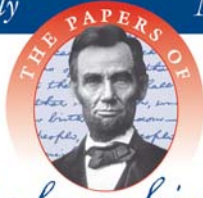


LINCOLN EDITOR

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Newsletter of



January - March 2010

Volume 10 Number 1

Abraham Lincoln

"a great honor and a great labor" A. Lincoln, October 26, 1863

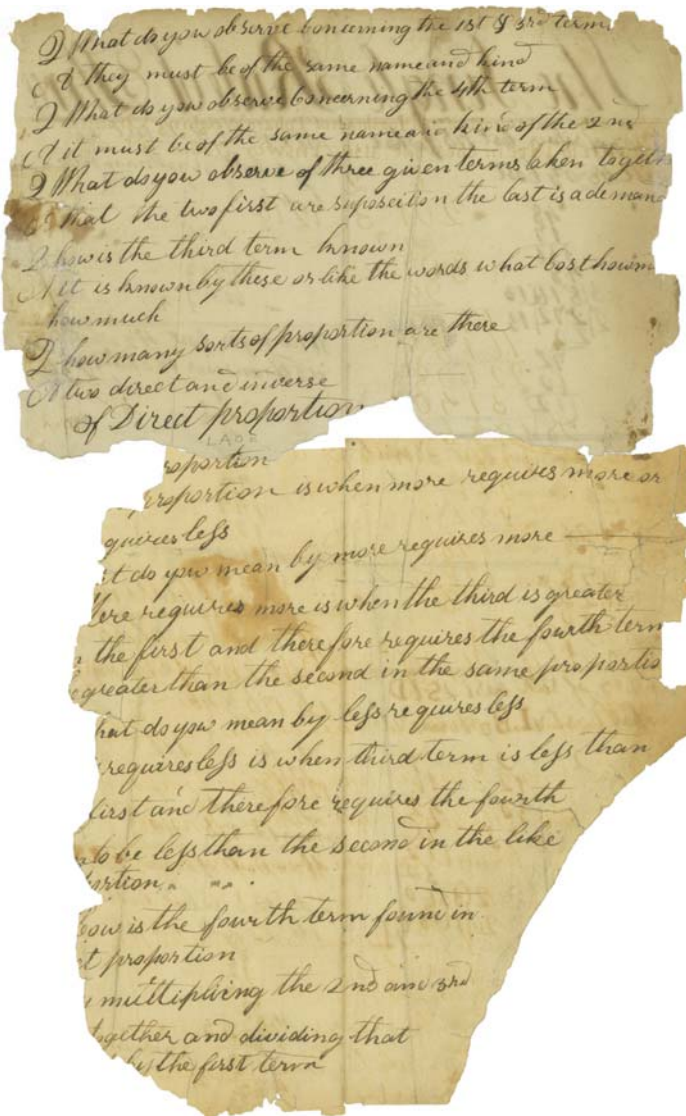
REASSEMBLING TEENAGER ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S HOMEWORK

The oldest existing manuscripts in Abraham Lincoln's own hand are pages from an arithmetic copybook that Lincoln created in the mid-1820s, while living in Indiana.

Lincoln's stepmother Sarah Lincoln gave the copybook to his third law partner William H. Herndon after Lincoln's death. Herndon subsequently distributed the pages among friends and acquaintances. Ten leaves or partial leaves from the copybook are known to have survived and were published in facsimile form in *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln* in 1953.

When Editor Daniel W. Stowell and Research Associate Kelley Clausen scanned documents at the University of Chicago in November of last year, they began the process that led to the reunion of two parts of a leaf from the copybook. Among the items they scanned was a fragment of approximately seven inches wide by seven and one half inches tall with a series of questions and answers on one side and math problems on the reverse. While processing the images at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library later, Stowell discovered that the fragment fit neatly with a smaller fragment that the project had scanned at Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island, in 2003. Using the digital images, Stowell carefully compared the fragments and digitally reunited them into a single image for the front and another for the back of the page. Although the fragment from Brown University had been published in the *Collected Works*, the other portion of the page at the University of Chicago had not.

Further research revealed that the questions and answers were from *The Schoolmaster's Assistant, Being a Compendium of Arithmetic, Both Practical and Theoretical in Five Parts* by Thomas Dilworth. The math problems on the back of the sheet were from the "Examples" section of the same publication. Both the questions and the problems related to the "Single Rule of Three," a mathematical method for solving proportions. Dilworth's volume was first published in London in the 1740s. An



Lincoln's Schoolwork

Upper half of image courtesy of Brown University, Providence, RI; lower half of image courtesy of the University of Chicago.

continued on page 2...

American edition appeared in 1769, and additional American editions appeared regularly for the next sixty years. Which edition Lincoln may have used to create his copybook remains unknown.

Although the *Schoolmaster's Assistant* provided the answers to the problems, it did not detail the necessary calculations. Reflecting the textbook's British origins, the problems referred to money in pounds, shillings, and pence, even in editions published in the United States in the 1820s. "If 3 oz. of silver cost 17s.," one problem read, "what will 48 oz. cost?" The answer is £13, 12s. or thirteen pounds, twelve shillings.

The Papers of Abraham Lincoln is delighted to have been able to reunite these two fragments from a page of Lincoln's homework as a teenager. Although the two original fragments are in repositories nearly 1,000 miles apart, the Papers of Abraham Lincoln has reunited them digitally into a single page.



Lincoln's Schoolwork

Upper half of image courtesy of Brown University, Providence, RI; lower half of image courtesy of the University of Chicago.

SEAN SCOTT JOINS PROJECT'S WASHINGTON, DC, STAFF

In February, the project welcomed Sean Scott, an Indiana native, to the editorial staff. As an assistant editor, he is working at the National Archives Building in Washington, DC, with Assistant Editor David Gerleman. Scott is already searching through records of the office of the Secretary War.

Scott holds a B.A. in history from Bob Jones University in Greenville, South Carolina, and an M.A. in history from Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana. In 2008, he earned his Ph.D. in history from Purdue University, where he wrote a dissertation in Civil War history. Oxford University Press is publishing his revised dissertation, *A Visitation of God: Northern Civilians Interpret the Civil War*, in the fall of 2010.



Scott is also the author of several articles and essays, including "‘Good Children Die Happy’: Children and Youth Confront Death during the Civil War," a chapter in *Children, Youth, and the Sectional Conflict* (New York University Press, forthcoming Fall 2010). Before accepting the position with the project, he was an assistant professor at Ouachita Baptist University in Arkadelphia, Arkansas.

He and his wife Heather have settled in Alexandria, Virginia, and are expecting their first baby in May.

DONORS

The project acknowledges with deep appreciation the generosity of the following contributors:

- Mr. and Mrs. Sheldon S. Cohen
- Robert S. French
- Lincoln Land Community College
- John A. Lupton

PROJECT AND STAFF NEWS

In January, Assistant Editor Daniel Worthington transferred from working at the National Archives Building in Washington, DC, to project offices in Springfield. Primarily, he will be transcribing documents from Series II and will spearhead the project's efforts to maintain editorial consistency in transcription, markup, and annotation.

The Hayner Memorial Library in Alton, Illinois, provided images of an 1844 Lincoln letter that the library owns. The Papers of Abraham Lincoln appreciates the assistance of Jeff Owen in making these images available.

In February...

Director Daniel Stowell scanned two new Lincoln legal documents in Virden, Illinois. The documents were part of a private collection of Lincoln memorabilia, which was being sold at a public auction.

Assistant Editor Ed Bradley and Research Assistant Laura Kopp Starr scanned four documents at the Gelman Library at George Washington University in Washington, DC. The project would like to thank Jennifer King, the manuscripts librarian. The documents included an 1864 speech, presenting Ulysses S. Grant a commission as Lieutenant-General and Grant's reply to Lincoln, thanking the president for the commission.

Ed Bradley also scanned an army commission at the National Museum of Civil War Medicine in Frederick, MD. The project would like to thank Lori Eggleston, the museum's collection and exhibition manager.

Assistant Director Stacy McDermott made a presentation about the Black Codes in antebellum Illinois to fifth graders at Iles Elementary School in Springfield. The presentation was part of the school's living history program.

In March...

Research Associate Chandler Lighty scanned two letters to Lincoln at Catholic University in Washington, DC. The project thanks Robin C. Pike and Jane Stoeffler for their assistance. Lighty also visited the National Museum of Health and Medicine, located at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, DC, where he scanned a commission for a medical inspector general. Thanks to Michael Rhode and Kathleen Stocker at the Otis Archives for their assistance.

Daniel Stowell visited the DuPage County Courthouse in Wheaton, Illinois, where he scanned a legal document owned by the DuPage County Bar Association. The project thanks Glenda Sharp and Ambrose Contreras.

Laura Kopp Starr and Chandler Lighty visited the Historical Society of Washington, DC, where they scanned

three Lincoln documents. The project would like to thank Yvonne Carignan, director of the research library and collections, and Colleen McKnight, special collections librarian, for their assistance.

Three staff members traveled to Wheaton College in the Chicago suburbs to present papers at the 30th Annual Illinois History Symposium. Assistant Editor A J Aiseirithe presented "Garrison Abolitionists and President Abraham Lincoln During the Civil War," Chandler Lighty presented "The Abolitionization of Major General Lew Wallace," and Daniel Stowell presented "The Prayers of a Few Thousand: Abolitionists Advise Lincoln." John R. McKivigan, the Director and Editor of the Frederick Douglass Papers, chaired the session and provided comments on the papers.

Ed Bradley published a review of Jimmy L. Bryan's *More Zeal Than Discretion: The Westward Adventures of Walter P. Lane* in the February 2010 issue of the *Journal of Southern History*.



Pictured from left: Daniel Stowell, John McKivigan, A J Aiseirithe, and Chandler Lighty.

MARY JANE MACDONALD, FORMER VOLUNTEER, DIES

Mary Jane MacDonald, a favorite volunteer of the Lincoln Legal Papers, died in Springfield, Illinois, in March. MacDonald spent her professional life as a librarian, most recently at the University of Illinois Springfield (formerly Sangamon State). In the early 1990s, MacDonald devoted many hours of her time to the project, working to create a research library to assist editors with the search for and contextualization of Lincoln legal documents and cases. She was a strong supporter of the Lincoln Legal Papers and the Papers of Abraham Lincoln; and her time and efforts spent with the project are appreciated and well remembered.

A CURIOUS EPILOGUE TO THE PETTICOAT AFFAIR

A new document discovery illuminates an unexpected connection between the presidencies of Andrew Jackson and Abraham Lincoln.

Margaret O'Neil was no stranger to scandal. As a young woman, she married John Timberlake, a purser in the United States Navy, who allegedly committed suicide because of her infidelity. As the wife of Secretary of War John Eaton, she scandalized President Andrew Jackson's inner circle. During the "Petticoat Affair," several of the cabinet wives, especially the wife of Vice President John C. Calhoun, ostracized Peggy Eaton. President Jackson and Secretary of State Martin Van Buren were more sympathetic to her, and the controversy led to the resignations of the Secretary of the Treasury and the Secretary of the Navy. Because of the division, Van Buren replaced Calhoun as the vice presidential nominee in Jackson's bid for re-election.

Eaton also resigned, and during the 1830s, he served as Governor of Florida Territory and United States Ambassador to Spain. In 1840, the Eatons returned to Washington, and he developed a law practice. He died in November 1856, and Peggy Eaton presided over a household that included her mother and her four grandchildren, the children of her deceased daughter and son-in-law. Apparently at the urging of her mother, she

remarried in 1859. Her third husband was Antonio Buchignani, her grandchildren's Italian dancing master. She was 59; he was in his early 20s. According to Peggy Eaton's autobiography, "he was extraordinarily handsome and had many gifts."¹

Antonio Buchignani began gathering letters of reference and submitting them to the Secretary of State shortly after Abraham Lincoln's inauguration in March 1861. He then wrote to the President directly seeking a diplomatic appointment.

**[Antonio Buchignani] to Abraham Lincoln²
28 March 1861**

Washington March 28/61

To His Excellency The President of the United States.

Antonio Buchignani an Italian of Tuscany, and now a citizen of the United States, begs to present himself to your Excellency's consideration, as an applicant for Consulship at Leghorn in Italy. Mr. Buchignani desires to [^]present[^] his claims as a gentleman and also as being acquainted with Italian language as he is also of four other languages. He has brought to the consideration of the Hon Secretary of State, his application as well as his certificates as regards his qualifications and his character as a gentleman, well known by the best citizens of Washington City, many of whom are the personal friends of the Hon Secretary of State.

Mr. Buchignani has been a warm advocate to the election of your Excellency for the high position which you fill for the truth of which he refers you to the Rev F. T. Evans, Brother in law to his wife former Mrs Gen Eaton.

Mr. Evans has stood forth in such fearful battles for the party, that is now in power, that he must be well known to your Excellency.

He with many others have given letters which will satisfy your Excellency that none other but a gentleman well qualified for the position would with such influence have been presented for the position as Consul to Leghorn.

Mr. B. takes pleasure in saying to his Excellency, that the Italian Minister, Cavalier Bertinati,³ as well Mr. Lisboa, the Brazillian Minister, are prepared to vouch for the correctness and ability of Mr. Buchignani.

They have also granted him the privilege of using their names and will be happy to subscribe to the within.



Peggy Eaton

*Image (of painting owned by the Hermitage in Nashville, TN)
courtesy of The Tennessee Portrait Project.*

Letters from the following gentlemen will be found in the State Dept.

Rev. Smith Pyne
Capt. M. S. Miller U.S.A.
A. B. Magruder Esq. Judge Advocate of the Navy
Hon. Samuel Chilton
Hon W. B. Magruder Ex Mayor of Washington
Lieut Julius Bohrer U.S. Navy.
Rev. F. S. Evans.
Docter Thomas Miller, M.D.
Harper and Michell Merchants.
George Burns Merchant.

And many more if the President desires

[*Endorsement*]

Consul Leghorn Italy
Antonio Buchignani
of D.C.
file with his others
Ent

In his letter of reference for Buchignani, Allan B. Magruder described Buchignani as “an Italian gentleman” who had lived in the United States for eight years. He was an “estimable & honorable” man, whom Magruder believed was “well-fitted for the duties of U.S. Consul at any port in his native land.” Another reference described him as “an excellent and upright young Gentleman.”⁴

On August 12, 1861, Lincoln appointed Andrew J. Stevens as consul to Leghorn, Italy. Undeterred and perhaps in response to this appointment, Buchignani wrote to President Lincoln again and Senator Samuel C. Pomeroy of Kansas visited Lincoln on his behalf.

**[Antonio Buchignani] to Abraham Lincoln⁵
August 1861**

Washington City
August ____ 1861.

To His Excellency
The President of the United States
Mr. Antonio Buchignani an applicant for the consulship to Venice in Italy or Nice in France has the honor to inform you that he has presented to the Hon Secretary of States consideration a number of the best letters of recommendation from Gentlemen of the “highest political standing” certifying that he has been true to the party now reigning and of his being well qualified for the positions

which he now asks. Cavallier Bertinatti the “Italian Minister” and The Brazillian Minister will vouch for him at any moment. Mr. Buchignani letters are from the Following Gentlemen.

Rev. Smith Pyne	“Rector of S ^t Johns Church”
Major Morris S. Miller	“U.S.A”
French S. Evans.	“Deputy collector” of Balto
Lieut J G Bohrer	“U.S. Navy”
W. B. Magruder	“Ex Mayor of Washington”

[*Endorsement*]

Why may not this young man have Venice, which is only \$750, or Nice, which has Fees only? Senator Pomeroy is very anxious for it.

A. Lincoln
Aug. 13, 1861.

Although Buchignani did not receive the position he sought, Senator Pomeroy continued to advocate his appointment to some position. It was in this context that President Lincoln again wrote to Secretary of State William H. Seward regarding Buchignani, in a new letter that has recently come to light (an image of the new letter is on page 6).

**Abraham Lincoln to William H. Seward⁶
18 September 1861**

Executive Mansion
Sep. 18, 1861

Hon. Sec. of State
My dear Sir:

Senator Pomeroy wishes Antonio Buchignani to be Sec. of Legation to Rome. Let it be so, unless you know some strong objection.

Yours truly
A. Lincoln

Buchignani was again unsuccessful, as the painter and journalist William James Stillman was appointed as the secretary of the legation at Rome. In February 1863, Buchignani learned of the death of Andrew J. Stevens, who had received the appointment to Leghorn, and wrote to Lincoln again. Senator Pomeroy endorsed the letter,

continued on page 6...

recommending Buchignani's appointment and describing him as "a Loyal citizen an ardent Republican, a Scholar & a Gentleman."⁷

According to Peggy Buchignani, he was for five years after their wedding "absolutely perfect as a husband—careful, tender, devoted." In 1866, however, after they moved to New York City, he threatened to leave her unless she signed over to him everything she owned. She reluctantly did so, but he took her money and her seventeen-year-old granddaughter Emily and fled to Italy. He sent a letter from the ship to Peggy, "praising me for my devotion to duty in all the relations of life, and stating that the only stain upon my name was having married him." He also sent her "a poor pitiful one hundred dollar bill." When he returned to New York City in 1868, she had him arrested. He posted bail, then jumped bail and returned to Canada. Peggy Buchignani divorced him in 1869, and he apparently married Emily, with whom he already had two children. Peggy reclaimed her former married name of Eaton and died in 1879 at a home for destitute women in Washington, DC.⁸

Daniel W. Stowell
Director/Editor

Executive Mansion
Sep. 18. 1861
Hon. Sec. of State
My dear Sir:
Senator Pomeroy
wishes Antonio Buchignani
to be Sec. of Legation to
Rome. Let it be so, un-
less you know some strong
objections.
Yours truly
A. Lincoln

NOTES

¹ Margaret Eaton, *The Autobiography of Peggy Eaton* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1932), 206; John F. Marszalek, *The Petticoat Affair: Manners, Mutiny, And Sex in Andrew Jackson's White House* (New York: Free Press, 1997), 228-30; Eighth Census of the United States (1860), Washington, DC, Ward 1, 345. The census lists Antonio Buchignani's age as 24 and Margaret Buchignani's as 41. Antonio Buchignani reported \$45,000 in real property and \$6,000 in personal property, and the household included Margaret Buchignani's four grandchildren, ages 9 to 18.

²[Antonio Buchignani] to Abraham Lincoln, 28 March 1861, Record Group 59, General Records of the Department of State, 1789-1949, Entry 760: Appointment Records, Applications and Recommendations for Public Office, 1797-1901, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD (hereafter, RG 59, Entry 760).

³Chevalier Joseph Bertinatti. The United States established diplomatic relations with the Kingdom of Italy when it accepted the credentials of Bertinatti as Minister plenipotentiary of the Kingdom of Italy on April 11, 1861.

Abraham Lincoln to William Seward

Image courtesy of The Abraham Lincoln Bookshop, Chicago, Illinois.

⁴ Allen B. Magruder to Unknown, 16 March 1861, RG 59, Entry 760; James W. Irwin to William H. Seward, 13 March 1861, RG 59, Entry 760.

⁵[Antonio Buchignani] to Abraham Lincoln, August 1861, RG 59, Entry 760.

⁶Abraham Lincoln to William H. Seward, 18 September 1861, Privately Owned, Abraham Lincoln Book Shop, Inc., Chicago, IL.

⁷[Antonio Buchignani] to Abraham Lincoln, 4 February 1863, RG 59, Entry 760.

⁸ Eaton, *Autobiography of Peggy Eaton*, 207; Marszalek, *The Petticoat Affair*, 232-35.

TAPPING INTO THE NEW TECHNOLOGY: LINCOLN'S EARLIEST TELEGRAPHIC MESSAGE

Editor's Note: *In the April-June 2009 issue of the Lincoln Editor, former Research Associate Erika Holst reported that Lincoln's first use of telegraphy was in the summer of 1849. Additional research by Research Assistant Marilyn Mueller presented here pushes Lincoln's first use of the telegraph back a full year to the summer of 1848.*

Sometimes the discovery of a previously unknown Abraham Lincoln document impresses historians not so much for its content, as for its date and for its brevity. Such is the case of a printed transcription of a telegram that Congressman Lincoln sent on June 9, 1848, from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Lincoln likely directed the telegram to Simeon Francis, the editor of the *Illinois Journal*, a Whig newspaper in Springfield.

Abraham Lincoln to [Simeon Francis]¹ 9 June 1848

PHILADELPHIA, June 9, 1848.

General TAYLOR has received the nomination of the Convention for President of the U. States.

A. LINCOLN.

Lincoln traveled to Philadelphia to attend the Whig National Convention, which chose Zachary Taylor as its presidential candidate.² The telegram's significance lies not in the information that Lincoln relayed; rather it appears to be the first time that Lincoln sent a telegram.

The telegram industry was in its infancy in 1848. In fact, on June 9, 1848, the very day that Lincoln telegraphed from Philadelphia, an Illinois newspaper reported that telegraph "lines have branched off through Missouri, Illinois, Wisconsin, Iowa, Arkansas, &c., &c., touching at all the principal towns, and, in three years, the whole Union will be in one electrical embrace."³

Lincoln's brief convention report belies the drama that took place in Philadelphia. Various contemporary newspapers and a letter written by a convention delegate document events Lincoln failed to mention. Sending a lengthy

telegram would have been prohibitively expensive, especially when compared to postal rates. Rates varied, but on average, telegraph companies charged approximately "twenty-five cents for ten words or less, sent one hundred miles."⁴ Based on these rates and the roughly 1,100 miles it traveled, Lincoln's telegram cost at least \$5. In comparison, the postal service charged a mere ten cents to deliver "a single-sheet letter...over 300 miles."⁵

Letters also took days to arrive at their final destination. Lincoln's telegram arrived in Springfield approximately forty-five minutes after he wired the news from Philadelphia.⁶ Before it arrived in Springfield, Lincoln's telegram likely passed through a number of cities along the route, including Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, Louisville, St. Louis, Alton, and Jacksonville.⁷ The circuitous path might provide another reason Lincoln chose not to divulge more than the confirmation of Taylor's nomination. Many pairs of eyes had access to the information contained in a telegram.

The 1848 Whig convention represented the fervent desire of Whigs to win even if that meant jettisoning the party's old standard-bearer, seventy-one-year-old Henry Clay in favor of war hero Zachary Taylor. Prior to 1848, Clay ran three times for the presidency, most recently as a Whig. By 1848, many Whig party members faced the hard truth that Clay could not win.

In a post-convention letter, Whig delegate Joseph Baldwin expressed a certain wistfulness. He wrote of Clay, "[T]he delegates . . . loved their old leader with a proud and deep affection—a sort of political first love, which they can never cherish for mortal man again; and now, whenever the name of Henry Clay is mentioned, spontaneously from every Whig heart bursts a loud acclaim . . . And as I write these words a feeling of sadness steals over me. I grieve to think that the last hope of elevating that great man to the presidency—no—of elevating the presidency to that great man, is extinguished, and extinguished by the hands of his friends."⁸

continued on page 8...



Masthead of the *Illinois Journal*, which printed Lincoln's known first telegram
Image courtesy of the *Illinois Journal*, 15 June 1848.

In contrast, Lincoln, who once championed Clay, avoided sentimentality. He did not mention Clay in post-convention letters to his wife Mary nor to his law partner William Herndon.⁹ Apparently, Lincoln chose to focus on the future. He embraced Taylor's candidacy as the Whigs' best chance of winning the White House.

Lincoln's first use of the telegraph to transmit a message did not mark his abandonment of letter writing. He

used the postal service extensively. But one cannot imagine Lincoln rhapsodizing about the postal service as did a nineteenth-century historian, who wrote, "The post-office is the pulsation of a nation, the beating of a million of hearts."¹⁰ Lincoln's use of the telegraph to convey the convention news to the folks back in Springfield represented his practical embrace of a presidential candidate and of the electricity of the new communications technology.

Marilyn Mueller, Research Assistant

Notes

¹ *Illinois Journal* (Springfield), 15 June 1848, 2:4. Lincoln may have also sent a subsequent message that gave the vote totals.

² Lincoln did not serve as a convention delegate; he merely observed.

³ *Alton (Illinois) Telegraph & Democratic Review*, 9 June 1848, 3:1.

⁴ Robert Luther Thompson, *Wiring a Continent: The History of The Telegraph Industry in the United States, 1832-1866* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1947), 243.

⁵ James Rees, *Foot-Prints of a Letter-Carrier: A History of the World's Correspondence* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co., 1866), 264.

⁶ *Illinois Journal* (Springfield), 15 June 1848, 2:4.

⁷ Thompson, *Wiring a Continent*, 74, 91, 127.

⁸ Malcolm C. McMillan, "Joseph Glover Baldwin Reports on the Whig National Convention of 1848," *The Journal of Southern History*, 25, no. 3 (August 1959): 375-76.

⁹ Abraham Lincoln to Mary Lincoln, 12 June 1848, Box 3, Henry Horner Lincoln Collection, Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, Springfield, IL; Abraham Lincoln to William H. Herndon, 12 June 1848, Roy P. Basler et al., eds., *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, 8 vols. (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1953), 1:476-77; Abraham Lincoln to Mary Lincoln, 2 July 1848, Box 5, University of Chicago, Chicago, IL.

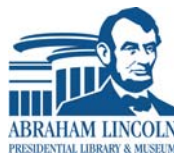
¹⁰ Rees, *Foot-Prints of a Letter-Carrier*, 111.

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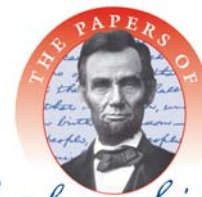
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Abraham Lincoln

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