



THE LINCOLN FORUM BULLETIN

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FORUM TO FEATURE MAJOR HISTORIANS TO MARK 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF 1862

The historic year 1862—which transformed the nation by bringing the first Confederate invasion of the North and the first Union assault against slavery—will be marked November 16-18 in Gettysburg when the Lincoln Forum hosts its 17th annual symposium.

The gathering, once again to be held at the Wyndham Hotel in Gettysburg, will be devoted this year to the theme: “1862: Battle Cry of Union / Battle Cry of Freedom.” As always, speakers will focus on the military, political, and personal issues that confronted Abraham Lincoln, his Union contemporaries, and his Confederate enemies. The 2012 gathering will mark year three of the Forum’s five-year observance of the Civil War Sesquicentennial.

“There is much to cover in our multi-year program of Civil War 150 concentration,” noted Forum Chairman Frank J. Williams. “The year 1862 was particularly rich in battlefield news, social change, political upheaval, technological innovation, and personal tragedy—from the first ironclads, to the first emancipation, to the last days of Willie Lincoln, and the rise and fall of George McClellan. Our goal at Forum XVII is to shed new light on this complex, watershed year and bring it into sharp focus for our members. And we think we have the roster of historians to do so with originality, verve, and the highest levels of scholarship. The combination should make the 2012 meeting one of the most important in our history.”

Special guest speaker this year—making his Forum debut—will be the celebrated historian James I. (“Bud”) Robertson, one of the nation’s leading experts on the Confederate military and the life of the common soldier during the Civil War. Also speaking for the first time will be the widely acclaimed Columbia University scholar Eric Foner, whose recent book, *The Fiery Trial: Abraham Lincoln and American Slavery*, won an unprecedented trifecta last year: The Lincoln Prize, the Pulitzer Prize, and the Bancroft Prize.

Another eagerly awaited first-time speaker will be Amanda Foreman, author of the critically praised, *A World on Fire: Britain’s Crucial Role in the American Civil War*. She will speak on the Emancipation Proclamation as a propaganda tool for the enemy—and, of course, its announcement’s impact on foreign relations, especially with England, Dr. Foreman’s specialty.

Forum favorite Catherine Clinton will return to discuss the hauntingly similar personal tragedies that struck both the Abraham Lincoln and Jefferson Davis families during the Civil War—the untimely deaths of sons. And frequent visitor John C. Waugh will enjoy a return engagement to explore the historic relationship he covered in his most recent book: that of Commander-in-chief Lincoln and general-in-chief George B. McClellan.

continued on page 3

Abraham Lincoln at the headquarters of the Army of the Potomac, October 3, 1862, detail of a photograph by Alexander Gardner. (Library of Congress)



SELLING THE SIXTEENTH PRESIDENT

This message is not so much about Abraham Lincoln as it is about us. It is about the ways Americans think about, talk about, and represent Lincoln and the ways we use him in our political, ideological, personal, and national struggles. Simultaneously, we deify and commercially exploit him.

From Lincoln-themed cocktails and waffle parlors across from Ford's Theatre to high-tech museums and romance novels, the image of Abraham Lincoln so permeates the national imagination that we now find him in the unlikeliest of places.

The martyred 19th-century president is invoked in heated political debates over such 20th- and 21st-century issues as homosexuality, abortion, and the war on terror.

The use (and mis-use) of the Lincoln image reveals the nation's shared fears and fascinations. In learning about the packaging and selling of Abraham Lincoln, we learn about ourselves, about who we think we are, and who we wish we could be.

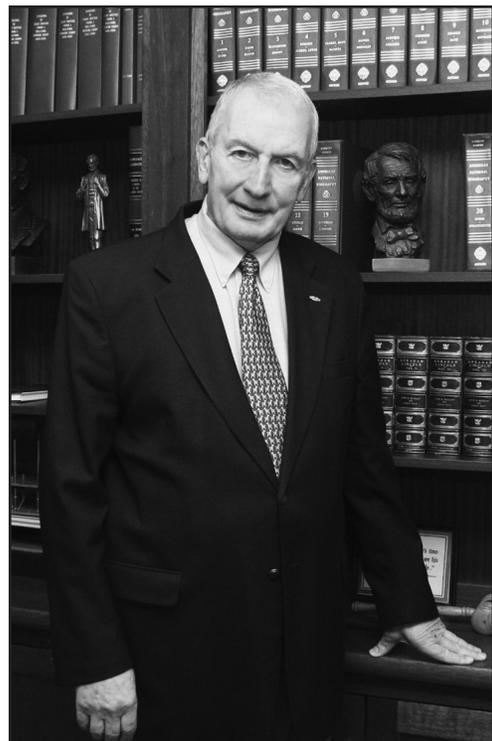
Unfortunately, there have been some bloopers along the way. Here are some:

The popular Fox News host, Bill O'Reilly, and co-author Martin Dugard, write a bestselling book, *Killing Lincoln*, which covers the assassination and our need for Abraham Lincoln today. With 1.5 million copies of the book in print and a continuing top-presence on the *New York Times* bestseller list, it is, nevertheless, fraught with historical errors that could have been easily corrected by a close read of the manuscript by one of our Lincoln assassination scholars.

A portrait, purportedly of Mary Todd Lincoln, hanging in the Governor's Mansion in Springfield, Illinois, is found to be a fraud after a conservator cleans the grime and varnish to find a face other than Mary's portrayed on the canvas—and conducts an x-ray that should have been done years ago.

Bobblehead sculptor Rick Lynn creates dolls of historical figures, including one of John Wilkes Booth, which was added to the inventory, then quickly removed from the shelves, of the Gettysburg Museum and Visitor Center on March 10 and the Gift Shop of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum in Springfield, Illinois, shortly thereafter. Critics say the dolls trivialized President Lincoln's death.

The Robert Redford movie, *The Conspirator*, is an exaggeration of the President's assassination, Mary Surratt's involvement and the military commission that tried her. And, *Abraham Lincoln, Vampire Hunter*, speaks volumes with the title alone.



MESSAGE from the CHAIRMAN

Notwithstanding, casting a vigilant light on the commercial appropriation of Abraham Lincoln, we should not forget those scholars and history buffs who truly focus on Lincoln. So through our Forums, we wholeheartedly encourage our members and fellow citizens to continue to delve into the vast scholarship on Abraham Lincoln, to view the fascinating realm of Lincoln fiction and film (the latest will be Stephen Spielberg's *Lincoln* due to open on December 25, 2012), and to seek out Abraham Lincoln in museums and historic sites. Remaining aware of the ways Lincoln is constructed—and occasionally misconstrued—promises not only to teach us about Abraham Lincoln but also to teach us something about ourselves. Real leaders, wrote David Foster Wallace, are people who “help us overcome the limitations of our own individual laziness and selfishness and weakness and fear and get us to do better, harder things than we can get ourselves to do on our own.” Abraham Lincoln is such a leader. We should follow his example—with care. 📌

Frank J. Williams
Chairman

STEPHEN LANG VOTED FAVORITE SPEAKER AT LINCOLN FORUM XVI

Award-winning actor Stephen Lang has a new honor to add to his list of encomia: the highest-ranked speaker at Lincoln Forum XVI in November 2011.

Tabulated Evaluation sheets—more than 150 of them, the highest number ever submitted—garnered the acclaimed *Avatar* star a 9.5 rating out of a possible 10—earning him the title of audience favorite for the most recent gathering at the Wyndham. Lang delivered a deeply emotional, highly charged reading of a performance soliloquy he wrote to re-imagine a Gettysburg veteran returning to the site of the war's biggest battle for its 50th anniversary in 1913. Lang followed his talk with an extensive question-and-answer session, and a generous introduction of author Larry Smith, whose book *Beyond Glory* inspired Lang's series of one-man performance pieces honoring Medal of Honor recipients. He has performed the Gettysburg piece before civilians and fighting men and women in both the U.S. and in theaters of war abroad.

Ranking second and third in the 2011 evaluations were two presentations on the Lincoln family: Stephen Berry's talk on the Lincolns and Todds, and Jason Emerson's lecture on the 16th president's son, Robert T. Lincoln. Berry and Davis earned average ratings of 9.47 and 9.16, respectively.

Also ranking high in the annual evaluations were William C. (“Jack”) Davis (9.02), Adam Goodheart (8.96), Thomas Craughwell and Michael Kline (8.65), and William Seale (8.43). 📌



Lang Meets Lincoln,
Courtesy Mme. Tussaud's (HFB)

ATTENDEES CHEER 2011 FORUM SYMPOSIUM

The nearly 300 attendees of Lincoln Forum XVI filled their annual evaluation sheets with high praise for our Wyndham headquarters hotel and the programs featured at this year's symposium.

Those privileged enough to attend the special Ed Bearss Gettysburg battlefield tour offered such remarks as: "great as usual," "awesome," "remarkable," "a wonderful opportunity," and "Ed was superb."

Lincoln readings by renowned presenters George Buss and Jim Getty won accolades as well: "Always good," "they are wonderful as themselves as President, Lincoln, too. We are lucky to have them." And: "I learned what to expect of Lincoln's true voice when reading Harold's book about Cooper Union. Somehow I imagine his accent and dialect about halfway between Getty and Buss."

As usual, comment forms included praise (particularly for outgoing Administrator Betty Anselmo) and useful suggestions. Following is a sampling of attendee response:

"You who plan do a wonderful job and we thank you. Coming to the Lincoln Forum is a very important part of our life each year."

"This is my fourth year. I have always enjoyed myself and look forward to next year. We've made many dear friends."

"This is truly an exceptional organization, due both to its leadership and membership. It is the one to which I give my

highest priority every year. The membership loves and needs more opportunity for participation. The speakers are wonderful, but we need more questions and answers from the audience."

"Every year is better than the last. Keep up the good work. Thanks for all your work, Betty!"

Loved the chef's tour with Frank and Mr. Rodier. Please repeat" (we are!).

Added another: "Dining inside the White House was a delicious, delightful experience and I hope we will do it again next year."

"Excellent. I love coming to the Forum."

"I am very impressed as always with the quality and variety of the speakers."

"Many thanks for making this event the highlight of my year. You keep doing such a great job. Can you bottle your organizational secrets, along with your energy formulas? A fortune awaits!"

"The Forum was fantastic as always."

"Thank you for the substantial contribution to the veneration and study of American history."

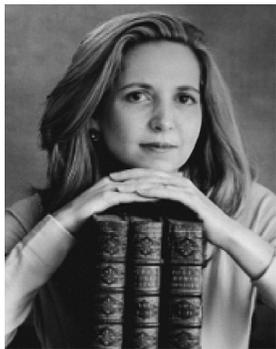
"Thank you for your cordial welcome and family-like atmosphere."

"Another good one: special people doing special things!"

continued on page 16

FORUM TO FEATURE MAJOR CIVIL WAR HISTORIANS TO MARK 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF 1862

continued from page 1



Amanda Foreman

Four Forum regulars return, as always, in their widely anticipated even-year spots for Forum XVII: Chairman Frank J. Williams on the impact of the suspension of habeas corpus; Harold Holzer with the President's evolving view of combat in "Lincoln on War;" Craig L. Symonds on Lincoln as admiral-in-chief and his relationships with Admirals David Porter and David Farragut; and John Marszalek on the two great military stars who rose in the west 150 years ago: Ulysses S. Grant and William T. Sherman.

For the first time, in direct response to member requests, the Forum will feature not one but two all-star panels on major issues of 1862: "The Constitution Goes to War," chaired by Frank Williams with panelists Roger Billings, Andrew Kent, and Burrus Carnahan; and "A Hundred Days to Emancipation—the Preliminary Proclamation," with Edna Greene Medford, Louis Masur, and other historians in attendance.

Small-group, "no-holds-barred" question-and-answer

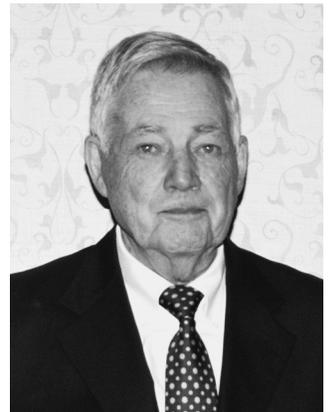


Eric Foner (HFB)

sessions will occur for the third consecutive year, featuring the opportunity for attendees to dialogue with Forum historians. By popular demand, Chairman Williams and Wyndham executive chef Claude Rodier will reprise their sold-out 2011 session, "Dining Inside the White House" for the first 40 registrants who sign up. As yet another final-afternoon alternative, the local Gateway Gettysburg Theater will open its doors for the first time to screen for our attendees its widely praised 30-minute film, *Fields of Freedom*.

And, in a renewal of another treasured tradition, the Forum's leading "Lincolns" will perform excerpts from some of the 16th president's great words—this time, of course, from the anniversary year of 1862: George Buss performing Lincoln's moving condolence letter to Fanny McCullough, and James Getty re-creating highlights from Lincoln's iconic 1862 Annual Message to Congress.

Finally, the organization will bestow its two coveted achievement awards in 2012: the Richard Nelson Current prize for lifetime contributions to the history field; and the award for organizational excellence in preserving and promoting the stories of Lincoln and the Civil War. 🏆

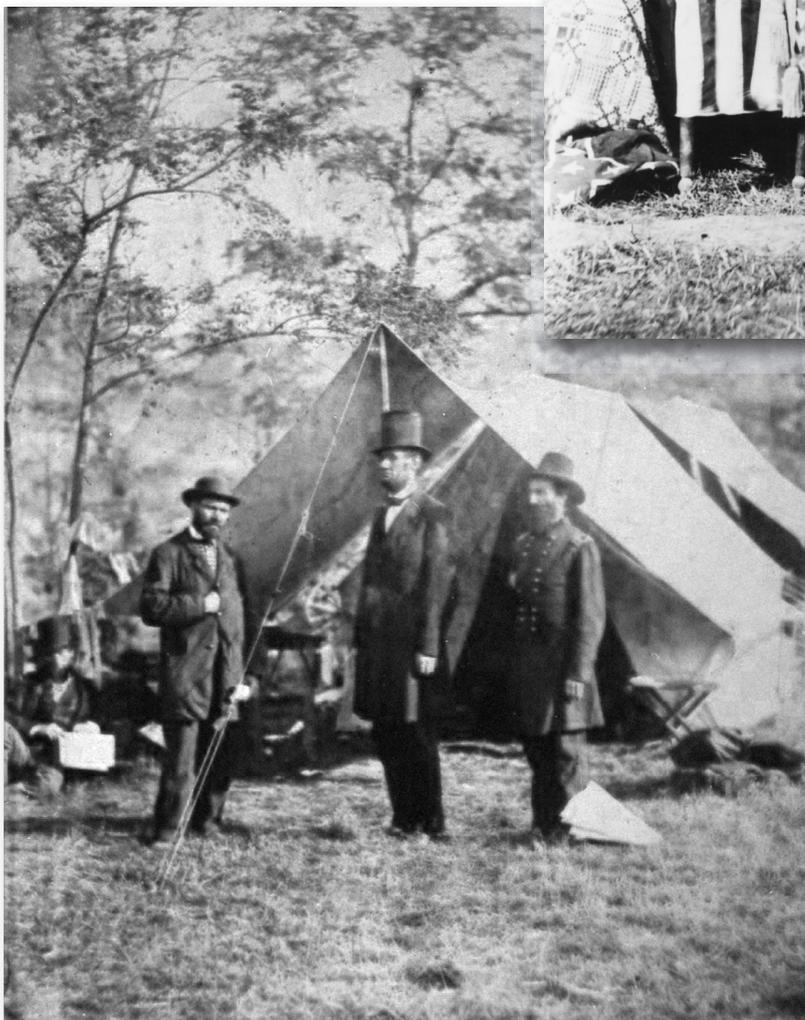


Bud Robertson (HFB)



A hundred and fifty years ago this fall, Abraham Lincoln visited the headquarters of the Army of the Potomac near Sharpsburg, Maryland. Two weeks earlier, Union forces under General George B. McClellan had turned back Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia at the Battle of Antietam. But Lincoln was displeased that McClellan had failed to pursue the retreating Rebels, and arrived on October 1, 1862 to prod his reluctant general ("This is McClellan's bodyguard," he complained at one point about the idle army). On the morning of the 3rd, battlefield photographer Alexander Gardner arrived on the scene to make a record of the presidential visit. The widely published series of pictures marked the first time in history that an American president had posed for the camera on a battlefield of war—and Gardner did all he could to market his opportunity. In the resulting images, the tall president towered over the assembled men in uniform. Lincoln posed for a second shot conferring with McClellan inside the commander's tent. But look closely: all these pictures were cleverly staged and just a bit misleading. To arrange the group poses, for example, Lincoln and his generals made sure to assemble outside a very military-looking tent. But clearly visible in the background is a handsome house, inside which any subsequent summit meeting might just as easily have been held. As for the pictorial record of the face-to-face meeting inside that tent, it is doubtful whether McClellan really kept an American flag nearby as a tablecloth—but it made a wonderful prop. Note one piece of reality the cameras could *not* conceal: Lincoln's face is undisguisedly pale—he looks like he has been spending too much time in the White House, and not enough outdoors, which was undoubtedly true. But the battle-wearied McClellan is richly sunburned—except, that is, for his brow, which has clearly been kept from the sun by the brim of his kepi. A final footnote: Lincoln not only benefited from publication of this series of heroic pictures, which all depicted him exerting hands-on leadership on the field—he also kept one of the photos for his own family album. However, the aggravating McClellan was nowhere to be seen in the image Lincoln retained: instead it was a separate pose, also shown here, depicting Lincoln with spymaster Allan Pinkerton, whom the President credited with saving him from the Baltimore assassination plot the year before; and fellow Illinoisan John McClernand, who had accompanied Lincoln from Washington on the visit to McClellan's Army. (Photos: Library of Congress.)

FAMOUS PHOTO OP



The Lincoln Forum Bulletin welcomes contributions from members and historians—articles and photos alike. Send to editor Harold Holzer at harold.holzer@metmuseum.org. The editor particularly thanks the contributors to the current issue.

REVISITING THE CASE OF MARY SURRETT

By Richard Sloan



Mary Surratt

The case of Mary Surratt remains one of the most controversial elements in the story of President Lincoln's murder. The recent movie, *The Conspirator*, focused on three major elements: the moral conscience of her attorney, Frederick Aiken; the question of whether or not her constitutional rights were denied when she and other assassination conspirators were tried by a Military Commission; and third, what the movie's screenwriter, James Solomon, called the "extraordinary mother and son story."

He was referring to John Surratt, who hid out in Canada during his mother's trial for crimes *he* had committed. Even while in jail, Mary continued to deny any knowledge of Booth's designs or her son's role, in order to protect him, even though she faced execution. During a talk at the Greenwich Public Library, Solomon argued that had the government found John Surratt and brought him back during the 1865 trial, they would not have released his mother. In fact, Solomon created a scene in the movie in which she tells lawyer Aiken: "My son did not conspire to kill your president. He conspired to *kidnap* him. My son is not a murderer."

However, Mrs. Surratt never really made such an admission. When I cited this as an example of historic license, Mr. Solomon replied: "You were never there. Nobody was there.... This is a perfect example of, 'you just don't know.' I think that the emotional truth...was that she had knowledge of what went on in that boarding house. I took the point of view that Mrs. Surratt had to know the existence of *something*. Many of the folks at the Surratt House Museum believe that she had knowledge of the kidnapping plot. But nobody really knows..."

Some students of the case have nit-picked the film to death. They do not seem to appreciate that in telling a complex story such as this, a playwright cannot always write it just as it happened. (As you will soon learn below, I can certainly relate to the practice of taking historic license.)

There is another, related "mother and son" story—which *The Conspirator* only touched upon—a story I find much more interesting, dramatic, but as yet unexplored by dramatists. So I wrote it myself, and call it *The Witness & the Collector*.

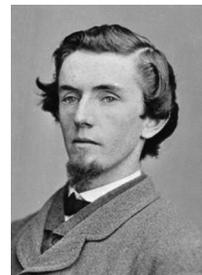
The "mother and son" scenario here is between Mrs. Surratt and Louis Weichmann, a 23-year-old former theological student (and friend of her son) who boarded in her Washington home. Mrs. Surratt's daughter, Anna, testified that her mother treated him like a son, a story corroborated by John T. Ford, the owner of Ford's Theatre, who heard it from Weichmann himself while they were being detained as witnesses during the trial. After Mrs. Surratt was found guilty and hanged, Weichmann was branded as a coward who had deserted Mrs. Surratt in her hour of need.

Years later he claimed no one had more respect and love for Mrs. Surratt than he, but when placed "in a position that tarnished my reputation, endangered my very life, and made me look like an accomplice, my sympathy ceased forever." Just as historians (and screenwriters) are *still* not altogether sure what Mrs. Surratt knew about the conspiracy, they remain equally uncertain of Weichmann's role. I find him to be a far more interesting character than Frederick Aiken. Weichmann was shown in the movie testifying that over a five-month period he observed the comings and goings of Booth, the Surratts, and three other men (who turned out to be conspirators), heard snatches of their

traitorous conversations, and observed (albeit from a distance) frequent secret meetings and whispered conversations not only between Booth and John Surratt, but between Booth and Mrs. Surratt. He added that his suspicions were sufficiently aroused to warrant confiding what he observed to a fellow worker in the War Department. This is historically accurate—up to a point.

Throughout *The Conspirators'* trial scene (filmed on a set that was a perfect recreation of the courtroom), Mrs. Surratt turned her head from Weichmann's occasional glance, almost as though he was telling the truth. The audience is given to wonder if perhaps she really did know of the kidnap plot. I would have preferred seeing Mrs. Surratt give a steely look to the man she had considered a son, and have *him* avoid *her* eyes. Aiken's intense cross-examination of Weichmann prompted one of the judges to say, "The witness is not on trial!" Defendant Lewis Paine immediately rose and blurted out, "He oughtta be!" Aiken then expressed the opinion that Weichmann appeared to know more about the plot than he would admit. He was right, for there *is* more to Weichmann than meets the eye. Flashbacks could have been employed to show the audience just how friendly he had been with the conspirators. In fact; Weichmann provided many of the details in his memoirs, unpublished for more than a century, but made it all seem as though he had been "duped" ("framed" might have been more appropriate).

Students of the case are still asking nagging questions about the man some of them call "Lyn' Lou." Was John Surratt telling the



John Surratt

truth in an 1880 lecture when he said Weichmann was not a conspirator, but knew all about the kidnapping scheme and was constantly importuning him and Booth to let him be part of it? Did he really take a co-worker into his confidence? Or did he realize too late that he had been caught in the web of conspiracy and approach a co-worker (Daniel Gleason) so that if something happened to Lincoln he would appear to have just been an innocent bystander? Why did he ask Gleason if

the men might be plotting to kidnap or assassinate the President? Why was he a nervous wreck on the morning after the assassination? Why couldn't he hear Mrs. Surratt's message to her tenant, John Lloyd, to have "those shooting irons" ready for people who would be calling for them on the night of the assassination? As Aiken wondered in *The Conspirator*, how could he *not* have known the conspirators' true designs after having been so chummy with them for so many months? He attempted to answer many (but not all) of these questions in the weeks and years that lay ahead, but never to anyone's satisfaction. Frightened and shaken, he revealed to Ford that Secretary of War Stanton told him that "the blood of the murdered president was as much on his hands as on Booth's," and that if he was concerned about his own "safety," he would be wise to tell all he knew.

One of Ford's employees, costumer Louis Carland, later stated that Weichmann told him that if he had been left alone and allowed to give his statement to his interrogators as he had wanted to, Mrs. Surratt would have met a different fate. The general consensus of historians is that he was, indeed, threatened with prosecution as a conspirator unless he told prosecutors what they wanted to hear. Faced with that dilemma, he claimed the Surratts placed him in a position "endangered my very life, and made me look like an accomplice."

From the day Mrs. Surratt was hanged until the day he died, Weichmann was haunted by her friends and supporters.

THROUGH HER “SON”—LOUIS WEICHMANN

These included the Catholic priests of Washington who had been among the lady’s strongest allies. The press had a field day with him, and he was even rumored to have suffered a nervous breakdown. In a sworn statement shortly after the execution, Weichmann answered one of his early accusers, John Brophy, by denying he was a coward and insisting he had been Mr. Surratt’s best character witness, which, oddly enough, is not far from the truth. As he reached what he called “the shady side of life,” still tormented, he decided to write his memoirs and put his side of the affair before the world. However, they never saw the light of day during his lifetime, probably because he feared renewed attacks. In fact, there is no evidence that he ever submitted his manuscript to a publisher. It was forgotten until Weichmann’s great niece offered it to Minnesota collector Floyd Risvold, who acquired it for an undisclosed sum and saw to its publication (by Alfred Knopf) in 1975. The memoir turned out to be nothing more than a self-serving vindication, full of cleverly twisted statements, inconsistencies, contradictions, tampering with dates, and perhaps even a few fabrications. (Risvold later told the Lincoln Fellowship of Wisconsin that from his own research he was sure Mrs. Surratt knew about the kidnap plot.)

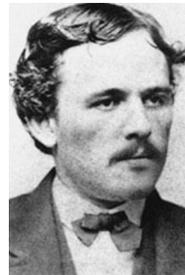
Shortly after publication of the Weichmann memoirs, I saw a reference in an auction catalogue that the great Lincoln collector Oliver Barrett once owned letters Weichmann had written to Osborn Oldroyd, another famous Lincoln collector. With the help of legendary Lincoln autograph dealer Ralph Newman, I found them in the University of Chicago Library. I located the other half of the correspondence as well. Floyd Risvold had acquired it along with Weichmann’s manuscript. He generously made copies available for study, enabling me to put together both halves of the correspondence for the first time. They revealed two important things: first, that Oldroyd had asked Weichmann for a few pages about his experiences for his own forthcoming book, *The Assassination of Abraham Lincoln*, and second, that Weichmann had traveled from his home in Indiana to Washington in June of 1901 to visit Oldroyd in his museum, which was located, ironically, in the house where Lincoln died.

Reading these letters made me feel as though I was in the same room with the two, listening to them chat about Lincoln and his assassination! I imagined Oldroyd giving Weichmann a tour of his museum and going over his chapter with him. That is what inspired me to write *The Witness & the Collector*. In a manner of speaking, *they* wrote it for me. Besides drawing upon their correspondence and Weichmann’s memoirs, I selected Weichmann’s words from his 1865 and 1867 testimonies, his interrogations and statements to government investigators, and his reply to Brophy’s charges. Oldroyd’s dialogue was reconstructed from his 1901 book and the numerous interviews he granted to reporters in his museum.

The reason for Weichmann’s Washington visit was never made clear in the correspondence, so I had to make an educated guess: it was to see the house and convince Oldroyd to include his submission in his book. (The letters really indicate that Oldroyd didn’t need to be convinced; he had already decided to include Weichmann’s submission, and in fact did so. He no doubt considered it a scoop.)

I had to take license here as well; otherwise there would be no reason for the play in the first place. My whole purpose was to give Oldroyd a reason to ply Weichmann with the questions that have long been asked, to argue with him and contemplate whether or not he was convinced of what Weichmann *claimed* he believed: that Mrs. Surratt was “as guilty as John Wilkes

Booth!” In my play, Oldroyd represents all of the historians and students of the case. I wanted to present what I hoped would be a thoughtful discussion of the evidence, and at the same time paint a picture of Weichmann as I see him: intelligent, polite, nervous, clever, guilt-ridden, sensitive, and overly defensive. As my play progresses, Oldroyd asks many of the nagging questions that have been asked over the years, but is not satisfied with most of the answers. He conveys to the audience the sense that he is leaning towards a belief in Mrs. Surratt’s innocence, despite all of Weichmann’s statements and protestations. He becomes increasingly frustrated by Weichmann’s inability to accept any of his host’s arguments. (For example, Oldroyd asks him if Mrs. Surratt was “simply unaware of what her son was really up to and that she was just an unwitting pawn?”) Weichmann responds, “Oh, come now. She was his mother; she knew him better than anyone!” Oldroyd counters with, “But wouldn’t she have been the last person in the world to have suspected her own son of being implicated in such a mad scheme? Maybe she did think he was only a cotton speculator or a blockade runner. You say that you would have been the last person on earth to suspect him. And yet you were his best friend. You had gone to seminary together. You ate together at his mother’s house. Why, you even slept in the same bed! How is it possible that even you couldn’t see what he was up to?”



Louis Weichmann

Weichmann heatedly asserts, “Because he deliberately deceived me, just like his mother. I keep telling you that!” Oldroyd, just as excited, replies: “You miss my point! If you only had a vague suspicion.... even though you were his best friend, why can’t you see that he could have also fooled his own mother?!” Through it all, Oldroyd tried to remain a good host, giving Weichmann a V.I.P. tour of his museum (including the room in which Lincoln died), and proudly showing him photos, letters, and artifacts that he thought he would find of interest. Eventually, Oldroyd has enough. He emphatically tells Weichmann, “You place me in a very difficult position if you expect me to include *your* story, and *your* convictions, in *my* book, and claim that I am its author. I’m not ready to do that. *When you get your book out, you’ll be able to state it just as you see it, right?*” Weichmann comes up with number of little excuses for not being able to submit his work to a publisher for six to nine more months. “*Don’t forget, this has been a work of years for me, and I find I must still go over it and correct a few inaccuracies and omissions of my stenographer, and my faulty spelling*” (italicized words from their correspondence.)

Weichmann finally realizes he has failed to win Oldroyd over and that his trip from Indiana was in vain. He makes one more long-winded plea, gives him letters from some of the judges of the Military Commission that attest to his truthfulness at the trial, and departs. Once he is gone, Oldroyd lets out a sigh of relief, picks up his life mask of Lincoln, and speaks to it. “Well, Mr. President, what do you think? Shall I believe Mr. Louis Weichmann? Will we ever really know the true story behind your murder? I wonder. I wonder.”

(Former Lincoln Group of New York President Richard Sloan presented his *The Witness & the Collector* in staged readings, with props, to the Surratt Society in 2005 and the Lincoln Group of N.Y. in 2011. Sloan portrayed Weichmann, and a fellow student of the case, John Howard, portrayed Oldroyd.) ■

LINCOLN FORUM



Bill King, Candelle Richman, Frank J. Williams, Bob Baumgartner, Bonnie DeWolf, & Catherine Teodosio



John McClarey & Jerry Desko



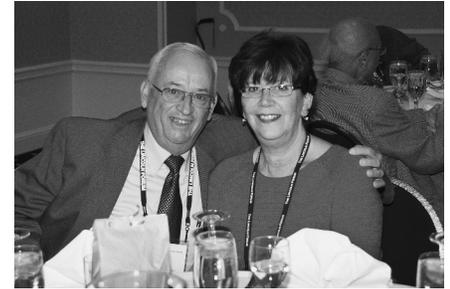
Dick Crews & Mel Maurer



Betty Anselmo, Ed Bearss, & Henry F. Ballone



Norm Schmidt, Victoria Ott, & Ron Keller



Skip & Sarah Bellino



Harold Holzer, Liz Boritt, & Edith Holzer



Edith Holzer, Tom Horrocks, & Tina Grim



Russ Weidman & Carol Becker



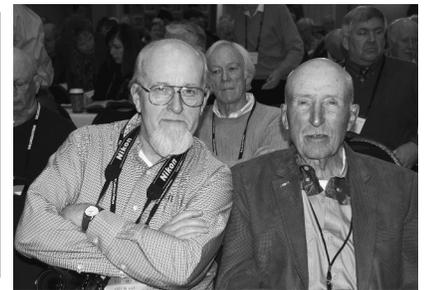
Tiffany Stouck & Everett Ladd



Frank J. Williams



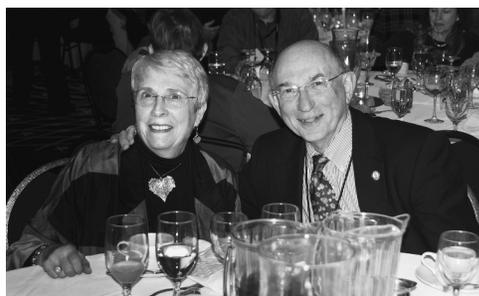
Linda Wheeler, Russ Weidman, & Dave Walker



Joe Card & Ed Bearss



Stephen Berry



Jeanne & John Marszalek



Harold Holzer, Ed Bearss, & Frank J. Williams

XVI MEMORIES



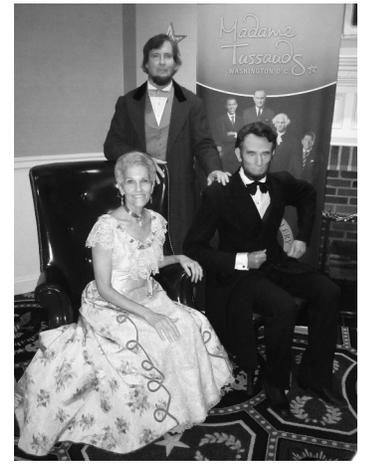
Edith Holzer & Marylou Symonds



Virginia Williams, Betty Anselmo, & Renee Foley



Edna Greene Medford



Dave Walker & Pat Dougal



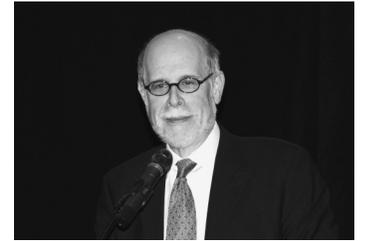
William Seale



Michael Kline & Thomas Craughwell



Frank J. Williams & Claude Rodier



Harold Holzer



Frank J. Williams & Jack Davis



Jason Emerson, Joe Fornieri, & Tom Craughwell



Eileen & David Patch



Craig Symonds, Ed Bearss, & John Marszalek



Adam Goodheart, Craig Symonds, & Harold Holzer



Jane & Marty Waligorski



Dan Weinberg, Bob Willard, & Bob Lenz

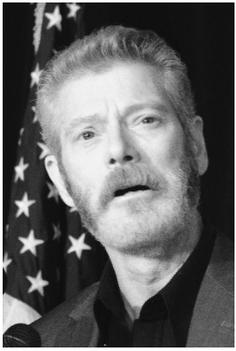


Stephen Lang



Photos by Tim Branscum, Joe Card, Henry F. Ballone, & Dave Walker

LINCOLN FORUM



Stephen Lang



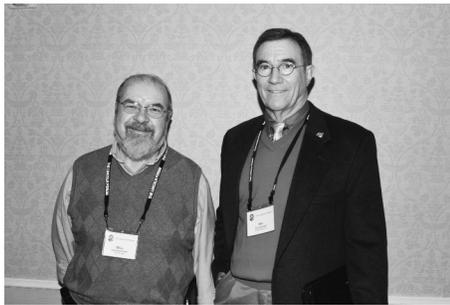
Bob Willard, Brenda Pascal, Cindy Stewart, Paul Pascal, & Buzz Carnahan



Carson Long Military Academy



Frank J. Williams



Bill Grandstaff & Ski Schanher



Gabor Boritt & Stephen Lang



Judy Kambestad



Stephanie Williams & John Eliff



Harold Holzer, Frank Williams, & Roger Billings



Mark Kevitt, David S. Rankey, & David Rankey



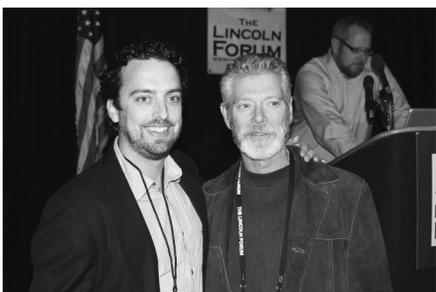
Henry F. Ballone, Ed Bearss, & Gabor Boritt



Jules Silk, Patrick Anderson, & Rev. Harold Hand



Alan Rosen, George Campbell, & Tom Destefano



Jake Boritt & Stephen Lang



Dave Cuculich & Ruth Hotaling

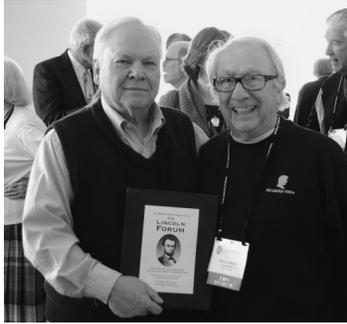


Robert & Nancy Wolfgang

XVI MEMORIES *continued*



Debbie Frattaroli, Gordon Doble, Michelle Krowl, & Candelle Richman



Malcolm Garber & Clarke Harrison



The Lincoln-Douglas Society of Freeport, Illinois



On Tour with Ed Bearss



Ruth Hotaling, Gabor Boritt, & Dave Cuculich



Gloria Glickman, Sori Devore, Bob & Karen Field



Ed Bearss



Virginia Williams



George Buss



Harold Holzer & Tom Horrocks



David Long, Joe Fornieri, & Craig Symonds



Jim Getty & Dave Walker



Bob Willard, Michelle Krowl, & Roger Billings



Harold Holzer



Bob Douglas, Ron Robertson, & Virginia Douglas



Al & Betty Anselmo



Tim Branscum

ACCOLADES FOR 2011 CURRENT AWARD HONOREE ED BEARSS

Ed Bearss, winner of the Forum's 2011 Richard Nelson Current achievement award, has admirers from all walks of life: enthusiasts, preservationists, readers, and of course veterans of his legendary battlefield tours.

At the November ceremony honoring Bearss, three of these fans provided surprise letters to second our emotion. For those members who missed this unforgettable experience, here are their messages, as read to the closing banquet on November 18.

From James McPherson

Ed Bearss has done more for the Civil War community than any other single individual, and has been doing it for well over half a century. From his days as historian at Vicksburg National Military Park, when he upgraded the interpretation of the campaign and siege, published several important histories of the campaign, and brought up the USS Cairo from its watery grave, to his years as chief historian of the National Park Service, his service from 1991 to 1993 on the Congressional Civil War Sites Commission, and his legendary activities as a battlefield guide, tens of thousands of people who have read his words and gone on his tours have learned an enormous amount from him, and continue to do so. Ed is in a class by himself as Mr. Civil War.

From Ken Burns

I can't think of anyone in the field of Lincoln and Civil War studies more deserving of this award than Ed Bearss. For

decades he has literally been the voice of the battlefield, giving tours, making the unfathomable understandable, and more important, communicating the human dimensions of stories that have over the century and a half since the Civil War began become encrusted with the barnacles of sentimentality and nostalgia. For Ed, the people and the stories are real, not something to sanitize or white wash, and in his scholarship and lifetime of research into this period, he always brings a fresh perspective. And then there is that voice. May I say a word about that voice? Ed Bearss' voice is a gift from the Gods; it can cut through a back hoe trying to interrupt one of his mesmerizing tours. It reaches to the back of the group, has sympathy and humor and sometimes a sense of moment so compelling that every now and then, you the listener are certain that as Faulkner once said, "History is not was, but is." Congratulations Ed! Well deserved!

From President George W. Bush

Congratulations on your receiving the 2011 Richard Nelson Current Award of Achievement from the Lincoln Forum.

As you celebrate this important milestone, I hope you will take pride in your accomplishments. Your commitment to historical preservation and education serve as a fine example for others, and Laura and I are pleased to join your family and friends in congratulating you on this special occasion. We send our best wishes. 📌

THE 1864 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

By Jerry Desko

In a past column I analyzed the 1860 presidential election in Adams County by reviewing past copies of *The Adams Sentinel* (pro-Lincoln) and *The Compiler* (anti-Lincoln). This comparison is between those two newspapers once again but, this time in reference to the presidential election of 1864.

This election involved only two candidates. Abraham Lincoln represented the National Union Party and General George B. McClellan represented the Democratic Party. In 1860, thirty-three states voted in the national election but in 1864 twenty-five states voted. These twenty-five were the loyal Union states that didn't secede.

As expected *The Compiler* pilloried Lincoln and promoted the election of George B. McClellan, the "peace candidate". The paper published stories that told of several Republican newspapers switching their allegiance to McClellan and a myriad of stories of serving soldiers that professed their support for their former commander. The editor contended that if Lincoln was re-elected there would be four more years of war, the freeing of slaves which would result in the dissolution of the Union and there would be an increase in taxes.

The Sentinel countered with reminding the public who in fact started the war in the first place by laying out each rebellious move chronologically. The editor published reports of soldiers and sailors that supported Lincoln's re-election including quotes from Thaddeus Stevens and General Joseph Hooker. He also published reports of the dangers of the Copperhead movement's plot to take over the government of Indiana. He spoke of alarms on the northern border in Ogdensburg and Buffalo, New York, concerning pro-

Confederates massing near the border, poised to strike at the United States, all in the wake of the Confederate raid on St. Albans, Vermont.

The national election occurred on November 8 and resulted in Lincoln's majority being over 400,000 voters. Much of this was due to the fact many soldiers were allowed to leave the field and vote back home and some states even instituted absentee balloting for those who could not get leave. Lincoln took the electoral college vote by 212 to 21. He won all the states allowed to vote except for New Jersey, Kentucky and Delaware.

In Pennsylvania, as he did in 1860, Lincoln received a majority of votes which gave him all of the twenty-six electoral votes. Once again, the vote in Adams County was not representative of the statewide results.

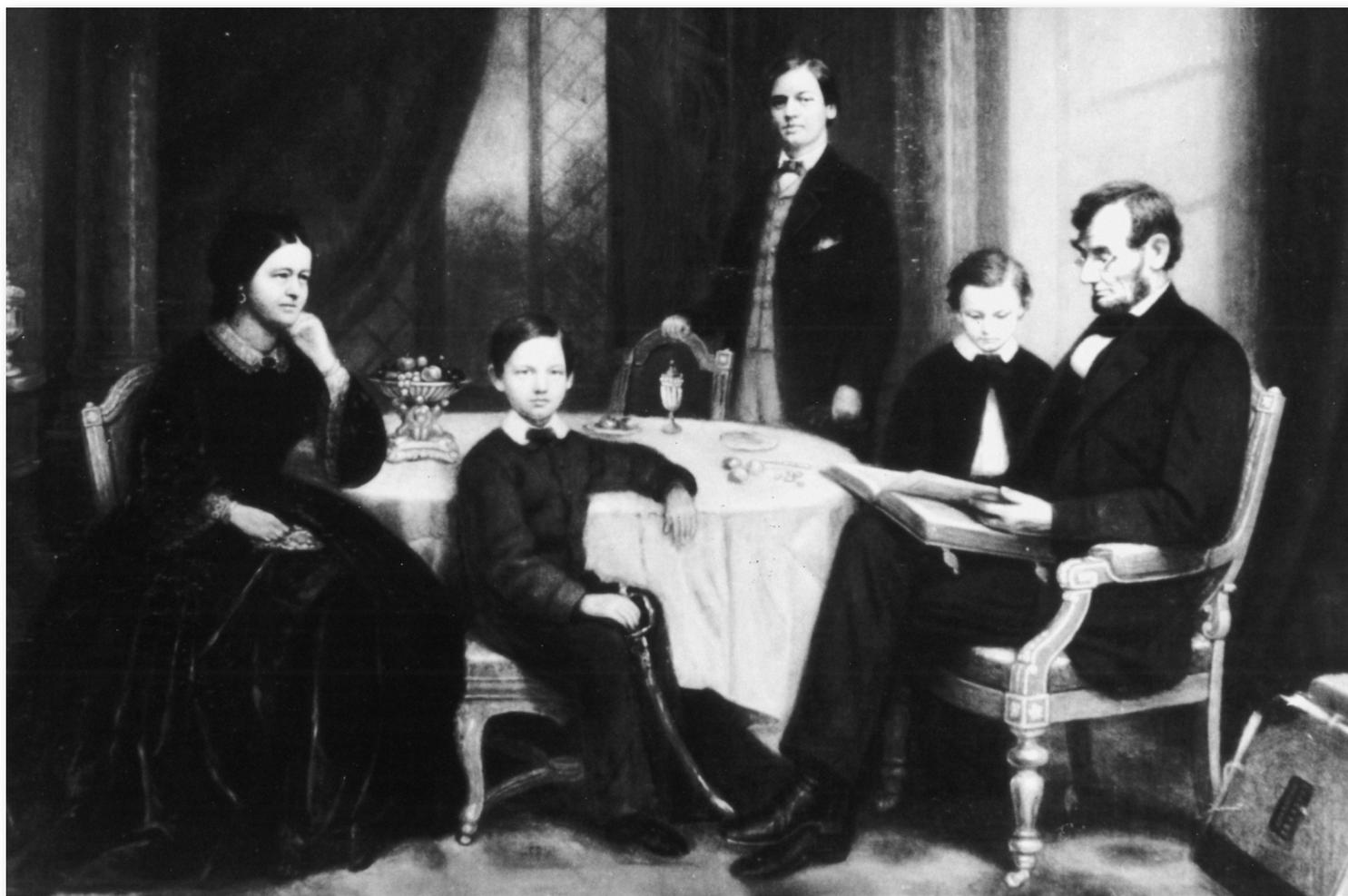
In 1860, with the war clouds looming, Lincoln's majority in Adams County was 0.01 per cent of the total popular vote in the county. In 1864, with Grant in a stalemate at Petersburg and Sherman about to mount his March to the Sea from captured Atlanta, McClellan captured the majority vote in Adams County by 10 per cent!

It was quite apparent that the people of Adams County, after four long years of war, destruction and sacrifice, wanted peace. Peace is what they got, but not by the pathway General McClellan chose, but by the manner in which Lincoln and Grant provided.

On April 9, 1865, in the McLean House parlor, at Appomattox Court House, Virginia, Robert E. Lee officially surrendered the Army of Northern Virginia to U.S. forces led by Ulysses S. Grant. This act for all intents and purposes, ended the American Civil War. 📌

THE PRESIDENT'S GREATEST WARTIME LOSS: WILLIAM WALLACE LINCOLN (1850-1862)

Understandably, no casualty of the Civil War era affected Abraham Lincoln—or his wife, Mary—more deeply than the death of their beloved 11-year-old son, Willie, 150 years ago on February 20, 1862. “Well, Nicolay,” the dazed father sputtered as he entered his private secretary’s office minutes after the child had expired, “my boy is gone—he is actually gone!” Then he broke down in tears and retreated to his own desk. He never spoke publicly or wrote about his bereavement, although Mary poured out her despair with several friends and correspondents. Although the President returned to work almost immediately, he never truly recovered from the staggering loss. The parents treasured the photographs of their deceased child, including the seldom published pose here, made the year before by an unknown camera operator when the family first arrived in Washington for the 1861 inauguration. Astoundingly, artists and printmakers—ever on the prowl for commercially profitable subjects—did not think to depict the shattered Lincoln family together until after Lincoln himself died three years later. Then the market was flooded with such group portraits. This is the “official” family picture, blessed by the President’s widow, who supplied the photographs used as models: *The Lincoln Family in 1861* by artist Francis B. Carpenter, who had spent six months at the White House in 1864 painting the first reading of the Emancipation Proclamation before the Cabinet. “I enclose you one of my precious, sainted Willie,” Mary wrote the artist in November 1865, sending her favorite photo of Willie. “You have doubtless heard, how *very* handsome a boy, he was considered—with a pure, gentle nature, always *unearthly & in intellect far, far* beyond his years.” (Photos: Lincoln Financial Foundation Collection, New-York Historical Society.) 📌



ABRAHAM LINCOLN AND D.C. EMANCIPATION: A LOOK BACK 150 YEARS

By John T. Elliff

On April 16, 1862, President Lincoln signed the law emancipating slaves in the District of Columbia. The Office of the Secretary of the District of Columbia and the Lincoln Group of D.C. co-sponsored a commemoration of the sesquicentennial of D.C. emancipation at President Lincoln's Cottage in Washington on April 15. Speakers included Frank J. Williams, Harold Holzer, and Edna Greene Medford.

Abraham Lincoln first addressed D.C. emancipation issues as Illinois legislator in 1837, as a Member of Congress in 1849, and as President in 1862.

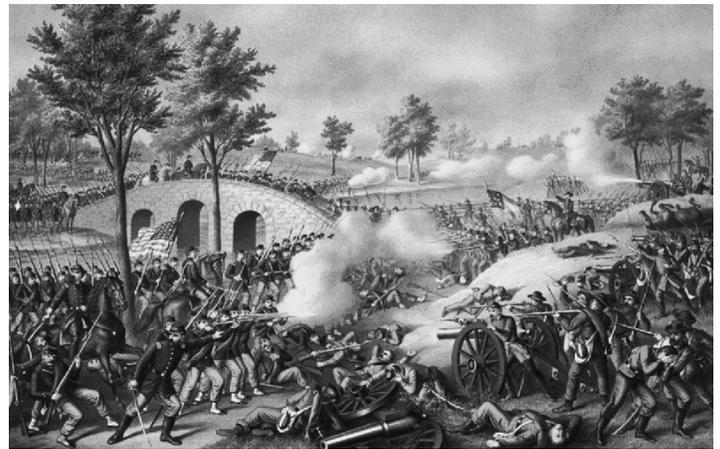
When abolitionist societies were formed in the 1830s, southern legislatures called on their northern counterparts to denounce them. The Illinois legislature responded with a resolution stating "that the purposes of the abolitionists are highly reprehensible" and "that the General Government cannot abolish slavery in the District of Columbia, against the consent of the citizens of said District, without a manifest breach of good faith." Legislator Lincoln voted against this resolution and filed a "protest" declaring "that the institution of slavery is founded on both injustice and bad policy; but that the promulgation of abolition doctrines tends rather to increase rather than abate its evils." Lincoln affirmed the constitutional power of Congress to abolish slavery in the District, even if it would be better to wait for a request from its white citizens. Only five other legislators voted with Lincoln, and only one joined his protest. Lincoln's dislike of the abolitionists' uncompromising rhetoric reflected his moderate approach to reform through persuasion, not denunciation, as set forth in his 1843 temperance address in Springfield.

Twelve years later Lincoln was a Congressman living in Washington, D.C., where the population of 52,000 included 3,700 slaves and 10,000 free African-Americans. Congress reconvened in December 1848 before the inauguration of Whig slaveholder Zachary Taylor as president. When new proposals to abolish slavery in the District reached the House floor, Congressman Lincoln voted against them because they did not provide compensation to slaveholders or require a referendum.

Lincoln had not changed his views on the injustice of slavery. It is easy to imagine him agonizing over the issue in the boarding house where he resided with Congressman Joshua Giddings of Ohio, leader of the antislavery efforts. Lincoln consulted Giddings and the Whig mayor of Washington on a compromise plan and announced it to the House, claiming to have the support of "about fifteen of the leading citizens of the District." Lincoln's gradual, compensated D.C. emancipation plan would free all slave children born after January 1, 1850 who served a period of apprenticeship and free older slaves with monetary compensation to their owners. A vote by the capital's "free white male citizens" was required. The bill also required District authorities "to provide active and efficient" enforcement of the return of "all fugitive slaves escaping into said District." When Lincoln surfaced it publicly, however, his compromise failed to win the wider support it needed, so he did not introduce the bill. Lincoln told an interviewer in 1860, "Finding that I was abandoned by my former backers and having little personal influence, I dropped the matter knowing it was useless to prosecute the business at that time." Some prominent abolitionists later denounced Lincoln's proposal, especially the fugitive slave provision that led Wendell Phillips to call him "that

slave hound from Illinois." But Joshua Giddings considered Lincoln's approach "as good a bill as we could get at this time."

In the 1850s D.C. emancipation was overshadowed by the issue of slavery in the territories that brought Lincoln back into politics and ultimately to the presidency. During the 1858 Lincoln-Douglas debates he said he "would be exceedingly glad to see Congress abolish slavery in the District of Columbia, and, in the language of Henry Clay, 'sweep from our Capital that foul blot upon our nation.'" After the 1860 election, President-elect Lincoln rejected peace proposals to allow slavery in the territories; but he would compromise on other issues. He assured a southern moderate: "I have no thought of recommending the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia, nor the slave trade among the slave states; and if I were to make such recommendation, it is quite clear Congress would not follow it."



The Battle of Antietam (chromo by Kurz and Allison)—the Union victory that spurred Emancipation

By 1862 Lincoln and the Republican majority in Congress were prepared to prohibit slavery in the territories and in the District of Columbia. The problem was the pressing strategic political-military need to keep border slave states in the Union. Persuading those states to abandon slavery would end Confederate hopes of gaining their support. Lincoln's annual message to Congress in December 1861 recommended that Congress offer a procedure for compensated emancipation and that "steps be taken for colonizing" freed slaves. Colonization had become part of Lincoln's approach to emancipation policy in the 1850s, despite lack of interest by African-Americans themselves. Lincoln followed up with a request to Congress on March 6, 1862 for a joint resolution pledging monetary compensation to any state that adopted a plan for "gradual abolishment of slavery." Congress promptly agreed.

When a bill was introduced for compensated emancipation in the District, Lincoln was concerned about the effect on the Border States. He wrote to Horace Greeley: "I am a little uneasy about the abolishment of slavery in this District, not but I would be glad to see it abolished, but as to the time and manner of doing it. If some one or more of the border-states would move fast, I should greatly prefer it; but if this can not be in a reasonable time, I would like the bill to have the three main features—gradual—compensation—and vote of the people—I do not talk to members of congress on the subject, except when they ask me." The bill debated in Congress provided for compensation, but not for gradual emancipation or a vote of the white male citizens.

continued on page 15

ABRAHAM LINCOLN AND D.C. EMANCIPATION: A LOOK BACK 150 YEARS

continued from page 14 On the Senate floor an amendment was offered to require compulsory colonization of freed D.C. slaves. When more conservative Republicans joined Democrats to produce a tie vote, Vice President Hannibal Hamlin broke the tie to defeat the amendment. Republicans then reunited to pass the bill 29-14 with a different amendment creating a fund for voluntary colonization. The House adopted the Senate measure 92-38. What was Lincoln's role on the issue of forcible deportation? He talked to key congressmen and discussed the bill with Bishop Daniel A. Payne of the African Methodist Episcopal Church for forty-five minutes. During the same month he told Liberian government representatives that no one had ever "advocated, in my presence, the compulsory deportation of freed slaves to Liberia or elsewhere." Lincoln's next annual message to Congress referred to their "deportation," but always with the qualification that it be with "the mutual consent of the people to be deported."

In a statement upon signing the bill, President Lincoln declared: "I have never doubted the constitutional authority of congress to abolish slavery in the District; and I have ever desired to see the nation's capital freed from the institution in some satisfactory way. Hence there has never been, in my mind, any question upon the subject, except the one of expediency, arising in view of all the circumstances. If there be matters within and about this act, which might have taken a course or shape, more satisfactory to my

judgment, I do not attempt to specify them. I am gratified that the two principles of compensation, and colonization, are both recognized, and practically applied in the act."

"In the matter of compensation, it is provided that claims may be presented within ninety days from the passage of the act 'but not thereafter'; and there is no saving for minors, femes-covert, insane, or absent persons. I presume this is an omission by mere over-sight, and I recommend that it be supplied by an amendatory or supplemental act."

Lincoln wanted to ensure that persons who lacked legal standing to apply for compensation, such as wives "protected" by husbands (femes-covert), could have their compensation claims considered. The supplemental act was adopted on July 12, 1862.

Later President Lincoln told a friend: "Little did I dream in 1849, when I proposed to abolish slavery in this capital, and could scarcely get a hearing for the proposition, that it would be so soon accomplished." Frederick Douglass called the law "that first great step towards that righteousness which exalts a nation." Citing D.C. emancipation, white abolitionist Henry Ward Beecher said: "[W]e have found by experience that though Abraham Lincoln is sure, he is slow; and that though he is slow, he is sure."

(The author is a member of the Lincoln Forum and the Lincoln Group of D.C., and serves as a volunteer at Ford's Theatre.) ■

ABRAHAM LINCOLN BICENTENNIAL FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES NEW ROUND OF GRANTS

The Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Foundation announced its third cycle of grants in March to 10 different organizations in six states plus the District of Columbia. All the programs are aimed at perpetuating the study of the 16th President during the current Civil War Sesquicentennial. The current round of grants totals \$134,000. These awards will support a range of activities from tourism promotion to communication-system modernization to textile conservation to the development of Lincoln conferences and exhibitions—two of them, notably, in the South.

The Foundation's funding comes from gifts raised in the final years of its predecessor organization, the U. S. Lincoln Bicentennial Commission (ALBC), created by the President and Congress in 2000 to plan and organize events marking Lincoln's 200th birthday in 2009. The successor foundation has since sought to encourage and help support activities aimed at perpetuating its original goal of completing Lincoln's "unfinished work."

"We are proud to offer our support to these 10 well-conceived plans to promote Lincoln history and preservation at the highest levels of professional scholarship and popular appeal," commented Harold Holzer, Chairman of the Lincoln Bicentennial Foundation. "We continue to be amazed and delighted by the range of activities that gestate nationwide—requiring only modest support to bring the Lincoln story to an ever-widening audience of Americans. In the current cycle we have covered a wide range of needs and issues, and we hope these projects that can now go forward with our help attract the kind of broad interest and local attention they deserve." Foundation support will go to the following recipients:

The Abraham Lincoln Association, Springfield, IL (\$5,000), to support a day-long 2013 conference, "The

Results of Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation."

The Old State Capitol Foundation, Springfield, IL (\$7,500), to help fund installation of a new audio and microphone system in historic Representative Hall, the chamber where Lincoln delivered his "House Divided" address in 1858, and now the site of many public history events.

Looking for Lincoln Heritage Coalition, Springfield, IL (\$33,000), to help develop and support development of a 42-county historic tourism area linked by road signage, website data, marketing, and programs at sites where Lincoln visited, lived, or worked during his Illinois years. U. S. Senator Dick Durbin, former co-chair of the ALBC, helped authorize and fund "Looking for Lincoln."

Lincoln Heritage Museum at Lincoln College, Lincoln, IL (\$1,000), to support a summer seminar for teachers around the theme: "Abraham Lincoln: His Life, Leadership, and Legacy."

The Kentucky Lincoln Sites Alliance, Hodgenville, KY (\$12,000), to help implement Lincoln-related educational and marketing initiatives along the new Lincoln Heritage trail in the state of his birth.

The Department of History, Clemson University, Clemson, SC (\$27,000), to support a 2013 Emancipation Proclamation conference as part of the university's "On Home Ground" sesquicentennial initiative.

The Ulysses S. Grant Association, Starkville, MS (\$15,000), to sponsor a series of Lincoln lectures at the recently relocated USGA, focusing on the crucial partnership between the President and his most important general.

continued on page 16

LINCOLN BICENTENNIAL FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES NEW ROUND OF GRANTS

continued from page 15 Bureau of Historic Sites, New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, Waterford, NY (\$15,000) to fund conservation of the U. S. Flag that adorned Lincoln's bier during his funeral in Albany, New York in 1865—part of a larger effort to preserve the State's entire collection of Civil War-era battle flags.

Lehigh Valley Heritage Museum, Allentown, PA (\$5,000), to help fund a Lincoln exhibition and symposium on "Abraham Lincoln: A Modern American."

Lincoln Group of the District of Columbia, Washington, D.C. (\$13,500), to fund a 2012 symposium on Lincoln and the Constitution on national Constitution Day, the 115th anniversary of the signing of the Constitution of the United States.

Members of the Foundation Board are: Orville Vernon Burton, Vice Chairman; Thomas Campbell, Treasurer; Charles Scholz, Secretary; Darrel Bigham, David Lawrence, Edna Greene Medford, Antonio Mora, Jean Powers Soman, and Forum Chairman Frank J. Williams. ■

ATTENDEES CHEER 2011 FORUM SYMPOSIUM

continued from page 3

Criticism and suggestions were of course included—and we share some of the more interesting examples herewith:

"Why are there so few African Americans in attendance?"

"Name tags need to be BIGGER!"

"I would like to see more students."

"Attendance should be maxed out. We are growing too much."

"More panels, more AV presentations."

"Too much testosterone. More women speakers, please!"

"Can we do a panel on best—and worst—new books?"

"Less lecture, more questions."

"Fewer questions so there is more time for lectures."

"Please do not interrupt speakers with time controls."

"We need to have pretty tight time controls."

Finally, a note to those who wrote sincerely to say the room was too cold, too warm, too stuffy, and too drafty, too dark and too bright: we always strive for happy medium, and we will stay on that thermostat. But bring layers! ■

ATTENTION BOOK LOVERS

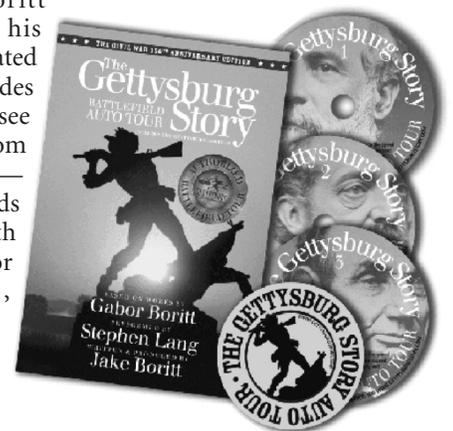
Make your purchases at The Abraham Lincoln Book Shop through our website at www.thelincolnforum.org.

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SESQUICENTENNIAL TECHNOLOGY AT WORK: NEW VIRTUAL BATTLEFIELD TOURS

The Civil War Trust has introduced a new series of Battlefield apps for Android and iPhones—available on the App Store and in the Android Market. The downloads are free, according to our friend Howard Seares, managing general partner of Twenty-First Century Associates. According to the promotional material for the new applications, the downloads give users the opportunity to "explore battlefields with confidence." "Let the Civil War Trust's new Battle Apps guide you—and experience Civil War battlefields in a whole new way." The apps include such "onboard information" as orders of battle, battle facts, historical photos, troop positions, and chronologies. The initial apps include Malvern Hill, Chancellorsville, and Bull Run. Warning: while the apps function on Apple iPads, they are optimized for smartphones. The apps do not work on smartphones powered by BlackBerry or Windows.

For those still tethered to the technologies of the late 20th century, the "Gettysburg Battlefield Auto Tour" CDs written and produced by Jake Boritt based on the work of his father, Gabor, and narrated by Stephen Lang, provides an unbeatable way to see and "hear" the battle from the comfort of one's car—while keeping both hands on the wheel and both eyes on the scenery! For more information, www.boritt.com. ■



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