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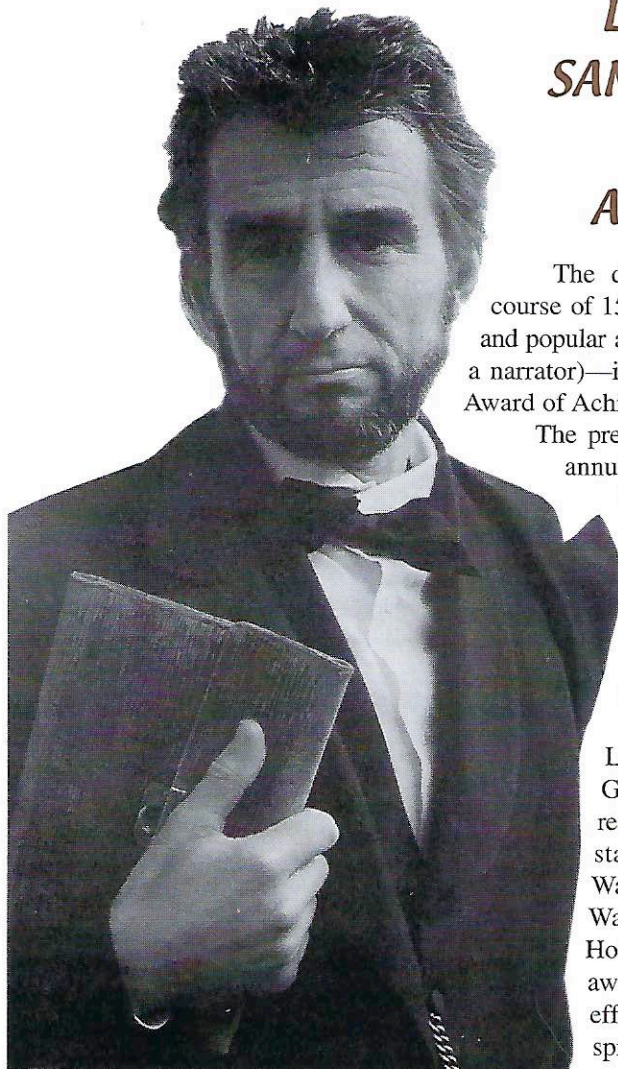
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Sam Waterston in the title role of Gore Vidal's *Lincoln*

Photo: American Heritage

LINCOLN FORUM NAMES SAM WATERSTON WINNER OF RICHARD N. CURRENT AWARD OF ACHIEVEMENT

The distinguished actor Sam Waterston—who over the course of 15 years has portrayed Abraham Lincoln to both critical and popular acclaim on stage, on television, and even in ballet (as a narrator)—is the 2003 winner of the annual Richard N. Current Award of Achievement of the Lincoln Forum.

The presentation came at the opening banquet of the eighth annual Lincoln Forum symposium in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania—the village where Abraham Lincoln delivered his most famous speech 140 years ago this week. The award, named for Professor Richard N. Current, dean of the nation's Lincoln historians and a founding member of the Lincoln Forum's Board of Advisors, is a Lincoln statuette, *Freedom River*, created by sculptor John McClarey of Decatur, Illinois.

More than 300 guests—a new record for a Lincoln Forum event—gathered at the historic Hotel Gettysburg to honor Mr. Waterston, and to watch him read some of Lincoln's most memorable words in a special staging of *Lincoln Seen and Heard*, which Mr. Waterston had previously performed in New York and Washington, among other venues, together with Harold Holzer, vice chairman of the Forum. He was cited at the award ceremonies for "his determined and extraordinarily effective efforts to re-invent and magically preserve the spirit and the message of Abraham Lincoln."

Commented Frank J. Williams, chairman of the Lincoln Forum: "Just as great scholars interpret Lincoln for our time, a great actor can provide interpretations that not only entertain, but educate and endure. Sam Waterston has

done this, and has become the 'Abraham Lincoln' of our age. His talent and his commitment have helped Lincoln live for a new generation of Americans, and we are honored to honor him for his contributions to the culture."

"It is especially 'fitting and proper,'" Judge Williams added, "that we pay tribute to Sam Waterston just across the street from the house where Lincoln wrote the final draft of his Gettysburg Address—words that this brilliant performer has helped live in our memories with his incomparable interpretations."

Mr. Holzer made the formal presentation to Mr. Waterston following their performance of *Lincoln Seen and Heard*. The two have presented the words-and-images show at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Hotchkiss School, and for the U. S. Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission at The Library of Congress.

Although Sam Waterston once said, "If I have to be typecast, I'd like it to be as Abraham Lincoln," he has etched an array of diverse and unforgettable characters during a brilliant 40-year-long performing career. He has played racists, reformers, and rabbis, reporters and CIA agents—and, once, a pregnant man!

'An Equal Chance'

Not many months ago, a deadly fire swept through a nightclub in West Warwick, Rhode Island during a pyrotechnic display at a rock concert. The tragedy left 100 dead and over 200 seriously injured.

The grisly details have been widely reported in the national media, and there is little I can add—even if judicial propriety allowed me to do so. Since I serve as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the state whose families lost loved ones, I cannot comment on the fire beyond expressing my regrets and condolences.

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On January 10, 1860, Pemberton Mill, a five-story cotton factory in Lawrence, Massachusetts, suddenly collapsed, trapping hundreds of employees—many of them young women—under the debris. For hours, rescue workers dug their way through the rubble in an attempt to find survivors. But late that cold winter night, fire unexpectedly ignited and swept uncontrollably through the ruins, killing and maiming many of the helpless injured still buried alive beneath the remains of the mill.

The horrible event stirred the nation, dominated the press, and inspired a reform-minded exposé (*An Authentic History of the Lawrence Calamity*). The site itself became a kind of 19th-century predecessor of Ground Zero in New York—a tourist attraction.



Three months after the tragedy, Abraham Lincoln found himself in Lawrence for four hours between trains, en route from a speaking engagement back to his eldest son's boarding school in Exeter, New Hampshire. With his boy Robert in tow, he likely visited the mill site, or so he hinted in a letter home.

Harold Holzer will be writing about this trip, no doubt, in his forthcoming book *Lincoln at Cooper Union*, as Lincoln's visit followed his famous appearance in New York City. But today it seems worth noting that, faced with the horror, Lincoln was moved not just to mourn about yesterday, but to think practically about tomorrow. So he began pondering the rights of laborers, especially after a shoe workers' strike crippled the New England economy and stirred a hornet's nest of political controversy.

Addressing an audience in New Haven on March 6, 1860, Lincoln compared the ability of the strikers to press their case to the cruelly fixed condition of slavery, and noted: "I am glad to see that a system of labor prevails in New England under which laborers CAN strike if and when they want." To Lincoln, American democracy was not designed "to prevent a man from getting rich," but "to allow the humblest man an equal chance to get rich with everyone else."

In the midst of despair and discord—not unlike what many friends and families of the victims of tragedies in New York and Rhode Island feel today—Lincoln saw the light of freedom and opportunity for all people, black and white, North and South.

It is that spirit that imbues the Lincoln Forum as it convenes for its eighth annual symposium—looking with sorrow at the recent events of the past, and with hope and conviction toward a safer, more prosperous, and happier future. Welcome to Forum '03! 📖

Find The Lincoln Forum on the web at:

WWW.THELINCOLNFORUM.ORG

- Essay contest information
- Membership and Symposium registration forms
- Use the Amazon and The Lincoln Bookstore links to buy your books

If you wish to receive periodic information on Lincoln Forum activities via email, please advise administrator Annette Westerby (anetwest@earthlink.net)

PLATT FAMILY ESSAY SCHOLARSHIP CONTEST GENERATES RECORD INTEREST

An enthusiastic response of more than 2,200 inquiries from around the globe led to a record 337 entries this year in the Lincoln Forum Platt Family Essay Contest.

The winning entry will be announced November 18 during the Forum symposium at Gettysburg and printed in the May Lincoln Forum *Bulletin*.

Emails, telephone calls and letters from as far away as Uzbekistan, Hong Kong and Moldova followed the announcement of the 2003 competition. Essays on this year's theme, Lincoln's Image in Popular Culture, were submitted from Nigeria to Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, according to coordinator Don McCue.

McCue, a Forum Advisory Board member and archivist at the Lincoln Memorial Shrine in Redlands, California, says the dramatic response this year was due to aggressive efforts to spread the word through the Forum's website and notices sent to 120 colleges and universities.

Moreover, a change in the name of the project to recognize the Platt family's contribution also made it clear that a scholarship is involved. McCue says this led to posting on sites that search for scholarship opportunities.

He says the diversity of entries led to a variety of treatments of the popular culture theme. Most dealt with Mr. Lincoln and the movies, but some cited the long history of Lincoln in advertising. One entrant even composed rap lyrics on the Lincoln theme.

McCue says the Lincoln Shrine staff, led by Richard Hanks and Colleen Bowman, did yeoman work responding to the flood of inquiries and submissions.

The essay contest committee suffered a major setback in February when founding members George Craig of the New York Civil War Roundtable and Michael Maione of Ford's Theater passed away.

"George and Mike were true lovers of Lincoln and will be missed," according to McCue, who continues as coordinator and judge, along with Dr. Tom Turner of Bridgewater State in Massachusetts.

The theme for the 2004 essay scholarship competition will be posted on the Lincoln Forum website (www.thelincolnforum.org) shortly after the Gettysburg symposium. ■

IN MEMORIAM: MICHAEL MAIONE

As reported briefly in the May 2003 issue of the *Bulletin*, Michael Maione, the longtime and learned official historian at the Ford's Theatre National Historic Site, and a founding member of the Lincoln Forum Board of Advisors, died suddenly on February 21 at the age of 57. The editors were unable to take full note of his passing because the Issue No. 13 was on its way to the printers when the sad news arrived.

Veterans of Forum symposia will remember Mike as a lively, irrepressible spirit, dressed in his Park Service uniform, who was usually the first attendee to rise to the microphone in question-and-answer sessions. His knowledge was vast, and his curiosity even larger. He considered himself a perennial Lincoln student rather than a Lincoln expert, although those who knew and consulted him professionally will attest to his enormous grasp of the Lincoln field.

Recently, Michael Maione reflected on nearly thirteen years at Ford's Theatre. In an interview with fellow Forum Advisor Joseph E. Garrera, just published in the *Lincoln Herald*, he discussed how much he learned on the job—and how much more he felt he could learn in the future.

"There's always more to learn," he insisted. "I've learned the very real fact that Mr. Lincoln still lives, he still has tremendous moral power; he still resonates with the public. You notice I never call him Lincoln. It's always Mr. Lincoln. I address him as Mr. Lincoln because his spirit is present."

So is the generous, ebullient spirit of Mike Maione. His last effort in his field is posthumous: "John Wilkes Booth: The Money Trail," co-authored with James O. Hall and published in the same (spring 2003) edition of the *Lincoln Herald*.

The officers and Advisors of the Forum are grateful for Mike's contributions to our organization and the entire Lincoln community, and express their condolences to Mike's family and countless friends.

Platt Family 2004 Lincoln Forum Essay Scholarship

1st Prize \$1000 2nd Prize \$500 3rd Prize \$250

The Platt Family Essay Scholarship Contest of The Lincoln Forum is designed to stimulate interest in Abraham Lincoln among young people. Open to anyone who is enrolled as a full-time undergraduate student. The essay should be a minimum of 1,500 and a maximum of 5,000 words. Deadline for entries is July 31, 2004.

Theme for 2004 Essay Contest will be announced in November and posted on the Forum's website.

Entries will be judged by the essay committee of The Lincoln Forum. Don McCue, curator of The Lincoln Shrine in Redlands, California serves as coordinator. For more information: Don McCue, Curator — Lincoln Memorial Shrine 125 W. Vine St. Redlands, CA 92373 e-mail: archives@aksmiley.org

U.S. LINCOLN BICENTENNIAL COMMISSION MEETS AT HOME OF LINCOLN'S SON

by Michael F. Bishop, executive director of the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission

In the course of our national life there are occasions when we as citizens should pause to contemplate the life and example of those who have come before us. One such momentous occasion looms before us: the 200th birthday of Abraham Lincoln on February 12, 2009. As is the custom when great national events are to be celebrated, the United States Congress has taken an active role in preparing for the bicentennial of Lincoln's birth.

The Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission (ALBC) was created by Congress and charged with planning a fitting and proper celebration of our greatest president's 200th birthday. The fifteen-member bipartisan Commission, co-chaired by Senator Richard Durbin, Congressman Ray LaHood, and noted Lincoln scholar Harold Holzer, is a diverse group of political leaders, jurists, scholars, and collectors united by their admiration for Lincoln and devotion to his ideals. Headquartered in Washington, D.C., the Commission is planning to celebrate the life of Lincoln through educational initiatives, film projects, traveling exhibitions, a new penny, a commemorative coin and stamp, a joint meeting of Congress, and in many other ways.

The Organization of American Historians is well represented among the membership of the ALBC. Professor James Horton, president-elect of the OAH, is a member, as are Dr. Darrel Bigham of Indiana and eminent Lincoln scholar Professor Gabor Boritt.

The Commission is aware that it cannot plan such an important celebration without the assistance, ideas, and enthusiasm of both experts and the general public. Our Advisory Committee, made up of more than one hundred historians, businesspeople, artists, and actors, has already contributed immensely to the effort. Hundreds of valuable suggestions have already been received through our website, www.lincolnbicentennial.gov, and we encourage everyone to visit and submit their ideas for the bicentennial celebrations.

The bicentennial in 2009 will not be the first major public observance of Abraham Lincoln's birthday. In 1909, the Lincoln Centennial Commission marked the 100th birthday of the Great Emancipator through a variety of celebrations, and was responsible for the placement of the Lincoln profile on the penny. The work of the Commission led eventually to the construction of the Lincoln Memorial. In 1959, the Lincoln Sesquicentennial Commission published educational pamphlets, sent Lincoln scholars around the world to teach about his life and example, and placed the image of the Lincoln Memorial on the penny. The work of these two Commissions, which was far more extensive and consequential than can be adequately described here, is further illuminated in Merrill Peterson's brilliant *Lincoln in American Memory*.

Those academics uncomfortable with the "great man" approach to history would do well to remember that any discussion of Lincoln must automatically lead to study and debate over the most important and perplexing historical questions. The study of Lincoln is much more than the veneration of a murdered saint; it is also an examination of American slavery and race relations. If commemorating the life and career of Abraham Lincoln brings forth "the better angels" in American society, the bicentennial celebration will have proven worthwhile.

The Commission seeks not to only to celebrate the accomplishments of Lincoln, but to remember him as he truly was. It is important to remember that Lincoln was a deeply controversial president, and

that a significant percentage of the American public opposed his war policies. Even as the very existence of the nation was threatened, opponents of the war called for a negotiated peace. Lincoln was vilified in the press, and portrayed as a baboon and a bloodthirsty tyrant. While his Administration occasionally resorted to draconian measures such as suspending the writ of habeas corpus, Americans were for the most part entirely free to criticize their president and his policies. Though Lincoln may have strained, he did not break, the Constitution.

Perhaps the most important component of the upcoming bicentennial observances will be education. The sad statistics are there for all to see: young Americans are often stunningly ignorant of their own history. Such historical amnesia threatens the ability of young people to mature into responsible citizens. A lack of appreciation of our shared past makes it more difficult to knit together a unified society in an increasingly multicultural age. Under the able leadership of Dr. Darrel Bigham, the Education Committee of the ALBC has already gathered remarkable ideas for teaching the story of Lincoln. Through teacher training initiatives, the formulation of stimulating lesson plans, and creative use of film, television, and the Internet, historians can help bring Lincoln alive to new generations of Americans.

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The U.S. Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission held its summer 2003 meeting at Hildene, the Manchester, Vermont estate where the 16th president's son, Robert, spent his final years and died in 1926. The home is now open to the public, offering tours of the family's relics and rooms. The Commission also welcomed its newest member, Rep. Jesse Jackson Jr. (D-Illinois), appointed to fill a vacancy by House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi.

www.hildene.org

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LINCOLN AT ANTIETAM?

PICAYUNE BUTLER.

TUNE—"All on Hobbies."

Old Fuss and Feathers, as we knew before,
Sent away from down East to sack Baltimore,
A gimblet-eyed lawyer of State prison fame,
With a vile set of 'cut throats and this heroes name.

Chorus—Was Picayune Butler, Picayune Butler,
Picayune Butler of state prison fame.

His bobbadill valor was known to but few,
So to make the South wonder he gave them a que,
He proclaim'd what he'd do and roundly he swore,
He would suck, burn and poison all Baltimore.

Chorus—Picayune Butler, &c.

He found out a secret that none others knew,
A girl had sold cakes and poison'd them too,
A newsboy he captur'd, and had a good reason,
To know that newsboy was hatching rank treason.

Chorus—Picayune Butler, &c.

But old Fuss and Feathers found out he got drunk,
And then only then had he any spunk,
So he sent him down south to die by the still,
And if that would not answer Jeff. Davis would kill.

Chorus—This Picayune Butler, &c.

To remind readers about Forum VIII's unprecedented tour of the Antietam battlefield, the last issue of the Bulletin featured several photographs of Lincoln's 1862 visit to the area to confer with General George B. McClellan. The photos were widely circulated to promote Lincoln's stature as commander-in-chief. But Lincoln's enemies also had their say about his visit, and one was a vicious rumor that the President had defiled the sacred ground there by asking his friend, Ward Hill Lamon, to sing comic songs while walking on a battlefield littered with dead and wounded. The libel so upset the President that he thought of drafting a formal denial for Lamon's signature—a course he ultimately rejected. But an unknown cartoonist revived the story for the 1864 election campaign with the scabrous cartoon pictured above, *The Commander-in-Chief Conciliating the Soldier's Votes on the Battle Field*. The lithograph suggests that even Lamon—shown here unrealistically as a svelte soldier—was revolted by Lincoln's allegedly vulgar request. Surviving evidence indicates that this anti-Lincoln caricature was sold by the pro-Democratic New York World. (Photo: Library of Congress)

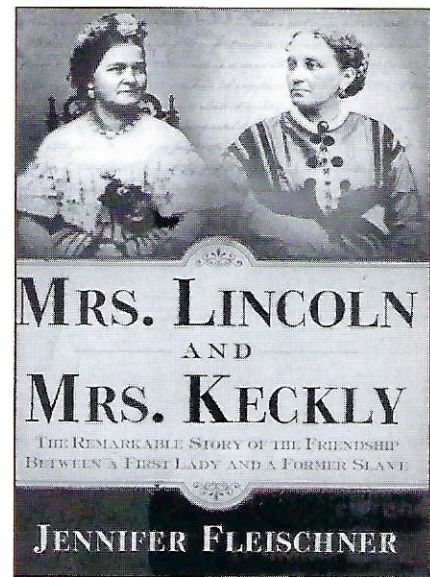
(left) Early printing of the comic ditty *Picayune Butler*, the song President Lincoln allegedly asked Ward Hill Lamon to sing on the Antietam Battlefield. (Photo: Rare Books and Manuscripts Department, Confederate Broad sides Digital Collection, Z. Smith Reynolds Library, Wake Forest University, Winston-Salem, North Carolina)

NEW ON THE LINCOLN BOOKSHELF

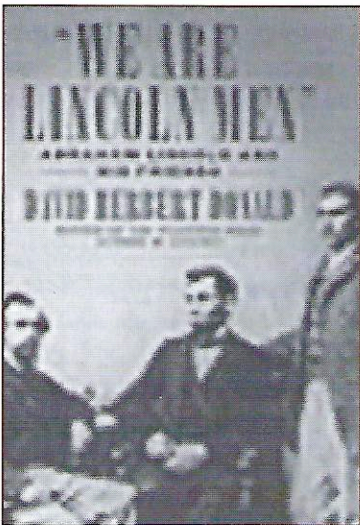
The Lincoln bookshelf continues to grow. As James M. McPherson notes in his new edition of *Battle Cry of Freedom, Civil War and Lincoln* enthusiasts—not to mention authors and publishers—are riding “a rising wave of interest...that has not yet crested.”

The latest in the field demonstrates the extraordinary range of new subjects still left to be treated, and the commitment and scholarship of both new and veteran historians who continue producing important subjects.

New and noteworthy since the last Lincoln Forum symposium (many available at this year’s official symposium bookstore):



- *Lincoln’s Sanctuary: Abraham Lincoln and the Soldiers’ Home* by Matthew Pinsker (Oxford University Press, 2003). This widely anticipated new study—by last year’s highest-rated Lincoln Forum speaker—examines Lincoln’s life as a commuter-President who resided for many months each year at a residential institution for disabled army veterans outside of Washington. David Herbert Donald wrote: “Pinsker’s research has been indefatigable, and his findings will be new even to Lincoln specialists.” Dr. Pinsker teaches at Dickinson College.
- *Mrs. Lincoln and Mrs. Keckly: The Remarkable Story of the Friendship Between a First Lady and Former Slave* by Jennifer Fleischner (Broadway Books, 2003). Mary Lincoln’s seamstress became her closest confidante in wartime Washington, and this book traces their close relationship. William Lee Miller praised the study as “an excellent, illuminating book that offers a fresh vision of Mary Lincoln...and provides new insights into race, women’s lives, and American society in the nineteenth century.” Dr. Fleischner is chair of the English department at Adelphi University.
- *Lincoln Reshapes the Presidency* edited by Charles M. Hubbard (Mercer University Press, 2003). The latest volume in an important series of collected lectures from Lincoln symposia at Lincoln Memorial University in Harrogate, Tennessee, this installment features essays by Frank J. Williams, Gerald J. Prokopowicz, Philip Shaw Paludan, Lucas E. Morel, William C. Harris, and James M. McPherson, among others. Professor Hubbard is director of the Abraham Lincoln Museum at LMU.
- *The Illustrated Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era* by James M. McPherson (Oxford University Press, 2003). Its text slightly abbreviated from the original Pulitzer Prize-winning edition, this lavishly illustrated revision boasts 35,000 new words—in captions—and hundreds of sketches, photographs, paintings and maps. The much-honored author has attempted “a blending of words and pictures intended to bring the Civil War alive in a unique manner.” Professor McPherson won the 2002 Richard Nelson Current Award of the Lincoln Forum.



- *“We Are Lincoln Men:” Abraham Lincoln and His Friends* by David Herbert Donald (Simon & Schuster, 2003). In his latest contribution to the Lincoln field—nearly half a century after his first—the distinguished historian dissects Lincoln’s close friendships with intimates Joshua Fry Speed, William H. Herndon, Orville H. Browning, John G. Nicolay and John M. Hay, and William H. Seward. In the process, Professor Donald not only breathes new life into Lincoln’s evolution as a leader and a man, but re-visits, and revises, many of the ideas he has presented over the years in previous Lincoln works.
- *Abraham Lincoln Sculpture Created by Avar T. Fairbanks* by Eugene F. Fairbanks (Privately printed, 2002). In a remarkable, 75-year-long career, sculptor Fairbanks created many monumental statues and busts of the 16th president, including the familiar full-figure bronze at the entrance to New Salem state park. This well-illustrated compilation by his son illustrates and analyzes the artist’s creative process as well as the artistic and cultural impact of his works. pictorial newspapers, is analyzed and illustrated in this treasure chest of cartoons and caricatures by one of the pre-eminent scholars in the field.

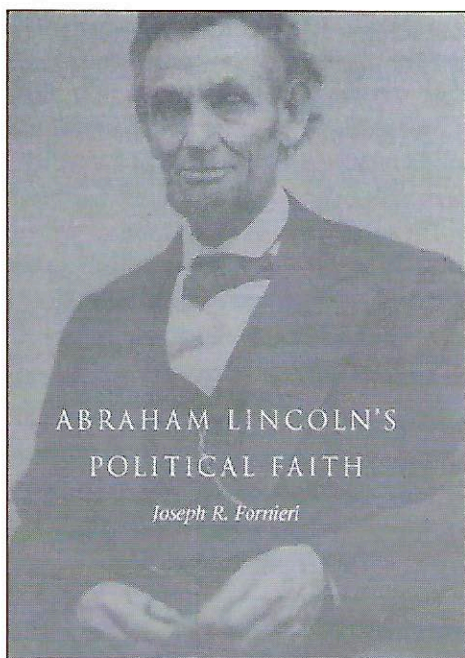
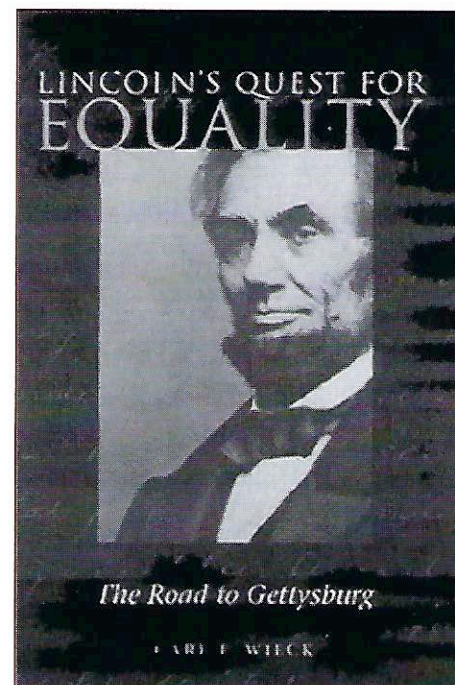
- *In Tender Consideration: Women, Families, and the Law in Abraham Lincoln's Illinois* edited by Daniel W. Stowell (University of Illinois Press, 2002). The exhaustive compilation of the Lincoln Legal Papers has already inspired a number of important new studies. This one includes essays not only by the volume's editor, but by John A. Lupton, Christopher A. Schnell, Susan Krause, and others. In his foreword, Michael Grossberg of Brandeis University calls the result "a signal contribution to American legal and social history."

- *Lincoln's Quest for Equality: The Road to Gettysburg* by Carl F. Wieck (Northern Illinois University Press, 2002). The author, a senior lecturer in English at Tampere University in Finland, offers a fresh re-analysis of the Gettysburg Address as the product of Lincoln's constantly evolving political philosophy. Political scientist David Zarefsky called it "an important contribution to Lincoln literature."

- *Lincoln, Religion, and Romantic Politics* by Stewart Winger (Northern Illinois University Press, 2003) seeks common chords between Lincoln's writings and the reigning religious vision of American identity. The book takes a fresh look at Lincoln's career-long rivalry with Stephen A. Douglas, and with his complex relationship with God and religion. Mark E. Neely predicted the book would offer "an original challenge to reigning views." "contrarian and thought-provoking."

- *Mr. Lincoln's Wars: A Novel in Thirteen Stories* by Adam Braver (William Morrow) is the season's major entry in the realm of historical fiction. Best described as a collection of short stories, some incorporating Lincoln as a major or corollary character, this highly original book evokes the Civil War era with startling effect—though purists may recoil at the portrait of a president who drinks and takes drugs.

- *Abraham Lincoln's Political Faith* by Joseph R. Fornieri (Northern Illinois University Press, 2003). Yet another important study of Lincoln's religious faith and its influence on his politics, leadership, and rhetoric, this study argues that Lincoln showed remarkable consistency in his privately held and publicly expressed religious convictions. The nation's leading scholar of religious history, Martin E. Marty, commended the book for presenting "a strong vision of Lincoln's political religion." The author teaches political science at Rochester Institute of Technology.



New on political culture. The field continues to produce important new studies on the 19th-century political world in which Abraham Lincoln rose to prominence. Especially noteworthy among recent titles are the following: *Civic Wars: Democracy and Public Life in the American City During the Nineteenth Century* by Mary P. Ryan (University of California Press); *Patriot Fires: Forging a New American Nationalism in the Civil War North* by Melinda Lawson (University Press of Kansas); and *Rude Republic: Americans and Their Politics in the Nineteenth Century* by Glenn C. Altschuler and Stuart M. Blumin (Princeton University Press).

Coming soon: *Bulletin* readers may well want to know about the wide array of titles due in 2004, including *The Emancipation Proclamation* by Allen C. Guelzo (Simon & Schuster); *Lincoln's War* by Geoffrey Perret (Random House); *What Lincoln Believed* by Michael Lind (Doubleday); *Lincoln at Cooper Union: The Speech that Made Abraham Lincoln President* by Harold Holzer (Simon & Schuster); *Mr. Lincoln's Wisdom* by Mario Cuomo (Harcourt Brace); *Lincoln's Last Months* by William C. Harris (Harvard University Press); *The President is Shot!* by Harold Holzer (for young readers from Boyds Mills Press); and a major new book on the assassination and Booth's escape by James Swanson.

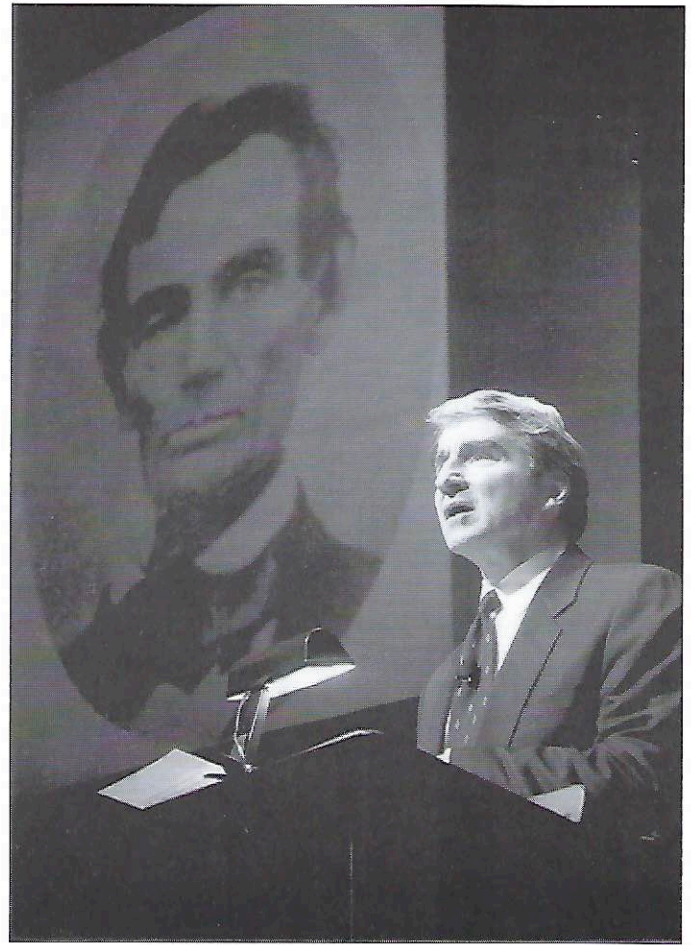
SAM WATERSTON: 'HOW I MET LINCOLN'

My obsession began in a typical way for an actor. Somebody began talking to me about a job, and I owe that job to Gore Vidal, because without his best-seller, there wouldn't have been a job for me to be interested in.

What followed as an innocent and unplanned visit to the Library of Congress, which began with my asking a completely idiotic question about whether they had anything on Lincoln there. Treating me like a madman, the library people asked, "Why are you interested?" I responded, "Because I'm going to play him in a mini-series." They all sort of blanched at my lack of knowledge, but they showed me around the collections as fast as they could.

Lincoln's letter to an earlier actor, James Hackett—in which he wrote, "I have endured a great deal of ridicule without much malice; and have received a great deal of kindness, not quite free from ridicule"—they put that in my hands. They showed me casts of his face and hands. At the end of the day, they took me down to the bowels of the library—a vast work-room filled with long tables with lights over them—where a guy was about to seal up the contents of Lincoln's pockets on the night he was killed. That was it. I was hooked.

(From "How I Met Lincoln: Some Distinguished Enthusiasts Reveal Just How They Fell Under His



**Sam Waterston reads the words of the 16th President in Lincoln Seen and Heard at the Library of Congress.
(Photo: John Harrington)**

ROGER WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY SYMPOSIUM TO MARK 150th ANNIVERSARY OF KANSAS-NEBRASKA ACT

Roger Williams University in Bristol, Rhode Island has announced plans to host next summer a scholarly symposium to mark the sesquicentennial of the history-altering 1854 Kansas-Nebraska Act—one of the most bitterly disputed Congressional initiatives in American history. Its passage brought ex-Congressman Abraham Lincoln back into political prominence.

The conference, which will be co-sponsored by the Lincoln Forum and the Lincoln Group of Boston, will be held at the University June 25-26, 2004. Speakers already committed to the event include Michael Vorenberg, John Y. Simon, Frank J. Williams, and Harold Holzer.

Professor James Takach of the Roger Williams University English Department is organizing the symposium. He calls the Kansas-Nebraska legislation one of the "federal initiatives during the 1850s that put the United States on the track toward civil war." Adds Takach: "As a result of the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act, Lincoln came out of a political semi-retirement and launched a political career that landed him in the White House in 1861."

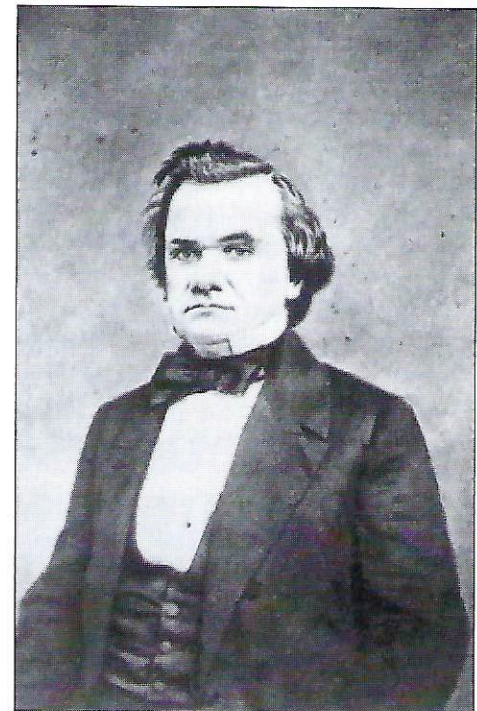
The controversial legislation was authored and managed through Congress by Lincoln's arch-political rival, Democratic Senator Stephen A. Douglas, against whom he was destined to run for both the Senate and the Presidency.

Lincoln was outraged by the Act's passage, and declared himself "anxious that it "shall be rebuked and condemned every where." Convinced the new law would open western territories to slavery through so-called "popular sovereignty"—the right of settlers to vote slavery up or down in each area—Lincoln believed the new rules would result in "assaults upon all we have ever really held sacred." To Lincoln, the Kansas-Nebraska Act Congress' version of "perfect liberty" was "the liberty of making slaves of other people."

Details of the Symposium will be published in the next edition of the *Bulletin* and posted on the Forum website. Forum members interested in advance information may write Professor James Takach, English Department, Roger Williams University, One Old Ferry, Bristol, RI 02809.



2004 marks the 150th anniversary of Douglas' most famous piece of legislation—the Kansas-Nebraska Act



LINCOLN'S DOUGLAS: THE IMAGE OF THE 'LITTLE GIANT'

Lincoln enthusiasts who can recite every detail of the story of his long-time rivalry with Democrat Stephen A. Douglas sometimes tend to forget how well-known and powerful a figure the “Little Giant” was between 1854 and 1861. In fact, Douglas was far better known, and more often portrayed, during those years than the man who ultimately defeated him for the Presidency in 1860—as the images on this page (all from the Frank J. and Virginia Williams Collection of Lincolniana) attest. Douglas was among the most frequently photographed men in the nation, and his portraits were widely reproduced in engravings and lithographs of the day. The Senator from Illinois enjoyed a huge following throughout the country. Not only did future General Ulysses S. Grant support him in his race for the White House against Lincoln; Mrs. Grant recalled draping the buildings in her Illinois hometown when Douglas died the following year. This page acknowledges the fact that next year marks the 150th anniversary of Douglas' most famous piece of legislation—the Kansas-Nebraska Act—which voided the Missouri Compromise and “aroused” Lincoln back into politics after a period of public hibernation. Lincoln would have been the first to agree that the most formidable Democrat of the pre-war years was the cunning politician, pugnacious debater, and imposing presence pictured on these pages. (Photos by Virginia Williams)



EX-‘PRETZELS’ FROM FREEPORT REUNITE AT FORUM EVENT

By Donald Pieper

It was one of those can-it-be? ... no-way! ... wait, yes-it! is situations.

A couple of years ago, during a Lincoln Forum symposium event at Gettysburg, Robert Lenz saw a vaguely familiar face and a name tag that read “Rich Sokup.” Hmm, he thought. He had a classmate back at Freeport, Ill., High School whom he knew then as Richie Sokup. But that was nearly a half-century ago. Not likely they would reunite in a Holiday Inn ballroom in Pennsylvania.

Still, it sure looked like Richie.

Sure enough, it was his fellow Pretzel (the Freeport High nickname is the Pretzels, a tribute to the breweries and bakeries that were part of the community’s German heritage). They hadn’t seen each other since Bob graduated and went off to the University of Illinois.

When he tells his version of that 2001 reunion, Bob says Rich was “clearly puzzled” when Bob approached him. “You see,” Bob jokes, “he still looks just like he did in high school. He looked old in high school. So I recognized him. But I’ve grown old. So he was puzzled.”

Bob says that once Rich recognized him as his old debating teammate, he announced to everyone around that Bob had been his boyhood hero. “That embarrassed me,” Bob says. “I had no idea he felt that way.”

The puzzled Pretzel, Rich, was two classes behind Bob at Freeport High. “He was a big time debater,” Rich says of Bob. “I was in debate and he sort of took me under his wing. That was really a nice thing for a senior to do with a sophomore.”

Bob says he was motivated by something other than heroism. The Freeport school, he says, had little money to finance road trips for its championship-caliber debaters. Team members, under Bob’s direction, sold snacks and offered coat-checking services at school sporting events to raise funds.

“I was a senior and I decided that Rich would be the right one to take over those duties,” Bob says.

There had been one other time since high school when their paths crossed — in a way. Rich says he noticed one election year that among the candidates for trustee of the University of Illinois was a Robert Lenz of Bloomington. “I wondered idly if it could be the same Bob Lenz I went to school with,” Rich says. Since the two Pretzels got back in touch, Rich has discovered that, yes, indeed, that was his boyhood hero’s name on the ballot.

They see each other much more frequently these days — often at events involving Abraham Lincoln. They discovered that each of them had been lifetime Lincoln buffs. They live two and a half hours apart and each has been active in groups associated with Lincoln, but it wasn’t until that chance meeting that they were reunited.

Bob says he learned of the Forum while watching a C-Span rebroadcast of a 1999 symposium program. He tried to register for the 2000 Gettysburg meeting, but it had already sold out. So, he registered as early as possible for 2001.



Rich Sokup (right) in character as Judge David W. Davis in his latest dramatization on Lincoln's life, with Illinois neighbor George Buss portraying Lincoln.

The two high school buddies see each other elsewhere as well. In fact, this September the “world premiere performance” Rich Sokup’s original script for “An Evening with David Davis and Abraham Lincoln” was staged in Bloomington, with Rich as Judge Davis.

Bloomington, of course, is the hometown of Bob Lenz, who not incidentally is president of the David Davis Mansion Foundation, sponsor of the event. It was Bob who had urged Rich to write the script on commission from the Davis Mansion foundation, which holds the rights. “I knew he would do a whiz-bang job, and he did,” Bob says.

Bloomington was the hometown of Judge Davis, who offered political counsel to Mr. Lincoln — on a different scale, perhaps, but somewhat like Bob advising young Richie as a Pretzel debater.

The Lincoln role in the Davis-Lincoln dialogue was played by George Buss, a long-time collaborator with Rich Sokup. Their usual pairing has Rich as Stephen A. Douglas and Buss as Lincoln in a re-enactment of debates that occurred long before Sokup and Lenz argued for the Pretzel squad.

Rich, who has been involved in Lincoln-Douglas debate re-creations for 45 years, and Buss did their act at Freeport again August 27th, the 145th anniversary of the day the originals faced each other there and Douglas delivered what history knows as the Freeport Doctrine. The enunciation of the Douglas position that citizens of territories should be able to decide slavery questions themselves had long-range political ramifications.

Bob says reaction to the Doctrine helped David Davis — “a political genius,” Bob says — as he managed Lincoln’s 1860 campaigns for the Republican nomination and the presidency. Lincoln later appointed Davis to the United States Supreme Court. Davis also served as a U.S. Senator and, as president pro-tempore of the Senate, was known as the de facto vice president after James Garfield was assassinated and the elected vice president, Chester A. Arthur, succeeded to the presidency.

It didn’t surprise Bob Lenz that Rich has been active for decades acting as Douglas and now Davis in dramatizations. He was an outstanding actor in high school and at Knox College, Bob says. 📖

Viking Grads Also Have Lincoln Link

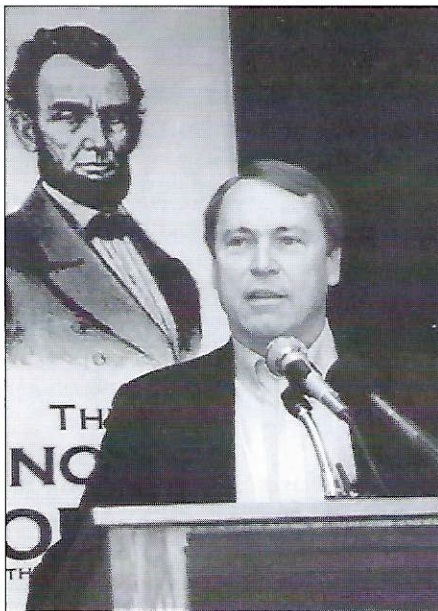
There may be still more — and let us know if there are — but Lincoln Forum symposia have brought together the classmates of at least one other high school.

Chuck Platt, the Forum Treasurer, has recruited five other members of his 1949 Omaha North High class. They are James “Harlow” Wilcox, Bob Leigh, Ron Barnett (who graduated in 1948, but has been adopted by the Forty-Niners), John Lastovica and Don Pieper.



**THE LINCOLN FORUM WILL
CO-SPONSOR THE SECOND
ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM AND
FAMILY WEEKEND AT THE
MARINERS' MUSEUM IN
NEWPORT NEWS, VIRGINIA,
MARCH 5-7, 2004**

The Lincoln children, Tad (seated), Willie (reading), and Robert (in uniform) are shown in an imaginary, palatial setting by printmaker William Smith in 1865. Presidential children—Lincoln's and Davis's—will be one of the subjects covered at next year's Forum co-sponsored Mariners' Museum Symposium, "Children of the Civil War."



Craig L. Symonds — on tap to highlight the second annual symposium at The Mariners Museum.

SECOND ANNUAL OFF-SEASON EVENT AT MARINERS' MUSEUM: THE CHILDREN OF THE CIVIL WAR

The Lincoln Forum will co-sponsor the second annual symposium and family weekend at the Mariners' Museum in Newport News, Virginia, March 5-7, 2004. The Museum is the home of the recently recovered artifacts of the Civil War ironclad *USS Monitor*—including its iconic gun turret. The artifacts will be on public view for the special weekend.

The theme for the event—which takes place on the 142nd anniversary of the *Monitor's* fabled Hampton Roads duel with the Confederate ironclad *CSS Virginia*—will be "The Children of the Civil War."

Speakers will include Forum favorites William C. "Jack" Davis, Craig L. Symonds, and Chairman Frank J. Williams and Vice Chairman Harold Holzer. Williams will speak on the children of the Lincoln and Davis families, and Holzer will explore the "Drummer Boy Phenomenon"—the image of young men in the Civil War.

A special featured speaker will be Marquette University historian James Marten, who wrote the acclaimed 1998 book, *The Children's Civil War* (University of North Carolina Press, 1998). Howard Fuller will speak on the pre-*Monitor* ironclads, and Thomas Campbell on "Confederate Phoenix: The *Virginia* Rising."

As a special added attraction, the event will include a reading and book signing by noted children's author Karen Winnick, author of the young readers' favorite *Mr. Lincoln's Whiskers* (Boyd's Mills Press).

Fordham University Press has concurrently announced plans to publish the proceedings of the 2003 inaugural conference on "The Battle of Hampton Roads."

For early information on the 2004 weekend, official hotels, or conference registration, call the Mariners' Museum at 757-591-7739 or 800-581-7245, or email info@mariner.org. Details will be posted on the Lincoln Forum web site soon. ■



www.mariners.org
www.thelincolnforum.org

Waterston has won an Emmy Award, a Golden Globe Award, and a Screen Actors Guild (SAG) Award for his work on television, and an Oscar nomination for his starring role as journalist Sydney Schanberg in the 1984 classic, *The Killing Fields*. For his stage work, he has also been nominated for a Tony Award, and won an Obie, Drama Desk, and New York Critics Circle award.

Undoubtedly, Waterston is best known to audiences for his portrayal of executive assistant district attorney Jack McCoy in the long-running NBC drama, *Law and Order*, a role he has played with enormous success since 1994. The program continues to attract huge audiences both for its premiere episodes Wednesday nights on NBC, and in its cult-favorite re-runs daily on TNT. Airing as often as four times a day, *Law and Order*—and its star—are probably the most frequently viewed television of the young 21st century.

No actor of our generation has won more attention—or praise—for his many incisive, influential portrayals of Abraham Lincoln. He played the title role in the award-winning 1988 mini-series *Gore Vidal's Lincoln*, and later starred in the Lincoln Center stage revival of Robert E. Sherwood's *Abe Lincoln in Illinois*. He provided the voice of Lincoln for the 1990 PBS Ken Burns Classic, *The Civil War*, and for the permanent audio tours of the Lincoln Museum in Fort Wayne, Indiana. In 2001, he provided on-stage narration for a widely praised, newly choreographed Eliot Feld Dance Company performance set to Aaron Copland's orchestral piece, *Lincoln Portrait*.

Mr. Waterston also delivered keynote addresses at the opening of the Lincoln Museum special exhibition, *Lincoln from Life*, and at the annual Lincoln's Birthday banquet of the Abraham Lincoln Association in Springfield, Illinois. Before both presidents and members of Congress, he has recited the words of Lincoln from the hallowed stage of Ford's Theatre. In addition to his several appearances in *Lincoln Seen and Heard*, Waterston took to the stage of The Metropolitan Museum again in 2002 alongside Dianne Wiest (as Mary Lincoln) for a new, sellout presentation with Harold Holzer: *The Lincoln Family Album*.

Born in Cambridge, Massachusetts in 1940—his Lincoln Forum award was presented just one day after his 63rd birthday—Sam Waterston was educated at the Groton School and Yale University, taking his junior year at the Sorbonne in Paris, and earning his BA in 1962. That same year, he made his New York stage debut.

For the next 10 years, Waterston acted on stage, winning particular attention for his role in *The Trial of the Catonsville Nine*, and for his riveting, romantic portrayal of Benedick in the New York Shakespeare Company's 1972 production of *Much Ado About Nothing*, a role he reprised for the CBS television adaptation.

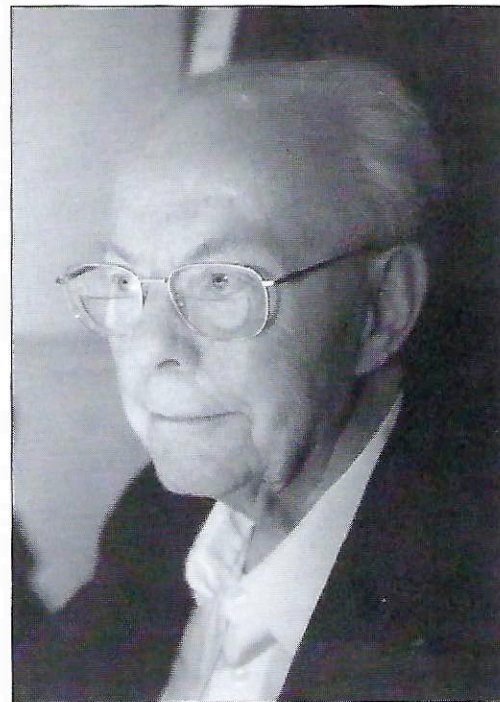
During the 1960s he also acted in such films as *The Plastic Dome of Norma Jean*, *Fitzwilly*, and *Generation*. In the 70s he was widely praised for performances such as Nick Carraway in *The Great Gatsby*, which helped established him as a motion picture star. Since then his movies have included: *Interiors*, *Hopscotch*, *Hannah and Her Sisters*, *Crimes and Misdemeanors*, *The Man in the Moon*, and this year, *Le Divorce*.

His widely varied television work has included the role of the bigoted attorney in *Assault at West Point*, adapted from the book about the court martial of Johnson Whittaker by Lincoln Forum Advisor John Marszalek. Waterston also provided the voice of Thomas Jefferson in two 1997 documentaries: *Thomas Jefferson* and *Lewis & Clark*. He has also played fictional presidents on the large and small screens.

But he remains widely—and happily—identified with the role of Lincoln. On Lincoln's Birthday last year, the *Washington Times* observed of his most recent performance of the 16th president's words: "If the audience was spellbound, the actor was as well."

Waterston agreed: "I defy anyone not to become an addict after being in contact with him."

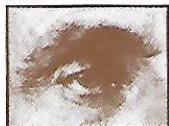
Sam Waterston is the 8th winner of the Forum's annual achievement award. Previous honorees were Gabor Boritt (1996), Brian Lamb (1997), John Hope Franklin (1998), Paul Simon (1999), David Herbert Donald (2000), Garry Wills (2001), and James M. McPherson (2002). Legendary professor emeritus Richard Nelson Current, for whom the award is named, is the author of *The Lincoln Nobody Knows*, along with countless other classics of biography and history. 📖



**Richard Nelson Current (above),
for whom the prize is named.**

Help Wanted

The Lincoln Forum Bulletin is looking for unexpected sources of information about Mr. Lincoln. The obvious references are well-known, but the Bulletin editors are planning an article for next spring's edition about less-obvious sources that Lincoln researchers have discovered. Please e-mail details about your favorite under-utilized source to Don Pieper at depea@charter.net.



If you have news to share — on your Lincoln or Civil War organization, activities, or studies — send it for inclusion in the next Bulletin to:

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