



THE LINCOLN FORUM

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TWELFTH ANNUAL LINCOLN FORUM SYMPOSIUM TO EXAMINE LINCOLN, LAW, AND JUSTICE *Carwardine, Smith, Shaara Among Keynoters*

Some of the nation's leading Lincoln scholars, from both here and abroad, will appear at the 12th annual Lincoln Forum symposium to explore the timely 2007 theme: "Lincoln, Law, and Justice." This year's symposium will take place, as always, in Gettysburg November 16-18. Pre-registration is already underway.

Keynote speakers for the three evening banquets will be: Richard Carwardine of Oxford University, England, the Lincoln Prize-winning author of *Lincoln*; Jean Edward Smith, Grant biographer and author of the eagerly anticipated biography, *FDR*; and Jeff Shaara, the enormously popular historical novelist whose vivid stories of the Civil War era have won best-seller status and wide critical acclaim.

Frank J. Williams, chairman of the Lincoln Forum, announced: "The 12th annual symposium is not only dear to my heart as an attorney and judge, but crucial to the American soul, both in the Lincoln era and our own. The issues of law and justice in wartime continue to engage-and in some cases, divide-us. Our hope is that this opportunity to air the historical past will help to illuminate the American future."

Focusing specifically on this year's theme will be historians Douglas L. Wilson and Rodney O. Davis of the Lincoln Studies Center of Knox College, in Galesburg, Illinois. They recently collaborated on the first annotated edition of *Herndon's Lincoln*, the seminal, 19th-century biography by Abraham Lincoln's law partner, William H. Herndon. Professor Wilson just won his second Lincoln Prize for *Lincoln's Sword*, an analysis of his presidential writings.

"Lincoln and the Law" will be the theme of the annual panel discussion, to be moderated by Chief Justice Williams and featuring James F. Simon, author of a widely praised recent book on Lincoln and Chief Justice Roger B. Taney; Mark E. Steiner, author of the most recent account of Lincoln's law practice, *An Honest Calling*, and Daniel W. Stowell of the Lincoln Legal Papers Project in Springfield, Illinois.


Also featured this year will be a special Saturday morning session devoted to major new books on Lincoln: Tom Wheeler, author of *Mr. Lincoln's T-Mails*, an account of his mastery of the telegraph; Jason Emerson, whose new book on the relationship between Mary Lincoln and her son, Robert, is due soon; and William C. Harris, the award-winning author of the forthcoming *Lincoln's Rise to Power*. Later that day, attendees will be able to view the colorful annual Remembrance Day parade outside the Holiday Inn Forum headquarters.

As a special feature, photo historian Bob Zeller, the leading expert on stereopticon photography of the Civil War, will present a 3-D slide show of Lincoln and Washington, D.C.

The Forum will also present its annual Richard Nelson Current Award of Achievement, offer battlefield and other special tours, present its annual "Lincoln Lite" program alternatives, host a bookstore and author signings, and present the annual prize for the Platt Family student essay contest.

This November, for the first time, the Forum will also offer a pre-registration program with Fred Priebe and other Lincoln presenters discussing their careers in re-creating and interpreting the 16th president.

The dean of all Lincoln presenters, James Getty, will be on hand at the final banquet on Sunday, November 18, for his traditional recitation of a Lincoln oration.

The following day, enrollees will be invited to participate in Gettysburg's annual; November 19 activities commemorating the anniversary of Lincoln's greatest speech: a morning program at the Soldiers' Cemetery grounds, a luncheon at the Lincoln Fellowship of Pennsylvania (separate reservations required), and the annual Fortenbaugh Lecture, both events sponsored by Gettysburg College. 

THE LINCOLN FORUM
has been endorsed by the
Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission.



Of Space and Grace



MESSAGE from the CHAIRMAN

Last November, as reported elsewhere in the *Bulletin*, the Forum leadership invited everyone who attended our 11th annual symposium to ponder the most challenging organizational question before us. Should we expand our yearly gatherings—compelling us to find a bigger venue, probably outside the center of Gettysburg, perhaps in another city altogether? Or should we continue to limit our registration to the 235 or so enrollees who can comfortably fit—or perhaps “squeeze” would be a better word—into the Holiday Inn Gettysburg Battlefield hotel?

No one can deny that we have spent ten wonderful years at the Holiday Inn. Memories have been made here. The hotel staff we have come to regard so highly have worked diligently to modernize rooms, upgrade sound systems, enhance menus, and make us as comfortable as possible within the confines of its undeniably limited space.

Attendees consistently praise its unbeatable central location—in the heart of town, a few steps from the annual parade, battlefield, and Soldiers' Cemetery, and just a few blocks from the historic Dobbin House where we gather for an annual, though equally crowded, change-of-pace lunch. But others worry that their friends are unable to join the Forum family because the hotel cannot accommodate bigger crowds.

Your comments this year, as we suspected, were mixed, and I invite you to check the report we have included in this issue. Needless to say, had our attendees come down strongly one way or the other on the subject, your leadership would have responded according to your wishes. But for every one of you who expressed the wish that we find a bigger hotel, at least an equal number implored us to stay where we are.

It would take the wisdom of Solomon—at least of Lincoln (and having our beloved Chuck Platt to advise us wouldn't hurt either!)—to make the final decision.

For now, we are committed to 2007 at the Holiday Inn. We urge you to reserve early, book your rooms as quickly as possible—and, if you cannot secure a room at the headquarters hotel, to reserve at one of the nearby alternate hotels so you can at least be part of the daily programs.

Feel free to advise Harold, Russ, Annette or me on your thoughts. We welcome your views, and want very much to do the best by our membership.

At this time, vote would likely prove inconclusive—and it would also be irreversible. As Lincoln said in 1861, “I do not deny the possibility that the people may err in an election; but if they do, the true cure is in the next election.”

But if we elect to move, we must all be prepared to give up downtown Gettysburg for the foreseeable future. The Holiday Inn is in great demand, particularly during the period we reserve its rooms. Once we give it up, our automatic hold will be sacrificed forever.

Perhaps, in the end, we are living proof that a house divided—even when the house itself is too small—can stand, after all. Especially when its occupants are family. ■

In Memory of Chuck Platt, a memorial fund has been established to promote the study of Abraham Lincoln.

If you wish to make a tax-deductible donation send to:

The Lincoln Forum Educational Fund, c/o Russell Weidman, Treasurer, The Lincoln Forum, 6009 Queenston St., Springfield, VA, 22152.

The Forum is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization; donations to the fund are 100% tax deductible.



Doris Kearns Goodwin



Doris Kearns Goodwin receiving the 2006 Richard Nelson Current Award of Achievement from Harold Holzer and Frank J. Williams

To receive e-mail updates about The Lincoln Forum and other Lincoln news, enter (or change) your email address to our automated Email Marketing system on our home page at:

www.thelincolnforum.org

DORIS KEARNS GOODWIN EARNS HIGHEST AUDIENCE RATING IN LINCOLN FORUM HISTORY

Doris Kearns Goodwin, the acclaimed author of the best-selling book *Team of Rivals: The Political Genius of Abraham Lincoln*, and last year's winner of the Lincoln Forum's Richard Nelson Current Award of Achievement, has won the highest audience approval ratings in Forum history.

For her keynote address last November, Ms. Goodwin earned an unprecedented rating of 9.93 from attendees—breaking all previous records by winning the top ranking of “10” on all but 7 of 110 evaluations submitted by Forum XI enrollees. She became the first Forum speaker ever to earn more than 100 perfect “10’s.”

At least a dozen enrollees actually asked to give Ms. Goodwin ratings higher than 10—she was awarded a dozen 11s and 12s, along with several 10+ grades and one ranking of 25. Under speaker ranking guidelines, however, each of these ratings was counted at a maximum level of 10. Had Ms. Goodwin's actual numbers been counted according to the submissions received, she would have earned a total rating even higher than the maximum of 10!

In the few months since the Forum, Ms. Goodwin has also won the Ford's Theatre Lincoln Medal from President Bush, and the History Maker annual award from the New York State Archives.

Forum XI itself was awarded a 9.0 rating, Gettysburg's Holiday Inn Battlefield headquarters hotel received an 8.5, and the hotel's food service earned a higher-than-average 8.1 in this year's evaluations.

Among the rankings earned by the rest of the Lincoln Forum XI speakers' roster, Craig Symonds, John Marszalek, Richard Striner, and the “Lincoln” press conference featuring George Buss with Harold Holzer as interlocutor all earned 9.2 scores. Ratings of 9.0 were achieved by John Y. Simon, Frank J. Williams, Harold Holzer, and Joshua Wolf Shenk, followed closely by Edna Greene Medford and Gabor Boritt. Attendees scored the student panel discussion on Lincoln and race a ranking of 7.8—most welcoming the opportunity to dialogue with young men and women from Howard University, with others expressing concern that Lincoln's reputation as an Emancipator may be eroding with the younger generation of African Americans. Both the battlefield tour and the annual “Lincoln Lite” alternative presentation were well-ranked.

This year's attendees traveled an average of 523.4 miles (the editors could not count the exhausted enrollee who answered the question “how many miles did you travel?” with the comment: “Don't ask!”) As always, Forum attendees commented favorably on the Forum's registration and hotel costs, and gave the *Lincoln Forum Bulletin* a rating of 8.3. 🏠

PICTURE PORTFOLIO— 150 YEARS AGO: DISORDERLY LINCOLN?

A century-and-a-half ago this winter—the year was 1857—Abraham Lincoln visited a photographer's studio for the first time in three years. Scholars remain unable to explain why the rising politician—keenly aware of his evolving public image, and deeply interested in modern technological innovations as well-shunned the opportunity to immortalize himself more often.

The result of the sitting at Alexander Hesler's Chicago gallery on February 28, 1857, helps provide the answer. “This coarse, rough hair of mine was in a particularly bad tousle at the time,” Lincoln supposedly recalled, “and the picture presented me in all its fright.” The subject of the photograph was not alone in this impression.

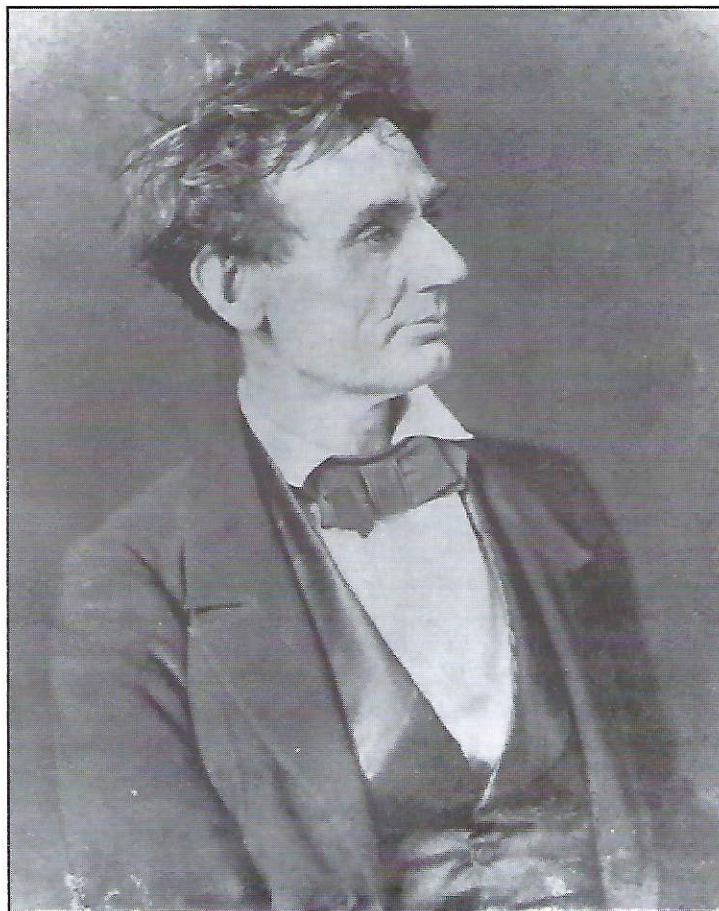
When the exacting Mary Lincoln and their mutual personal and political friends first saw it, they had much the same reaction. Writing to James Babcock, Lincoln explained with unusual frankness: “My impression is that their objection arises from the disordered condition of the hair.” But he could not disguise his own belief that as a likeness it was “a very true one.”

In its original incarnation, the controversial pose did Abraham Lincoln little harm. In 1857, photographs were seldom reproduced or adapted for other pictorial media. Lincoln himself was not quite popular enough to yet inspire one of these rare engraved or lithographic adaptations. The Hesler remained buried in obscurity, at least for a time.

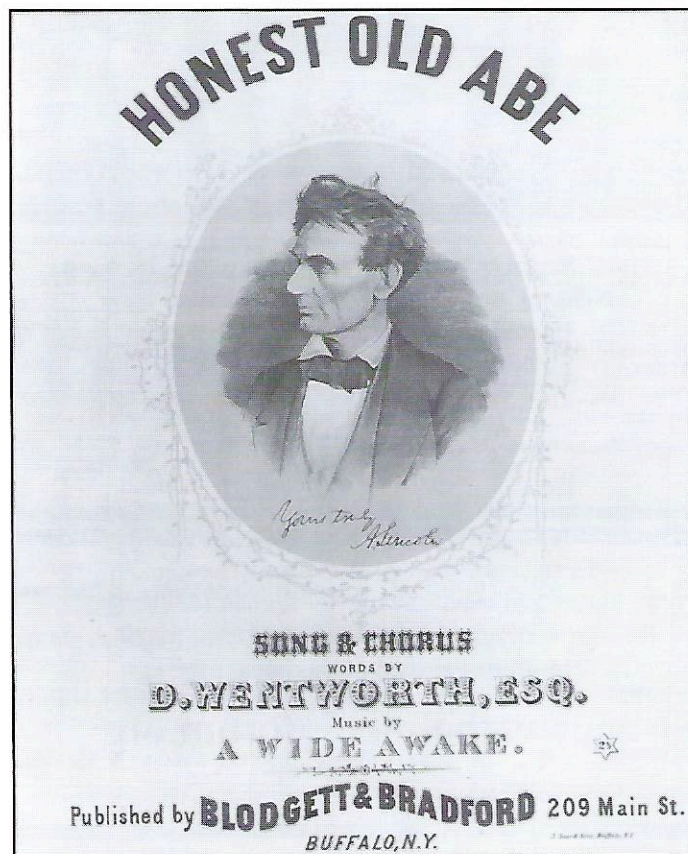
However, once he won the 1860 presidential nomination, Lincoln—and every one of the rare photos for which he had sat previously—found a newly appreciative audience. The 1857 Hesler pose was no exception. While many eastern printmakers gravitated to the sophisticated, urbane Cooper Union photo made in New York almost three years later to the day (and featuring a hairstyle carefully arranged by Mathew Brady), western engravers and lithographers manifested a clear preference for the outdated, but rugged-looking 1857 Hesler. As a result, a number of influential 1860 campaign prints—especially cartoons meant to lampoon Lincoln's prairie image—copied the photo made three years earlier, out of date though it was.

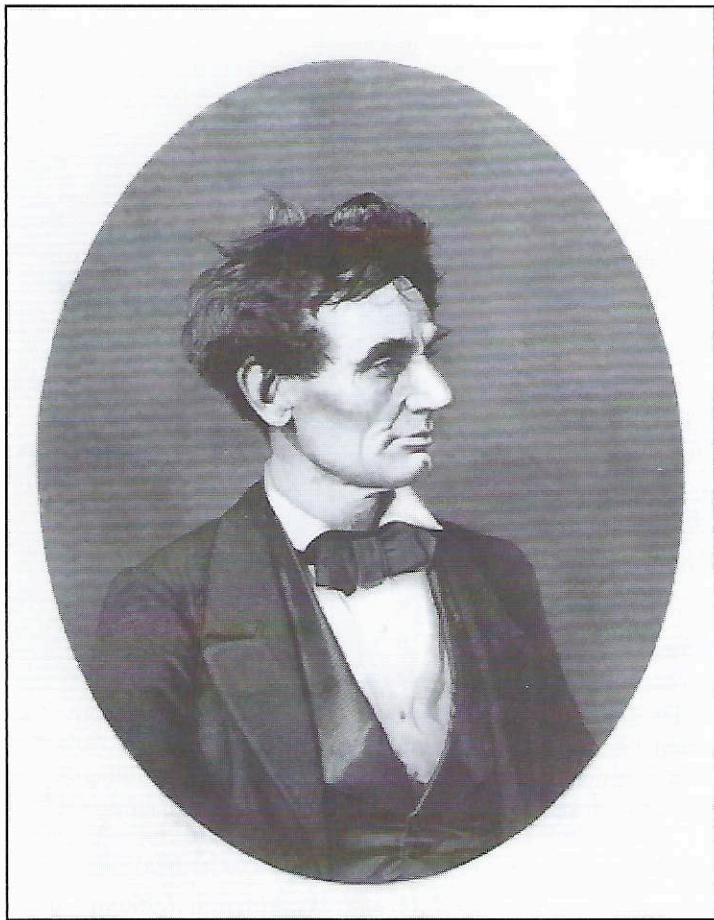
“Disordered” or not, Lincoln's image of a century-and-a-half ago got a new life in parlor prints, campaign posters, caricatures, and sheet music covers. “I have not a single one at my disposal,” Lincoln replied to a supporter who asked him early in 1860 if he had any portraits he could spare. Within a few months, however, the Hesler image made a comeback and was widely available throughout the country. The photo made shortly after Lincoln's 50th birthday became one of the most popular poses ever—owing, no doubt, to the uniquely tousled hair that his wife and friends found so objectionable. ■

(Right) A Hesler-inspired campaign sheet music cover, issued in 1860 by Blodgett & Bradford of Buffalo, with the tousled-hair image reversed.
(The Library of Congress)



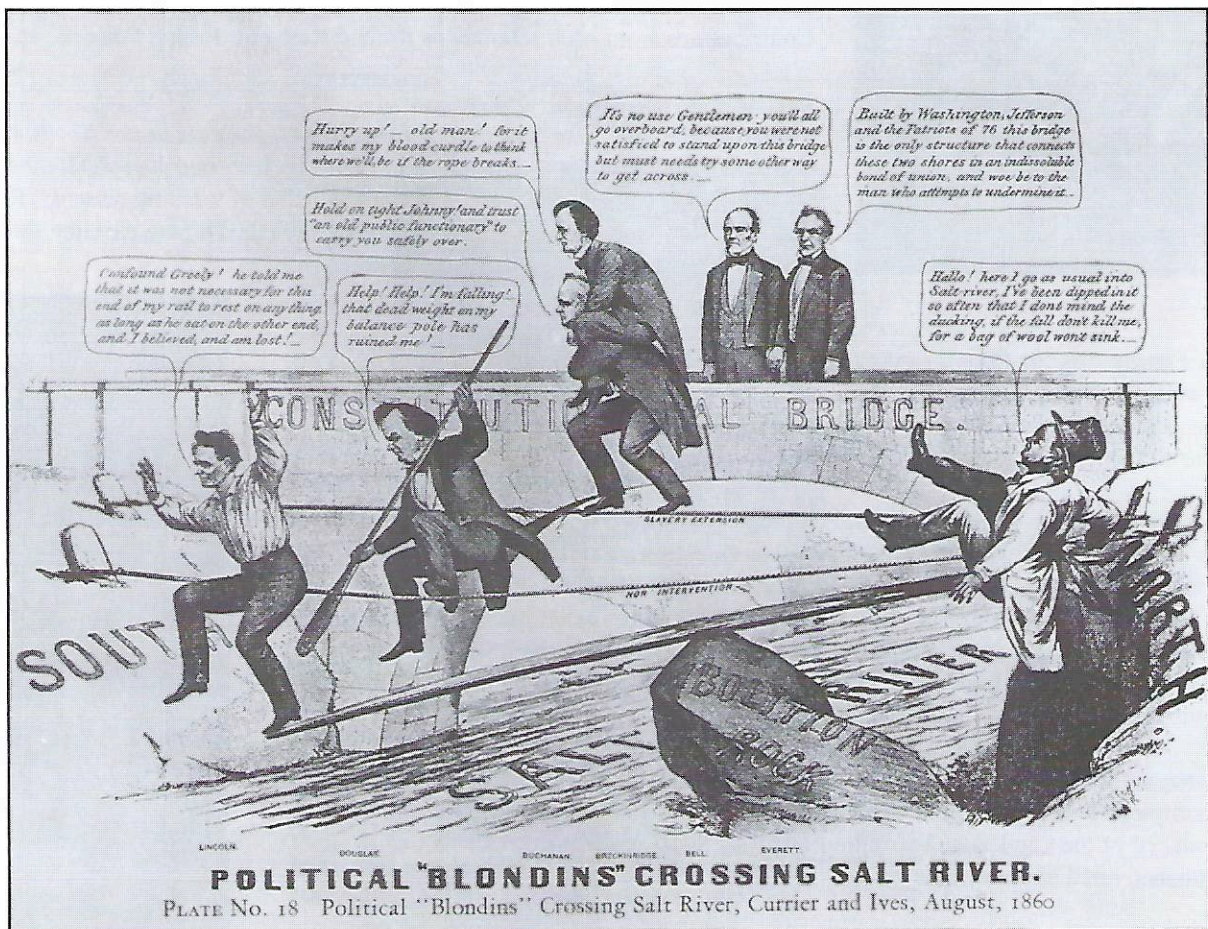
The “disordered hair” photo, taken by Alexander Hesler, Chicago, Illinois, February 28, 1857.
(The Lincoln Museum, Fort Wayne, Indiana, #O-2)





This adaptation by a Chicago printmaker appeared in 1860. (Library of Congress)

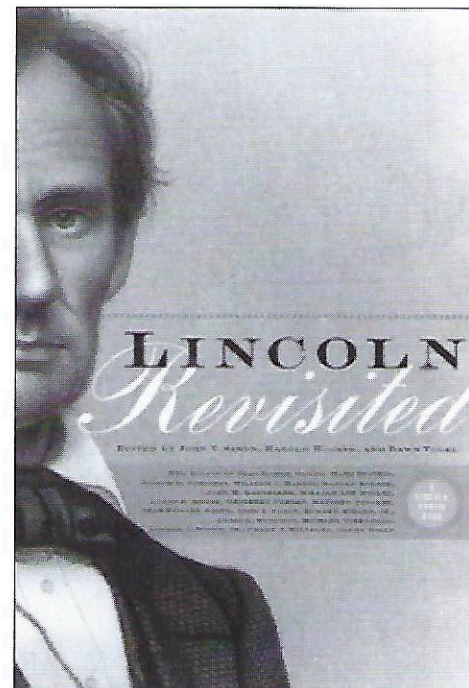
Image flopped again, Lincoln crosses "Salt River" on a rail in a Currier & Ives campaign cartoon from 1860. (The Lincoln Museum, # 433)





**ON THE LINCOLN BOOKSHELF:
ANOTHER NEW SEASON OF LINCOLN TITLES**

Lincoln Revisited: New Insights from the Lincoln Forum, edited by John Y. Simon, Harold Holzer, and Dawn Vogel (Fordham University Press), is the latest-and largest-of the published collections of Lincoln Forum essays by the nation's leading scholars. Booklist called it "a superb collection that covers a wide variety of topics and offers fresh perspectives...a valuable contribution." The "stellar list of contributors," according to historian Hans L. Trefousse, includes: Jean Baker, Daniel Mark Epstein, Joseph R. Fornieri, William C. Harris, John Marszalek, William Lee Miller, Lucas Morel, Geoffrey Perret, Matthew Pinsker, Jean Edward Smith, Edward Steers Jr., Craig L. Symonds, Michael Vorenberg, Ronald C. White, Frank J. Williams, Garry Wills, and editors Holzer and Simon. A major opportunity to own a collection of some of the best presentations made at recent Lincoln Forum symposia. Order on amazon.com, or on the Lincoln Forum website. Or direct from the publisher: www.fordhampress.com.

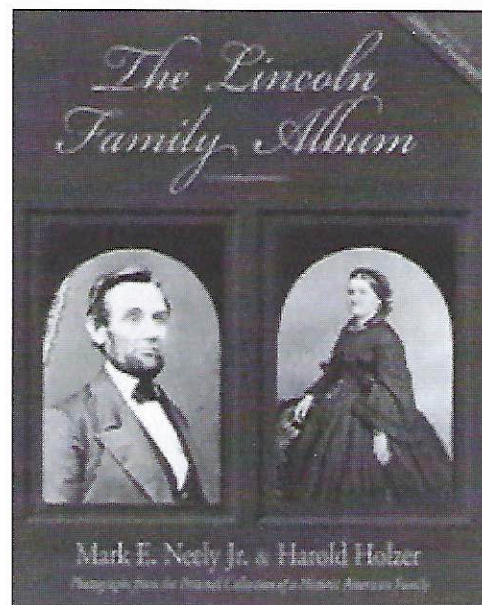


**Lincoln and His World: The Early Years—
Birth to Legislature**, by Richard Lawrence Miller (Stackpole Books). The first in a proposed multi-volume biography of Lincoln by the author of *Truman: The Rise to Power*, it

was praised by Pulitzer Prize-winning historian Richard Hodes as a "deeply authentic narrative of Lincoln's early years" that makes "young Abe's life fresh again with surprises."

The Great Presidential Triumvirate at Home and Abroad: Washington, Jefferson, and Lincoln, edited by William D. Pederson and Frank J. Williams (Nova Science Publishers) brings together essays from another LSU/Shreveport conference on the American presidency. Contributions from such scholars as Ronald Rietveld, Joseph Fornieri, and editor Williams.

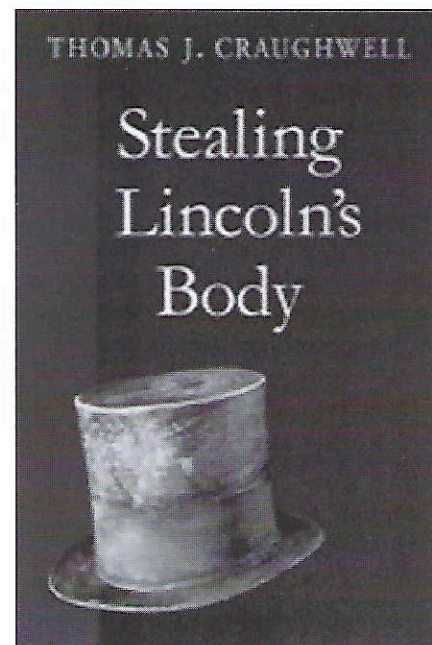
Copperheads: The Rise and Fall of Lincoln's Opponents in the North, by Jennifer L. Weber (Oxford University Press), was praised by historian Joseph Glatthaar as "a wonderful and timely book that explores the nature and value of wartime dissent." Ronald C. White Jr. added that Professor Weber's research "has established a new baseline for all future interpretations of an often overlooked movement."



The Lincoln Family Album: Photographs from the Personal Collection of a Historic American Family, by Mark E. Neely Jr. and Harold Holzer (Southern Illinois University Press), is a new edition of the 1990 original, featuring a new introductory essay and several new pictures from the collection that resides at the Lincoln Museum in Fort Wayne.

Stealing Lincoln's Body by Thomas J. Craughwell (Belknap/Harvard University Press) dramatically recalls the plot by professional counterfeiters to ransom Lincoln's corpse on Election Day 1876-while almost everyone else in America focused on the race between Rutherford B. Hayes and Samuel Tilden. Writing in the *Washington Post*, Harold Holzer called this a "spirited narrative" that makes "readers feel, hear, and smell the atmosphere" of the time. "Summoning the raw spirit of crime novels and horror stories, as well as the forensic detail of a coroner's inquest, Craughwell turns the eerie final chapter of the Lincoln story into a guilty pleasure."

The Dark Intrigue, by Frank van der Linden (Fulcrum Publishing), suggests that Peace Democrats conspired with Confederate agents in the summer of 1864 to force an armistice to stop the bloodshed of the Civil War. The author suggests that Abraham Lincoln learned of the plot, and outmaneuvered his pro-peace rivals.



Related Titles...

A People at War: Civilians and Soldiers in America's Civil War, by Scott Nelson and Carol Sheriff (Oxford University Press) chronicles “in encyclopedic detail,” according to James M. McPherson, the concept of the Civil War representing what Lincoln called “a people's contest.” According to McPherson, “the authors bring alive the impact of the war on ordinary as well as extraordinary people.”

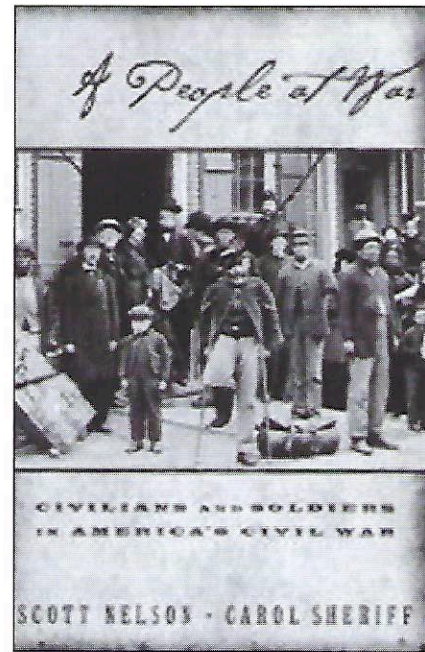
This Mighty Scourge: Perspectives on the Civil War, by James M. McPherson (Oxford University Press), a collection of 16 essays by the dean of Civil War scholars, includes two major entries on Abraham Lincoln: “To Remember that He Had Lived,” and “As Commander-in-Chief I Have a Right to Take Any Measure Which May Best Subdue the Enemy,” the latter published for the first time.

Virginia at War 1862, edited by William C. Davis and James I. Robertson Jr. (University Press of Kentucky), offers chapters on the theme by Dennis E. Frye, Harold Holzer, Harold S. Wilson, John G. Selby, and Brian Steel Wills, among others. Historian Emory Thomas called the collection “insightful history” offering “fresh, original work by strong scholars. Each essay speaks to crucial questions and offers exciting answers.” The editors both teach Civil War courses at Virginia Tech.

The Road to Disunion, Volume II: Secessionists Triumphant, 1854-1861, by William W. Freehling (Oxford University Press), is an instant and controversial classic. Ira Berlin declared that Freehling “brilliantly illuminates the politics that drove the white South and the nation to Civil War,” and Richard Carwardine praised the author as “an outstanding historian at the height of his powers.”

The First Lady of the Confederacy: Varina Davis's Civil War, by Joan E. Cashin (Belknap/Harvard University Press), offers the first full-length portrait of Mary Lincoln's Confederate counterpart—Mrs. Jefferson Davis. David Herbert Donald called it “a major biography, essential for an understanding of the Confederacy and important for the history of women.”

Confederate Rage, Yankee Wrath: No Quarter in the Civil War by George S. Burkhardt (Southern Illinois University Press), offers “a fact-filled, shocking, and long-needed” study of the often horrific treatment of “U.S. Colored Troops” during the Civil War, according to John F. Marszalek, who adds: “[R]eaders will never be able to view the Civil War in the same way again.”



IN MEMORIAM Gerald Drake Kambestad

The Lincoln Forum is saddened to report the loss of a charter member and devoted friend, Jerry Kambestad, who died in Santa Ana, California on December 13th, 2006. Jerry and his wife Judy attended nearly every one of the Lincoln Forum symposia, and last fall participated in the Churchill Centre conference on Lincoln and Churchill—loyal, devoted to and fascinated by the Lincoln story to the end. We will miss him greatly.

THE U.S.S. MONITOR CENTER OPENS AT THE MARINERS' MUSEUM, NEWPORT NEWS, VA

Marking the 145th anniversary of the most famous naval duel in American history—the battle between the ironclads *Monitor* and *Merrimack*—the long-awaited U.S.S. Monitor Center opened at the Mariners' Museum in Newport News, Virginia.

Virginia Governor Tim Kaine cut the ribbon opening the new center, at ceremonies presided over by the Mariners' Museum's new president, Tim Sullivan.

The opening weekend featured the annual symposium co-sponsored by the Lincoln Forum. Craig Symonds, the Center's official historian and a frequent Forum speaker, gave the keynote. The first full-day of lectures featured presentations by the Forum's chairman and vice chairman, Frank J. Williams and Harold Holzer, as well as a paper by James M. McPherson. George Buss offered another of his acclaimed Lincoln press conferences.

The new 63,000-square-foot, \$35 million center features a battle theater, a turret recovery theater (narrated by Current Award winner Sam Waterston), a full-size outdoor replica of the *U.S.S. Monitor*, and such miraculously recovered original *Monitor* artifacts as the Union warship's red-glass lantern.

Since the discovery of the *Monitor* wreck site off Cape Hatteras in 1973, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has recovered more than 1,200 artifacts from the ocean floor—from objects as intimate as gutta percha buttons, and as formidable as the ship's guns and anchor.

The most famous of all of its salvaged artifacts, the iconic turret, is visible in a restoration tank in the Center's new high-tech laboratory—where enough sediment has been removed to expose again for the first time in a century-and-a-half the dents in its armor plate inflicted in March 1862 by the *Merrimack*. ■



Full size replica of the *U.S.S. Monitor* at the Mariners' Museum. Photo: Henry F. Ballone

CHRISTENING WITH WATERMELON JUICE

By Don Pieper

Only Lincoln, Illinois, of the 17 American cities named in Abraham Lincoln's honor, got its name before his presidency.

Lincoln was the attorney for the Chicago and Alton Railroad and also for the developers who founded a new community near the C&R tracks.

Lincoln, replying to the letter informing him a town would share his name, said: "You'd better not do that, for I never knew anything named Lincoln that amounted to much."

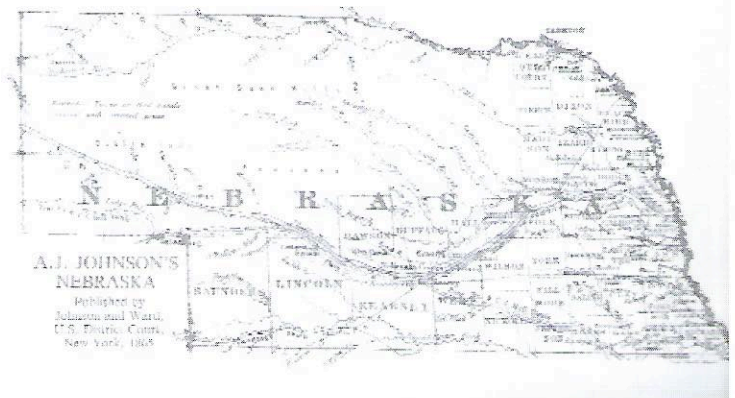
Lincoln, attending the August 27, 1853 ceremonies celebrating the sale of the first lots, followed the prairie tradition for "christening" a new town. He smashed a watermelon on a rock and squeezed the juice on the ground to perform the "rites."

The Illinois city remembers the incident with a life-sized sculpture of a watermelon neatly sliced — not smashed. It was erected in 1964 by the local Kiwanis, Rotary and Lions clubs. The Lincoln/Logan County Chamber of Commerce has a "mobile melon," a car painted green and red with seeds. The chamber calls it a traveling billboard for the community.

Lincoln College, home of a museum with more than 2,000 Lincoln artifacts, is located at Lincoln, Illinois. The corner of Logan and Fourth streets in Lincoln is known as the Stephen A. Douglas site. Douglas spoke there during his 1858 senatorial campaign with Lincoln, who was present but did not speak.

Lincoln, Nebraska, is the largest of the 17 American municipal Lincolns and the only state capital. There also are 18 American counties named after Lincoln, including one in Nebraska.

The seat of Lincoln County, Nebraska, is North Platte, founded as the Union Pacific's first winter quarters during the westward construction of the transcontinental railroad. The rail link to California was authorized with President Lincoln's strong backing. ■



Map of Nebraska, c. 1865, showing that most of the towns were south of the Platte River. The map is from "Perkey's Nebraska Place Names," by Elton A. Perkey, published in 1982 by the Nebraska State Historical Society.

A CAPITAL IDEA

How Lincoln, Nebraska, got a 'hateful' name

By Don Pieper

This is a story that involves north-south rivalries and Lincoln-Douglas debates. It involves secrecy, intrigue, pugnacity, jealousy, revenge, scandal and disgrace. It involves a stealth midnight buggy ride, a salt lick, a secession attempt (unsuccessful) and vetoes (successful and not).

It's the story about how Nebraska became the only state in the Union — a Union whose future Abraham Lincoln had assured — to have a capital named after him.

The name wasn't chosen as a compliment. Just the opposite. Lincoln was substituted for the uninspired "Capital City" because of a political ploy that backfired. But, then, lots of things in this story didn't turn out the way they were intended.

The story begins at the salt lick — a prairie bog just northwest of Lincoln, a site visible today from modern Nebraska's skyscraper statehouse. In the mid-19th century, the place attracted a few folks who thought (wrongly) that the salt might have significant economic value. They had "fabulous anticipations," according to the 1889 "History of Lincoln" by A.B. Hayes and Sam D. Cox. The original name for their settlement — and the territorial county in which it was located — was Lancaster (after the city in Pennsylvania and the shire in England).

As the 1860s began, deer, antelope, buffalo, coyotes, pelicans, prairie chickens and mosquitoes were more common around Lancaster than pioneer salt entrepreneurs. There also were some curious but suspicious Native Americans, including one whose odd sense of humor led to fatal results and a surprising reaction by his tribal comrades.

Hayes and Cox say that during the winter of 1862-63, a fellow named Van Benthussen was boiling water to recover salt when "an Indian hit him a rap over the knuckles with a ramrod, for a joke. The old man did not see the joke the same way, and flew into a rage and knocked the Indian over into the boiling salt, burning him fatally. The settlers went to the Indian camp in alarm, fearing this act had incensed the aborigines, but they were found making sport of the scalded Indian, who roared with pain in his dying agony. They called him a squaw, and pointed their fingers at him in scorn."

The incident was no more bizarre than the behavior of the raucous white politicians who were squabbling over statehood and the location of the capital. There were no fatalities during their deliberations, but a lot of roars of pain — especially from those who wanted the new state's capital to be north of the Platte River. It was a north-south row with the same geographic symmetry of the just-ended Civil War.

And it involved not only Abraham Lincoln, and his presidential successor Andrew Johnson, but the longtime ying to Lincoln's yang, Stephen A. Douglas. Omaha (named for an Indian tribe) was in Douglas County, named after the Little Giant. And Omaha, the seat of territorial Nebraska, was where the north-of-the-Platte River faction wanted the capital of the new state to be.

More Nebraskans, and, more to the point, more Republicans, lived south of the Platte. But, after Lincoln's assassination and the ascension of Tennessean Johnson, the national administration was headed by a Democrat, the party favored by the majority of north-Platters.

In another episode mirroring the national scene, south-Platters became so frustrated with the quarrels over statehood issues that they attempted unsuccessfully to secede and become Kansans.

That, in a way, was still another echo from the national battles because Stephen Douglas's Kansas-Nebraska Act played a role in the north-south and Lincoln-Douglas debates.

Hayes and Cox quote from an 1886 talk by to the State Historical Society by Representative Charles H. Gere, who described a typically rowdy "debate" in the territorial legislature about statehood issues. Gere said one "stalwart" lawmaker, contending that the south had elected House officers unfairly, approached the dais. "Speaker Chapin suddenly unlimbered a Colt's Navy, duly cocked, and warned ... (that his rulings) would be enforced by the combined armament at the command of the proper presiding officers."

Chapin declared the session adjourned. The north-Platters tried to keep the south side hostage in the chamber, but an athletic fellow "leaped over the legislative stove," Gere related, and reached the door first, then held it open so his fellow "reapportionists," or south-Platters, could escape.

A bill asking Congress to make Nebraska a state was a victim of a veto by the territorial governor. Another effort, also engineered by the Republicans from south of the Platte, was sent to Washington, but died with a Johnsonian pocket veto. Still another attempt stalled because the proposed state constitution denied freed slaves the vote, according to Augustus O. Thomas, James A. Beattie and Arthur C. Wakley, the editors of "History of Nebraska," published in 1918.

The offending constitutional passage was rewritten, and accepted by Congress. There was another Johnson veto, but this time the post-Civil War Republican-controlled Congress overrode it.

Nebraska achieved statehood, March 1, 1867. But where would the capital be? And what would its name be?


The Republicans were in control of the new state and they named a commission to choose a south-of-the-Platte seat. The choice was near the salt lick where Van Benthussen had taken offense at having his knuckles rapped with a ramrod.

"It was a bold enterprise to lay off a capital city on the naked prairie," the editors of the 1918 history said. Donald R. Hickey, in his 1992 book "Nebraska Moments: Glimpses of Nebraska's Past," said there was plenty of criticism of the choice of Lancaster-cum-Lincoln, a place "with no river, no railroad, no steam wagon, nothing."

The new capital was quickly to be the scene of more unpleasantry. The first governor, David Butler, was among those given authority to sell lots at the new location to finance construction of the first state capitol. He was accused of skimming some money for himself. Bills of impeachment were passed. He was convicted. Nebraska's first chief executive was booted from office in disgrace.

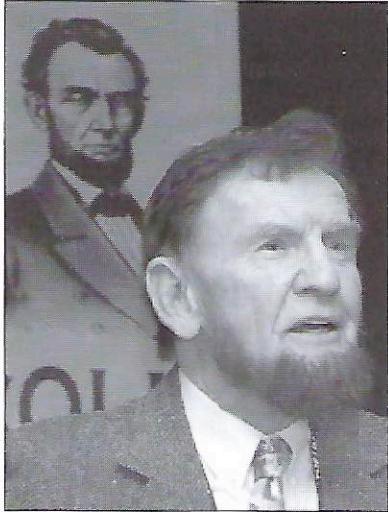
But, after all this, how did the settlement called Lancaster become Lincoln? That was the political ploy that backfired. According to Dorothy Weyer Creigh, in her 1977 history "Nebraska," an Omaha legislator, "assuming (that) no right-minded Democrat would vote for that hateful name," thought he could stymie the south-Platte contingent with an amendment changing Capital City, the name originally to be substituted for Lancaster, to Lincoln. "The bill passed anyhow," Creigh says.

And the midnight buggy ride? The official Nebraska website quotes the state's first secretary of state, Thomas Kennard, as saying much later in his life that he and Butler had been afraid the north-Platte faction would try to prevent the move from Omaha to Lincoln. So, "without consulting any other person," they concocted a plan. Kennard would go to territorial capitol in Omaha on a Saturday night, take the state seal (a \$25 metal embossing tool), "wrap (it) carefully and place it under the seat in my buggy, drive straight to the west over the prairies" and by midnight be across the Platte.

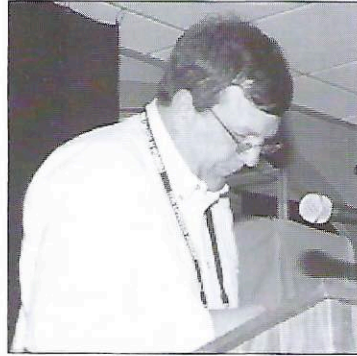
He did just that. And the same seal is in use today at Lincoln, the capital of Nebraska. 

FORUM XI MEMORIES

Photos by Forum photographers:
David Walker, Henry Ballone and Joe Card



Jim Getty



Rev. Harold Hand



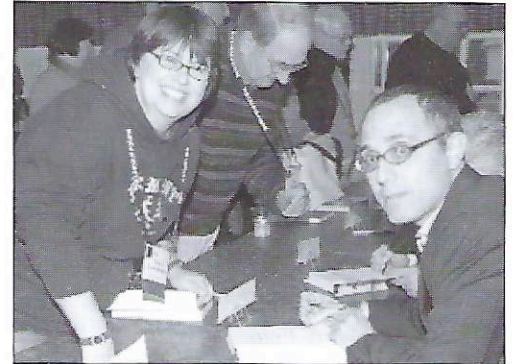
Rev. Richard Statzky



Rick Beard



David Walker, Henry Ballone and Joe Card



Cheryl Lustenberger and Joshua Wolf Shenk at the author signing



Ka'mal McClarin, Pedro Rivera, Noelle Trent, Talitha LeFlouria, Edna Greene Medford, Marcia Carrington-Headley, Peggy Lewis & Ronald Allen



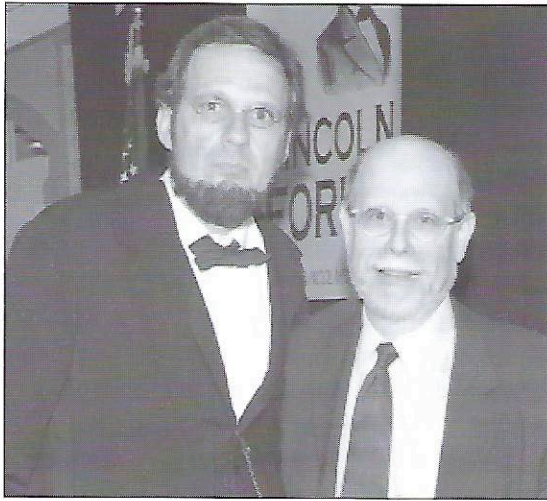
Another packed house



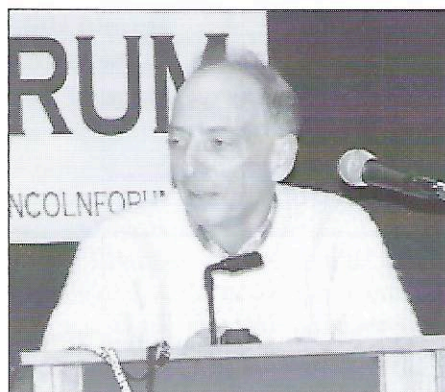
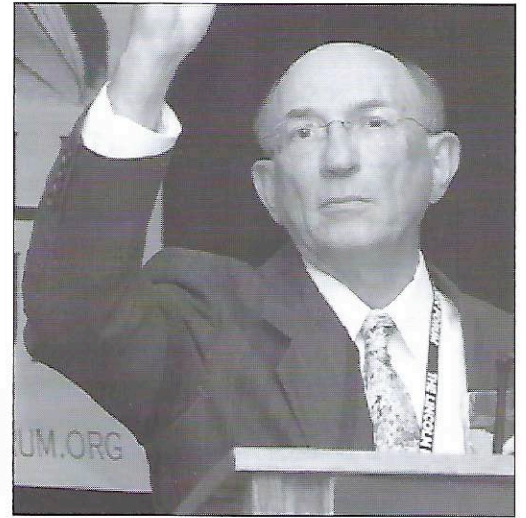
Russ & Budge Weidman



Jerry Desko and Terry Holahan



Clockwise from top right: John Marszalek, Don McCue, Howard University Student Panel Ronald Allen-Ka'mal McClarin-Noelle Trent & Marcia Carrington-Headley, Richard Striner, Gabor Boritt, Craig Symonds, Joshua Wolf Shenk, John Y. Simon with Harriet Simon and Edna Greene Medford, and George Buss with Harold Holzer



LINCOLN FORUM XI: ATTENDEES EXPRESS THEMSELVES

As always, Lincoln Forum XI attendees expressed themselves honestly, colorfully, and convincingly in the comment sections of last year's evaluation forms.

"All the presenters were very good," said one typical evaluation. "In only my second Lincoln Forum, I already feel like 'part of the family,'" read another, adding: "This is a wonderful and worthwhile organization." "The presenters were outstanding," according to one evaluation. "Speech content and delivery were excellent." Declared another: "Thank you for a very wonderful learning experience and the chance to meet so many delightful people."

"This was my first Lincoln Forum," noted one enthusiast. "And although I have heard wonderful praise for it, I was not sure if a Lincoln novice would feel comfortable here. I was wrong! This is a very warm, embracing atmosphere of scholarly interaction that was never dull. All the participants I met were friendly, welcoming, and very interesting. I will be back!" Agreed another first-timer. "I just want to express how wonderful the members of the Forum were in making me feel so welcome. I greatly enjoyed all of our speakers. I am looking forward to next year!"

Among the subjects enrollees proposed for future forum symposia: the Lincoln family, the presidency, Civil War-era foreign policy, Lincoln's legal career, and wartime politics. Several attendees proposed creating special funds and projects to mark the Lincoln bicentennial.

Even in earning more than usual praise, the banquet food got the attention of one environmentalist. "I think the food is very good," she said, but "it is unnecessarily lavish. I dislike waste. We could have more lean fare and put the amount saved toward a project for the 2009 Lincoln bicentennial."

While the bookstore room earned much positive comment for the variety of its displays and offerings, some members expressed disappointment that speakers' books were not available in sufficient quantity to meet demand.


The subject of the Forum venue has become a particularly hot topic among Forum regulars. For the first time, this year's evaluation form posed the questions: "Would you favor moving the symposium, to a facility outside the town of Gettysburg?" and "Do you favor staying at the Holiday Inn and limiting attendance?" Not surprisingly, the replies were both mixed-and-provocative.

"We need a bigger venue," insisted one attendee. "We need a larger facility," echoed another, and perhaps should even consider moving the meeting to another location like Illinois and Washington D.C." Another suggested that limiting the size of the forum would create a "snob symposium." But one enrollee worried that moving to a larger venue would "mean the loss of our comfort zone."

One comment read: "The current venue is perfect because it keeps our group large enough to be exciting, but small enough to seem like family." Yet another said, "I like the size and location of the forum the way it is but realize growth is unavoidable. The interest in Lincoln only grows!" "I am torn," admitted another. "Being in town is wonderful, but I feel confined." Another suggested the Forum seek a hotel that might offer more generous public spaces, as well as meeting rooms with desks as well as chairs—though no such facility yet exists in town.

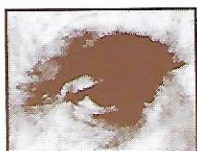
An Indiana enrollee perhaps expressed the frustrating issue best. "I love being in Gettysburg," she said. "It is what adds to the whole Forum. It makes Lincoln more Lincolnesque, and Gettysburg more real. That would be hard to give up. However, as much as I love these days, I hate to see it limited. On the other hand, it keeps the Forum more personal—as long as I get to be here." As an attendee from the Midwest asked: "Would bigger necessarily be better?"

"We all go home and talk to each other about Lincoln to fellow buffs," admitted one regular. "But we hesitate to encourage them to come because of limited space!"

Forum Chairman Frank J. Williams admitted the complexity of the issue and renewed his pledge to monitor attendance and registration availability. See his comments in this edition's Chairman's Message on page two. 



Harold Holzer and Frank J. Williams receiving the key to the town of Gettysburg from Mayor Troxell and Tina Grim of The Civil War Institute.



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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