Abraham Lincoln

FROM HIS OWN WORDS

AND

CONTEMPORARY ACCOUNTS

"I Would Save the Union"

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Abraham Lincoln

From His Own Words
and
Contemporary Accounts

EDITED by Roy Edgar Appleman

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UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
FRED A. SEATON, *Secretary*

NATIONAL PARK
CONRAD L. WIRTH, *Director*

INTRODUCTION

THE Lincoln story is ever fresh. It springs eternal from the deep current of human tribute that wells up to do homage to man's achievement in the realm of the moral and spiritual. That is why the obscure birth of a boy in a rude frontier log cabin was destined to unfold a chronicle that has become a heritage for the ages. So it is that the massive seated figure enshrined in the white temple in the Nation's Capital looks down silently but movingly upon the pilgrims who come to feel the atmosphere of man's true greatness.

This was the man who split rails in frontier clearings, guided flatboats over the streams of the prairies and on the bosom of the Father of Waters, ate meagre lunches of cheese and crackers in gloomy despair in a barren law office, traveled the circuit and there enlisted law on the side of justice, cheered the countryside with a fund of humor, matched in skill and force of argument the advocates of antiquity in the historic debates with Douglas, freed the slaves, spoke the First and Second Inaugurals and the Gettysburg Address, and held in his hands unbroken at last the ties that bound together a people and made a nation.

Lincoln, in the year before his death, told a friend that he had never read an entire novel in his life. This same man could carry a volume of Euclid in his pocket for months as his constant companion. He was ever concerned with and engrossed in realities; yet his instinct of interpreting human nature in terms of fable was as rich as Aesop's. His language matched the Anglo-Saxon of Shakespeare and the beauty and simplicity of the Old Testament. He was a patient, canny politician. He was self-reliant. The resources within himself were large and ample. He listened with courteous patience to the thoughts of others, but in the end the independence of his own judgment resolved the decision.

Any search for the fountains of Lincoln's greatness must deal with his astonishing power over words. His mental processes worked with fine precision in resolving the shadowy substance of thought into durable expression. No one with discernment can sit down and read through Lincoln's collected works, speech by speech, letter by letter, document by document, without knowing that here was a man who had mastered the language of his race.

Lincoln was only a little past 56, although he looked years older, when death came. There is every evidence that his moral, spiritual, and intellectual powers were still developing. The Second Inaugural was given to the world only by a margin of six weeks. One is left to speculate upon the what might have been. Had the assassin's hand been stayed, continued manifestations of political wisdom and additional exalted classics of the English tongue surely would have had their birth in this man's mind and would have matured to become earthly realities, enriching the heritage of our people and all mankind.

It is the purpose of this book to bring together a few of the more important and significant passages of Lincoln's letters, speeches, and state documents, together

with firsthand observations and appraisals of the man by some of those who saw him with contemporary eyes as he moved from day to day through the varied experiences that destiny had ordained for him. The illustrations are intended to supplement and illuminate the text and are themselves contemporary historical documents.

ROY EDGAR APPLEMAN.

Region One Headquarters, National Park Service,
Richmond, Virginia.
February 23, 1942.

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Among the several full standing portraits of Lincoln, this one has captured better perhaps than any other the commanding dignity of the man, an intangible quality that can be felt rather than described. This portrait was made in Washington on February 9, 1864, by Mathew Brady. Reproduced from a rare print in the Library of Congress.

1. Autobiography

In response to a request, and after some hesitation, Lincoln wrote to Jesse W. Fell on December 20, 1859, giving a brief account of his early years. Fell sent a copy of the manuscript, together with other facts relating to Lincoln's political and legislative career, to a friend in Chester County, Pennsylvania, Mr. Joseph H. Lewis, who used the material in preparing an ably written and extensive memoir on Lincoln which appeared in many papers of the country in January 1860. This memoir helped to prepare the way, especially among the Pennsylvania delegation, for Lincoln's nomination at Chicago in the following June. Lincoln's letter to Fell is a simple modest account of his life up to that time and is characterized by his habitual economy of expression. It is one of the most extensive statements he ever committed to writing concerning the main events of his own life.

My dear Sir: Herewith is a little sketch, as you requested. There is not much of it, for the reason, I suppose, that there is not much of me. If anything be made out of it, I wish it to be modest, and not to go beyond the material. If it were thought necessary to incorporate anything from any of my speeches, I suppose there would be no objection. Of course it must not appear to have been written by myself.

Yours very truly,

A. Lincoln.

I was born February 12, 1809, in Hardin County, Kentucky. My parents were both born in Virginia, of undistinguished families—second families, perhaps I should say. My mother, who died in my tenth year, was of a family of the name of Hanks, some of whom now reside in Adams, and others in Macon County, Illinois. My paternal grandfather, Abraham Lincoln, emigrated from Rockingham County, Virginia, to Kentucky about 1781 or 1782, where a year or two later he was killed by the Indians, not in battle, but by stealth, when he was laboring to open a farm in the forest. His ancestors, who were Quakers, went to Virginia from Berks County, Pennsylvania. An effort to identify them with the New England family of the same name ended in nothing more definite than a similarity of Christian names in both families, such as Enoch, Levi, Mordecai, Solomon, Abraham, and the like.

My father, at the death of his father, was but six years of age, and he grew up literally without education. He removed from Kentucky to what is now Spencer County, Indiana, in my eighth year. We reached our new home about the time the State came into the Union. It was a wild region, with many bears and other wild animals still in the woods. There I grew up. There were some schools, so called, but no qualification was ever required of a teacher beyond "readin', writin', and cipherin' " to the rule of three. If a straggler supposed to understand Latin happened to sojourn in the neighborhood, he was looked upon as a wizard. There

was absolutely nothing to excite ambition for education. Of course, when I came of age I did not know much. Still, somehow, I could read, write, and cipher to the rule of three, but that was all. I have not been to school since. The little advance I now have upon this store of education, I have picked up from time to time under the pressure of necessity.

I was raised to farm work, which I continued till I was twenty-two. At twenty-two I came to Illinois, Macon County. Then I got to New Salem, at that time in Sangamon, now in Menard County, where I remained a year as a sort of clerk in a store. Then came the Black Hawk war; and I was elected a captain of volunteers, a success which gave me more pleasure than any I have had since. I went the campaign, was elated, ran for the legislature the same year (1832), and was beaten—the only time I ever have been beaten by the people. The next and three succeeding biennial elections I was elected to the legislature. I was not a candidate afterward. During this legislative period I had studied law, and removed to Springfield to practise it. In 1846 I was once elected to the lower House of Congress. Was not a candidate for reelection. From 1849 to 1854, both inclusive, practised law more assiduously than ever before. Always a Whig in politics: and generally on the Whig electoral tickets, making active canvasses. I was losing interest in politics when the repeal of the Missouri compromise aroused me again. What I have done since then is pretty well known.

If any personal description of me is thought desirable, it may be said I am, in height, six feet four inches, nearly; lean in flesh, weighing on an average one hundred and eighty pounds; dark complexion, with coarse black hair and grey eyes. No other marks or brands recollected.

Lincoln to J. W. Fell, December 20, 1859.

2. The Mother of Abraham Lincoln

Nancy Hanks Lincoln, the mother of Abraham, died in 1818. She was probably 35 years old. Neither the time nor place of her birth is definitely known. Hers were the short and simple annals of the poor. Only a few obscure people had ever known Nancy Hanks Lincoln. It was not until 30 years after her death that her son reached sufficient fame to cause anyone to inquire after his mother. By that time nearly all of the few people who had known or seen this woman in life had died or disappeared. Only one or two remained to give their scanty recollections of Abraham's mother. Among them was William Wood, an industrious and reliable man, who moved from Kentucky to Indiana in 1809. He settled in Perry County in a region that subsequently became part of Spencer County at a place that later proved to be one and a half miles north of the Indiana home of the Lincolns. For over 2 years Wood knew Nancy Hanks Lincoln and was her neighbor in that then sparsely settled region. He sat up all of one night with Mrs. Lincoln during the period of her final illness. The testimony given below is an excerpt from a statement Wood made to William Herndon in 1865 when he was 82 years of age.

Abe got his mind and fixed morals from his good mother. Mrs. Lincoln was a very smart, intelligent, and intellectual woman; she was naturally strong-minded; was a gentle, kind, and tender woman, a Christian of the Baptist persuasion, she was a remarkable woman truly and indeed. I do not think she absolutely died of the milk sickness entirely. Probably this helped to seal her fate.

William Wood's Statement to Herndon, September 15, 1865.

3. His Physical Strength

Abraham Lincoln's physical strength has become legendary. One of his fellow townsmen at New Salem, R. B. Rutledge, a brother of the storied "Ann," recalls this quality of the young Lincoln.

Trials of strength were very common among the pioneers. Lifting weights, as heavy timbers piled one upon another, was a favorite pastime, and no workman in the neighborhood could at all cope with Mr. Lincoln in this direction. I have seen him frequently take a barrel of whisky by the chimes and lift it up to his face as if to drink out of the bunghole. This feat he could accomplish with the greatest ease. I never saw him taste or drink a drop of any kind of spirituous liquors.

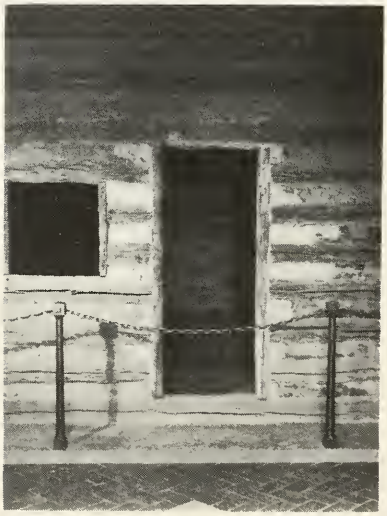
R. B. Rutledge to Herndon, October 1866.

4. Ann Rutledge

Perhaps the most reliable statement extant concerning the relationship of Ann Rutledge and Abraham Lincoln to each other is to be found in the words of her younger brother. One of the most interesting speculations regarding Lincoln's life concerns the effect upon his personality and career of his remembrance of the lovely Ann Rutledge and of her tragic and untimely death. Apparently, Lincoln almost never referred in after years to this episode of his life. The two selections that follow are from letters written to William Herndon by R. B. Rutledge, Ann's brother.

You make some pertinent inquiries concerning my sister and the relations which existed between herself and Mr. Lincoln. My sister Ann was born January 7, 1813, and died August 25, 1835. She was born in Kentucky and died in Menard County, Illinois. In 1830, my sister being then but seventeen years of age, a stranger calling himself John McNeil came to New Salem. He boarded with Mr. Cameron and was keeping a store with a Samuel Hill. A friendship grew up between McNeil and Ann which ripened apace and resulted in an engagement to marry. McNeil's real name was McNamar. It seems that his father had failed in business, and his son, a very young man, had determined to make a fortune, pay off his father's debts and restore him to his former social and financial standing. With this view he left his home clandestinely, and in order to avoid pursuit by his parents changed his name. His conduct was strictly hightoned, honest, and

The two views at top and left are of the traditional Lincoln birthplace cabin preserved in the Memorial Building at Abraham Lincoln National Historical Park, near Hodgenville, Ky. The date of the older photograph of the cabin at the lower right is unknown, but it probably was taken 50 or more years ago.



moral, and his object, whatever any may think of the deception which he practiced in changing his name, entirely praiseworthy.

He prospered in business and, pending his engagement with Ann, he revealed his true name, returned to Ohio [actually New York] to relieve his parents from their embarrassments, and to bring the family with him to Illinois. On his return to Ohio, several years having elapsed, he found his father in declining health or dead, and perhaps the circumstances of the family prevented his immediate return to New Salem. At all events he was absent two or three years.

In the meantime Mr. Lincoln paid his addresses to Ann, continued his visits and attentions regularly, and those resulted in an engagement to marry, conditional to an honorable release from the contract with McNamar. There is no kind of doubt as to the existence of this engagement. David Rutledge urged Ann to consummate it, but she refused until such time as she could see McNamar, inform him of the change in her feelings, and seek an honorable release. Mr. Lincoln lived in the village, McNamar did not return, and in August 1835 Ann sickened and died. The effect upon Mr. Lincoln's mind was terrible; he became plunged in despair, and many of his friends feared that reason would desert her throne. His extraordinary emotions were regarded as strong evidence of the existence of the tenderest relations between himself and the deceased.

My sister was esteemed the brightest mind of the family, was studious, devoted to her duties of whatever character, and possessed a remarkably amiable and lovable disposition. She had light hair and blue eyes.

R. B. Rutledge to Herndon, October 1866.

The facts are William Berry first courted Ann and was rejected; afterwards Samuel Hill; then John McNamar, which resulted in an engagement to marry at some future time. He, McNamar, left the county on business, was gone some years; in the meantime and during McNamar's absence, Mr. Lincoln courted Ann and engaged to marry her, on the completion of the study of law. In this I am corroborated by James McRutledge, a cousin about her age, and who was in her confidence. He says in a letter to me just received: "Ann told me once in coming from a camp meeting on Rock Creek, that engagements made too far ahead sometimes failed, that one had failed (meaning her engagement with McNamar), and gave me to understand that as soon as certain studies were completed she and Lincoln would be married."

R. B. Rutledge to Herndon, November 21, 1866.

5. Advice to a Young Friend

In 1848, while serving in Washington as a Congressman from Illinois, Lincoln received a letter from his young law partner, William H. Herndon, complaining of some fancied grievances he held against certain Illinois personages. The following excerpt from Lincoln's reply discloses not only his sound advice to young Herndon but reveals something of his own character as well.

The way for a young man to rise is to improve himself every way he can, never suspecting that anybody wishes to hinder him. Allow me to assure you that suspicion and jealousy never did help any man in any situation. There may sometimes be ungenerous attempts to keep a young man down; and they will succeed, too, if he allows his mind to be diverted from its true channel to brood over the attempted injury. Cast about, and see if this feeling has not injured every person you have ever known to fall into it.

Now, in what I have said, I am sure you will suspect nothing but sincere friendship. I would save you from a fatal error. You have been a laborious, studious young man. You are far better informed on almost all subjects than I have ever been. You cannot fail in any laudable object, unless you allow your mind to be improperly directed. I have somewhat the advantage of you in the world's experience, merely by being older; and it is this that induces me to advise.

Lincoln to Herndon, July 10, 1848.

6. Befriending a Soldier's Widow

William H. Herndon tells of a stirring scene in which Lincoln's righteous indignation was thoroughly aroused.

I once saw Mr. Lincoln look more than a man; he was inspired by the occasion. There was a man living here by the name of Erastus Wright; he was, his business rather was, to obtain pensions for the soldiers of the Revolution's heirs, widows, etc., the soldiers of 1812's widows, heirs, etc. An old revolutionary soldier's widow applied to Wright, about 1849–50 to get her pension, which amounted to about $400. Wright made out the papers, got the pension, and charged the poor widow $200, half of what he got. The poor old woman came into our office quite blind, deaf, and on crutches, and stated to Mr. Lincoln her case. Lincoln at once sympathized with the woman and said: "Wright shall pay you back $100 or more." Lincoln went and saw Wright in person. Wright refused to refund. The old woman commenced suit, Lincoln giving security for costs. The case finally got before the jury with all the facts of the case fully told. Lincoln loomed up, rose up to be about nine feet high, grew warm, then eloquent with feelings, then blasting as with a thunderbolt the miscreant who had robbed one that helped the world to liberty, to *Wright's* inalienable rights. Lincoln was inspired if man was ever inspired. The jury became indignant and would have torn Wright up, mobbed in a minute, burst into tears at one moment and then into indignation the next. The judge and spectators did the same, according to the term that Lincoln gave his eloquence. The jury made Wright disgorge all except about $50.

Herndon to Jesse W. Weik, November 12, 1885.

This photograph gives a clear impression of Lincoln's physical proportions. It probably was made in 1860 and is his earliest full length portrait. A print of this photograph was found in 1931 in the effects of Henry Kirk Brown, famous sculptor and friend of Lincoln. Reproduced from a photograph in the possession of the L. C. Handy Studios, Washington, D. C.

"7. You Shall Go to Work"

As his station in life slowly improved over that of his poor relatives, Lincoln was frequently called upon for assistance. He always displayed a keen interest in the welfare of those who had been close to him in his youth, especially his stepmother, and gave liberally to their aid from his limited means. The following letter to his step-brother, however, shows that he was not to be imposed upon in this respect. It also bespeaks a regard for the dignity and value of labor that is in the best American tradition.

Dear Johnston: Your request for eighty dollars I do not think it best to comply with now. At the various times when I have helped you a little you have said to me, "We can get along very well now"; but in a very short time I find you in the same difficulty again. Now, this can only happen by some defect in your conduct. What that defect is, I think I know. You are not lazy, and still you are an idler. I doubt whether, since I saw you, you have done a good whole day's work in any one day. You do not very much dislike to work, and still you do not work much, merely because it does not seem to you that you could get much for it. This habit of uselessly wasting time is the whole difficulty; it is vastly important to you, and still more so to your children, that you should break the habit. It is more important to them, because they have longer to live, and can keep out of an idle habit before they are in it, easier than they can get out after they are in.

You are now in need of some money; and what I propose is, that you shall go to work, "tooth and nail," for somebody who will give you money for it. Let father and your boys take charge of your things at home, prepare for a crop, and make the crop, and you go to work for the best money wages, or in discharge of any debt you owe, that you can get; and, to secure you a fair reward for your labor, I now promise you, that for every dollar you will, between this and the first of May, get for your own labor, either in money or as your own indebtedness, I will then give you one other dollar. By this, if you hire yourself at ten dollars a month, from me you will get ten more, making twenty dollars a month for your work. In this I do not mean you shall go off to St. Louis, or the lead mines, or the gold mines in California, but I mean for you to go at it for the best wages you can get close to home in Coles County. Now, if you will do this, you will be soon out of debt, and, what is better, you will have a habit that will keep you from getting in debt again. But, if I should now clear you out of debt, next year you would be just as deep in as ever.. You say you would almost give your place in heaven for seventy or eighty dollars. Then you value your place in heaven very cheap, for I am sure you can, with the offer I make, get the seventy or eighty dollars for four or five months' work. You say if I will furnish you the money you will deed me the land, and, if you don't pay the money back, you will deliver possession. Nonsense! If you can't now live with the land, how will you then live without it? You have always been kind to me, and I do not mean to be unkind to you. On

the contrary, if you will but follow my advice, you will find it worth more than eighty times eighty dollars to you.

LINCOLN TO JOHN D. JOHNSTON, JANUARY 2, 1851.

8. THAT NAME "ABE"

The instances were no doubt rare when Mr. Lincoln in mature years was addressed as "Abe." Lincoln had dignity. His presence imperceptibly restrained a cheap familiarity. One can sense this about the man from some of his photographs. Two contemporaries and close friends of Abraham Lincoln discuss how people of his day addressed him.

But although I have heard of cheap fellows, professing that they were wont to address *him* as "Abe," I never knew of any one who ever did it in my presence. Lincoln disdained ceremony, but he gave no license for being called "Abe." His preference was being called "Lincoln" with no handle at all. I don't recollect of his applying the prefix "Mr." to any one. When he spoke to Davis, he called him "Judge," but he called us all on the circuit by our family names merely, except Lamon, whom every one called "Hill." We spoke of him as "*Uncle Abe*," but to his face we called him "Lincoln." This suited him; he *very* much disliked to be called "Mr. President." This I knew, and I never called him so once. He didn't even like to be called "Mr." He preferred plain "Lincoln."

HENRY C. WHITNEY, *Life on the Circuit with Lincoln.*

In all my journeyings with him I never heard any person call him "Abe," not even his partner, Herndon. There was an impalpable garment of dignity about him which forbade such familarity. I have read pretended conversations with him in books and newspapers where his interlocutors addressed him as Abe this or Abe that, but I am sure that all such colloquies are imaginary.

HORACE WHITE, *The Lincoln and Douglas Debates.*

9. LINCOLN IN HIS LAW OFFICE

Much of the valuable Herndon material on Lincoln is in the form of letters Herndon wrote to Jesse W. Weik when the latter was collaborating in the preparation of the work commonly known as Herndon's Lincoln. *The following excerpt from one such letter gives an intimate glimpse into the Lincoln and Herndon law office in Springfield. It also is a valuable comment on the man Lincoln. The second selection, a recollection of Whitney's, discloses the extraordinary fiscal and accounting arrangement that existed in the Lincoln and Herndon partnership.*

As I said to you, a law office is a dry place. There is nothing in it but work and toil. Mr. Lincoln's habit was to get down to his office about 9 a. m., unless he was out on the circuit, which was about six or eight months in the year. Our office never

was a headquarters for politics. Mr. Lincoln never stopped in the street to have a social chat with anyone; he was not a social man, too reflective, too abstracted; he never attended political gatherings till the thing was organized, and then he was ready to make a speech, willing and ready to reap any advantage that grew out of it, ready and anxious for the office it afforded, if any in the political world. If a man came into our office on business, he stated his case, Lincoln listening generally attentively while the man told over the facts of his case. Generally Lincoln would take a little time to consider. When he had sufficiently considered, he gave his opinion of the case plainly, directly, and sharply; he said to the man: "Your case is a good one," or "a bad one," as the case might be. Mr. Lincoln was not a good conversationalist, except it was in the political world, nor was he a good listener; his great anxiety to tell a story made him burst in and consume the day in telling stories. Lincoln was not a general reader, except in politics. On Sundays he would come down to his office, sometimes bringing Tad and Willie and sometimes not, would write his letters, write declarations and other law papers, write out the heads of his speeches, take notes of what he intended to say. How do you expect to get much of interest out of this dry bone, a law office, when you know that Lincoln was a sad, gloomy, melancholic, and an abstracted man? Lincoln would sometimes lie down in the office to rest on the sofa, his feet on two or three chairs or up against the wall. In this position he would reflect, decide on what he was going to do and how do it; and then he would jump up, pick up his hat and run, the good Lord knows where.

HERNDON TO WEIK, FEBRUARY 24, 1887.

The system of business was as slovenly as the office itself: one day, Lincoln suddenly thrust his hand down deep into his pantaloons pocket, and fished up two dollars and fifty cents, which he gave to Herndon, saying: "Here, Billy, is your share of the fee for the suit before Squire ———."

This transaction had every semblance of reality and good faith; yet I felt bound somehow to consider it as a bit of pleasantry; and accordingly I said incredulously: "Is that the way this law firm keeps its accounts?" "That's *jest* the way;" promptly replied Lincoln: "Billy and I never had the scratch of a pen between us; we *jest* divide as we go along:" and Herndon confirmed this statement of an extraordinary occurrence by a nod.

WHITNEY, *Life on the Circuit with Lincoln.*

10. JUDGE DAVIS APPRAISES LINCOLN, THE LAWYER

Lincoln's career as a lawyer was closely bound up with the old eighth Illinois judicial circuit. Lincoln loved the life of the circuit, and he became one of its best known personages. Judge David Davis, who later became a Justice of the United States Supreme Court, presided over court on the circuit a large part of the time, and Lincoln tried cases before him perhaps hundreds of times. No one was in a better position than Judge Davis to make an estimate of Lincoln's professional traits and talents.

Springfield home of Abraham Lincoln. When bought in 1844, it was 1½ stories. In the yard is Lincoln with two of his sons, Willie and Tad. Reproduced from photo taken in 1860.

An exterior view of the Lincoln and Herndon law office of 1860. It was upstairs and at back of building. The two large windows on the lower left apparently opened into the office. Here Lincoln formulated many of his political statements. Reproduced from a photograph made in 1886.

In all the elements that constitute the great lawyer, he had few equals. He was great both at *nisi prius* and before an appellate tribunal. He seized the strong points of a cause, and presented them with clearness and great compactness. His mind was logical and direct, and he did not indulge in extraneous discussion. Generalities and platitudes had no charms for him. An unfailing vein of humor never deserted him; and he was always able to chain the attention of court and jury, when the cause was the most uninteresting, by the appropriateness of his anecdotes.

His power of comparison was large, and he rarely failed in a legal discussion to use that mode of reasoning. The framework of his mental and moral being was honesty, and a wrong cause was poorly defended by him. The ability which some eminent lawyers possess, of explaining away the bad points of a cause by ingenious sophistry, was denied him. In order to bring into full activity his great powers, it was necessary that he should be convinced of the right and justice of the matter which he advocated. When so convinced, whether the cause was great or small, he was usually successful. He read lawbooks but little, except when the cause in hand made it necessary; yet he was usually self-reliant, depending on his own resources, and rarely consulting his brother lawyers, either on the management of his case or on the legal questions involved.

To his honor be it said, that he never took from a client, even when the cause was gained, more than he thought the service was worth and the client could reasonably afford to pay. The people where he practiced law were not rich, and his charges were always small.

His presence on the circuit was watched for with interest, and never failed to produce joy and hilarity. When casually absent, the spirits of both bar and people were depressed. He was not fond of controversy, and would compromise a lawsuit whenever practicable.

David Davis in Speech Given at Indianapolis, Quoted in Ward H. Lamon, *The Life of Abraham Lincoln.*

11. Lincoln Interprets the Declaration of Independence

The discussion stage of the great controversy over slavery reached its climax on the speaker's platform, in the formulation of political philosophy, and in Court decisions during the 1850's. The Dred Scott Decision was announced by the Supreme Court on March 7, 1857. Lincoln held that the Court had made a bad decision and had wrongly interpreted the law of the land. In a great speech a few months after the Dred Scott Decision had been handed down he appealed to the Declaration of Independence and inquired into the intentions of the framers and the meaning of some of the stirring clauses of that famous document in support of his view.

I think the authors of that notable instrument intended to include *all* men, but they did not intend to declare all men equal *in all respects.* They did not mean

to say all were equal in color, size, intellect, moral developments, or social capacity. They defined with tolerable distinctness in what respects they did consider all men created equal—equal with "certain inalienable rights, among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." This they said, and this they meant. They did not mean to assert the obvious untruth that all were then actually enjoying that equality, nor yet that they were about to confer it immediately upon them. In fact, they had no power to confer such a boon. They meant simply to declare the right, so that enforcement of it might follow as fast as circumstances should permit.

They meant to set up a standard maxim for free society, which should be familiar to all, and revered by all; constantly looked to, constantly labored for, and even though never perfectly attained, constantly approximated, and thereby constantly spreading and deepening its influence and augmenting the happiness and value of life to all people of all colors everywhere. The assertion that "all men are created equal" was of no practical use in effecting our separation from Great Britain; and it was placed in the Declaration not for that, but for future use. Its authors meant it to be—as, thank God, it is now proving itself—a stumbling-block to all those who in after times might seek to turn a free people back into the hateful paths of despotism. They knew the proneness of prosperity to breed tyrants, and they meant when such should reappear in this fair land and commence their vocation, they should find left for them at least one hard nut to crack.

LINCOLN SPRINGFIELD SPEECH, JUNE 26, 1857.

12. "A HOUSE DIVIDED"

On June 16, 1858, Lincoln took one of the most fateful steps of his career. The occasion was a speech delivered at the close of the Republican State Convention of Illinois which had just nominated him as the Republican Party's candidate for United States Senator. Before delivering his speech, Lincoln, on one of the rare occasions when he asked advice, called together a small group of party leaders and close friends and read to them the opening paragraph. Should he deliver it as written? With only one exception they all advised against it. They said to do so would bring ruin to him and the party in the forthcoming election. The one exception was William Herndon, Lincoln's law partner. He urged him to deliver it as written and declared that if he did so it would make him President. Lincoln gave the speech unchanged. As was foreseen by the shrewd party leaders, the advanced view caused alarm, and in the ensuing campaign Douglas made political capital of this fact. Lincoln was defeated; but the speech, and those that followed almost immediately in the famous debate with Douglas, marked Lincoln as a national figure.

Mr. President and Gentlemen of the Convention: If we could first know where we are, and whither we are tending, we could better judge what to do, and how to do it. We are now far into the fifth year since a policy was initiated with the avowed

object and confident promise of putting an end to slavery agitation. Under the operation of that policy, that agitation has not only not ceased, but has constantly augmented. In my opinion, it will not cease until a crisis shall have been reached and passed. "A house divided against itself cannot stand." I believe this government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free. I do not expect the Union to be dissolved—I do not expect the house to fall—but I do expect it will cease to be divided. It will become all one thing, or all the other. Either the opponents of slavery will arrest the further spread of it, and place it where the public mind shall rest in the belief that it is in the course of ultimate extinction; or its advocates will push it forward till it shall become alike lawful in all the States, old as well as new, North as well as South.

Lincoln Springfield Speech, Close of Republican State Convention, June 16, 1858.

13. Power of Memory

Lincoln possessed the faculty of memory in an unusually high degree. Apparently, he could remember with ease what he thought worthwhile retaining in his mind. Here, in the words of one who saw him at work almost daily for over 16 years, one glimpses the process by which Lincoln's great speeches took form.

Mr. Lincoln had keen susceptibilities to the hints, insinuations, and suggestions of nature and of man which put him in mind of something known or unknown; hence his power and tenacity of what is called the association of ideas must have been great; his memory was exceedingly retentive, tenacious, and strong; he could write out a speech, as in the Cooper Institute speech, and then repeat it word for word, without any effort on his part. This I know about the "house divided against itself" speech; he wrote that fine effort, an argumentative one, in slips, put those slips in his hat, numbering them, and when he was done with the ideas he gathered up the scraps, put them in the right order, and wrote out his speech, read it to me before it was delivered, and in the evening delivered it just as written without notes or finished speech; his susceptibilities to all suggestions and hints enabled him through his retentive memory at will to call up readily, quickly, and accurately the associated and classified fact, person, or idea.

Herndon's "Notes and Monographs"

14. Lincoln the Speaker

Probably no one saw and heard Lincoln give more speeches than William H. Herndon. No one worked more devotedly and assiduously to promote Lincoln's political career than he. Perhaps no other person observed as carefully as did he the many little characteristics of Lincoln in the act of addressing a jury or a political gathering. Fortunately, Herdon's description of Lincoln, the speaker, is preserved for posterity in one of his many letters.

Mr. Lincoln was six feet and four inches high in his sock feet; he was consumptive by build and hence more or less stoop-shouldered. He was very tall, thin, and gaunt. When he rose to speak to the jury or to crowds of people, he stood inclined forward, was awkward, angular, ungainly, odd, and, being a very sensitive man, I think that it added to his awkwardness; he was a diffident man, somewhat, and a sensitive one, and both of these added to his oddity, awkwardness, etc., as it seemed to me. Lincoln had confidence, full and complete confidence in himself, self-thoughful, self-helping, and self-supporting, relying on no man. Lincoln's voice was, when he first began speaking, shrill, squeaking, piping, unpleasant; his general look, his form, his pose, the color of his flesh, wrinkled and dry, his sensitiveness, and his momentary diffidence, everything seemed to be against him, but he soon recovered. I can see him now, in my mind distinct. On rising to address the jury or the crowd he quite generally placed his hands behind him, the back part of his left hand resting in the palm of his right hand. As he proceeded and grew warmer, he moved his hands to the front of his person, generally interlocking his fingers and running one thumb around the other. Sometimes his hands, for a short while, would hang by his side. In still growing warmer, as he proceeded in his address, he used his hands—especially and generally his right hand—in his gestures; he used his head a great deal in speaking, throwing or jerking or moving it now here and now there, now in this position and now in that, in order to be more emphatic, to drive the idea home. Mr. Lincoln never beat the air, never sawed space with his hands, never acted for stage effect; was cool, careful, earnest, sincere, truthful, fair, self-possessed, not insulting, not dictatorial; was pleasing, good-natured; had great strong naturalness of look, pose, and act; was clear in his ideas, simple in his words, strong, terse, and demonstrative; he spoke and acted to convince individuals and masses; he used in his gestures his right hand, sometimes shooting out that long bony forefinger of his to dot an idea or to express a thought, resting his thumb on his middle finger. Bear in mind that he did not gesticulate much and *yet it is true* that every organ of his body was in motion and acted with ease, elegance, and grace, so it all looked *to me*.

As Mr. Lincoln proceeded further along with his oration, if time, place, subject, and occasion admitted of it, he gently and gradually warmed up; his shrill, squeaking, piping voice became harmonious, melodious, musical, if you please, with face somewhat aglow; his form dilated, swelled out, and he rose up a splendid form, erect, straight, and dignified; he stood square on his feet with both legs up and down, toe even with toe—that is, he did not put one foot before another; he kept his feet parallel and close to and not far from each other. When Mr. Lincoln rose up to speak, he rose slowly, steadily, firmly; he never moved much about on the stand or platform when speaking, trusting no desk, table, railing; he ran his eyes slowly over the crowd, giving them time to be at ease and to completely recover himself, *as I suppose*. He frequently took hold with his left hand, his left thumb erect, of the left lapel of his coat, keeping his right hand free to gesture in order to drive home and to clinch an idea. In his greatest inspiration he held both of his hands out

above his head at an angle of about fifty degrees, hands open or clenched according to his feelings and his ideas.

HERNDON TO BARTLETT, JULY 19, 1887.

15. THE LINCOLN-DOUGLAS DEBATE: PROLOGUE TO DESTINY

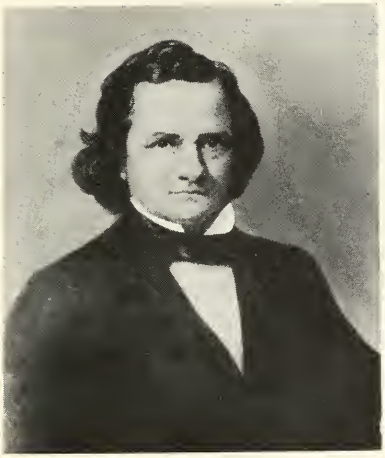
In 1858, Abraham Lincoln was the Republican, and Stephen A. Douglas the Democratic, candidate for United States Senator from Illinois. Douglas was serving as Senator at the time and was seeking reelection. Shortly after the campaign started, Lincoln, in a letter written at Chicago, July 24, challenged Douglas to a joint debate on the issues before the people. Douglas accepted and suggested that there be a joint meeting at one prominent point in each congressional district in the State, excepting the Second and Sixth, where each had already spoken. Douglas named seven places.

The great issue was over slavery and its constitutional and legal place in the Nation. The Dred Scott Decision, the Kansas-Nebraska Bill, the extension of slavery into the Territories, were the points on which the great debate dwelt. Douglas was considered the leader of the Democratic Party. His great talent and power in debate were acknowledged throughout the land. Compared with him, Lincoln was unknown beyond the borders of his own State. The political and forensic contest waged by these two men in Illinois that year caught the attention of the entire Nation. After its close the name of Lincoln, for the first time, was not altogether unfamiliar in the country at large. Douglas traveled over the State during the debate in a special train equipped with a brass cannon. Lincoln traveled as an ordinary passenger in a common coach, and there were times when he could not even find a seat.

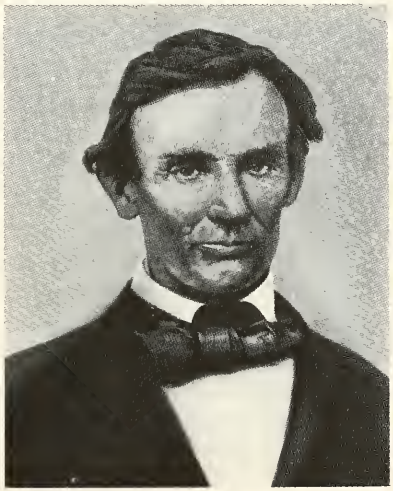
Close reasoning, iron logic, clear exposition, and honesty marked Lincoln's speeches. They may still be cited as masterpieces of political discussion. Yet Douglas won the contest, as he was returned to the Senate by a close vote of the State Legislature.

In the first selection given below an old friend of Lincoln's tells about riding with him on the way to the first debate at Ottawa. In the second, Horace White, who reported the debates for the Chicago Tribune, *relates some of his impressions of the contest.*

I went from Chicago via the morning train, which reached Ottawa at noon. Lincoln got on board at Morris. The humblest commercial traveler did not travel so unostentatiously; he was entirely alone, and carried his little baggage in his hand. He did not have a director's car, with a great retinue of flunkeys and parasites and a platform car with a cannon on it, as his distinguished competitor did. He sat with me throughout the journey; and I am thus enabled to know for myself that this remarkable man exhibited not the slightest trace of excitement or nervousness at the threshold of one of the fiercest political contests in this or in any other country. We talked about matters other than the impending debate.



Stephen Arnold Douglas. Douglas was Lincoln's rival in Illinois and national politics. At the time of the series of debates in 1858 Douglas was United States Senator from Illinois and the recognized head of the Democratic Party. He was a ready resourceful speaker. Senator Fessenden once said of him, "You may drop him in the middle of a morass, from which escape seems impossible, and before your back is turned he will have built a corduroy road across it, and be at you again and at you harder than ever." Reproduced from a print of a daguerreotype.



An interesting portrait of Lincoln made at the time of his debates with Douglas. It shows him as he appeared when his fame first burst the bounds of Illinois. This was the man against whom Douglas was matched in the Illinois Senatorial Contest of 1858. The portrait was made by C. Jackson at Pittsfield, Ill., October 1, 1858, just after Lincoln had finished making a two-hour speech in the public square. Reproduced from a print after the original ambrotype.

I merely alluded to that as we approached the goal for the contest to which he calmly and indifferently replied, that he was fully prepared.

WHITNEY, *Life on the Circuit with Lincoln.*

The first joint debate in pursuance of the agreement was at Ottawa, August 21. It took place in the open air, as did all the other debates. The State was now pretty well stirred up. Expectation was on tiptoe. . . . I had early taken a position on elevated ground overlooking the town and surrounding country. Some hours before the time fixed for the speaking, clouds of dust began to rise on the horizon along the roads leading to the place, from all points of the compass, and these clouds became more frequent and more dense as the hours rolled on.

There were large wagons with four-horse teams for the accommodation of political clubs, heavily loaded and bearing canvas signs indicating their habitation and their political belonging. Long before the speakers and reporters ascended the platform, the public square where the meeting took place, and the avenues leading thereto, were densely packed with human beings, who had also swarmed upon the platform itself and its timber supports, and had filled the windows of all houses within earshot. . . . At all the other joint debates, except those of Jonesboro and Alton, which were in the part of Illinois called "Egypt," similar crowds and scenes were witnessed, the largest assemblage of all, according to my memoranda, being at Galesburg.

Douglas ended in a whirlwind of applause [the opening debate at Ottawa] and Lincoln began to speak in a slow and rather awkward way. He had a thin tenor, or rather falsetto, voice, almost as highpitched as a boatswain's whistle. It could be heard farther and it had better wearing qualities than Douglas' rich baritone, but it was not so impressive to the listeners. Moreover, his words did not flow in a rushing, unbroken stream like Douglas'. He sometimes stopped for repairs before finishing a sentence, especially at the beginning of a speech. After getting fairly started, and lubricated, as it were, he went on without any noticeable hesitation, but he never had the ease and grace and finish of his adversary. . . . Lincoln required time to gather himself . . ., but he never failed to find his footing and to maintain it firmly when he had found it. What he lacked in mental agility and alertness he made up in moral superiority and blazing earnestness that came from his heart and went straight to those of his hearers.

The last debate took place at Alton, October 15. At this meeting Douglas' voice was scarcely audible. It was worn out by incessant speaking, not at the seven joint debates only, but at nearly a hundred separate meetings. At Alton he was so hoarse that he could not be distinctly heard more than twenty feet from the platform. Yet he maintained the same resolute bearing, the same look of calm self-confidence that he had shown at the beginning. Lincoln's voice was not in the least impaired although he had made as many speeches additional to the joint debates as Douglas had.

HORACE WHITE, *The Lincoln and Douglas Debates.*

16. A Republican Leader Defines the Slavery Issue

The Republican Party, which developed rapidly as a new political force following the enactment of the Kansas-Nebraska Bill in 1854, gathered its strength chiefly from those who opposed the extension of slavery into the Territories. In the Lincoln-Douglas Debates this issue was paramount. Perhaps nowhere can a more concise and explicit statement of the position of the Republican Party on this issue be found than in Mr. Lincoln's opening speech at Quincy in the sixth of the joint debates.

We have in this nation the element of domestic slavery. It is a matter of absolute certainty that it is a distribuing element. . . . The Republican party think it wrong—we think it is a moral, a social, and a political wrong. We think it is a wrong not confining itself merely to the persons or the States where it exists, but that it is a wrong which in its tendency, to say the least, affects the existence of the whole nation. Because we think it wrong, we propose a course of policy that shall deal with it as a wrong. We deal with it as with any other wrong, insofar as we can prevent its growing any larger, and so deal with it that in the run of time there may be some promise of an end to it. We have a due regard to the actual presence of it amongst us, and the difficulties of getting rid of it in any satisfactory way, and all the constitutional obligations thrown about it. I suppose that in reference both to its actual existence in the nation, and to our constitutional obligations, we have no right at all to disburb it in the States where it exists, and we profess that we have no more inclination to disturb it than we have the right to do it. . . . We also oppose it as an evil so far as it seeks to spread itself. We insist on the policy that shall restrict it to its present limits. We don't suppose that in doing this we violate anything due to the actual presence of the institution, or anything due to the constitutional guaranties thrown around it.

We oppose the Dred Scott decision in a certain way, upon which I ought perhaps to address you a few words. We do not propose that when Dred Scott has been decided to be a slave by the court, we, as a mob, will decide him to be free. We do not propose that, when any other one, or one thousand, shall be decided by that court to be slaves, we will in any violent way disturb the rights of property thus settled; but we nevertheless do oppose that decision as a political rule, which shall be binding on the voter to vote for nobody who thinks it wrong, which shall be binding on the members of Congress or the President to favor no measure that does not actually concur with the principles of that decision. We do not propose to be bound by it as a political rule in that way, because we think it lays the foundation not merely of enlarging and spreading out what we consider an evil, but it lays the foundation for spreading that evil into the States themselves. We propose so resisting it as to have it reversed if we can, and a new judicial rule established upon this subject.

Lincoln Opening Speech, Sixth Joint Debate, at Quincy, Ill., October 13, 1858.

17. Slavery and the South

Lincoln's position on the question of the institution of slavery in the Southern States was greatly misunderstood by many people during the period when the extension of slavery was violently agitated. His political enemies repeatedly accused him of being an abolitionist. He always denied this and made constant attempts to state his position clearly and to be correctly understood on this point. There is no evidence that he ever changed his position on this subject. All his speeches and public statements after the enactment of the Kansas-Nebraska Bill to the time of his death show an undeviating consistency on this point. He fully understood the social complexities and ramifications of the slavery system in southern economy, and he sympathized with the people of the South in their problems concerning it. In the first of the series of memorable debates with Douglas, Lincoln, at Ottawa, read an excerpt from his great speech at Peoria in 1854, 4 years earlier, in which he had stated his position regarding the South and the race question. He said his views on that subject remained unchanged. Douglas in the course of the debates repeatedly tried to place Lincoln in a bad light in regard to this matter. Here are Lincoln's words:

Before proceeding, let me say I think I have no prejudice against the Southern people. They are just what we would be in their situation. If slavery did not now exist among them, they would not introduce it. If it did now exist among us, we should not instantly give it up. This I believe of the masses North and South. Doubtless there are individuals on both sides who would not hold slaves under any circumstances; and others who would gladly introduce slavery anew, if it were out of existence. We know that some Southern men do free their slaves, go North, and become tip-top Abolitionists; while some Northern ones go South, and become most cruel slave-masters.

When Southern people tell us they are no more responsible for the origin of slavery than we, I acknowledge the fact. When it is said that the institution exists, and that it is very difficult to get rid of it in any satisfactory way, I can understand and appreciate the saying. I surely will not blame them for not doing what I should not know how to do myself. If all earthly power were given me, I should not know what to do as to the existing institution. My first impulse would be to free all the slaves, and send them to Liberia—to their own native land. But a moment's reflection would convince me that whatever of high hope (as I think there is) there may be in this in the long run, its sudden execution is impossible. If they were all landed there in a day, they would all perish in the next ten days; and there are not surplus shipping and surplus money enough in the world to carry them there in many times ten days. What then? Free them all, and keep them among us as underlings? Is it quite certain that this betters their condition? I think I would not hold one in slavery at any rate; yet the point is not clear enough to me to denounce people upon. What next? Free them, and make them politically and socially our equals? My own feelings will not admit of this; and if mine

would, we well know that those of the great mass of white people will not. Whether this feeling accords with justice and sound judgment is not the sole question, if, indeed, it is any part of it. A universal feeling, whether well or ill-founded, cannot be safely disregarded. We cannot make them equals. It does seem to me that systems of gradual emancipation might be adopted; but for their tardiness in this, I will not undertake to judge our brethren of the South.

When they remind us of their constitutional rights, I acknowledge them, not grudgingly, but fully and fairly; and I would give them any legislation for the reclaiming of their fugitives, which should not, in its stringency, be more likely to carry a free man into slavery, than our ordinary criminal laws are to hang an innocent one.

LINCOLN REPLY IN OTTAWA JOINT DEBATE, AUGUST 21, 1858.

18. "AND THIS, TOO, SHALL PASS AWAY"

Few sentences in the English language can equal in majesty and grandeur of thought and simplicity of expression the following words of Lincoln.

It is said an Eastern monarch once charged his wise men to invent him a sentence to be ever in view, and which should be true and appropriate in all times and situations. They presented him the words, "And this, too, shall pass away." How much it expresses! How chastening in the hour of pride! How consoling in the depths of affliction! "And this, too, shall pass away." And yet, let us hope, it is not quite true. Let us hope, rather, that by the best cultivation of the physical world beneath and around us, and the intellectual and moral world within us, we shall secure an individual, social, and political prosperity and happiness, whose course shall be onward and upward, and which, while the earth endures, shall not pass away.

LINCOLN, ANNUAL ADDRESS BEFORE THE WISCONSIN STATE AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY, SEPTEMBER 30, 1859.

19. AT COOPER INSTITUTE

In October 1859, Lincoln received an invitation to speak at Henry Ward Beecher's church in Brooklyn. He replied that he could give a speech in February if it could be on a political subject. This was agreed to. On Monday evening, February 27, 1860, a committee waited on Lincoln at his New York hotel to accompany him to Cooper Institute, which had replaced Plymouth Church as the place of the meeting. They found Lincoln dressed in a sleek shining new suit of black covered with creases and wrinkles. The committee conducted Lincoln to the hall and ushered him to the platform. Here he found the most cultivated men and women of the city awaiting him. An immense audience filled the hall. No less a person than William Cullen Bryant introduced him. It is doubtful if Lincoln ever prepared another speech as carefully as the one he gave that night. Herndon has testified to the great effort

Lincoln spent upon it. Before delivering this address he was known in the East chiefly as a rather obscure western lawyer who had gained some prestige a little over a year earlier in the debates with Douglas during the Illinois senatorial contest. The day after the address Horace Greeley's New York Tribune *said of him, "No man ever before made such an impression on his first appeal to a New York audience." This speech put within Lincoln's grasp a chance for the Presidency. His closing words are given below.*

If slavery is right, all words, acts, laws, and constitutions against it are themselves wrong, and should be silenced and swept away. If it is right, we cannot justly object to its nationality—its universality; if it is wrong, they cannot justly insist upon its extension—its enlargement. All they ask we could readily grant, if we thought slavery right; all we ask they could as readily grant, if they thought it wrong. Their thinking it right and our thinking it wrong is the precise fact upon which depends the whole controversy. Thinking it right, as they do, they are not to blame for desiring its full recognition as being right; but thinking it wrong, as we do, can we yield to them? Can we cast our votes with their view, and against our own? In view of our moral, social, and political responsibilities, can we do this?

Wrong as we think slavery is, we can yet afford to let it alone where it is, because that much is due to the necessity arising from its actual presence in the nation; but can we, while our votes will prevent it, allow it to spread into the national Territories, and to overrun us here in these free States? If our sense of duty forbids this, then let us stand by our duty fearlessly and effectively. Let us be diverted by none of those sophistical contrivances wherewith we are so industriously plied and belabored—contrivances such as groping for some middle ground between the right and the wrong: vain as the search for a man who should be neither a living man nor a dead man; such as a policy of "don't care" on a question about which all true men do care; such as Union appeals beseeching true Union men to yield to Disunionists, reversing the divine rule, and calling, not the sinners, but the righteous to repentance; such as invocations to Washington, imploring men to unsay what Washington said and undo what Washington did.

Neither let us be slandered from our duty by false accusations against us, nor frightened from it by menaces of destruction to the government, nor of dungeons to ourselves. 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.

LINCOLN ADDRESS AT COOPER INSTITUTE,
NEW YORK, FEBRUARY 27, 1860.

20. A MAN'S HAND

Leonard Volk, the eminent sculptor, journeyed to Springfield during the Presidental campaign in 1860 to make molds of Lincoln's hands. Volk also, at another time, made

a life mask of Lincoln's features. No one who has examined casts of Lincoln's hands made from the Volk molds can fail to be impressed by their size, symmetry, and appearance of great strength. In the paragraphs below Volk tells of making the molds.

By previous appointment I was to cast Mr. Lincoln's hands on the Sunday following this memorable Saturday, at nine A. M. I found him ready, but he looked more grave and serious than he had appeared on the previous days. I wished him to hold something in his right hand, and he looked for a piece of pasteboard, but could find none. I told him a round stick would do as well as anything. Thereupon he went to the wood-shed, and I heard the saw go, and he soon returned to the dining-room (where I did the work), whittling off the end of a piece of broom-handle. I remarked to him that he need not whittle off the edges.

"O, well," said he, "I thought I would like to have it nice."

When I had successfully cast the mold of the right hand, I began the left, pausing a few moments to hear Mr. Lincoln tell me about a scar on the thumb.

"You have heard that they call me a rail-splitter, and you saw them carrying rails in the procession Saturday evening; well, it is true that I did split rails, and one day, while I was sharpening a wedge on a log, the ax glanced and nearly took my thumb off, and there is the scar, you see."

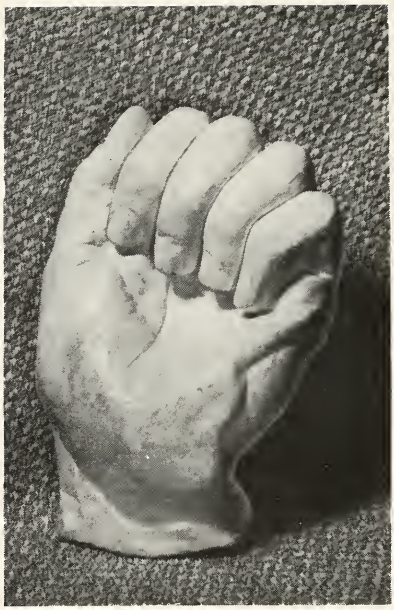
The right hand appeared swollen as compared with the left, on account of excessive hand-shaking the evening before; this difference is distinctly shown in the cast.

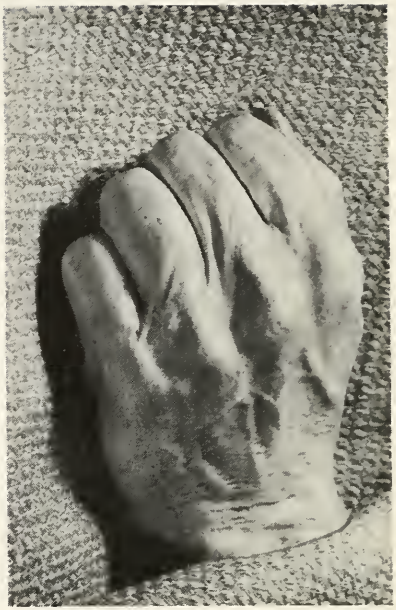
That Sunday evening I returned to Chicago with the molds of his hands, three photographic negatives of him, the identical black alpaca campaign-suit of 1858, and a pair of Lynn newly-made pegged boots. The clothes were all burned up in the great Chicago fire. The casts of the face and hands I saved by taking them with me to Rome, and they have crossed the sea four times.

WHITNEY, *Life on the Circuit with Lincoln*, QUOTING
VOLK IN *Century Magazine*, DECEMBER, 1881.

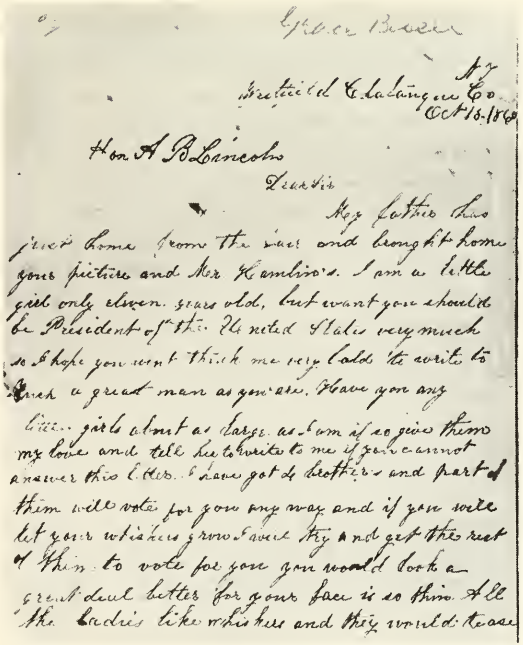
21. A LITTLE GIRL SUGGESTS WHISKERS

On October 15, 1860, during the Presidential campaign an 11-year-old girl from a small hamlet in Western New York wrote to the Republican candidate expressing her concern over his appearance, which she was afraid might have a bad effect on the voters in the forthcoming election. The campaign photographs of Lincoln were a disappointment to her. She suggested that his appearance would be improved if he wore whiskers. Thus the image by which several generations have known the emancipator was sculptored in a child's mind. When he went east to Washington, in February, Lincoln's train stopped at Westfield, between Erie and Buffalo. When Lincoln appeared to speak a few words to the assembled people, the whiskers already were in evidence. He asked if his little correspondent, Grace Bedell, were present. She was. He asked her to come forward and then placed a fatherly kiss on her cheek.





During the 1860 Presidential campaign the sculptor, Leonard Volk, went to Springfield following Lincoln's nomination by the Republican National Convention at Chicago and made plaster casts of Lincoln's hands. The two top illustrations show his left hand, the bottom one is of the right hand which clenches a piece of a broomstick. Volk says the right hand was swollen from excessive handshaking at a reception the previous evening. Reproduced from original casts in the Lincoln Museum (Ford Theatre) in Washington.



Grace Bedell

N.Y.

Westfield Chatauqua Co.
Oct 15-1860

Hon A B Lincoln

Dear Sir

My father has just come home from the fair and brought home your picture and Mr Hamlin's. I am a little girl only eleven years old, but want you should be President of the United States very much so I hope you won't think me very bold to write to such a great man as you are. Have you any little girls about as large as I am if so give them my love and tell her to write to me if you cannot answer this I will. I have got 4 brothers and part of them will vote for you any way and if you will let your whiskers grow I will try and get the rest of them to vote for you you would look a great deal better for your face is so thin All the ladies like whiskers and they would make you look handsome to vote for you and then you would be President. My father is going to vote for you and if I was a man I would vote for you to but I can't do and get every one to vote for you that I can. I think that rail fence around your picture makes it look very pretty. I have just got a little baby sister she is three weeks old and is just as cunning as can be. When you ~~direct~~ your letter direct to Grace Bedell Westfield Chatauqua County New York

I must not write any more answer this letter right off. Good bye

Grace Bedell

The letter that induced Lincoln to grow whiskers. It was written by little 11-year-old Grace Bedell. The original letter is in the possession of the Hon. George A. Dondero, of Michigan, to whom it was given by Mrs. Robert Lincoln. Reproduced from a photostatic copy in the Lincoln Museum (Ford Theatre). The envelope illustrated is a campaign envelope of the period.

Little Miss Bedell's letter is reproduced photographically on these pages. Lincoln's reply to the little girl is given below.

My dear little Miss: Your very agreeable letter of the 15th is received. I regret the necessity of saying I have no daughter. I have three sons—one seventeen, one nine, and one seven years of age. They, with their mother, constitute my whole family. As to the whiskers, having never worn any, do you not think people would call it a piece of silly affectation if I were to begin it now?

LINCOLN TO GRACE BEDELL, OCTOBER 19, 1860.

22. "HERE I HAVE LIVED"

It seems that Lincoln did not write out beforehand the few words of the Springfield Farewell. Apparently, either they had been formulated in his mind earlier or they came to his lips spontaneously in the hour of parting from his home and neighbors. The version given below is that used in Nicolay & Hay, Abraham Lincoln Complete Works. *A goodly crowd of people had assembled at the railroad station to see Lincoln depart. He spoke from the platform of the rear car. Some eyewitnesses described the weather as clear; others said bystanders stood with their heads bared to falling snowflakes. The great preponderance of evidence, however, shows conclusively that it was raining at the time. The language of the Farewell is simple and moving in its eloquence, and unmistakably it reveals the mood of the man at that moment.*

My friends: No one, not in my situation, can appreciate my feeling of sadness at this parting. To this place, and the kindness of these people, I owe everything. Here I have lived a quarter of a century, and have passed from a young to an old man. Here my children have been born, and one is buried. I now leave, not knowing when or whether ever I may return, with a task before me greater than that which rested upon Washington. Without the assistance of that Divine Being who ever attended him, I cannot succeed. With that assistance, I cannot fail. Trusting in Him who can go with me, and remain with you, and be everywhere for good, let us confidently hope that all will yet be well. To His care commending you, as I hope in your prayers you will commend me, I bid you an affectionate fairwell.

FAREWELL ADDRESS AT SPRINGFIELD, ILL.,
FEBRUARY 11, 1861.

23. "THE MYSTIC CHORDS OF MEMORY"

It is safe to say that the closing words of Lincoln's First Inaugural will live as long as the English language shall endure. It is one of the crowning majesties of the Anglo-Saxon tongue. The man who thus spoke was in the act of taking up the reins of government of a people rent by civil discord. Brother was on the verge of taking up arms against brother.

Why should there not be a patient confidence in the ultimate justice of the people? Is there any better or equal hope in the world? In our present differences is either party without faith of being in the right? If the Almighty Ruler of Nations, with his eternal truth and justice, be on your side of the North, or on yours of the South, that truth and that justice will surely prevail by the judgment of this great tribunal of the American people.

By the frame of the government under which we live, this same people have wisely given their public servants but little power for mischief; and have, with equal wisdom, provided for the return of that little to their own hands at very short intervals. While the people retain their virtue and vigilance, no administration, by any extreme of wickedness or folly, can very seriously injure the government in the short space of four years.

My countrymen, one and all, think calmly and well upon this whole subject. Nothing valuable can be lost by taking time. If there be an object to hurry any of you in hot haste to a step which you would never take deliberately, that object will be frustrated by taking time; but no good object can be frustrated by it. Such of you as are now dissatisfied, still have the old Constitution unimpaired, and, on the sensitive point, the laws of your own framing under it; while the new administration will have no immediate power, if it would, to change either. If it were admitted that you who are dissatisfied hold the right side in the dispute, there still is no single good reason for precipitate action. Intelligence, patriotism, Christianity, and a firm reliance on Him who has never yet forsaken this favored land, are still competent to adjust in the best way all our present difficulty.

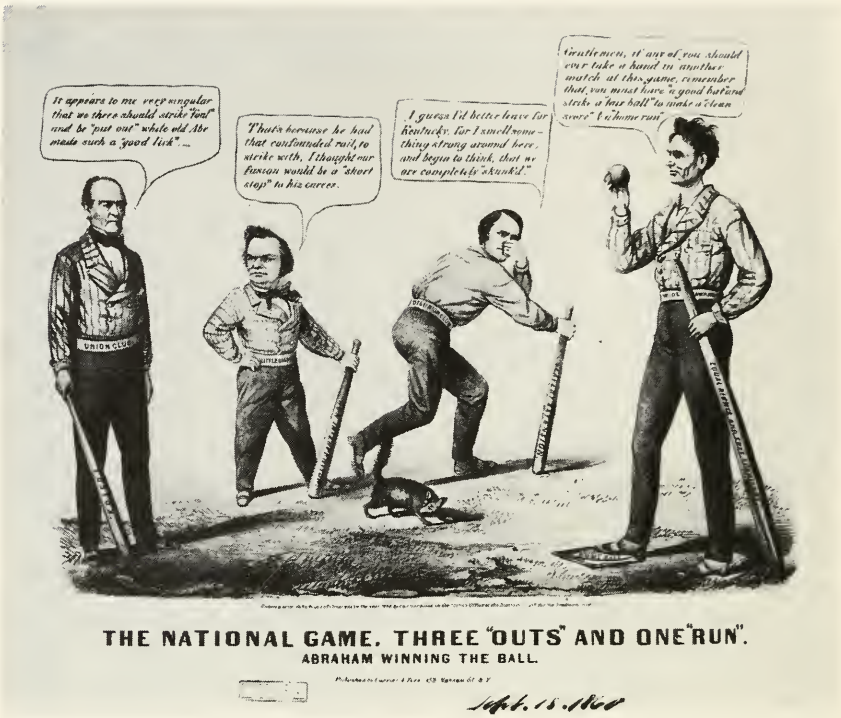
In your hands, my dissatisfied fellow-countrymen, and not in mine, is the momentous issue of civil war. The government will not assail you. You can have no conflict without being yourselves the aggressors. You have no oath registered in heaven to destroy the government, while I shall have the most solemn one to "preserve, protect, and defend it."

I am loath to close. We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained, it must not break our bonds of affection. The mystic chords of memory, stretching from every battlefield and patriot grave to every living heart and hearthstone all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature.

LINCOLN, FIRST INAUGURAL ADDRESS, MARCH 4, 1861.

24. "I WOULD SAVE THE UNION"

During the summer of 1862, there was much criticism and denunciation of Lincoln. McClellan's Peninsular Campaign had ended in failure. Military failures beset the efforts of the Federal Government. Abolitionist groups in the North denounced



THE NATIONAL GAME. THREE "OUTS" AND ONE "RUN".

ABRAHAM WINNING THE BALL.

The famous Currier & Ives poster cartoon, published during the 1860 Presidential campaign, represents the four candidates. From left to right, John Bell, of Tennessee, Constitutional Union Party; Stephen A. Douglas, of Illinois, Democratic Party; John C. Breckenridge, of Kentucky, Southern Wing of Democratic Party; Abraham Lincoln, of Illinois, Republican Party. Reproduced from original in the Lincoln Museum (Ford Theatre) in Washington.

Lincoln for not emancipating the slaves. They accused him of being pro-slavery. Speaking the sentiments of this group, Horace Greeley published in The New York Tribune *his famous editorial, "The Prayer of Twenty Millions." On August 22, Lincoln replied to Greeley in a letter that was also released to the newspapers. Second Bull Run was only a week in the future; Antietam less than a month. Lincoln had been considering the advisability of emancipating the slaves as a military and political measure. He had decided on the proclamation and was only waiting for a favorable opportunity to announce. it. In the letter to Greeley there is a hint that the administration's policy on emancipation might change. It was not seen by the abolitionists, however, and their anger only increased. Exactly a month to the day after writing his letter to Greeley, Lincoln was to issue his preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, taking advantage of the opportunity offered by the Battle of Antietam, which, though indecisive, turned back Lee's first invasion of the North. The Greeley letter is a notable statement of the policy that governed Lincoln during the first year and a half of the war.*

Dear Sir: I have just read yours of the 19th, addressed to myself through the New York "Tribune." If there be in it any statements or assumptions of fact which I may know to be erroneous, I do not, now and here, controvert them. If there be in it any inferences which I may believe to be falsely drawn, I do not, now and here, argue against them. If there be perceptible in it an impatient and dictatorial tone, I waive it in deference to an old friend whose heart I have always supposed to be right.

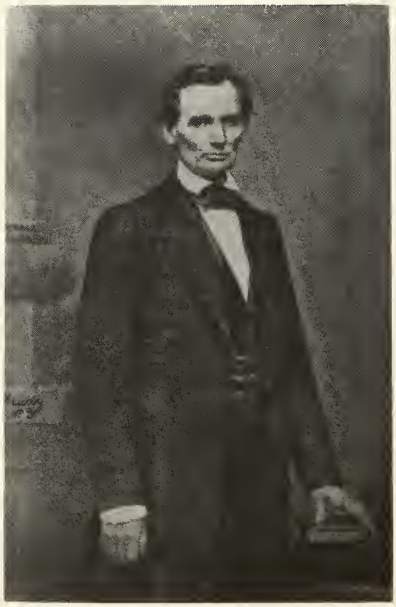
As to the policy I "seem to be pursuing," as you say, I have not meant to leave any one in doubt.

I would save the Union. I would save it the shortest way under the Constitution. The sooner the national authority can be restored, the nearer the Union will be "the Union as it was." If there be those who would not save the Union unless they could at the same time save slavery, I do not agree with them. If there be those who would not save the Union unless they could at the same time destroy slavery, I do not agree with them. My paramount object in this struggle is to save the Union, and is not either to save or to destroy slavery. If I could save the Union without freeing any slave, I would do it; and if I could save it by freeing all the slaves, I would do it; and if I could save it by freeing some and leaving others alone, I would also do that. What I do about slavery and the colored race, I do because I believe it helps to save the Union; and what I forebear, I forebear because I do not believe it would help to save the Union. I shall do less whenever I shall believe what I am doing hurts the cause, and I shall do more whenever I shall believe doing more will help the cause. I shall try to correct errors when shown to be errors, and I shall adopt new views so fast as they shall appear to be true views.

I have here stated my purpose according to my view of official duty; and I intend no modification of my oft-expressed personal wish that all men everywhere could be free.

LINCOLN TO GREELEY, AUGUST 22, 1862.

Mary Todd Lincoln in formal reception attire as mistress of the White House.



The first photograph of Lincoln by Brady. It was made in New York. February 27, 1860.

Three-quarter profile portrait made by Alexander Hesler in Springfield, Ill., June 3, 1860.

25. The Emancipation Proclamation Takes Form

From the outset, the conduct of the war was based by Lincoln on the principle of saving the Union. Many elements in the North from the beginning, however, demanded the liberation of the slaves. This Lincoln resisted. A large part of the North would not have been willing to support the war if they had thought it was for the purpose of freeing the slaves; and the effect of emancipation on the delicate situation in the border States might have been disastrous. By the middle of 1862, the situation had changed. Lincoln decided on the Emancipation Proclamation. He now felt that it was necessary for the successful prosecution of the war. The artist, Carpenter, who spent several months in the White House in 1864 and had Lincoln's confidence, relates in Lincoln's own words the story of the events leading up to the issuing of the Emancipation Proclamation.

"It had got to be," said he, "midsummer, 1862. Things had gone on from bad to worse, until I felt that we had reached the end of our rope on the plan of operations we had been pursuing; that we had about played our last card, and must change our tactics, or lose the game! I now determined upon the adoption of the emancipation policy; and, without consultation with, or the knowledge of the Cabinet, I prepared the original draft of the proclamation, and, after much anxious thought, called a Cabinet meeting upon the subject. This was the last of July, or the first part of the month of August, 1862." (The exact date he did not remember.) "This Cabinet meeting took place, I think, upon a Saturday. All were present, excepting Mr. Blair, the Postmaster-General, who was absent at the opening of the discussion, but came in subsequently. I said to the Cabinet that I had resolved upon this step, and had not called them together to ask their advice, but to lay the subject-matter of a proclamation before them; suggestions as to which would be in order, after they had heard it read. Mr. Lovejoy," said he, "was in error when he informed you that it excited no comment, excepting on the part of Secretary Seward. Various suggestions were offered. Secretary Chase wished the language stronger in reference to the arming of the blacks. Mr. Blair, after he came in, deprecated the policy, on the ground that it would cost the Administration the fall elections. Nothing, however, was offered that I had not already fully anticipated and settled in my own mind, until Secretary Seward spoke. He said in substance: 'Mr. President, I approve of the proclamation, but I question the expediency of its issue at this juncture. The depression of the public mind, consequent upon our repeated reverses, is so great that I fear the effect of so important a step. It may be viewed as the last measure of an exhausted government, a cry for help; the government stretching forth its hands to Ethiopia, instead of Ethiopia stretching forth her hands to the government.' His idea," said the President, "was that it would be considered our last *shriek*, on the retreat." (This was his *precise* expression.) "'Now,' continued Mr.

Seward, 'while I approve the measure, I suggest, sir, that you postpone its issue, until you can give it to the country supported by military success, instead of issuing it, as would be the case now, upon the greatest disasters of the war!' " Mr. Lincoln continued: "The wisdom of the view of the Secretary of State struck me with very great force. It was an aspect of the case that, in all my thought upon the subject, I had entirely overlooked. The result was that I put the draft of the proclamation aside, as you do your sketch for a picture, waiting for a victory. From time to time I added or changed a line, touching it up here and there, anxiously watching the progress of events. Well, the next news we had was of Pope's disaster, at Bull Run. Things looked darker than ever. Finally, came the week of the battle of Antietam. I determined to wait no longer. The news came, I think, on Wednesday, that the advantage was on our side. I was then staying at the Soldiers' Home, (three miles out of Washington.) Here I finished writing the second draft of the preliminary proclamation; came up on Saturday; called the Cabinet together to hear it, and it was published the following Monday."

CARPENTER, *Six Months at the White House with Abraham Lincoln.*

26. ON SHAKESPEARE

The letter from Lincoln to the actor Hackett, given below, reflects Lincoln's deep interest in Shakespeare.

Some of Shakespeare's plays I have never read; while others I have gone over perhaps as frequently as any unprofessional reader. Among the latter are "Lear," "Richard III.," "Henry VIII.," "Hamlet," and especially "Macbeth." I think nothing equals "Macbeth." It is wonderful.

Unlike you gentlemen of the profession, I think the soliloquy in "Hamlet" commencing "Oh, my offense is rank," surpasses that commencing "To be or not to be." But pardon this small attempt at criticism. I should like to hear you pronounce the opening speech of Richard III. Will you not soon visit Washington again? If you do, please call and let me make your personal acquaintance.

LINCOLN TO HACKETT, AUGUST 17, 1863.

27. "BLESSINGS OF FRUITFUL FIELDS"

Thanksgiving was first celebrated by the settlers at Plymouth in the Massachusetts colony in 1621 under the leadership of Governor William Bradford. Washington and Madison each issued a Thanksgiving proclamation once during their Presidencies. It was not until 1863, however, when Lincoln issued his Thanksgiving Day Proclamation that the holiday was established as a national annual event, occurring on the last

The "First Reading of the Emancipation Proclamation" was painted by Francis B. Carpenter in 1864 during a six months' period he spent in the White House for that purpose. It portrays the scene at the moment Lincoln has finished reading to his assembled Cabinet members the draft of his proposed Emancipation Proclamation. Each of the personages represented in the painting sat for his portrait, and all the furniture and various objects were sketched and painted from the originals. The portraits from left to right represent: Edwin M. Stanton, Secretary of War; Salmon P. Chase, Secretary of the Treasury; Abraham Lincoln, President; Gideon Welles, Secretary of the Navy; Caleb B. Smith, Secretary of the Interior; William H. Seward, Secretary of State (seated); Montgomery Blair, Postmaster General; Edward Bates, Attorney General. Reproduced from the original painting in the Capitol.

Thursday of November. The first observance of the national holiday came one week after the dedication of the Soldiers National Cemetery at Gettysburg. The language of the proclamation is beautiful and marked by a rare felicity of expression.

The year that is drawing toward its close has been filled with the blessings of fruitful fields and healthful skies. To these bounties, which are so constantly enjoyed that we are prone to forget the source from which they come, others have been added, which are of so extraordinary a nature that they cannot fail to penetrate and soften the heart which is habitually insensible to the everwatchful providence of almighty God.

In the midst of a civil war of unequaled magnitude and severity, which has sometimes seemed to foreign states to invite and provoke their aggressions, peace has been preserved with all nations, order has been maintained, the laws have been respected and obeyed, and harmony has prevailed everywhere, except in the theater of military conflict; while that theater has been greatly contracted by the advancing armies and navies of the Union.

Needful diversions of wealth and of strength from the fields of peaceful industry to the national defense have not arrested the plow, the shuttle, or the ship; the ax has enlarged the borders of our settlements, and the mines, as well of iron and coal as of the precious metals, have yielded even more abundantly than heretofore. Population has steadily increased, notwithstanding the waste that has been made in the camp, the siege, and the battlefield, and the country, rejoicing in the consciousness of augmented strength and vigor, is permitted to expect continuance of years with large increase of freedom.

No human counsel hath devised, nor hath any mortal hand worked out these great things. They are the gracious gifts of the most high God, who while dealing with us in anger for our sins, hath nevertheless remembered mercy.

It has seemed to me fit and proper that they should be solemnly, reverently, and gratefully acknowledged as with one heart and one voice by the whole American people. I do, therefore, invite my fellow-citizens in every part of the United States, and also those who are at sea and those who are sojourning in foreign lands, to set apart and observe the last Thursday of November next as a day of thanksgiving and praise to our beneficent Father who dwelleth in the heavens. And I recommend to them that, while offering up the ascriptions justly due to him for such singular deliverances and blessings, they do also, with humble penitence for our national perverseness and disobedience, commend to his tender care all those who have become widows, orphans, mourners, or sufferers in the lamentable civil strife in which we are unavoidably engaged, and fervently implore the interposition of the almighty hand to heal the wounds of the nation, and to restore it, as soon as may be consistent with the Divine purposes, to the full enjoyment of peace, harmony, tranquillity, and union.

In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the United Stated States to be affixed.

President Lincoln's Thanksgiving Day Proclamation, October 3, 1863.

28. Bixby Letter of Condolence

The original of the Bixby letter apparently has been lost. It has been alleged that this famous letter was not written by Lincoln. Recently, a certain distinguished American educator stated that he was told in 1912 by Lord Morley that John Hay, one of Lincoln's private secretaries, told him in 1905 that he wrote the letter. Lincoln scholars remain unconvinced. It is pointed out that the Bixby letter shows all the qualities of Lincoln's literary style. Regardless of the dispute that has developed over the authorship of this letter, it is given below as a Lincoln document. As a message of condolence it is generally considered unsurpassed.

Dear Madam: I have been shown in the files of the War Department a statement of the Adjutant-General of Massachusetts that you are the mother of five sons who have died gloriously on the field of battle. I feel how weak and fruitless must be any words of mine which should attempt to beguile you from the grief of a loss so overwhelming. But I cannot refrain from tendering to you the consolation that may be found in the thanks of the Republic they died to save. I pray that our heavenly Father may assuage the anguish of your bereavement, and leave you only the cherished memory of the loved and lost, and the solemn pride that must be yours to have laid so costly a sacrifice upon the altar of freedom.

Lincoln to Mrs. Bixby, November 21, 1864.

29. Lincoln Writes to a General

Lincoln wrote over 30 letters to General Hooker. One has become so famous that it is commonly known as "The Hooker Letter." It notified Hooker that he had been given command of the Army of the Potomac, replacing Burnside, following the latter's calamitous defeat at the Battle of Fredericksburg. In November 1941, this letter sold for $15,000 at a Philadelphia auction. In 1924, it had sold for $10,000. Although a masterpiece of English composition, that alone would not have given it its great value. The unique quality of this remarkable letter lies in the fact that it is a magnificent character sketch of the writer himself. In it Lincoln's frankness, integrity, magnanimity, and his paramount concern for the success of the Army and the preservation of the Nation are fully revealed. Hooker himself apparently was visibly touched by the letter. Shortly after receiving it he discussed it one evening with Noah Brooks who reports that Hooker said, "That is just such a letter as a father might write to his son. It is a beautiful letter, and, although I think he was harder on me than I deserved, I will say that I love the man who wrote it."

General: I have placed you at the head of the Army of the Potomac. Of course I have done this upon what appear to me to be sufficient reasons, and yet

I think it best for you to know that there are some things in regard to which I am not quite satisfied with you. I believe you to be a brave and skilful soldier, which of course I like. I also believe you do not mix politics with your profession, in which you are right. You have confidence in yourself, which is a valuable if not an indispensable quality. You are ambitious, which, within reasonable bounds, does good rather than harm; but I think that during General Burnside's command of the army you have taken counsel of your ambition and thwarted him as much as you could, in which you did a great wrong to the country and to a most meritorious and honorable brother officer. I have heard, in such a way as to believe it, of your recently saying that both the army and the government needed a dictator. Of course it was not for this, but in spite of it, that I have given you the command. Only those generals who gain successes can set up dictators. What I now ask of you is military success, and I will risk the dictatorship. The government will support you to the utmost of its ability, which is neither more nor less than it has done and will do for all commanders. I much fear that the spirit which you have aided to infuse into the army, of criticizing their commander and withholding confidence from him, will now turn upon you. I shall assist you as far as I can to put it down. Neither you nor Napoleon, if he were alive again, could get any good out of an army while such a spirit prevails in it; and now beware of rashness. Beware of rashness, but with energy and sleepless vigilance go forward and give us victories.

LINCOLN TO HOOKER, JANUARY 26, 1863.

30. GRANT MEETS LINCOLN

General Grant's account of his first private interview with President Lincoln, on the occasion in the early spring of 1864 when he was given command of all the Federal armies, explains many of the reasons for Lincoln's interference in military matters, for which he has been severely criticised. At last Lincoln had found the man who would accept the responsibility and bring final victory.

In my first interview with Mr. Lincoln alone he stated to me that he had never professed to be a military man or to know how campaigns should be conducted, and never wanted to interfere in them: but that procrastination on the part of commanders, and the pressure from the people at the North and Congress, *which was always with him*, forced him into issuing his series of "Military Orders"—one, two, three, etc. He did not know but they were all wrong, and did know that some of them were. All he wanted or had ever wanted was some one who would take the responsibility and act, and call on him for all the assistance needed, pledging himself to use all the power of the government in rendering such assistance. Assuring him that I would do the best I could with the means at hand, and avoid as far as possible annoying him or the War Department, our first interview ended.

Personal Memoirs of U. S. Grant.

31. A Man's Need of Humor

Lincoln's story telling proclivities were well known in his own time. On the old eighth circuit in Illinois his humor and fund of anecdotes were proverbial. What was not so well known was that the tall homely man needed a blanket of humor to supress the fires of depression, gloom, and sense of tragedy that almost consumed him. He sought desperately to supply this need. Then, too, he daily turned his great gift to very practical purposes. Often he softened a rebuke or a refusal or avoided a long discussion or a laborious explanation by an appropriate story that illustrated his point of view. It was principally the purpose or effect of a story that interested Lincoln, not the story itself. The following three selections show the characteristic quality of Lincoln's wit and humor.

Some of Mr. Lincoln's intimate friends once called his attention to a certain member of his Cabinet who was quietly working to secure a nomination for the Presidency, although knowing that Mr. Lincoln was to be a candidate for re-election. His friends insisted that the Cabinet officer ought to be made to give up his Presidential aspirations or be removed from office. The situation reminded Mr. Lincoln of a story.

"My brother and I," he said, "were once plowing corn, I driving the horse and he holding the plow. The horse was lazy, but on one occasion he rushed across the field so that I, with my long legs, could scarcely keep pace with him. On reaching the end of the furrow, I found an enormous chin-fly fastened upon him, and knocked him off. My brother asked me what I did that for. I told him I didn't want the old horse bitten in that way. 'Why,' said my brother, 'that's all that made him go.'

"Now," said Mr. Lincoln, "if Mr. ——— has a Presidential chin-fly biting him, I'm not going to knock him off, if it will only make his department go."

Henry J. Raymond in *Lincoln Talks*, Edited by Emanuel Hertz.

Judge Holt expected, of course, that he would write "approved" on the paper; but the President, running his long fingers through his hair, as he so often used to do when in anxious thought, replied, "Well, after all, Judge, I think I must put this with my leg cases."

"*Leg cases*," said Judge Holt, with a frown at this supposed levity of the President, in a case of life and death. "What do you mean by *leg cases*, sir?"

"Why, why," replied Mr. Lincoln, "do you see those papers crowded into those pigeon-holes? They are the cases that you call by that long title, 'cowardice in the face of the enemy,' but I call them, for short, my 'leg cases.' But I put it to you, and I leave it for you to decide for yourself: if Almighty God gives a man a cowardly pair of legs how can he help their running away with him?"

Schuyler Colfax, in *Lincoln Talks*, Edited by Emanuel Hertz.

Mr. Seward said: "Gentlemen, I will tell you one thing, Mr. Lincoln never tells a joke for the joke's sake, they are like the parables of old-lessons of wisdom. When he first came to Washington he was inundated with office-seekers. One day he was particularly afflicted; about twenty place-hunters from all parts of the Union had taken possession of his room with bales of credentials and self-recommendations ten miles long. The President said:

" 'Gentlemen, I must tell you a little story I read one day when I was minding a mudscow in one of the bayous near the Yazoo.

" 'Once there was a certain king,' he said, 'who kept an astrologer to forewarn him of coming events and especially to tell him whether it was going to rain when he wanted to go on hunting expeditions. One day he had started off for the forest with his train of ladies and lords for a grand hunt, when the cavalcade met a farmer, riding a donkey, on the road. "Good morning, Farmer," said the king. "Good morning, King," said the farmer. "Where are you folks going?" "Hunting," said the king. "Lord, you'll get wet," said the farmer. The king trusted his astrologer, of course, and went to the forest, but by midday there came on a terrific storm that drenched and buffeted the whole party. When the king returned to his palace he had the astrologer decapitated and sent for the farmer to take his place. "Law's sake," says the farmer when he arrived, "it ain't me that knows when it's goin' to rain, it's my donkey. When it's goin' to be fair weather that donkey always carries his ears forward so." "Make the donkey the court astrologer!" shouted the king. It was done. But the king always declared that that appointment was the greatest mistake he ever made in his life.'

"Lincoln stopped there. 'Why did he say it was a mistake?' we asked him. 'Didn't the donkey do his duty?' 'Yes,' said the President, 'but after that time every donkey in the country assembled in front of the palace and wanted an office.' "

Leslie's Weekly, 1863, in *Lincoln Talks*,
Edited by Emanuel Hertz.

32. The President Takes a Hand

There are numerous stories of the times that President Lincoln interfered to ameliorate the harshness of a military judgment or the severity of a court martial sentence. Always he was swayed by what he considered the inherent justice of the case and his deep sense of humanity. Stanton and others in the War Department opposed him in this on the ground that it undermined discipline and military authority. The following letter not only shows Lincoln's abiding sympathy for the common folk, but it also carries a lightly veiled stern rebuke to the Secretary of War for not carrying out a previous instruction.

My dear Sir: A poor widow, by the name of Baird, has a son in the army, that for some offense has been sentenced to serve a long time without pay, or at most with very little pay. I do not like this punishment of withholding pay—it falls

so very hard upon poor families. After he had been serving in this way for several months, at the tearful appeal of the poor mother, I made a direction that he be allowed to enlist for a new term, on the same conditions as others. She now comes, and says she cannot get it acted upon. Please do it.

LINCOLN TO SECRETARY STANTON, MARCH 1, 1864.

33. DEDICATION OF A SOLDIERS' NATIONAL CEMETERY

The famous address at Gettysburg contains two hundred and seventy-two words. The Sunday before it was given Noah Brooks accompanied President Lincoln from the White House to Gardner's studio where Lincoln had a long standing engagement to sit for the photographer. Thinking he might have an opportunity to look it over at the studio, Lincoln took with him a long envelope containing an advance copy of Edward Everett's speech, which was scheduled to be the main event at the dedicatory services. Everett's speech was long. It covered both sides of a one page supplement to a Boston newspaper. In response to a remark by Brooks, Lincoln observed that what he had to say would be "short, short, short." There was no danger that it would cover the same ground as Everett's oration. Lincoln told Brooks that his speech was written, but not finished. It is now known that he took considerable pains in formulating "the few appropriate remarks" he had been invited to make.

There are five manuscript copies of Lincoln's Gettysburg Address in his handwriting. The first was written in Washington. Apparently certain revisions in the wording were made by Lincoln at Gettysburg on the evening of his arrival there. These were incorporated in a second copy which was written out by him the following morning. This copy contains the draft of what he spoke later in the day. The other copies were made by him from the second in compliance with requests. In the spoken version, which seemingly was delivered from memory, Lincoln added the words "under God," and they were incorporated by him in subsequent manuscript copies of the speech.

Few of those present at Gettysburg sensed that imperishable words had been spoken. John Hay, one of Lincoln's private secretaries who was in the group that accompanied the President from Washington, noted in his diary the next day that "the President, in a fine free way, with more grace than is his wont, said his half dozen words of consecration." The world has long since accepted the Gettysburg Address as one of the supreme masterpieces of English eloquence.

Fourscore and seven years ago our fathers brought forth upon this continent, a new nation, conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

Now, we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived, and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battlefield of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of it as a final resting place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.

But in a larger sense we can not dedicate—we can not consecrate—we can not hallow—this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here have consecrated it far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they have, thus far, so nobly carried on. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us—that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion—that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain—that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom—and that this government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

LINCOLN, ADDRESS AT DEDICATION OF SOLDIERS' NATIONAL CEMETERY AT GETTYSBURG, NOVEMBER 19, 1863.

34. A STATESMAN SPEAKS

Surely Mr. Lincoln's letter to Mr. Hodges, of Kentucky, in the spring of 1864 is one of the most remarkable documents he ever penned. It is a confession of faith. It reviews a war policy. It states his understanding of the oath he took to preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution. It is masterful prose. The reasoning is close, the composition compact and terse. Every word serves a purpose. None could be omitted without destroying the precise intent of the writer. Throughout there is a dignity, and at the same time a humility, which graces every word. This letter is a document that deserves the closest study of every student of American constitutional history, of the war policy of the Lincoln administration in relationship to the emancipation of the slaves, and of the man, Lincoln, himself. Of its kind, it is unfellowed.

My dear Sir: You ask me to put in writing the substance of what I verbally said the other day in your presence, to Governor Bramlette and Senator Dixon. It was about as follows:

"I am naturally antislavery. If slavery is not wrong, nothing is wrong. I cannot remember when I did not so think and feel, and yet I have never understood that the presidency conferred upon me an unrestricted right to act officially upon this judgment and feeling. It was in the oath I took that I would, to the best of my ability, preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States. I could not take the office without taking the oath. Nor was it my view that I might take an oath to get power, and break the oath in using the power. I understood, too, that in ordinary civil administration this oath even forbade me to practically indulge my primary abstract judgment on the moral question of slavery. I had publicly declared this many times, and in many ways. And I aver that, to this day, I have done no official act in mere deference to my abstract judgment and feeling on slavery. I did understand, however, that my oath to

Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth, upon this continent, a new nation, conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation, so conceived, and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met here on a great battle-field of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of it as a final resting place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.

But in a larger sense we can not dedicate — we can not consecrate — we can not hallow this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember, what we say here, but can never forget what they did here. It is for us, the living, rather to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they have thus far so nobly carried on. It is rather

First page of the second draft of the Gettysburg Address, copied out by Mr. Lincoln on the morning of November 19, 1863, in Gettysburg and used by him later that day in making his "few appropriate remarks." Reproduced from the original in the Library of Congress.

preserve the Constitution to the best of my ability imposed upon me the duty of preserving, by every indispensable means, that government—that nation, of which that Constitution was the organic law. Was it possible to lose the nation and yet preserve the Constitution? By general law, life and limb must be protected, yet often a limb must be amputated to save a life; but a life is never wisely given to save a limb. I felt that measures otherwise unconstitutional might become lawful by becoming indispensable to the preservation of the Constitution through the preservation of the nation. Right or wrong, I assumed this ground, and now avow it. I could not feel that, to the best of my ability, I had even tried to preserve the Constitution, if, to save slavery or any minor matter, I should permit the wreck of government, country, and Constitution all together. When, early in the war, General Frémont attempted military emancipation, I forbade it, because I did not then think it an indispensable necessity. When, a little later, General Cameron, then Secretary of War, suggested the arming of the blacks, I objected because I did not yet think it an indispensable necessity. When, still later, General Hunter attempted military emancipation, I again forbade it, because I did not yet think the indispensable necessity had come. When in March and May and July, 1862, I made earnest and successive appeals to the border States to favor compensated emancipation, I believed the indispensable necessity for military emancipation and arming the blacks would come unless averted by that measure. They declined the proposition, and I was, in my best judgment, driven to the alternative of either surrendering the Union, and with it the Constitution, or of laying strong hand upon the colored element. I chose the latter. In choosing it, I hoped for greater gain than loss; but of this, I was not entirely confident. More than a year of trial now shows no loss by it in our foreign relations, none in our home popular sentiment, none in our white military force—no loss by it anyhow or anywhere. On the contrary it shows a gain of quite a hundred and thirty thousand soldiers, seamen, and laborers. These are palpable facts, about which, as facts, there can be no caviling. We have the men; and we could not have had them without the measure.

"And now let any Union man who complains of the measure test himself by writing down in one line that he is for subduing the rebellion by force of arms; and in the next, that he is for taking these hundred and thirty thousand men from the Union side, and placing them where they would be but for the measure he condemns. If he cannot face his case so stated, it is only because he cannot face the truth."

I add a word which was not in the verbal conversation. In telling this tale I attempt no compliment to my own sagacity. I claim not to have controlled events, but confess plainly that events have controlled me. Now, at the end of three years' struggle, the nation's condition is not what either party, or any man, devised or expected. God alone can claim it. Whither it is tending seems plain. If God now wills the removal of a great wrong, and wills also that we of the North, as well as you of the South, shall pay fairly for our complicity in that wrong,

impartial history will find therein new cause to attest and revere the justice and goodness of God.

LINCOLN TO A. G. HODGES, APRIL 4, 1864.

35. A STEPMOTHER'S RECOLLECTION

Sarah Bush Lincoln, second wife of Thomas Lincoln, and stepmother of Abraham, was a real mother to the young boy during the hard years in Indiana and on throughout his life. Each had genuine love and respect for the other. One of the last things Lincoln did before leaving Illinois for the White House to take up the responsibilities that lay ahead of him was to visit "mother," as he always called her. Her recollection of Abraham given below is from a statement she made to William Herndon on Friday, September 8, 1865, at her humble home 8 miles south of Charleston, Ill.

Abe slept upstairs, went up on pins stuck in the logs, like a ladder; our bedsteads were original creations, none such now, made of poles and clapboards. Abe was about nine years of age when I landed in Indiana. The country was wild, and desolate. Abe was a good boy; he didn't like physical labor, was diligent for knowledge, wished to know, and if pains and labor would get it, he was sure to get it. He was the best boy I ever saw. He read all the books he could lay his hands on. I can't remember dates nor names, am about seventy-five years of age; Abe read the Bible some, though not as much as said; he sought more congenial books suitable for his age. I think newspapers were had in Indiana as early as 1824 and up to 1830 when we moved to Illinois. Abe was a constant reader of them. I am sure of this for the years of 1827–28–29–30. The name of the Louisville *Journal* seems to sound like one. Abe read history papers and other books, can't name any one, have forgotten. . . . He duly reverenced old age, loved those best about his own age, played with those under his age; he listened to the aged, argued with his equals, but played with the children. He loved animals generally and treated them kindly; he loved children well, very well. There seemed to be nothing unusual in his love for animals or his own kind, though he treated everybody and everything kindly, humanely. Abe didn't care much for crowds of people; he chose his own company, which was always good. He was not very fond of girls, as he seemed to me. He sometimes attended church. He would repeat the sermon over again to the children. The sight of such a thing amused all and did especially tickle the children. When Abe was reading, my husband took particular care not to disturb him, would let him read on and on till Abe quit of his own accord. He was dutiful to me always; he loved me truly, I think.

MRS. THOMAS LINCOLN'S STATEMENT TO HERNDON, SEPTEMBER 8, 1865.

36. MR. HERNDON'S LINCOLN

William H. Herndon was born in Greensburg, Ky., December 28, 1816. His father moved to Troy, Madison County, Ill., 2 years later, and in 1821 to a farm in Sanga-

mon County, 5 miles northeast of Springfield. This was 9 years before Lincoln came to Illinois. Herndon first saw Lincoln in 1832. At that time Lincoln was serving as a pilot of a small steamer on the Sangamon River, working as an assistant to Rowan Herndon, William's cousin. Herndon took up the study of law, and in 1844 Lincoln took the younger man into his office in Springfield. Thus the law firm of Lincoln and Herndon was established. It lasted until Lincoln's death. On his last visit to the office, on February 10, 1861, the day before he left Springfield for Washington, Lincoln asked that the firm signboard at the foot of the stairs remain unchanged. "Let it hang there undisturbed," he said.

For more than 16 years prior to Lincoln's departure from Springfield to take up his duties as President, Herndon was the almost constant companion and observer of this remarkable man. Henry C. Whitney, a close friend of both men, has said that Herndon was Lincoln's political mentor; that he was Lincoln's closest political and personal friend; and that he had more to do with influencing Lincoln's political career than any other 10 men. Certain it is that no history of Lincoln's life before 1860 could be written without the Herndon manuscripts. Beginning shortly after the President's assassination, Herndon devoted the remainder of his life, or rather that part of it which could be spared from the task of earning a precarious livelihood, to the task of gathering source material on Lincoln. The following description of Lincoln is from a lecture prepared by Herndon and first given by him at Springfield, Ill., Dec. 12, 1865.

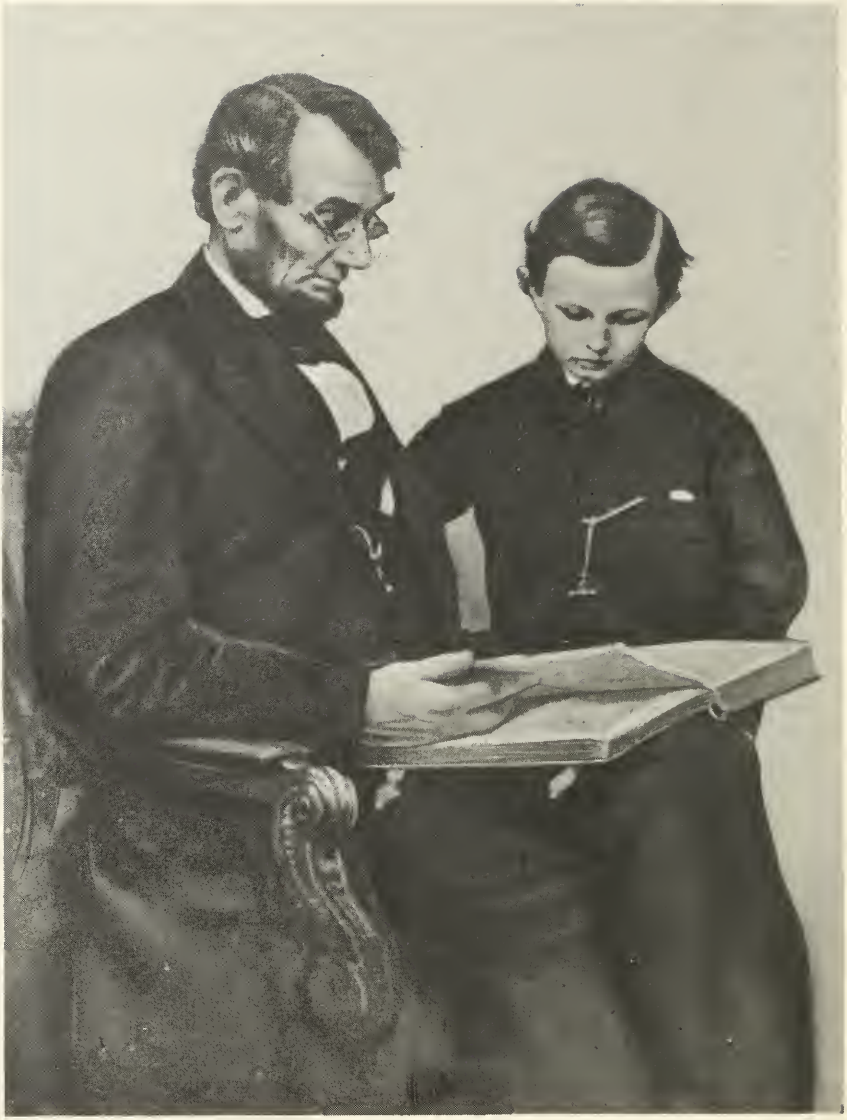
It is now the time to describe the person of Mr. Lincoln: he was about six feet four inches high, and when he left the city, was fifty-one years old, having good health and no gray hairs or but few on his head; he was thin, wiry, sinewy, raw and big heavy-boned, thin through the breast to the back and narrow across the shoulders, standing he leaned forward; was what may be called stoop-shouldered, inclining to the consumptively built, his usual weight being about one hundred and sixty or eighty pounds. . . . His organism and structure were loose and leathery; his body was well shrunk, cadaverous and shriveled, having very dark skin, dry and tough, wrinkled and lying somewhat in flabby folds; dark hair, the man looking woe-struck. The whole man, body and mind, worked slowly, creakingly, as if it needed oiling. Physically he was a very powerful man, lifting, as said, with ease four or six hundred pounds. . . . When this man moved and walked along he moved and walked cautiously, but firmly, his long and big bony arms and hands on them, hanging like giant hands on them, swung by his side; he walked with even tread, the inner sides of his feet being parallel; he put his whole foot down flat at once, not landing on his heel; he likewise lifted his foot all at once, not rising from the toe, and hence he had no spring to his walk; he had the economy of full lift of foot though he had no spring to his walk or apparent ease of motion in his tread; he walked undulatory, up and down in motion, catching and pocketing time, weariness all up and down his person preventing them from locating. The very first opinion that a stranger or one who did not observe closely would form of Lincoln's walk and motion was that he was a tricky man, a man of cunning, a dangerous shrewd man, one to watch closely and not to be trusted, but his walk was the mani-

fested walk of caution and firmness. In sitting down on a common chair or bench or ground, he was from the top of his head down to his seat no better than the average man; his legs and arms were, as compared with the average man, abnormally, unnaturally long, though when compared to his own organism, the whole physical man, these organs may have been in harmony with the man. His arms and hands, feet and legs, seemed to me, as compared with the average man, in undue proportion to the balance of his body. It was only when Lincoln rose on his feet that he loomed up above the mass of men. He looked the giant then.

Lincoln's head was long and tall from the base of the brain to and from the eyebrows. His head ran backward, his forehead rising as it ran back at a low angle, like Clay's and unlike Webster's, almost perpendicular. The size of his hat, measured on the hatter's hat block was 7⅛, his head being from ear to ear six and a half inches. Thus measured it was not below the medium or average size. His forehead was narrow but high; his hair was dark, almost black, and lay floating where his fingers put it or the winds left it, piled up and tossed about at random; his cheekbones were high, sharp, and prominent; his eyebrows heavy and prominent; his jaws were long, upcurved, and massive, looked solid, heavy, and strong; his nose was large, long, and blunt, a little awry toward the right eye; his chin was long, sharp and uncurved; his eyebrows cropped out like a huge jutting rock out of the brow of a hill; his face was long, narrow, sallow, and cadaverous, flesh shrunk, shriveled, wrinkled, and dry, having on his face a few hairs here and there; his cheeks were leathery and saffron-colored; his ears were large and ran out nearly at right angles from the sides of his head, caused by heavy hats in which he carried his big cotton or other handkerchief, his bank book, his letters, and his memoranda generally, and partly by nature; . . . his head was well-balanced on his shoulders, his little gray eyes in the right place. There was the lone mole on his right cheek just a little above the right corner of his mouth and Adam's apple on his throat. Beneath this rough and uncouth exterior was a very fine, an exceedingly fine physical organization, a fine and delicate network of nerves being woven through it along which feelings and thoughts traveled and flashed quicker than lightning.

Thus I say stood, walked, looked, felt, thought, willed, and acted this peculiar and singular man; he was odd, angular, homely, but when those little gray eyes and face were lighted up by the inward soul on fires of emotion, defending the liberty of man or proclaiming the truths of the Declaration of Independence, or defending justice and the eternal right, then it was that all those apparently ugly or homely features sprang into organs of beauty, or sank themselves into the sea of his inspiration that on such occasions flooded up his manly face. Sometimes it did appear to me that Lincoln was just fresh from the presence and hands of his Creator.

Herndon's Notes and Monographs, in
Emanuel Hertz, *The Hidden Lincoln.*



One of the most charming of the Lincoln photographs. It is the only one that shows Lincoln wearing glasses. He and his son Tad are caught by the camera in the act of looking over an album of Brady photographs. The artist, Carpenter, used this photograph as a model in executing his painting of the Lincoln family. This photograph was made by Brady in his studio in Washington, February 9, 1864, the same day the photograph used as the frontispiece was made. Courtesy the U. S. Army Signal Corps.

37. A Private Secretary Recalls Lincoln's White House Habits

In response to a request from William Herndon, John Hay, formerly one of Lincoln's private secretaries, wrote out some of his recollections of Lincoln's daily personal and official habits as President. Hay was in Paris serving as Secretary of the United States Legation when he wrote the letter, about a year and half after Lincoln's death. Portions of the letter are given below.

Lincoln used to go to bed ordinarily from ten to eleven o'clock unless he happened to be kept up by important news, in which case he would frequently remain at the War Department until one or two. He rose early. When he lived in the country at Soldiers' Home, he would be up and dressed, eat his breakfast (which was extremely frugal—an egg, a piece of toast, coffee, etc.), and ride into Washington, all before eight o'clock. In the winter at the White House he was not quite so early. He did not sleep very well but spent a good while in bed. Tad usually slept with him. He would lie around the office until he fell asleep and Lincoln would shoulder him and take him off to bed.

He pretended to begin business at ten o'clock in the morning, but in reality the anterooms and halls were full before that hour—people anxious to get the first ax ground. He was extremely unmethodical: it was a four years' struggle on Nicolay's part and mine to get him to adopt some systematic rules. He would break through every regulation as fast as it was made.

Anything that kept the people themselves away from him he disapproved—although they nearly annoyed the life out of him by unreasonable complaints and requests.

The House remained full of people nearly all day. At noon the President took a little lunch—a biscuit, a glass of milk in winter, some fruit or grapes in summer. He dined at from five to six and we went off to our dinner also.

Before dinner was over, members and Senators would come back and take up the whole evening. Sometimes, though rarely, he shut himself up and would see no one. Sometimes he would run away to a lecture or concert or theater for the sake of a little rest.

He was very abstemious, ate less than anyone I know. Drank nothing but water, not from principle, but because he did not like wine or spirits.

Hay to Herndon, September 5, 1866.

38. "With Malice Toward None"

A few days after his second inaugural President Lincoln wrote to Thurlow Weed thanking him for a complimentary note on the recent inaugural address. Referring to the address, Lincoln wrote, "I expect the latter to wear as well as—perhaps better

than—anything I have produced; but I believe it is not immediately popular." Not always is an author or speaker a true prophet of his own work. In this case, Lincoln was. This brief address, whose closing paragraphs are rich with the flavor and cadences of the Old Testament, is assurance of the speaker's immortality in the minds of man as long as the language is spoken and read. Lord Curzon said that Lincoln's Second Inaugural, his Gettysburg Address, and William Pitt's toast after the Battle of Trafalgar constitute the three supreme examples of eloquence in the English language.

Neither party expected for the war the magnitude or the duration which it has already attained. Neither anticipated that the cause of the conflict might cease with, or even before, the conflict itself should cease. Each looked for an easier triumph, and a result less fundamental and astounding. Both read the same Bible, and pray to the same God; and each invokes his aid against the other. It may seem strange that any men should dare to ask a just God's assistance in wringing their bread from the sweat of other men's faces; but let us judge not, that we be not judged. The prayers of both could not be answered—that of neither has been answered fully.

The Almighty has his own purposes. "Woe unto the world because of offenses! for it must needs be that offenses come; but woe to that man by whom the offense cometh." If we shall suppose that American slavery is one of those offenses which, in the providence of God, must needs come, but which, having continued through his appointed time, he now wills to remove, and that he gives to both North and South this terrible war, as the woe due to those by whom the offense came, shall we discern therein any departure from those divine attributes which the believers in a living God always ascribe to him? Fondly do we hope—fervently do we pray—that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away. Yet, if God wills that it continue until all the wealth piled by the bondman's two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash shall be paid by another drawn with the sword, as was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said, "The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether."

With malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan—to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves, and with all nations.

LINCOLN, SECOND INAUGURAL ADDRESS, MARCH 4, 1865.

39. HE BELONGS TO THE AGES

Gideon Welles, Secretary of the Navy throughout Lincoln's administration, kept a detailed and revealing diary during those crucial years. He had the true New England temperament and was as conscientious as any Adams. His diary is one of the most valuable sources of information on men and events of that period.

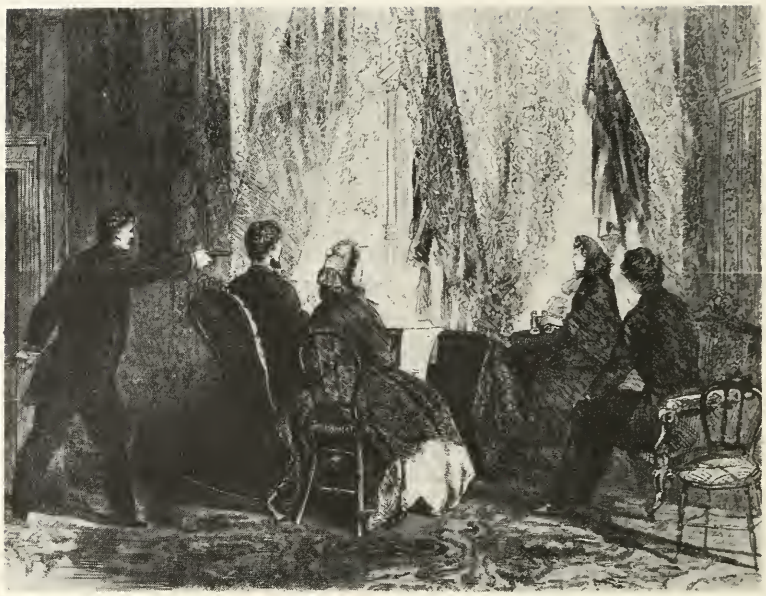
Welles retired about 10:30 on the evening of April 14, 1865. Shortly thereafter a messenger clamored outside and announced that the President and Seward and the latter's son had been assassinated. Dressing hastily Welles hurried across Lafayette Square to Seward's house on 15th Street. Stanton arrived there at about the same time. They found Seward severely wounded and his son slightly injured. Together, they then hastened on to Ford's Theatre. There they learned that the mortally wounded and unconscious President had been carried to a house across the street. The bullet from John Wilkes Booth's derringer had found its mark while the President was enjoying a few moments in his favorite form of relaxation. He had gone to the theatre to see Laura Keene in an English comedy called "Our American Cousin." Gideon Welles tells the story of the final hours.

The President had been carried across the street from the theatre, to the house of a Mr. Peterson. We entered by ascending a flight of steps above the basement and passing through a long hall to the rear, where the President lay extended on a bed, breathing heavily. Several surgeons were present, at least six, I should think more. Among them I was glad to observe Dr. Hall, who, however, soon left. I inquired of Dr. H., as I entered, the true condition of the President. He replied the President was dead to all intents, although he might live three hours or perhaps longer.

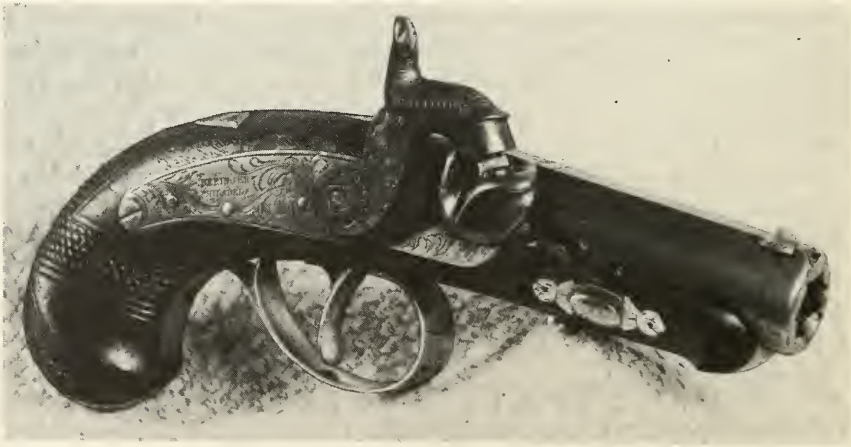
The giant sufferer lay extended diagonally across the bed, which was not long enough for him. He had been stripped of his clothes. His large arms, which were occasionally exposed, were of a size which one would scarce have expected from his spare appearance. His slow, full respiration lifted the clothes with each breath that he took. His features were calm and striking. I had never seen them appear to better advantage than for the first hour, perhaps, that I was there. After that, his right eye began to swell and that part of his face became discolored.

Senator Sumner was there, I think, when I entered. If not he came in soon after, as did Speaker Colfax, Mr. Secretary McCulloch, and the other members of the Cabinet, with the exception of Mr. Seward. A double guard was stationed at the door and on the sidewalk, to repress the crowd, which was of course highly excited and anxious. The room was small and overcrowded. The surgeons and members of the Cabinet were as many as should have been in the room, but there were many more, and the hall and other rooms in the front or main house were full. One of these rooms was occupied by Mrs. Lincoln and her attendants, with Miss Harris. Mrs. Dixon and Mrs. Kinney came to her about twelve o'clock. About once an hour Mrs. Lincoln would repair to the bedside of her dying husband and with lamentation and tears remain until overcome by emotion.

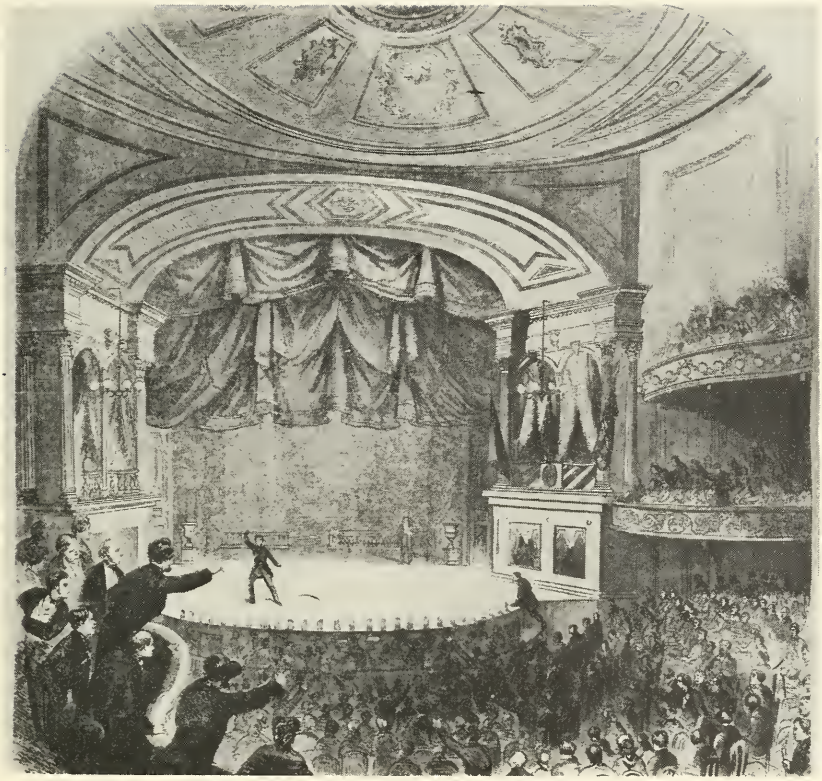
[April 15.] A door which opened upon a porch or gallery, and also the windows, were kept open for fresh air. The night was dark, cloudy, and damp, and about six it began to rain. I remained in the room until then without sitting or leaving it, when, there being a vacant chair which some one left at the foot of the bed, I occupied it for nearly two hours, listening to the heavy groans, and witnessing the wasting life of the good and great man who was expiring before me.



A contemporary sketch by Albert Berghaus representing John Wilkes Booth in the act of assassinating President Lincoln in his box at Ford Theatre, April 14, 1865. Berghaus, a staff artist for Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper, *was noted for the accuracy of his drawings. From left to right the figures are: John Wilkes Booth, Abraham Lincoln, Mrs. Lincoln, Miss Clara Harris, Maj. Henry Reed Rathbone. Reproduced from* Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper, *April 29, 1865.*



Deringer with which Booth shot Lincoln. Reproduced from original in Lincoln Museum (Ford Theatre).



A contemporary sketch by Albert Berghaus representing Booth crossing the stage at Ford Theatre after he had leaped down from the Presidential box on the right where he had just shot Lincoln. Mr. Stewart is shown climbing on stage at right to pursue Booth. This sketch is very accurate in its architectural details of the theatre and is much more informative than any contemporary photograph. Reproduced from Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper, *May 20, 1865.*

About 6 A. M. I experienced a feeling of faintness and for the first time after entering the room, a little past eleven, I left it and the house, and took a short walk in the open air. It was a dark and gloomy morning, and rain set in before I returned to the house, some fifteen minutes [later]. Large groups of people were gathered every few rods, all anxious and solicitous. Some one or more from each group stepped forward as I passed, to inquire into the condition of the President, and to ask if there was no hope. Intense grief was on every countenance when I replied that the President could survive but a short time. The colored people especially—and there were at this time more of them, perhaps, than of whites—were overwhelmed with grief.

Returning to the house, I seated myself in the back parlor, where the Attorney-General and others had been engaged in taking evidence concerning the assassination. Stanton, and Speed, and Usher were there, the latter asleep on the bed. There were three or four others also in the room. While I did not feel inclined to sleep, as many did, I was somewhat indisposed. I had been so for several days. The excitement and bad atmosphere from the crowded rooms oppressed me physically.

A little before seven, I went into the room where the dying President was rapidly drawing near the closing moments. His wife soon after made her last visit to him. The death-struggle had begun. Robert, his son, stood with several others at the head of the bed. He bore himself well, but on two occasions gave way to overpowering grief and sobbed aloud, turning his head and leaning on the shoulder of Senator Sumner. The respiration of the President became suspended at intervals, and at last entirely ceased at twenty-two minutes past seven.

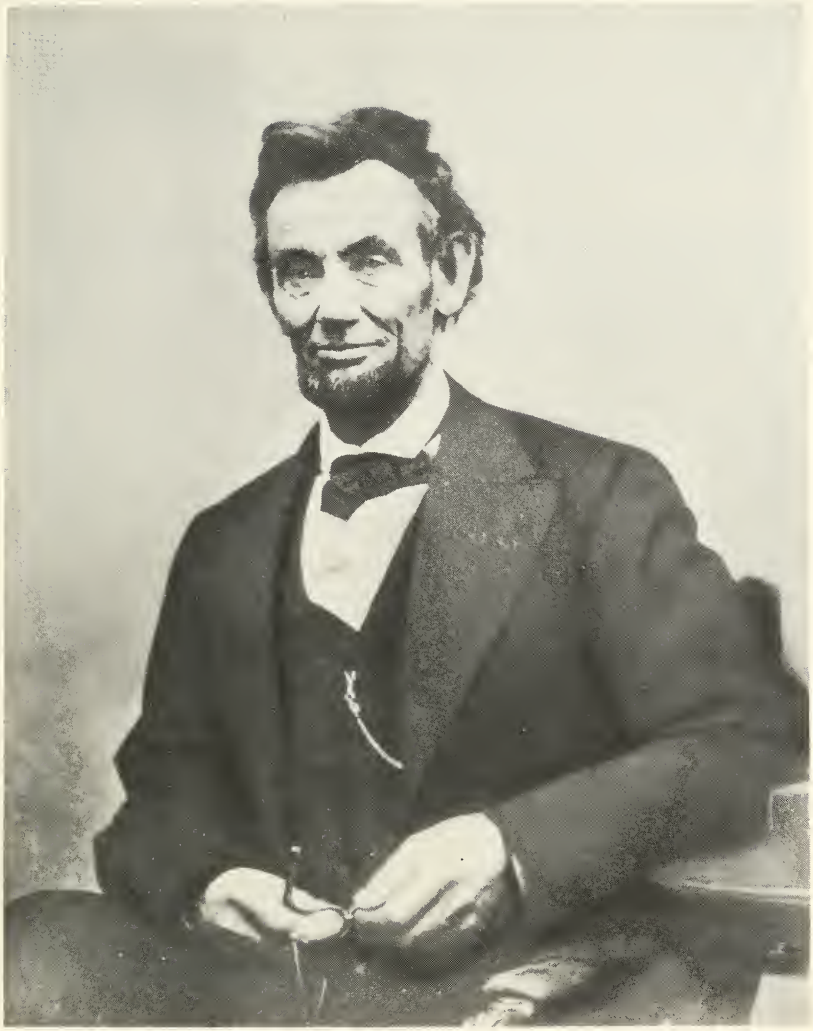
Diary of Gideon Welles.

40. Walt Whitman Sums Up Lincoln

Walt Whitman recorded in his Notebook for 1864 that he saw Lincoln almost daily as he lived at a place the President passed in going to and from his lodgings at the Soldiers' Home outside Washington during the hot and humid season of midsummer. Whitman then goes on to remark, "we have got so that we always exchange bows, and very cordial ones." Fortunately, this great American poet has left us his appraisal of Lincoln's character and personality.

I should say the invisible foundations and vertebra of his character, more than any man's in history, were mystical, abstract, moral and spiritual—while upon all of them was built, and out of all of them radiated, under the control of the average of circumstances, what the vulgar call *horse-sense*, and a life often bent by temporary but most urgent materialistic and political reasons.

He seems to have been a man of indomitable firmness (even obstinacy) on rare occasions, involving great points; but he was generally very easy, flexible, tolerant, respecting minor matters. I note that even those reports and anecdotes intended



Lincoln's last photograph. It was taken by Alexander Gardner, April 10, 1865, the day after Lee surrendered his army to Grant at Appomattox Court House and five days before Lincoln's death. Four negatives of Lincoln were made by Gardner at this last sitting.

to level him down, all leave the tinge of a favorable impression of him. As to his religious nature, it seems to me to have certainly been of the amplest, deepest-rooted kind.

WALT WHITMAN, IN *Reminiscences of Abraham Lincoln by Distinguished Men of His Time*, EDITED BY ALLEN THORNDIKE RICE.

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NOTE: This bibliography does not include the many works consulted and used in preparing the comments at the head of each section or in searching through the main body of source materials relating to Lincoln. It includes only the titles of the sources from which the selections themselves have been taken.

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