

# THE CHARGER

CLEVELAND CIVIL WAR ROUND-TABLE  
P.O. BOX 18900, CLEVELAND, OHIO 44118

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FEBRUARY 1996

340TH MEETING

VOL. 17 #6

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Wednesday, February 14, 1996

**DATE:**

The Hermit Club

**PLACE:**

**SUBJECT:**

"A Night with President  
Lincoln"

**SPEAKER:**

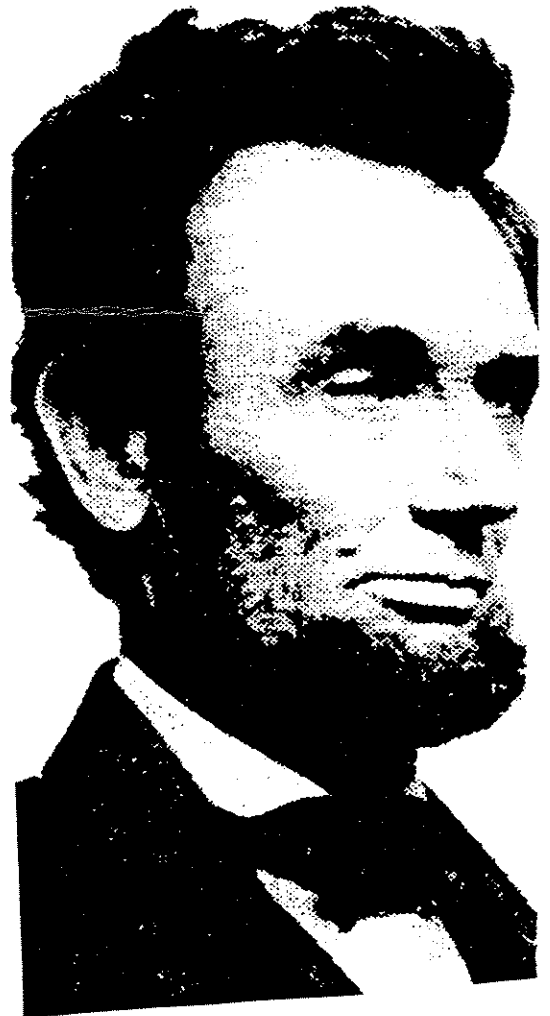
Dr. Hugh G. Earnhart. Currently a Professor of History at Youngstown State University, Dr. Earnhart is a recognized expert of the South and the Civil War. He has published articles in Civil War History and the Encyclopedia of Southern History. He will be doing a first person impression of the 16th President.

**TIME:**

Drinks 6PM Dinner 7PM

**RESERVATIONS:**

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# CLEVELAND CIVIL WAR ROUND-TABLE

1957 \* 1996



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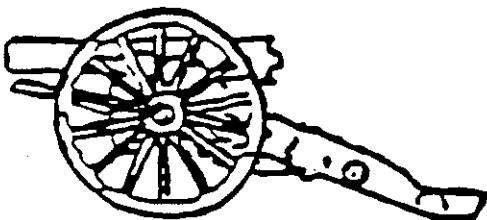
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## Up Coming Events



## This Year's Schedule of Meetings & Speakers

- |            |  |
|------------|--|
| March 13 - | Panel Discussion<br>"Opportunities Lost"<br>Bob Boyda, Moderator               |
| April 10 - | Jeffery Wert<br>"Custer"   |
| May 8 -    | Ladies Night<br>William A. Young, Jr.<br>"Rev. Findley at<br>Pickett's Charge" |

# MORE THAN YOU EVER WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT

## NATIONAL INAUGURATION BALL: 1865

On January 20 a new President of the United States of America will be inaugurated; that evening several inaugural balls will be held at various locations in our nation's capital. Perhaps some of our readers may attend one or more of those balls. We do not know whether a Mrs. H. S. Clark actually attended the "National Inauguration Ball" in 1865, but we do know that she received an invitation because it is in the archives of the Lincoln College Museum.

The ball that year was held on the night of Monday, March 6, though the invitation bears the date of the inauguration of President Abraham Lincoln and Vice President Andrew Johnson-March 4. (Until 1937, presidential inaugurations were held on March 4. This was changed by the Twentieth Amendment to the Constitution, ratified on January 23, 1933.) It was held in the United States Patent Office. Margaret Leech notes in *Reveille in Washington: 1860-1865* (1941) that, early in the evening, "the promenade halls, lined with cabinets of patents and curios, began to fill with strolling couples."

The elegant supper, enough to feed over four thousand people, included beef, veal, poultry, game, terrapin, oysters, and salads. The long table, designed to accommodate three hundred people at a time, was festive with flags, pyramids, and other ornaments.

The "crowning glories" of the feast, however, were the monuments of confectionary. The piece in honor of the army had six sculptured devices, including a combat scene between infantry and cavalry, and a mounted general with his field glass in active use. An equally elaborate tribute to the navy featured Farragut's flagship with the admiral lashed to the mast. The centerpiece was a mammoth sugar model of the Capitol, surrounded by scenes from the Revolution to Fort Sumter as it appeared when Recaptured by Union troops.

At 10:30 p.m., the band played "Hail to the Chief" and a path was cleared as President Lincoln entered, accompanied-as was the custom-by Speaker of the House Schuyler Colfax. Mary Lincoln, in a dress of white silk and lace, with a headdress of white jessamine and purple violets, followed on the arm of Senator Charles Summer.

Their appearance, Leech observes, "caused a buzz, for it was supposed that, since his successful fight against Lincoln's reconstruction plan, Summer was *persona non grata* at the White House. The president had chosen to make this public demonstration that there was no breach between them." Lincoln had sent the senator a note which, "for all its gentle courtesy, had the hint of a royal command."

It's interesting to note the years engraved on the steps at the bottom of the invitation: 1777-1783-the years of the Revolutionary War; 1812-13-the years of the War of 1812; and 1861-65. The later, of course, are the years of the Civil War-but the Confederacy did not surrender until several weeks following the inaugural ball.

(Courtesy of The Lincoln Newsletter, A publication of the Lincoln College Museum, Lincoln Illinois, Volume XI, Number 4, Winter 1992. The article was written by Barbara Hughett)



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Paul A. Glenn  
William Vodrey

## Lincoln and Your Lapel

Anyone who has frequented our esteemed president's shop in downtown Peninsula knows that political buttons abound there.

In fact, it is not too late for people like "Len Miller" to go down and get their Clinton buttons.

The following story on the "father" of the campaign button ran in the September 1992 *Shutterbug* magazine. Titled "Collectible Campaign Photo Buttons" it was written by Jack Naylor.

"The 1992 presidential political season is in full swing. Soon we will have access to a new set of buttons, but for our purposes, as collectors and historians, let's examine some political photo buttons of the past, starting with the first one.

The first political photo button was made to encourage voters to cast their ballots for the Illinois lawyer, Abraham Lincoln. He was a candidate for the President of the United States running opposite Stephen A. Douglas.

placed on a box in order for it to reach behind his ears.

It would not have been unexpected for the future president to have his photograph placed on a campaign button in 1860 in order to gain more recognition than he might get from an engraving on a flyer or in a newspaper.

In fact, there are two "first" 1860 photo buttons of Lincoln. On the button pictured here, the brass frame, 1 5/16 inch in diameter, reads "Abraham Lincoln 1860." The 1/2 inch diameter tintype of the beardless Lincoln is believed to have been reproduced from an albumen print made by Roderick M. Cole in Peoria, Illinois in 1859 or 1860.

The other "first" Lincoln photo button is identical in size of the frame and image. The only copy on the button is "Abraham Lincoln" embossed on the tintype, not on the frame. The button has a stamped flower and geometric design on the brass frame surrounding the image. The photo of the beardless Lincoln was Matthew Brady's February 27, 1860 portrait of Lincoln taken in New York just before his Cooper Union address.



The first photo campaign button.  
A beardless Lincoln campaigned  
for the presidency in 1860.

Lincoln's photo campaign  
button of 1864.



Lincoln evidently understood the strength of photography. In the book *The Face of Lincoln* edited by James Mellon (Crown Publishers, Inc., 1979), the compiler states that at least 136 photographic poses or views of Lincoln are believed to have existed. The first known image of Lincoln was a daguerreotype taken in 1847 in Springfield, Illinois, attributed to daguerreotypist N.H. Shepherd. Lincoln was age 38 and had just been elected to the US House of Representatives.

History records that in the early daguerreotypes and ambrotypes of the 6'4" Lincoln standing, the head rest had to be

The vice presidential candidate was not forgotten. On the reverse of each of the Lincoln campaign buttons was a 1/2 inch diameter tintype of Hannibal Hamlin, a Maine Democrat turned Republican, who served during Lincoln's first term.

There was a third Lincoln campaign button, this one for the 1864 re-election campaign. It is the same size as the 1860 buttons with "A. Lincoln" embossed on the tintype and stamped letters on the brass frame reading "For President 1864." The bearded Lincoln tintype is attributed to a February 1864 photo by Alexander Gardner at the Brady Washington studio. The

tintype of vice presidential candidate, Andrew Johnson, is on the reverse. Vice President Johnson was to become President after Lincoln was assassinated.

The three Lincoln buttons, the first photo campaign buttons, were attached to ribbon and pinned to a lapel.

Move ahead to 1868. A 46 year old Civil War hero, General Ulysses S. Grant, was running for president against Horace Greeley and Horatio Seymour. The size of the Grant photo campaign button increased to one inch diameter and the two tintypes, Grant and his vice presidential candidate, Schuyler Colfax, now side-by-side, were smaller than Lincoln's photo, a mere 3/8 inch diameter. The two candidates names were embossed on the tiny tintypes, above the photos. Grant won and became a two term president.

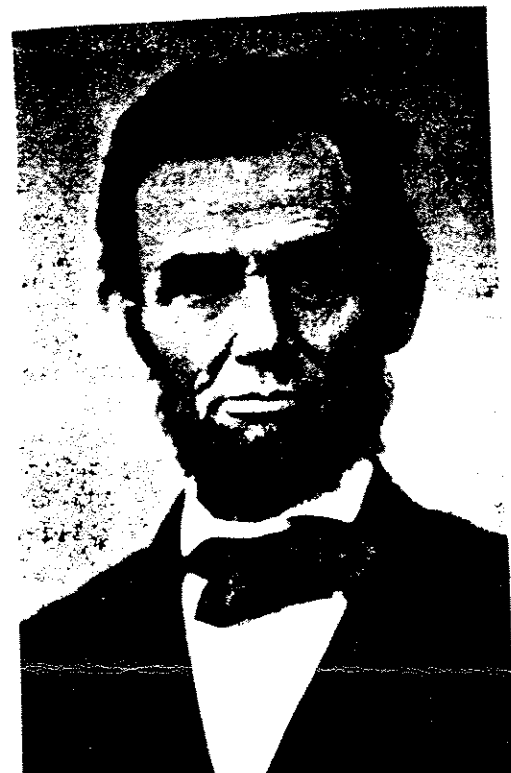
In 1896, there was a Gold Bug photo campaign button. William McKinley was running against William Jennings Bryan. McKinley's running mate was Garret A. Hobart. McKinley was in favor of the country changing from silver to the gold standard. The Gold Bug, a 1 1/4" x 9/16" gold colored lapel pin in the shape of a bug was the symbol worn by his followers. In fact, the Bug lapel pin was a photographic campaign button. Simply push on the bug's back and two springloaded wings popped out with a tiny tintype of McKinley on one wing, Hobart's on the other.

Every presidential campaign since Lincoln has produced photo buttons. Just before the party nominating conventions in 1992, the colorful photo buttons will be seen throughout the country. They are no longer small. The candidates smiling faces will be lithographed on 3-inch diameter buttons to be easily seen by anyone, especially home TV viewers.

What will collectors pay for campaign photo buttons? Either of the 1860 Lincoln buttons will sell for about \$400. The 1864 Lincoln button will be in the \$250 range, Ulysses S. Grant about \$200 and the McKinley Gold Bug usually brings \$300. Campaign photo buttons of winners or losers since World War II will bring from \$2 to \$100, depending on the candidate, button size and interest. A large Reagan button and a Dukakis-Bentsen 1988 button range in price from \$5 to \$20."

From "Buckeye HAROTACK"  
NEWSLETTER of the  
Cuyahoga Valley CWRT

# "Get down, you damn fool..."



When President Lincoln ventured from the White House to witness the nearby Battle of Fort Stevens, he foolishly stood up to peek over the ramparts - ignoring the fact that his height and his towering stovepipe hat made him an easy target for Rebel gunners. Seconds later, a Rebel bullet downed a Union officer standing just three feet from the President and a young captain screamed out, "Get down, you damn fool, before you get shot!" Only then did Lincoln take cover from the whizzing bullets. The captain was Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., the future Supreme Court Justice.

**PLEASE MAKE RESERVATIONS**

**PLEASE CALL 861-5588**

# Lincoln was a smart and busy lawyer

March 6, 1861

Americans recall and honor our 16th president on his 182nd birthday Tuesday. It is time to put to rest the myth that Lincoln was nothing more than a simple country lawyer. While his backwoods origin and "railsplitter" sobriquet have helped to foster the provincial image, in fact, Lincoln was one of the outstanding lawyers of Illinois in the 1840s and '50s.

After some self-study, he was licensed to practice law on Sept. 9, 1836. (As was the custom, he treated his examiners to dinner.)

For the most part, he learned law by teaching it. And his practice was extremely varied. It involved disputes over property and debts, murder, rapes, divorces and slander. He was engaged primarily in litigation and appellate work. Criminal law was only a small part of the total practice, and some of his more famous cases were under cases. (The trials of Henry B. Truett and William (Duff) Armstrong, the Moonshiner case, are probably the best known.)

Lincoln's law career found him in partnership with three different men — John Todd Stuart, Stephen T. Logan and finally William Herndon. When Lincoln left for Washington on Feb. 11, 1861, he looked wistfully at the Lincoln-Herndon sign and told a young associate: "Let it hang there undisturbed. Give our clients to understand that the election of a president makes no change in the firm of Lincoln and Herndon. I live. I'm coming back some time, and here we'll go right on practicing law as if nothing had ever happened."

Although his self-assessment was characteristically modest, as when he said, "I am of an accomplished lawyer," Lincoln had a successful practice. For example, the firm of Lincoln and Logan in one 11-day period in March 1844 took court action on an average of seven cases a day.

In 1853, Lincoln and Herndon were involved in 34% of the cases before the Sangamon County Circuit Court in Springfield.

Lincoln's varied legal practice took him to courts at all levels — the Eighth Illinois Circuit Court, the Illinois Supreme Court, and federal courts up to and including the U.S.



case. It was the volume of his work that made it lucrative. He often accepted payment in kind such as groceries, vegetables, produce, clothing, firewood or even a subscription to a local newspaper.

Lincoln's largest fee was the \$5,000 he received as counsel for the Illinois Central Railroad in the famous McClean County Tax Case. He successfully argued that railroad taxes should be exempt from county taxes as "public works" because they already paid taxes. This had a tremendous impact on railroad construction. Lincoln, who was opposed by two of his former partners, Logan and Stuart, was forced to sue the company for his fee, but he easily won a judgment in his favor.

Another significant case in which Lincoln participated was the McCormick vs. Manny & Co. case concerning infringement of patent rights (1855). He was hired to serve as local counsel with such Eastern lawyers as Edwin M. Stanton. The rude and supercilious Stanton and the others treated Lincoln as a Western hick, snubbing him and showing little respect for the extensive brief he had prepared. It was Stanton who supposedly referred to him as "that gl-raffe" and "that creature from Illinois."

But Lincoln learned a great deal from the case and felt the experience was worthwhile. (Ironically, Stanton later was Lincoln's secretary of war.)

As an all-purpose lawyer, Lincoln adopted a pragmatic approach. He took just about any case and argued both sides of the law. For example, he did this in fugitive slave cases. In the case of Bailey vs. Cromwell in 1841 in the Illinois Supreme Court, Lincoln won the freedom of an indentured Negro girl sold by one white man to another. He persuaded the court that it was illegal to sell a human being in Illinois since slavery was prohibited there both by the Northwest Ordinance of 1787 and by the Illinois Constitution.

The case established the enlightened principle that in Illinois every person was free regardless of color and that the sale of a free person was illegal.

And yet in the Matson slave case of 1847, tried in Charleston, Ill., Lincoln reversed his position and defended a Kentucky slave owner out to retrieve a slave family that had run away from him. The blacks were part of a slave coffe brought from Kentucky to work a tract of land in Illinois. Ironically, the opposition put forth the exact same arguments that Lincoln had made in Bailey vs. Cromwell, but the case was not mentioned.

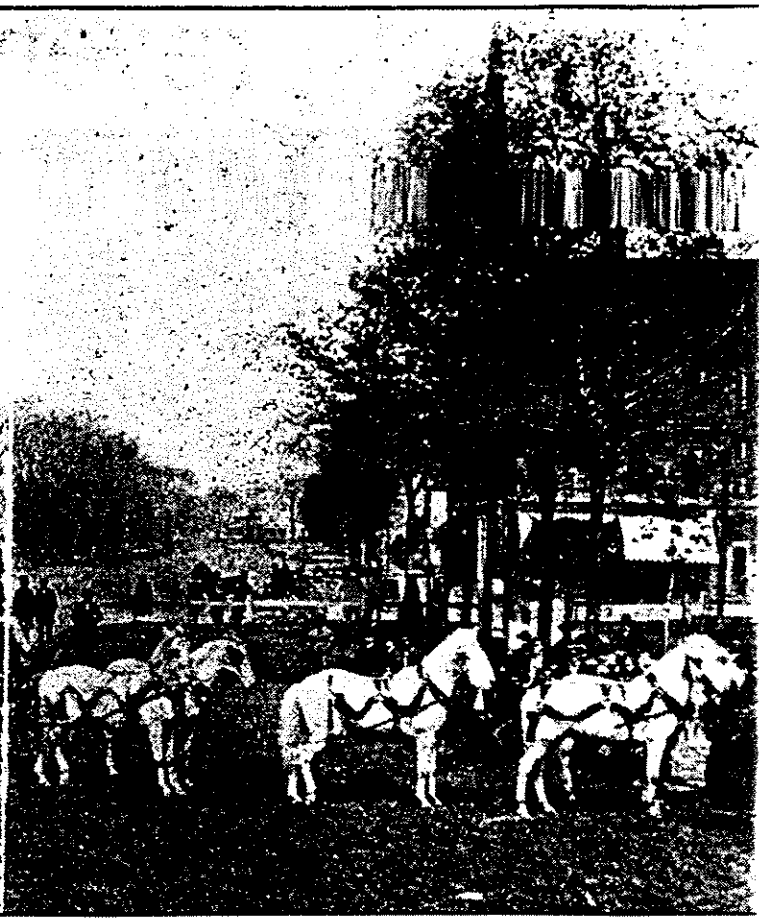
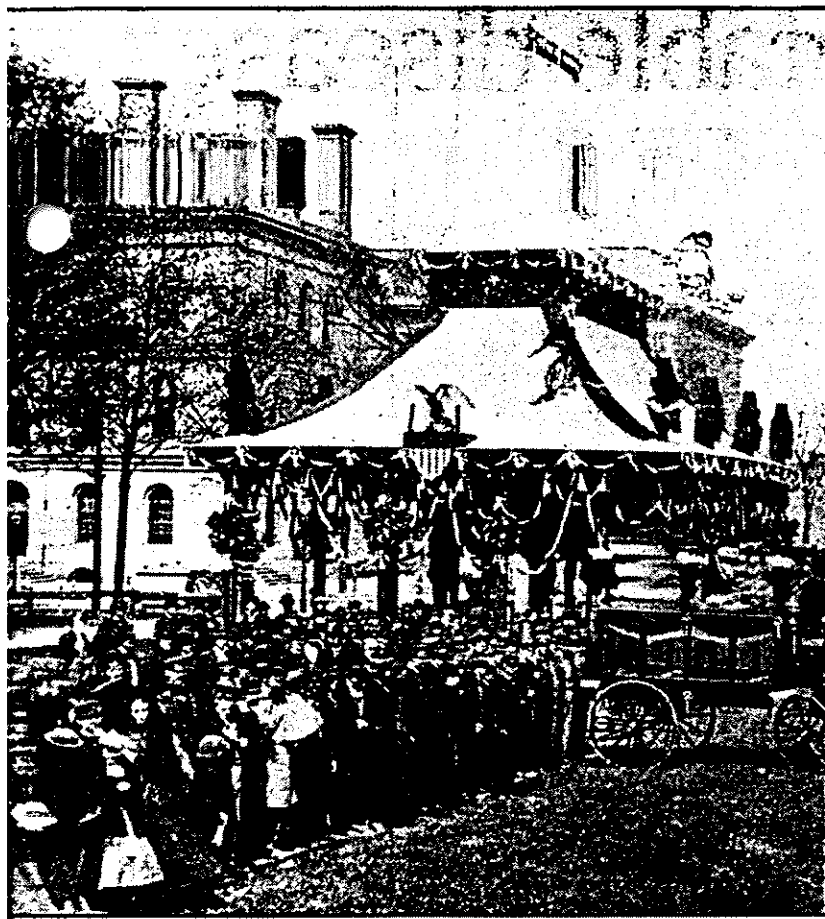
Lincoln, on the other hand, declared strongly that his client had brought the slaves to Illinois strictly on a temporary basis and that he planned to take them back to Kentucky after their work was done. Therefore, he maintained, Illinois law did not apply to them. This was cold and brutal logic, demonstrating how Attorney Lincoln could set aside his personal convictions — since he claimed to hate slavery — and work hard to win for a client, even if that meant sending a family back into bondage.

The court, however, ruled against him and set the blacks free, even though it did not mention the precedent Lincoln had helped to establish in Bailey vs. Cromwell.

In a law lecture, Lincoln offered this constructive advice, which is as sound today as it was in 1850:

"There is a vague popular belief that lawyers are necessarily dishonest. ... Let no young man choosing the law for a calling for a moment yield to the popular belief — resolve to be honest at all events; and if in your judgment you cannot be an honest lawyer, resolve to be honest without being a lawyer. Choose some other occupation, rather than one in the choosing of which you do, in advance, consent to be a knave."

Tullai is chairman of the history department at St. Paul's School, Brooklandville, Md.



President Lincoln's funeral coach stands in Public Square surrounded by officials. At left is the old Federal Post Office Building

# Loose-lipped Lincoln haters mobbed

Most Clevelanders were grief-stricken at the news of Abraham Lincoln's assassination on April 4, 1865, but not all; those who hated the president were delighted, and they talked — to anyone at hand that terrible day.

## CLEVELAND: LOOK BACK



Job Buch

Here's what the Cleveland Leader had to say: "Some villains are fools — so great fools that they parade their villainy before the world. Certain visitors in Cleveland were crazy enough to

express their joy at the murder of the President, and received therefore some very rough treatment.

"J.J. Husband, the well known architect, was in high glee after the news, remarking to one man, 'You have had your day of rejoicing, now I have mine,' to another, 'This is a good day for me,' and to a third, 'Lincoln's death is a damned small loss.' It seems that afterwards he became sensible of the danger that he had incurred

by these remarks, for he came sneaking back to the newspaper offices to deny that he had made them."

A mob ran Husband from his office to the roof, caught him, threw him through a skylight into his office, and kicked him down the stairs. "The mob would perhaps have pounded him to death had he not been rescued by prominent citizens. Locked in a courthouse room, he broke free, and, we understand, has since left town. He can never show his face in Cleveland again. His name has already been chipped from the place on the Court House where it was cut as the architect. . . .

"Other men of Southern sympathies knew enough to keep closely at home, Saturday. Cleveland is an unhealthy place for rebels."

Across the North, there was a tremendous outpouring of grief — the tragedy following on the heels of victory in the bloody, four-year war being almost too much for people to grasp. The seven-car funeral train bearing the president's body set out on April 21 on a 1,700 mile journey retracing the stops the president-elect had made four years earlier, on the way to his first inauguration.

There were stops in New York, where a crowd of 100,000 mourners accompanied the cortege through the streets; Philadelphia, and then Baltimore. In Lancaster, Pa., a tired old man in a carriage watched from the edge of the crowd as the train passed — James Buchanan, Lincoln's predecessor. Finally, it was Cleveland's turn.

There, the Committee on Location of Remains had decided no available building would accommodate the crowds, so the Committee on Arrangements had a pagoda put up in the city park (Public Square), with open sides through which two columns could pass the coffin.

A high bank above the Lake Erie shore was jammed with people as the train drew into the Union Depot. From there another engine took it to the Euclid St. station, and it was noted: "As the train came up the Lake Shore track, a very beautiful incident took place. Miss Fields of Wilson St., had erected an arch of evergreens on the bank of the lake near the track, and as the train passed appeared in the arch as the Goddess of Liberty in mourning."

Maj. Gen. Joseph "Fighting Joe" Hooker was in charge of military escorting the hearse, which was drawn by six white horses wearing crepe ribbons and silver stars.

A procession of more than 100,000 people moved along Euclid from the park, as a slow rain began to fall. A burial service was held over the coffin; 9,000 people passed the coffin the first day, growing ever larger till by closing at 10 p.m. many thousands from northern Ohio, Detroit, and western Pennsylvania towns had shuffled by.

Later, with the wind dropping and the rain, a night procession escorted the hearse through the crowded streets to the depot. The train continued its westward journey to Springfield, Ill., where little groups of men and women gathered at every crossroads, standing by bonfires, their tears mixing with the rain, as Abraham Lincoln rode into enduring American legend.

Rich is a local history author whose radio spot, "A Taste of Cleveland History" is heard on WCPN FM/90.3. This column appears each Sunday leading up to Cleveland's bicentennial in 1996.



# Who Was the Boy at the Hanging of the Lincoln Conspirators?

by Steven G. Miller

Anyone who has done research for any length of time at all has probably had a mystery that has plagued them despite their best efforts to solve it. It doesn't necessarily have to be a large mystery. In fact, some of the most annoying ones are the "little" mysteries; ones that really don't mean much in The Greater Scheme of Things.

I can sympathize with the frustration, because I, too, have had a puzzle that I couldn't figure out. I don't know whether most researchers find the answer to their micro-mysteries, but I'm writing to offer hope. I THINK I have found the answer to my little puzzler.

Mine involved the identity of the boy in uniform at the hanging of the Lincoln conspirators. The most famous Alexander Gardner photo of the execution is the one with the four limp-hanging bodies. The crowd has parted somewhat, and right in the middle of the soldiers is a pre-teenage boy in uniform. I've wondered who he was. Was he a drummer boy for a VRC Regiment, a camp-follower, or the son of an officer stationed at the Old Penitentiary? His identity has puzzled me for sometime. Thanks to some good luck, I may have solved my mystery.

Mike Kauffman provided the first clue. He sent me a copy of *Recollections of Boston Corbett*, by John C. Collins from *The Washington Star*, April 12, 1914. Collins said that, during the last two years of the war, he was "the company boy," a sort of regimental mascot for the 16th New York Cavalry. In 1865 he was around thirteen years old.

He tells that his brother, William, "allowed me to accompany him on his return to the camp after a brief furlough to his home. It was expected that this visit would be of short duration and that after I had had a few days experience of actual camp life I would be returned to my home."

William Collins was wounded in

a skirmish with Mosby's men before John could be returned home. After a short hospital stay, William returned to his regiment, only to be captured on June 24, 1864, in the same battle in which Boston Corbett was taken prisoner. Collins, Corbett and several others were shipped to Andersonville, Georgia. With no one to take him back to New York, John Collins was stuck with the regiment.

"I was given a pony which had been condemned because too small for a cavalryman, a uniform was cut and made for me by some soldier who had been a tailor... I enjoyed all the privileges and shared in much of the life of the regiment, except picket duty and the long scouts after Mosby. ...I think it was even whispered that the little white-headed boy had some occult influence in the renown which came to the regiment as the captors of J. Wilkes Booth..."

Collins talked about the hunt for the assassins and has a discussion of the career and character of Boston Corbett. He wrote of Corbett: "He gave me his photograph with his autograph on it a few days after he had killed Booth, and I remember his placing the forefinger of his right hand in the palm of my hand and saying that that was the finger that had pulled the trigger..."

His eyewitness account of the hanging of the conspirators on July 7, 1865 is particularly interesting. He tells of the strict security that was in evidence around the prison. Outside the walls was "a double line of soldiers for the entire length, standing by twos with bayonets touching one another." There were guards at each entrance and signed passes were required for admittance.

John goes on to say, "I have never quite known exactly how I did it, but I actually went through all these lines of troops without a pass, and in less than twenty minutes from the first attempt I was stationed not thirty feet away from the scaffold in full view of everything said or done in connection with the execution. I

suppose the fact that I was dressed in uniform had much to do with it. I think I am the youngest of living people who witnessed the most historical execution in this country."

Collins says that he had reason to regret his boldness after the trap fell, however: "Boy though I was, I turned away with the sensation of horror and faintness and a feeling that I have never since lost, that I had no wish ever to witness another such scene."

In the Doherty Archive is a letter from William Collins to John E. Hoover, Capt. Doherty's nephew, dated May 10, 1897, shortly after Capt. Doherty's death. Collins advised the Doherty family on securing a pension for Doherty's widow. He talks about Boston Corbett's prison life and the bad blood between the soldiers of the Garrett's Farm Patrol and the Baker clan. Collins told Hoover of the execution of the conspirators, too.

Williams says, "...My brother who visited you in Washington recently was present and saw the execution. Capt. Doherty I believe let him into the yard. He was only a boy at the time and was enlisted in the Regt. as he was young but he staid with the Regt. for about 18 months and was a general favorite with all the Officers and particularly Capt. Doherty. Col. Switzer (Col. Nelson B. Sweitzer, commanding officer) on the 16th N.Y. Cavalry was determined to have him educated and sent him to West Point at the close of the war, but he wanted to come home with the rest of us and did so."

Is this story apocryphal? Perhaps, but John Collins's account has the ring of truth. Brother William Collins confirmed it to Capt. Doherty's nephew; and, last but not least, there is that boy in uniform in the courtyard of the Arsenal Prison.

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Reprinted from the *Surratt Courier*, Vol. XVIII, No. 3, March, 1993, Ellen Watson, Editor.



# Vatican gave U.S. a criminal in 1866

He was suspect in the murder of Lincoln

by RUTH SINAI  
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — There is historical precedent for the Vatican agreeing to turn over a fugitive to the United States, although the Holy See maintains it cannot surrender ousted foreigner Gen. Manuel Antonio Surratt from its embassy in Panama. The Vatican adopted an entirely different position when asked to turn over one of the suspected conspirators in the 1865 assassination of President Abraham Lincoln, John H. Surratt Jr.

Surratt, a young Confederate spy who had conspired with John Wilkes Booth to abduct Lincoln in 1864, fled after Booth shot Lincoln on April 14, 1865.

Surratt, a devout Catholic,

changed his name to John Watson and joined Pope Pius IX's Zouaves Regiment in late 1865 or early 1866. The unit was part of the army that defended the Papal States, at that time an independent country about the size of West Virginia, against claims by Italian nationalists.

Surratt was located in 1866 with the help of an informer who recognized him and reported to U.S. authorities, whereupon Secretary of State William H. Seward notified Secretary of War E.M. Stanton.

"As we have no treaty of extradition with the papal government, it is proposed that a special agent be sent to Rome to demand the surrender of Surratt," Seward wrote Stanton on May 28, 1866.

Accordingly, the U.S. envoy to the Vatican, Rufus King, sought a meeting with the pope's foreign minister Cardinal Antonelli to tell him about Surratt.

"His Eminence was greatly interested by it, and intimated that if the American government desired the surrender of the criminal, there

would probably be no difficulty in any way," King wrote Seward on Aug. 8.

Several months later, having ascertained that Watson was indeed the fugitive Surratt, Seward instructed King to ask the cardinal "whether his Holiness (the pope) would now be willing, in the absence of an extradition treaty, to deliver John H. Surratt upon authentic indictment and as the request of this department, for complicity in the assassination of the late President Abraham Lincoln."

So eager was the Vatican to help the United States, that it did not even wait for an official request and ordered Surratt arrested immediately.

"Some surprise perhaps may be expressed that Surratt was arrested by the Papal authorities before any request to that effect had been made by the American government," King wrote Seward. Vatican authorities "gave me to understand that the arrest was made with the approval of his Holiness, and in anticipation of

any application from the State Department."

The Surratt and Noriega cases are similar in that the Vatican still doesn't have an extradition treaty with the United States — or Panama — but the two incidents differ in another significant way.

In the present instance, the Vatican can say its embassy can't, under international law, give up an asylum-seeker to a third country — the United States. It can only give up Noriega to Panama, the Vatican says, if it decides Noriega doesn't qualify as a political asylum case.

Surratt's case didn't end with papal cooperation, however, for the fugitive proved to be wlier and more agile than the six men sent to escort him from his regiment to Rome on Nov. 8, 1866.

The arresting officer reported to his superiors that Surratt, alias Watson, "leapt from a height of 23 feet on a very narrow rock," landed on a garbage heap, and disappeared.

King received repeated assurances

and documentation from Cardin Antonelli proving the Vatican's good faith in the affair and describing efforts to locate Surratt. In fact, several days after the escape, the papal minister Gen. Kauter "called to inform me of a rumor which had reached him" that a wounded Surratt had checked himself into an Italian hospital near the papal frontier, King wrote Seward.

A U.S. diplomat gave chase from Rome, but missed Surratt, who had set sail for Egypt on Nov. 17, 1866.

Surratt eventually was tracked down in Alexandria, and a U.S. ship brought him back to the United States.

A postscript to the affair:

Surratt's mother, Mary, who, raising her son in a boarding house that Booth and his co-conspirators had used as a meeting place, was hanged along with three other group members.

Surratt was tried by a civil court in Washington in 1867. He was fired by a hung jury



"NOT THIS FAR OUT OF THE MUD!"

# The Civil Warrior

On the U.S. frontier, young Abe Lincoln was a great wrestler—and sportsman • by David Fleming

ABRAHAM LINCOLN, the 16th president of the U.S., was such an accomplished wrestler that once, after disposing of an opponent with a single toss, he stepped to the center of the mob that had gathered and shouted, "Any of you want to try it, come on and whet your horns!"

No one stepped forward.

Which is not surprising, because the self-taught scholar who wrote the ringing Gettysburg Address was also one of the American frontier's fiercest grapplers during the early 1830s. "He can outrun, outlift, outwrestle and throw down any

ting champion Jack Armstrong the worst thrashing of his life one hot September day more than 163 years ago. That was the future president's most celebrated victory. Frustrated from the start by Lincoln's tremendous reach, Armstrong began stomping on his opponent's feet. Lincoln lost his temper. And a few tosses later Armstrong lost consciousness.

"We can only find one recorded defeat of Lincoln in 12 years," says Bob Dellinger, director emeritus of the National Wrestling Hall of Fame in Stillwater, Okla., where Lincoln is enshrined in the

Other commanders in chief who were successful wrestlers include Andrew Jackson, Zachary Taylor, Ulysses S. Grant and Chester A. Arthur. At 225 pounds William Taft was twice crowned undergraduate champion at Yale after he mastered a wicked move called the Flying Mare with which he would savagely flip an opponent to the ground. And Theodore Roosevelt kept fit with regular wrestling workouts during his term as governor of New York.

On the American frontier the sportsmanlike collar and elbow gave way to a catch-as-catch-can style that required less skill and more brute strength. The matches were decided when an opponent was thrown off his feet. In the name of civic pride (and, of course, some friendly wagering) champions from each county were pitted against each other. Lincoln progressed swiftly in this rougher style of wrestling—though he often helped conquered opponents to their feet or gave them water after matches. He was a proud competitor but a humble sportsman. And when his wrestling skills diminished, Lincoln's leadership qualities emerged.

In his service with the Illinois Volunteers during the Black Hawk Indian uprising of 1832, Lincoln was one match away from a regimental championship. Wrestling for the Sangamon County Volunteers, he had disposed of seven opponents before facing Hank Thompson, a fellow soldier. The two men locked up and strained for advantage before Lincoln broke away and declared Thompson "the most powerful man I ever had hold of." Honest Abe wasn't lying. Upon resuming the match Thompson secured his place in history by becoming the only man ever to throw Lincoln. And he did it twice.

With their hero defeated, Sangamon's troops cried foul and prepared for the brawl that often followed wrestling matches. Lincoln, showing the poise and character that would sustain him later as president, held up his hands and halted the hostilities. "Boys, give up your bets," he commanded. "If this man hasn't thrown me fairly, he could."



**In his most celebrated victory, Lincoln sent the loutish Armstrong into oblivion—for a spell, anyway.**

man in Sangamon County," said Bill Green, a store clerk in New Salem, Ill., as he watched the 22-year-old Lincoln whip all comers one day in 1831.

Lincoln's wrestling supremacy, however, was challenged often. Gangly and awkward as a child, he grew into a tall, muscular man with broad shoulders. But at 6' 4" and 185 pounds, Lincoln was a tempting target for any newcomer to the frontier eager to make a name for himself.

"He sure was the big buck of this lick," said another New Salem resident who saw Lincoln give the notorious county wres-

Hall of Outstanding Americans. "He was undoubtedly the roughest and toughest of all the wrestling presidents."

There were nine, actually, who were accomplished grapplers. At 18, George Washington was the school champion at the Reverend James Maury's Academy in Fredericksburg, Va. Washington was a master of the British style known as collar and elbow—named for wrestlers' hand placements in the face-to-face starting position. This was a disciplined sport in which success depended on tactical expertise. Later in life, as the commander of the Continental armies, Washington, then 47, used his superior wrestling skills to defeat seven consecutive challengers from the Massachusetts Volunteers.

# Lincoln-case diary in a legal tug of war

*It was kept by the general charged with protecting four of Booth's co-conspirators.*

By Peter Landry  
INQUIRER STAFF WRITER

By the time he took control of the prisoner, Brevet Maj. Gen. John Frederick Hartant had put his Norristown youth behind him, along with the Civil War battles of Antietam and Vicksburg and the years it had taken to restore his reputation after his men backed out of the first battle of Bull Run.

By the summer of 1865, he was provost marshal of Washington, D.C., and charged with the care of four of the most hated people in America: The three men and a woman who would die for conspiring to assassinate Abraham Lincoln.

A man of letters as well as a man-at-arms, Hartant kept a diary of those troubling times, a "day book" of the treatment and trial of the 16 people charged in the conspiracy.

And 129 years later, that diary has become the center of a contentious dispute between his great-granddaughter, her mother and historians at Gettysburg College.

The diary is part of a cache of the general's papers his grandson turned over to the college for use by historians and students during the 1965 centennial of Lincoln's death.

The family wants them back, so they can be published along with other records left in the Hartant collection.

The college refuses to give them up, contending that the papers were a gift.

An Adams County Common Pleas Court judge will have to decide.

Maj. Gen. Hartant, whose memorial obelisk overlooking the Schuylkill is the largest in Norristown's Montgomery Cemetery, was at the heart of the heated conspiracy debate after John Wilkes Booth's assassination of President Lincoln.

In the frenzy following the president's death, 16 people were rounded up and charged with plotting to kidnap or kill Lincoln, including Mary Surratt, who ran a boarding house where plans were allegedly hatched, and David Herold, George Atzerodt and Lewis Payne.

On July 7, 1865, these four were dropped through the floor of a hastily made scaffold in the yard of Washington's old Capital Prison (now Fort Lesley McNair).

Hartant couldn't have been closer to the case.

As provost marshal of the city, he had been assigned a brigade of infantry, a squadron of cavalry and a battery of artillery to protect the prisoners from angry mobs. He answered to Maj. Gen. Winfield Scott Hancock, a fellow Norristown native, and had a direct line to President Andrew Johnson.

A photograph shot on execution day by Alexander Gardner — the only photographer allowed in — shows Hartant standing at the center of the scaffold reading the orders of execution to the four, who had

been sentenced to death by a military commission.

The accused sat in chairs in 100-degree heat. Umbrellas provided scant relief for Hartant and others. When the traps opened, according to the hangman, the bodies bounced like balls on a string, then hung still.

"He [Hartant] played an important role in the Lincoln conspiracy trial," said Judith Meier, librarian at the Montgomery County Historical Society.

"From a historical standpoint, his papers are really priceless," added Norristown native Al Gambone, author of a Hartant biography due out at Christmas. "The day book is especially important, since it dispels a lot of the myth historians have gathered over the years about the harsh treatment of these defendants."

There is also a letter directly from Winfield Scott Hancock directing him to proceed with the execution, Gambone said. "... And one from Mary Surratt's daughter thanking him for his kindness to her mother."

In 1965, as Gettysburg and the nation prepared to celebrate the centennial of Lincoln's death, Hartant's Stockham of New Oxford, near Gettysburg, turned over about 50 Civil War-era papers to Gettysburg College for use by scholars.

His widow, Lillian, and their daughter, Helen Shireman, have a letter from the president of the college at the time, promising careful

stewardship.

President C.A. Hanson wrote them that "a review of these documents ... indicates they are of great importance as a previously unknown primary source material."

More significantly, the heirs note, the letter declared, "Since these items were loaned to the college, you should be aware that they will be properly released to you at any time should this be your wish."

Hartant Stockham died 11 years ago. In October, Helen Shireman asked the college to return the materials so she could restore the collection of the general's papers to its entirety and publish it.

In January, after a follow-up letter from Shireman, college president Gordon Hasland wrote the family that "we have performed an internal investigation concerning the Hartant documents, and we are unable to substantiate your claim to them. On the contrary, it is our conclusion that the college is the sole owner of the general's papers."

William T. Walker, associate vice president of the college, said the "real operative question" is whether the papers were given or loaned. Former Gettysburg president Hanson has died and cannot confirm the terms of the transfer, Walker said.

"Our concern is we think there were some negotiations later in the process that indicated they were donations," Walker said. "Our fear is if they are taken out of a public institu-

**Maj. Gen. John Frederick Hartant kept papers that his family wants returned.**



tion, they may be sold or dispersed down the road. What we want to make sure is that the wishes of the original donor are maintained." Attorneys yesterday presented arguments that they say did little to clarify the issue, and no date has been set to hear the case.

Shireman said the entire expertise left her with "a disappointed feeling" about Gettysburg College, which "proclaims to be a Civil War institution."

"The message that needs to come out of this is that people who are thinking about lending anything to an institution should think twice if they are fearful their property will be confiscated," she said. "What will this do to historical research in the future?"

# Abe Lincoln visits Cleveland

## President-elect's pre-inaugural tour stirred the city

Cleveland was wild with excitement on Feb. 15, 1861; President-elect Abraham Lincoln was due in town the next afternoon on his way to the March 4 inaugural in Washington. Newspapers were playing it up so much that they elicited some snide comments from the Buffalo Courier about "putting on airs," and other social sins of the era.

### CLEVELAND: A LOOK BACK



Bob Rich

Nobody from Cleveland really knew the lanky lawyer from Illinois whose reputation as "Honest Abe," had carried him to victory over better-known candidates at the Republican convention in

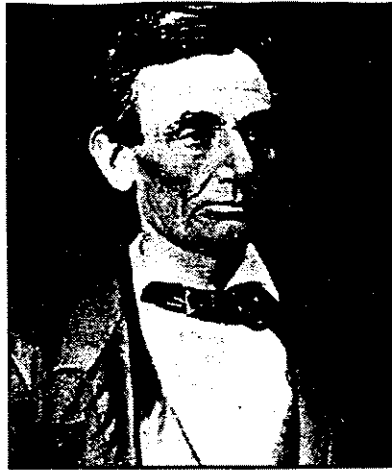
Chicago in August 1860. Then, in November, he had gone on to take 60 percent of the Northern vote with a platform that was anti-slavery, but moderate enough to appeal to the lower tier of Northern states and win the presidency without Southern votes.

By the time Lincoln headed east for the inauguration, South Carolina, Alabama, Georgia, Florida, Texas, Mississippi and Louisiana had seceded from the Union. Fort Sumter in Charleston harbor was being blockaded by the rebel states and they were threatening war.

But Lincoln kept his future plans for dealing with the secession to himself, to the approval of the editor of the Cleveland Leader who felt that Lincoln had already committed himself to upholding constitutional government, with all that that implied toward the South, and compared this to the corrupt Buchanan administration — "no government at all," still sitting in Washington, doing absolutely nothing.

The crowds gathered all day on Feb. 16 at the Euclid Station depot. The sidewalks were lined for miles miles and doors, windows and yards were filled with spectators. A police and military escort waited, and when the whistle of the Pittsburgh train sounded, "the horses of the dragoons plunged and reared, men shouted, women screamed, and children crawled out miraculously unharmed from beneath the heels of the steeds."

A procession continued along Euclid Ave. made up of wagons, a miniature ship on wheels, 75 workmen from the Cuyahoga Steam Furnace Co., the men of the Forest City Tool Co., fire engine companies, City Council and others.



PLAIN DEALER FILE

Matthew Brady portrait of President Abraham Lincoln.

Signs said, "Welcome to the president of our beloved country"; "The Union, It Must Be Preserved." Men cheered, women waved handkerchiefs. At 5 p.m., the parade arrived at the famous Weddell House hotel where 20 rooms had been reserved for the president's party.

Later, Lincoln would give a speech from his balcony: "Fellow citizens of Cleveland and Ohio: We have come here upon a very inclement afternoon. We have marched for two miles through the rain and the mud.

"Your large numbers testify that you are in earnest about something. And what is that something? ... I know that it is paid to something worth more than any one man, or any thousand, or any ten thousand men. A devotion to the Constitution, to the Union, and the Laws; to the perpetual liberty of the people of

this country. ... I think the present crisis is altogether an artificial one. ... What they do who seek to destroy the Union is altogether artificial. ... Have they not the same Constitution and laws that they have always had, and have they always have been?

"I have not the strength, fellow citizens, to address you at great length, and I pray that you will excuse me; but rest assured that my thanks are as cordial and sincere for the efficient aid which you gave to the good cause is working for the good of the nation, as for the votes which you gave me last fall. ...

"There is one feature that causes me great pleasure; and that is to learn that this reception is given, not alone by those with whom I chance to agree, politically, but by all parties. ... this is as it should be ... If we don't make common cause and save the good old ship, nobody will. ...

"To all of you, then, who have done me the honor to participate in this cordial welcome, I return most sincerely my thanks, not for myself, but for Liberty, the Constitution, and Union. I bid you all an affectionate farewell."

Not the Gettysburg Address or the Second Inaugural, but warm, sincere, and from the heart — no spin doctors.

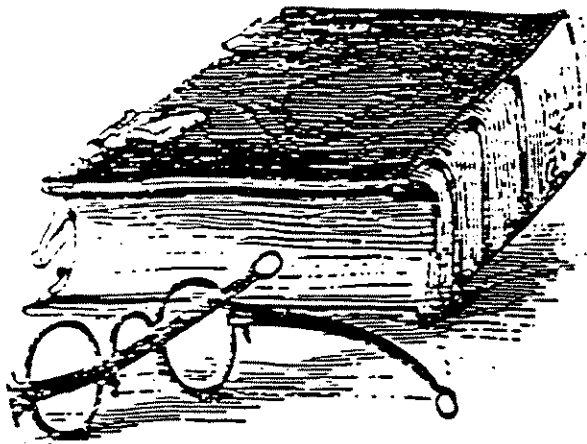
It would be four years later, in April 1865, before Abraham Lincoln would return to Cleveland in his funeral train, on the way to Springfield, Ill., his burial place.

Rich is a local history instructor whose radio spot, "A Touch of Cleveland History" is heard on WCPN FM/90.3. This column appears each Sunday leading up to Cleveland's bicentennial in July 1996.

# BOOK REVIEW



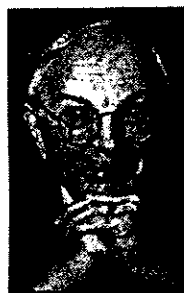
Books



By ALLAN PESKIN

Another book on Abraham Lincoln? With some 16,000 titles, at last count, devoted to our 16th president, including one which asks (and answers) the question, "How Big Was Lincoln's Toe?" one might think that the Lincoln theme had finally been exhausted.

Now here comes David Herbert Donald, a Harvard professor emeritus, in a sort of reverse of the Starship Voyager, to boldly go where far too many have gone before. And, like the Voyager, his mission succeeds, triumphantly.



Donald

Oddly enough, despite the mountain of printed Lincoln lore, there has never been a wholly satisfactory biography. William Herndon's 1889 memoir is too idiosyncratic; Carl Sandburg's biography is too mushy; Albert Beveridge's volumes carried the story only up to 1858; Lord Charnwood's book is outdated and Benjamin Platt Thomas' otherwise admirable study lacks footnotes. But this latest entry by David Donald is, as Goldilocks would say, just right.

# A look at Lincoln from his own point of view

LINCOLN. By David Herbert Donald. Simon & Schuster, 714 pp., \$35.

It is judicious, comprehensive, thoroughly annotated, impeccably researched and smoothly written. With its appearance we have not only the Lincoln for our time, but the standard by which future efforts will be measured.

In order to keep his story confined to one volume, Donald has chosen to tell it strictly from Lincoln's point of view. This means that events outside of Lincoln's immediate acquaintance are only sketched in lightly as background. Slavery, for example, is dealt with only insofar as it becomes a political issue that impinges upon Lincoln's career, and the organization of the Confederacy is scarcely discussed at all.

This is, after all, a biography, not a life and times. Readers who require a more comprehensive account are advised to turn to Allan Nevins' eight volumes on "The Ordeal of the Union" or, if that is too much of a good thing, the one-volume history by James McPherson ("Battle Cry of Freedom") or Donald's own "Civil War and Reconstruction" written in collaboration with James G. Randall.

Because of this narrative strategy, greater interest inheres in the earlier sections, what Sandburg called the Prairie Years, rather than in the War Years. Here Donald makes good use of the recent research that has rescued so much of Lincoln's early life from the realm of folklore. In one instance, however, folklore is vindicated. Forty years ago Donald himself did much to discredit the legend that young Abe's true love was his New Salem, Ill., neighbor, Ann Rutledge. Now, faced with fresh evidence, he restores Ann to her earlier place in Lincoln's heart.

Donald also profits from the recent intensive research into Lincoln's legal career. Seasoned Lincoln buffs may find this the most rewarding section because of its relative novelty.



The young Abraham Lincoln emerges from "Lincoln" as a precise and almost maddeningly plodding young attorney who prepared each case with thoroughness and deliberation.

In it they will find not the untutored, but supremely clever, courtroom wizard of legend, but a precise, almost maddeningly plodding attorney who prepared each case with thoroughness and deliberation. Lincoln also exhibited an integrity, reputedly rare in his profession, by refusing to accept large fees. Above all, as a lawyer Lincoln demonstrated a logical capacity to cut straight to the heart of the matter.

"Many a rival lawyer," says Donald, "was lulled into complacency as Lincoln conceded, say, six out of seven points in argument, only to discover that the whole case turned on the seventh point."

These same qualities — industry, logic and integrity — also marked Lincoln's political and presidential careers. How he got to be so much wiser and better than anyone else is a mystery that none of the 16,000 books on his life have yet solved, nor does this one.

The path that led from a Kentucky log cabin on the Sinking Creek Farm to apotheosis as the

# Keeping house for Lincoln

Housemaids' stories met with skepticism

**LINCOLN'S UNKNOWN PRIVATE LIFE: An Oral History by His Black Housekeeper Mariah Vance, 1850-1860. Edited by Lloyd Ostendorf and Walter Olesky. Hastings House, 563 pp., \$30.**

By ALLAN PESKIN

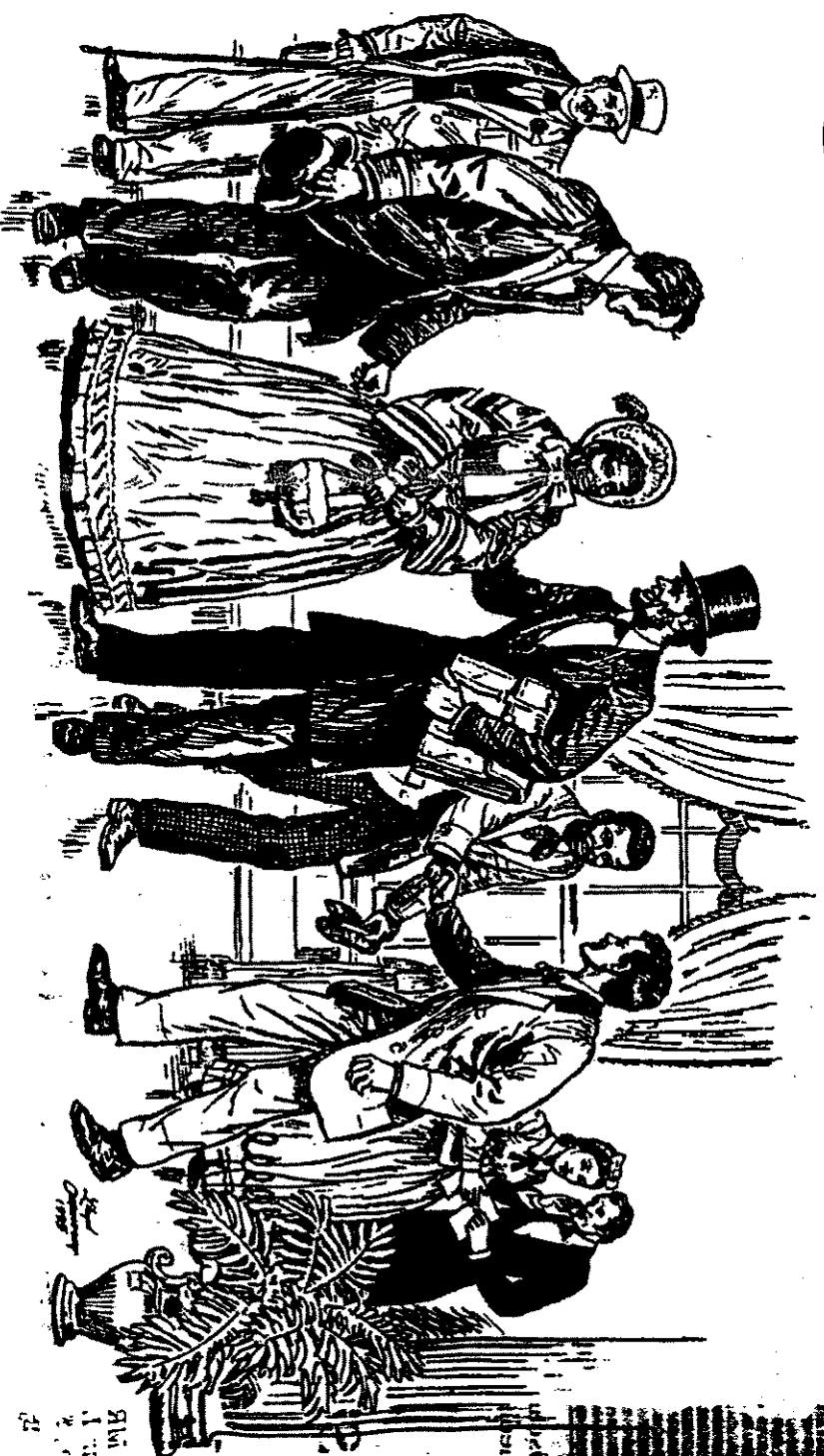
Here we have what should by rights be a historical bombshell—the hitherto unpublished reminiscences of Abraham Lincoln's Springfield, Ill., housekeeper, filled with fresh revelations on her employer's domestic relations, his love life and his religious and political views. Pre-publication hype compared this discovery in importance to the Dead Sea Scrolls, in drama with "Upstairs, Downstairs" and in reliability to the four Gospels.

Why, then was it greeted with suspicion and even scorn by members of the scholarly fraternity?

For one thing, the tangled history of this manuscript did not inspire confidence. Mariah Vance, one of the handful of blacks in Lincoln's hometown, worked as his servant from 1850 to his election as president of the United States in 1860.

In her old age she lived in Danville, Ill., where she did washing for a young bookkeeper named Adah Sutton. Sutton became fascinated by Vance's stories of life with the "Lincolnums" and took them down in bits and snatches in shorthand from 1900 to Vance's death in 1904.

In the 1940s, Sutton put her fragmentary notes into some sort of chronological order and turned them into a manuscript. The manuscript passed into the hands of Lloyd Ostendorf, a well-known Dayton, Ohio, Lincoln collector who may or may not (the record is unclear) have embellished it further. It then spent more than two decades making the rounds of various publishers until I. Morrow accepted it with an advance royalty allegedly of a million dollars. However, after outside readers were critical, Morrow canceled the project and the advance, leaving a smaller company to pick up the book.



An illustration from "Lincoln's Unknown Private Life," is said to represent the reminiscences of Mariah Vance, who worked for him from 1850 until his election to the presidency in 1860. The illustration is from the chapter "The Last Time Adah Mariah Saw Mistah Abe."

The editors, neither of whom are professional historians, attribute this setback to jealousy and to racism, but there are perfectly valid reasons that could generate skepticism. The chain of transmission has so many links that some of them are bound to be weak. Had Vance's memory faded after 40 years? Did Adah Sutton transcribe the stories accurately? Did she embellish her notes when she prepared them for publication? How much did the editors add or subtract?

Distortion and error can creep in at each of these stages, and there is reason to suspect that it might have. Sutton consistently transcribes Vance's dictation in a corn-pone dialect that reads like a parody of Stepin Fetchit. "Land a goodness, Honey Chile," she is quoted as telling

Lincoln's son Robert, "you is 'serv'ing of all the breakfast you little fat belly can hold." But when Vance is quoting white folks, like the Lincolns, their speech is recorded in meticulous, even high-flown, English. Mistah Lincolnum in particular runs on for page after page of elegant diction. If Sutton has embellished this, what other "improvements" might she have made?

Nor do the editors inspire total confidence. In their commentary they confuse the Missouri Compromise with the Compromise of 1850 and uncritically accept long-discredited Lincoln anecdotes and sayings, betraying a credulity that clouds their entire enterprise.



## LOOK AT LINCOLN

secular saint of America's civic religion is one that cannot be explained, only described. Donald, however, describes it as well as anyone yet has done. This may not be the last word on Lincoln, but for many readers intimidated by the magnitude of printed Lincolnia, it may well be the best place to start.

*Peskin, who teaches history at Cleveland State University, is the author of a biography of President Garfield.*

## KEEPING HOUSE FOR LINCOLN

Even if all these suspicions should prove groundless, the whole project still stands or falls on the reliability of Vance's memory. Some of her stories, such as Mary Lincoln's extreme mood swings that Vance attributes to an addiction to paregoric, have the ring of truth. Yet Vance's most striking revelations, such as Lincoln's secret baptism, his cruel taunting of his wife by raising the specter of his early love for Ann Rutledge, or Mary Lincoln's attack on her husband with a butcher knife, seem to betray what might kindly be called a constructive memory.

In the absence of supporting evidence, it is virtually impossible to sort out truth from invention. The result is not the anticipated bombshell, but neither is it a dud. It is more like a historiographic



An illustration from "Lincoln's Unknown Private Life," showing him with Ann Rutledge.

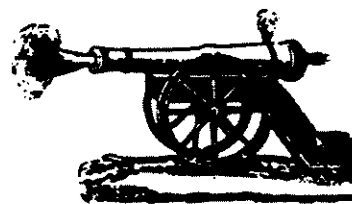
land mine, to be approached with caution and respect. It is also a testament to our enduring fascination with Lincoln and our need to understand everything, no matter how seemingly trivial, that made

that fascinating man tick.

*Peskin who teaches history at Cleveland State University, is the author of a biography of President James A. Garfield.*

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# Tragic fate of other couple in Lincoln's box

HENRY AND CLARA. By Thomas Mallon. Ticknor & Fields, 358 pp., \$22.95.

By JOHN STARK BELLAMY II

Truth is not only stranger than fiction; it is often sadder. Very sad and strange, indeed, is the story of Henry Rathbone and Clara Harris. Had it not been for a last minute change in theater-going plans, we might barely identify them as nearly anonymous bit players of history, just another couple whose lives were interrupted by the American Civil War.



Mallon

was assassinated.

Alas for them, that change occurred — and we remember them now as the other star-crossed couple who occupied the presidential box at Ford's Theater the night Lincoln was assassinated.

Thomas Mallon, author of two previous, well-received novels ("Aurora 7" and "Arts and Sciences"), feels a profound compassion for his title characters and has fictionalized their tragedy beautifully in "Henry and Clara." Born the children of two prominent New York State families, Henry and Clara became stepbrother and stepsister when their widowed parents married each other in the 1840s.

Mutually smitten as adolescents, Henry and Clara nonetheless married late for their era: Both a lack of parental enthusiasm for this step-sibling match and the disruptions of the Civil War delayed the wedding until 1867 and Clara's 33rd birthday.

As Mallon envisions their lives, it was already too late for them in

more ways than one. The shot that John Wilkes Booth fired at the back of Lincoln's head ruined their lives, too.

Henry tried to stop Booth from escaping and was brutally stabbed for his pains. As Ford's Theater dissolved in chaos and Mary Lincoln lapsed into the hysteria that would color the rest of her life, Henry's spurting blood began to spatter the box and the dresses of the two women in it. It was a stain that never left the lives of Henry and Clara and will long haunt the imagination of anyone who reads Thomas Mallon's aching account.

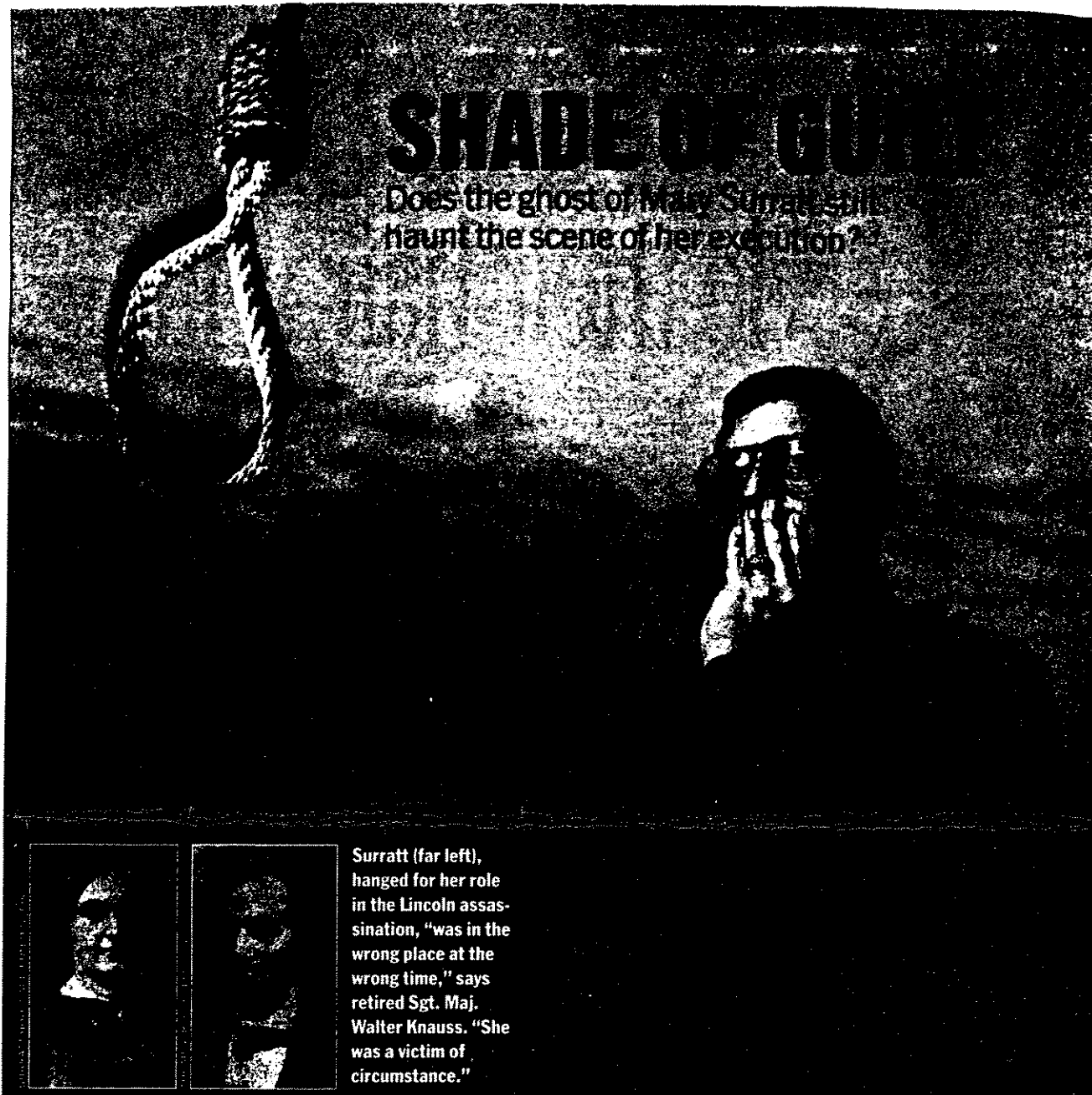
The accursed couple's remaining life together was an almost unalloyed purgatory. Haunted by remorse that he had been unable to prevent Booth's murderous act, Henry lapsed over the next two decades into abusive melancholy and delusions. Those delusions culminated in his murder of Clara on Christmas Day 1883 in Hanover, Germany. He shot her, as Booth had shot Lincoln, and then stabbed himself, as Booth has stabbed him 18 years before. Typically, however, Henry made a mess of it: He survived his wound and survived in an asylum until 1911.

Mallon has constructed a moving, historically accurate novel out of this domestic tragedy. Henry comes off as a petulant child, scarred by war and bad luck. More deeply realized, however, is Mallon's handling of Clara. A psychologically battered 19th century wife, she accumulates a numb dignity in this story that will resonate with kindred sisters in spirit of any era or anxiety.

Bellamy is a Cleveland Heights free-lancer.

# SHADE OF GUILT

Does the ghost of Mary Surratt still haunt the scene of her execution?



Surratt (far left), hanged for her role in the Lincoln assassination, "was in the wrong place at the wrong time," says retired Sgt. Maj. Walter Knauss. "She was a victim of circumstance."

**I**T WAS 4 A.M., AND ARMY CAPT. DAVID Osborne was sleeping in his quarters at Fort McNair in Washington. Osborne, 34, is not given to flights of imagination. He talks reluctantly about the events three years ago this week—on Feb. 12, Lincoln's birthday—when he was awakened by piteous sounds of moaning and weeping. "It was a female voice," he says, "and it was crying out, 'Oh, help me, help me!' It was coming out of the basement."

Osborne raced to the door that led to the basement of Quarters 20, where he lives, and flung it open. There was nothing there but the wind sighing in the night.

Osborne refuses to speculate about his experience. But for those

who know about Fort McNair's bloody secret, there is one possible explanation: The ghost of Mary Surratt, hanged on the grounds in 1865, was out and about again.

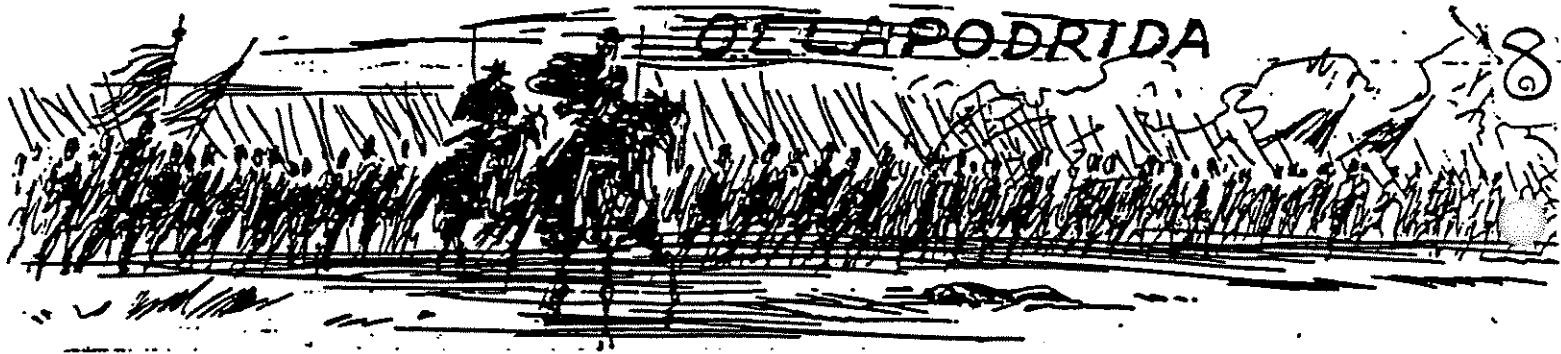
Surratt, a 42-year-old widowed Washington boardinghouse operator and Confederate sympathizer, was executed on July 7, 1865, along with three men—one of whom proclaimed her innocence. After three months in a cell in what is now Quarters 20, she was convicted, on circumstantial evidence, of helping John Wilkes Booth assassinate Abraham Lincoln.

Ever since her death, there have been stories. Soldiers' children report a "lady in black" who plays with them. Mysterious lights are said to flash around Quarters 20 in the

night. Heavy furniture moves about. Pictures are tilted on the walls. Doors mysteriously open.

Skeptics, including Michael Kauffman, who has published many articles on the Lincoln assassination, scoff at the stories. "Personally I find the actual history much more interesting than the ghost stuff," he says.

Retired Sgt. Maj. Walter Knauss, 53, for 10 years the senior noncommissioned officer at the fort, thinks, however, there is little doubt that something haunts the old stockade. "There's a presence here," says Knauss, of Burtonsville, Md., who is working on a history of the fort. "I've talked to too many people who have seen her or heard her weeping and wailing. Until her name is cleared, she's gonna stay right here." ■



When Lincoln ran for Congress as a Whig from the Springfield district, his opponent was one Rev. Peter Cartwright, a fire and brimstone preacher who was popular because, for one thing, he was noted for physically throwing out any drunk who happened to wander into one of his services. He didn't hesitate during the campaign to accuse Lincoln of having a wife who was a high-toned Episcopalian; that Lincoln was a "Diest" who believed in God but not in Christ, and that Lincoln had said in a speech that drunkards were as good as Christians.

Against the advice of his friends, Lincoln attended a religious service where Cartwright was to preach. At one time during the service Cartwright said, "All those who desire to give their hearts to God and go to Heaven will now stand." Then the preacher exhorted, "All those who do not wish to go to Hell will stand." Everyone stood except Lincoln. In grave tones, Cartwright then went on: "I observed that you all responded to my invitations save one. That one was Mr. Lincoln. May I inquire of you, Mr. Lincoln, where you are going?"

Slowly Lincoln rose and spoke. "I came here as a repectful listener. I did not know that I was to be singled out. I admit that the questions propounded by Brother Cartwright are important, but I did not feel called upon to answer as the others did. Brother Cartwright asks me directly where I am going. I desire to answer with equal directness: I am going to Congress." The meeting broke up.

One time while on the circuit, Lincoln and Judge Davis, with other members of the Eighth Circuit bar were entertained after dinner at the Old Macon House in Decatur, Illinois, by a Mrs. Jane Martin, accompanying herself on the first piano to arrive in central Illinois. She played a non-ending concert, singing such musicals as "Come Haste to the Wedding", "The Battle of Prague", "Carnival of Venice", "The Ship on Fire", "The Irish Mother's Lament", "The Widdy McGee", "I Won't be a Nun", "Old Dan Tucker", "Lucy Long", "Maniac", "Moonlight, Music, Love, and Flowers", "Rocked in the Cradle of the Deep", "Pilgrims' Fathers", "Bonapart's Grave", and as a finale, "He Doeth All Things Well".

Mr. Lincoln, in a vey grave manner, thanked the lady for the evening's entertainment, and said, "Don't let us spoil that last song by any other music tonight."



Being informed of the death of General John Hunt Morgan, Lincoln said, "Well, I wouldn't crow over anyone's death; but, I can take this as resignedly as any dispensation of Providence."

Speaking of resentment, Lincoln said, "Perhaps I have too little of it; but, I never thought it paid. A man has no time to spend half his life in quarrels."

Someone remarked to Lincoln that it seemed strange that the President of the United States and the President of the Confederate States should have been born in the same State.

"Oh, I don't know about that," laughed Mr. Lincoln. "Those Kentucky people will tell you that they raise 'most anything in their State, and I reckon they're mighty near right."

Lincoln's definition of wealth: "Simply a superfluity of things we don't need."

--- submitted and illustrated by Stu Cramer



## From The President's Desk



Everyone should have received a post card indicating that the meeting for February is scheduled for the second Wednesday of the month, February 14, 1996. The previous notice in The Charger has been rescinded and the meeting will be on Wednesday, the 14th of February.

Please excuse the confusion concerning this date. I feel much like Bill Clinton having to reverse myself several times before coming to a conclusion.

This month we will be having Dr. Hugh Ernhart from the Youngstown State University giving a presentation of Lincoln, in the first person. When Dr. Ernhart last appeared, he gave an excellent presentation. I look forward to this meeting.

The meeting this month will be in the Grille Room, in the downstairs location of the Hermit Club. Since we have more restricted seating in the Grille Room, please get your reservations in early.

There is a definite change for the April, 1996, meeting. This meeting is going to be held on April 17, 1996. This is the third Wednesday of April. The speaker at that meeting will be Jeffrey Wert who is an author of a biography of General James Longstreet and an upcoming biography of George Armstrong Custer. Please mark your calendars as to the April 17th. This date should not change.

The quiz last month was very successful even though the South ran away with the quiz. I would like to thank Kevin Casey for preparing the quiz and he certainly succeeded in his goal in making a quiz that everyone was able to participate in.

Finally, I received a call in January from George Hoagland who has been a member since 1957. George indicated that he has numerous books concerning the Civil War and other paraphernalia including various full color prints of the war dating back to the late 1800's. He invited anybody in the Roundtable who would like to see these items to give him a call and make arrangements to visit him. His phone number is in our roster, the new updated ones are nearly printed and should be available for this meeting. See you in February.



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