lincoln's Legacy of Justice and Opportunity: Our Challenge a Century and a Half Later*. ALA Board Members Dr. Michael Burlingame, Guy Fraker, Richard Hart, and Matthew Holden all spoke at various venues during the funeral commemoration weekend. The ALA also hosted two events at the Iles House for ALA members and made some new friends.

The ALA published Board Member Richard Hart's book entitled *The Funeral of Abraham Lincoln: May 3rd and 4th, 1865*. The book is available to purchase on our website www.abrahamlincolnassociation.org. We were pleased that he was chosen to host the C-SPAN coverage of the funeral reenactment along with ALA Director Dr. Michael Burlingame.

On May 1st, Law Day, the ALA presented a special new award called the *Spirit of Lincoln* to Illinois Supreme Court Chief Justice Rita Garman. This new award will be added to the Association's other awards and will be presented to individuals who exhibit the spirit of Abraham Lincoln in their professional careers for the betterment of humanity.

I also want to congratulate Kathryn Harris, the Vice-President of the Abraham Lincoln Association, on her retirement and her amazing career with the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library. Kathryn has many roles in life, including that of her alter ego, Harriett Tubman. We are pleased that she will have even more time to devote to the Association!

Congratulations go to ALA Board Member Thomas Johnson on the culmination of his time as Chancellor of the Lincoln Academy of Illinois. He has been a tremendous leader of this group that acknowledges Illinoisans making outstanding contributions to their local, national, and global communities.

And as always, thank you to all of our Members for making it possible for the Association to continue to fulfill our mission.

Robert A. Stuart, President



Illinois Governor Bruce Rauner (center) flanked by ALA President Robert A. Stuart and Bob's daughter Cori. The Governor and Diana Rauner invited ALA board members as well as people involved with the funeral reenactment to the Executive Mansion for a reception on Saturday May 2, 2015. Crew members of carrier *USS Abraham Lincoln* were also present there as well as at an ALA reception at the Iles House.

AS WILLIE LAY DYING, MARY LINCOLN GETS PILLORIED IN A POEM



By Jason Emerson

Mary Lincoln's famous — and infamous — White House ball on February 5, 1862, was a lavish, invitation-only event that had Washington society in an upheaval about who was selected to attend and who had been left out. It was also an opportunity for critics of the Lincolns to admonish their bad taste at holding celebrations in the midst of a civil war. The ball saw the premiere of the “Mary Lincoln Polka,” a song composed by U.S. Marine Band bandmaster Francis Scala in honor of the First Lady, and performed by the Marine Band. It was the first and last time the song was played until 2013.

Similarly, the 1862 ball was an event that inspired the publication of a stinging poetic satire of Mary Lincoln that pilloried her for holding such an aristocratic event while soldiers suffered and died on the battlefield. That poem, “The Queen Must Dance,” written by George H. Boker but published anonymously in the February 9, 1862 issue of the Philadelphia *Sunday Dispatch* newspaper, was reprinted across the country and much discussed at the time. While the fact of the poem's existence, and even its title, has been mentioned in numerous books about both Abraham and Mary, the poem itself has never been reprinted since its 1862 premiere, until now.

Mary Lincoln was an ambitious woman. Growing up in southern aristocracy, her marriage to a modest country lawyer was certainly a social comedown and, as the years passed in Springfield, history shows that Mary was constantly dreaming of more money, finer possessions, a larger house and, most important of all, greater political success for her husband and, concomitantly, greater social recognition

for herself. When the Lincolns entered the White House in 1861, they had reached the pinnacle of success — and, in Mary's mind, no one deserved it more.

Mary's tenure as First Lady is an interesting study; her time in the White House is rife with actions to admire, to censure, and by which to be simply befuddled. One historian has said that, had there been no Civil War during Lincoln's administration, Mary would have gone down as one of the greatest first ladies in American history, given her exquisite education, taste, and social refinement. The stress of the war, however, was not something her nervous temperament could handle. Perhaps. But Mary was still a Todd, and, as Stephen Berry showed in his excellent book *House of Abraham* (2007), she inherited a quick temper, a caustic wit, and an ennobled air. This last trait was a difficult one for her to reconcile as First Lady — her position in fact inflated it — and caused her vast amounts of criticism in Washington.

Quite simply, Mary Lincoln considered herself and her family to be the royalty of America, especially during the first year of the administration and before the death of son Willie in February 1862. Commissioner of Public Buildings Benjamin B. French called Mary Lincoln “The Queen,” “The American Queen,” and, more fully, “‘The Republican Queen’ who plagues me half to death with wants with which it is impossible to comply.”

Horatio Nelson Taft, an examiner for the U.S. Patent Office and father of Willie and Tad's closest playmates, twice recorded in his diary the frequency with which one saw Mary Lincoln seated in her carriage outside a merchant's store while the clerk would bring goods out for her inspection. “Here is the carriage of Mrs. Lincoln before a dry goods Store, her footman has gone into the Store. The Clerk is just going out to the carriage (where Mrs. L is waiting) with some pieces of goods for her to choose from. I should rather think that she would have a better chance at the goods if she was to go into the Store but then she *might* get jostled and gazed at and that too would be doing just as the common people do.”

Mary's entitled attitude caused her to alienate practically all of her family and friends during her White House years. Mary's sister, Ann Todd Smith, likened her sister's attitude to “Queen Victoria's Court.” Mary even managed to alienate her closest and oldest friend, Mercy (Levering) Conkling, who wrote to her son in 1863, “I have just written a letter to Mrs. Lincoln. Only think of me writing to her *royal highness*.”

It was within this social climate that Mary Lincoln, in January 1862, decided to forgo the traditional state dinners at the White House and instead hold a lavish, invitation-only ball. The ball, on February 5, 1862 — only seven months after the Union disaster at First Manassas and less than four months after the Union rout at Ball's Bluff — saw more than 500 of the capital's elite citizens spend the night at the White House reveling in exclusivity and consuming huge amounts of food and drink, all purchased with government money.

The dinner was considered “one of the finest displays of gastronomic art ever seen in this country. It was prepared by Maillard of New York, and cost thousands of dollars,” reported the *New York Tribune*. “In the center of the table was a looking-glass, and along it were ranged the fancy pieces of confectionery. At the head of the table was a large helmet, in sugar, signifying War. Then a large fancy basket of sugar — a pagoda, temple of liberty, large pagoda, cornucopia covered with sugared fruits and frosted sugar, large fountain of frosted sugar, and sitting around it candy glasses apparently full of frothing beer, four beehives, handsome Swiss cottage in sugar and cake. Chinese pagoda, and on a side-table was a very large fort, named Fort Pickens, made of cake, and sugared. The inside was filled with quails, candied. The tables fairly bent under expensive luxuries heaped one upon another.”

As was the journalistic custom of the time, newspapers explained in detail the fashions of all the ladies present, especially Mrs. Lincoln. It was reported that the First Lady wore a white satin dress with a train a yard in length, trimmed with black

(continued on page 9)

The Queen Must Dance

Oh! The Queen must dance!

Set all the band of scarlet clad musicians
to the white portals of the palace fare!
Spread out a feast amidst the nation's ruins,
its sobs, its tears, its wants and its despair!
Summon the fops and fashionists around her,
the light-browed votaries of whirling grace,
And the bare-bosomed girls whose secret fancies
light at the public hint of our embrace.
Beseech the scowling envoys of false England,
of cunning France and of presuming Spain,
To honor her. A sight like this she shows them
should stir delight in every hostile vein.
And order in the crowd of sordid leeches
who drain our golden arteries right and left,
The thieves who slyly pick the common pocket,
The new court eminence, brave enough for theft
For the Queen must dance.

Oh! The Queen must dance!

What though the staid decorum of old custom
be outraged for the moment; 'tis a day,
A day well thought of and most fully chosen
to lay sobriety and care away.
What though the land with patriot blood be running
and orphaned cries and widows' homeless moans
Mix with the shrilled anguish of the wounded
and the strong soldier's lonely dying groans?
What though the sick man through his narrow window,
can see the light and hear joyous strains,
And on his loathsome pillow gasps distracted
at what may appears seem an insult to his pains?
I charge you, maids and matrons of Columbia,
to veil your faces and this thing disown.
Let her disport herself amongst her fiddlers
alone, yes, in God's awful sight, alone!
If the Queen must dance!

Oh! The Queen must dance!

Ah! woman, woman, doff your gaudy velvets,
your foreign laces and your flashy rings
And clothe your vanity in decent raincoat
and busy you about more holy things.
Go to the sufferer like the English Florence,²
call back his life or ease his dying grief,
Let all his pressing wants find ministering
from you whence justly he may claim relief.
And let us see you flitting by the camp-fire,
take the rough soldier by his honest hand,
Lift his overlabored hopes with charming spirits,
and he shall bless your name throughout the land,
Were it not better, than half leagued with traitors,
and quite suspected, to enact a part
That glitters to the vulgar fancy only
and shows no traces of either brain or heart,
If the Queen must dance?

Oh! The Queen must dance!

Like Hebrew Miriam, then, strike up the timbrel³
before the heroes of your native West;
The first who used the empty gun and bayonet,
the foremost soldiers of the war confessed.
Nor yet forget the patient ranks awaiting
the tardy winter, for the land they love;
There is no hand uplifted in this struggle
that is not consecrate by God above.
Oh! Dance and sing before these noble soldiers
and make their courage equal their great cause,
A cause on which the nation's future glory
rests as great nature rests upon her laws.
On with the strong banner to the outposts!
Where'er it waved of right in days of yore;
And close behind it, treading on to music,
Let the thick columns of our warriors pour;
If the Queen must dance.

(continued from page 7)

lace flounces festooned up with white and black ribbon. "The dress was, of course, décolleté and with short sleeves displaying the exquisitely molded shoulders and arms of our fair 'Republican Queen,' the whiteness of which were absolutely dazzling," reported *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*. "Her head-dress was a coronet wreath of black and white crape myrtle, which was in perfect keeping with her regal style of beauty." Her jewelry consisted of pearl necklace, earrings, brooch and bracelets.

Presidential secretary John Nicolay wrote to his fiancée the day after the ball that it was "a brilliant success," while Ben: Perley Poore, a journalist and Washington insider, later wrote of the evening that "it was compared to the ball given by the Duchess of Richmond at Brussels the night before Waterloo." Yet, despite the ball's success -- or maybe because of it -- the criticism of the Lincolns, and Mary in particular, was merciless. The *New York Herald* called the event "A social blunder greatly to be regretted;" the *Sandusky [Ohio] Register* called the event "so out of all sympathy with the travail of the Nation, that no plea can excuse it;" while the *Cleveland Herald* said it was "about as appropriate as a game feast and gallopadés at a funeral" and compared it to "a burning Rome and a fiddling Nero."

What all of these critics did not apparently know or understand was that the Lincolns

attended their ball that evening with hearts full of anxiety over their 11-year-old son Willie, who was sick in bed on the second floor of the Executive Mansion. Willie had been ill for some days, most likely with typhoid fever, and the Lincolns nearly cancelled the ball until their doctor said Willie was improving. Still, the president and first lady left their guests multiple times during the party to go upstairs and sit with their sick boy. Two weeks later, Willie died.

This was the climate in which Boker, a prominent Philadelphia poet and playwright, penned "The Queen Must Dance." According to Boker's biographer, the poet's satire "merely expressed a disapprobation which was general. It was severe, but it was sincerely meant and widely recopied." While Boker published numerous plays and multiple volumes of poetry, including a Civil War-themed volume titled *Poems of the War* in 1864, "The Queen Must Dance" was never reprinted in any of his books.

Jason Emerson is an independent historian and journalist. He is the author of numerous articles and books on the Lincoln family, including *The Madness of Mary Lincoln* (2007) and *Giant in the Shadows: The Life of Robert T. Lincoln* (2012). His next book, *Lincoln's Lover: Mary Lincoln in Poetry* (Mayhaven Publishing), in which "The Queen Must Dance" is included, is due by the end of 2015.



Emerson Notes

1. In addition to being a writer, Boker was also a trained lawyer and a diplomat. President Ulysses S. Grant appointed him U.S. Minister to Turkey in 1871. He later became U.S. Minister to Russia in 1875. He and abolitionist C. G. Leland arranged for the printing of 48 copies of the Emancipation Proclamation in 1864, each one signed by Lincoln, Seward, and Nicolay, and sold for the benefit of wounded soldiers.
2. Florence Nightingale, English social reformer and statistician, and the founder of modern nursing.
3. A reference to Exodus 15:20 in the Old Testament of the Bible, which states, "Then Miriam the prophet, Aaron's sister, took a timbrel [small hand drum or tambourine] in her hand, and all the women followed her, with timbrels and dancing." Miriam, who was also the sister of Moses, led this song of victory for her people after the waters of the Red Sea parted.

"LINCOLN'S LEGACY OF JUSTICE AND OPPORTUNITY: OUR CHALLENGE A CENTURY AND A HALF LATER"



On Saturday, May 2, 2015, at the Ballroom of the President Abraham Lincoln Hotel in Springfield, Illinois, Dr. Edna Greene Medford, Professor and Chair of History, Howard University and an ALA Board Member, gave the principal opening address for the two days of commemoration of the 150th Anniversary of the death and funeral of Abraham Lincoln. A luncheon crowd of more than 200 were joined by others who attended to hear Professor Medford speak on historic as well as contemporary questions of race relations. The event was the Abraham Lincoln Association's principal participation in the commemoration events.

Photograph: Jerrie Blakely, President of the Springfield & Central Illinois African American History Museum, Nell Clay, Dr. Edna Greene Medford, Kathryn Harris, Vice President of the ALA, and Barbara Baldon.

The 150th Anniversary of Lincoln's Death and Funeral

Words cannot describe the reenactment of Lincoln's funeral in Springfield on May 2nd and 3rd, 2015. Many ALA Board Members participated in the events, as did many members. For those wishing to see the events unfold in Oak Ridge Cemetery, you can visit C-SPAN 3 for a full coverage of the events there on May 3. On these two pages are photographs of the reenactment as well as other events during the two days. Thanks to those who contributed these photographs. Descriptions are not necessary. We hope that you are transformed as were many attending that day by a reverent and respectful memory of Abraham Lincoln and his tragic death.



The 150th Anniversary of Lincoln's Death and Funeral



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Chief Justice Rita B. Garman First Recipient of *Spirit of Lincoln Award*

By Kate Shepherd

The Abraham Lincoln Association awarded Illinois Supreme Court Chief Justice Rita B. Garman with its first-ever *Spirit of Lincoln Award*. The award was established by the ALA to recognize individuals who have displayed the spirit of Abraham Lincoln in their professional careers for the betterment of humanity. The award was presented by Robert A. Stuart, Jr., President of the ALA, at the Sangamon County Bar Association Law Day luncheon, on May 1, 2015. The award is a bust of Abraham Lincoln by Illinois sculptor John McClarey specifically created for this award.

President Stuart stated that in Presi-

dent Lincoln's legal career he represented integrity, professional ability, reverence for the law, fair-mindedness, professional neutrality, goodwill, and collegiality. The ALA believes that Justice Garman has upheld these principles as the longest-serving female judge and the second-longest serving judge in Illinois. She also has received a lifetime achievement award from the Illinois Judges Association, and she was named Person of the Year by *Chicago Lawyer* magazine in 2013.

This award may be given to any individual who exhibits the spirit of Abraham Lincoln.



Illinois Supreme Court Chief Justice Rita B. Garman, recipient of the *Spirit of Lincoln Award*