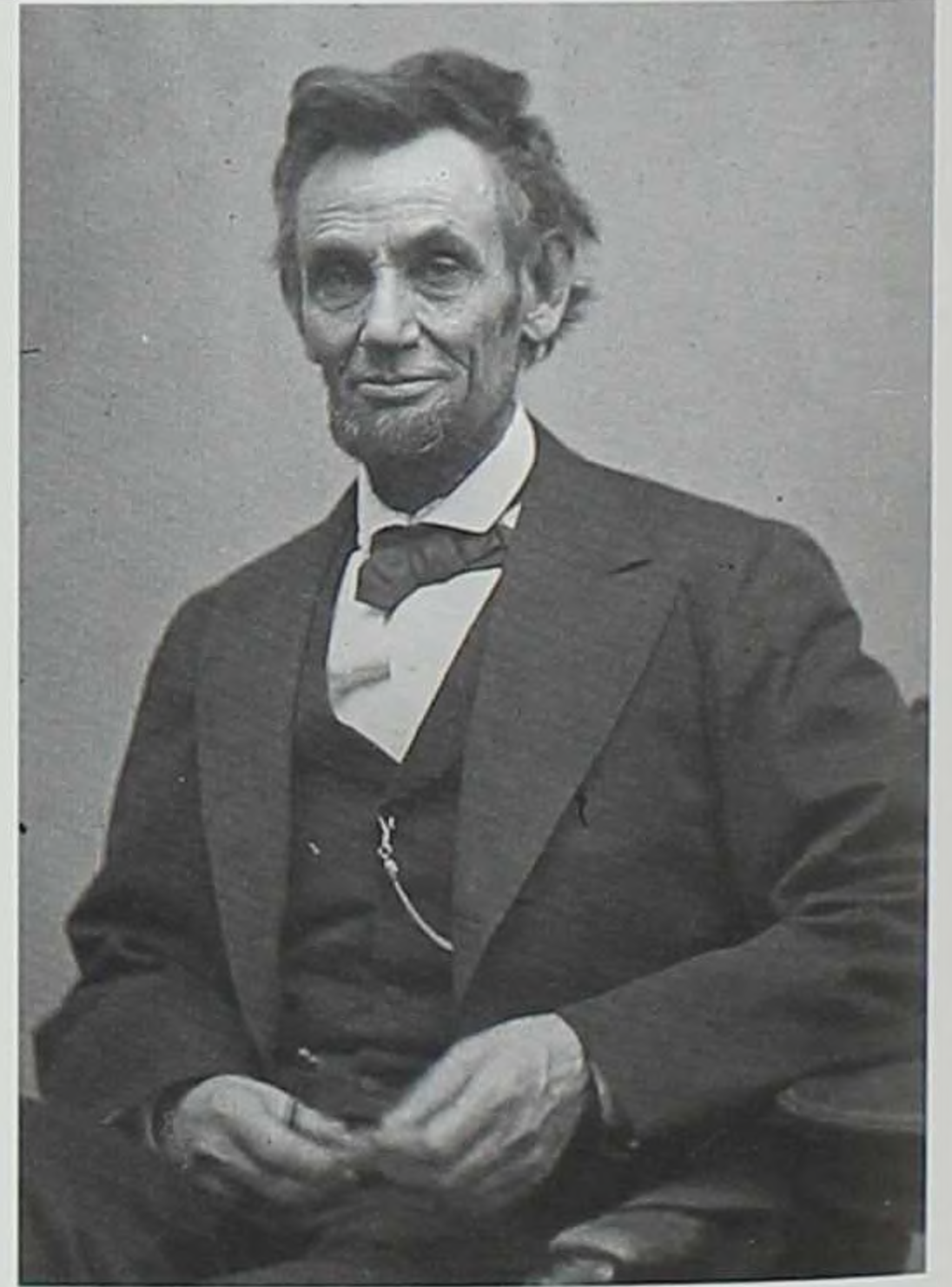
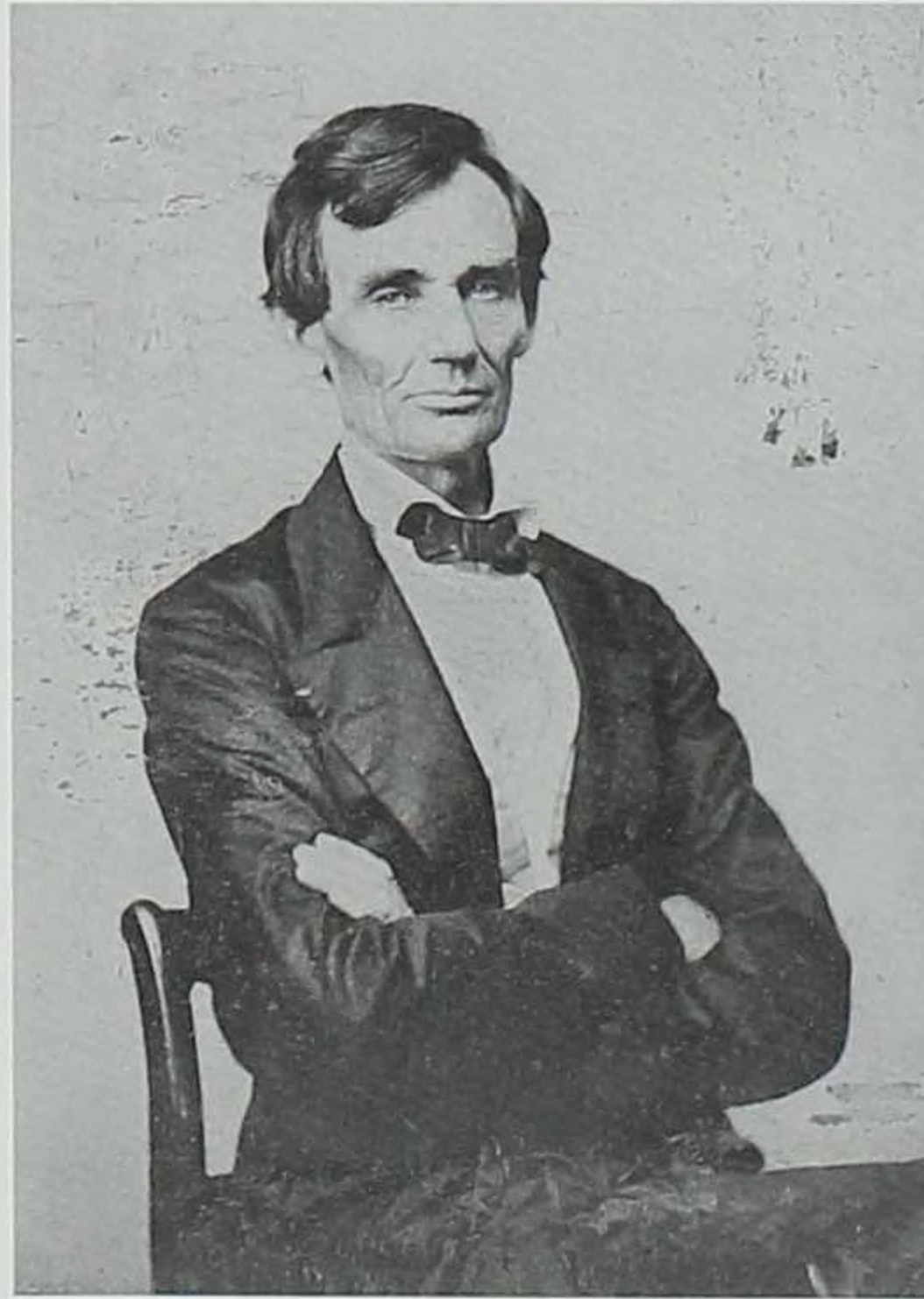
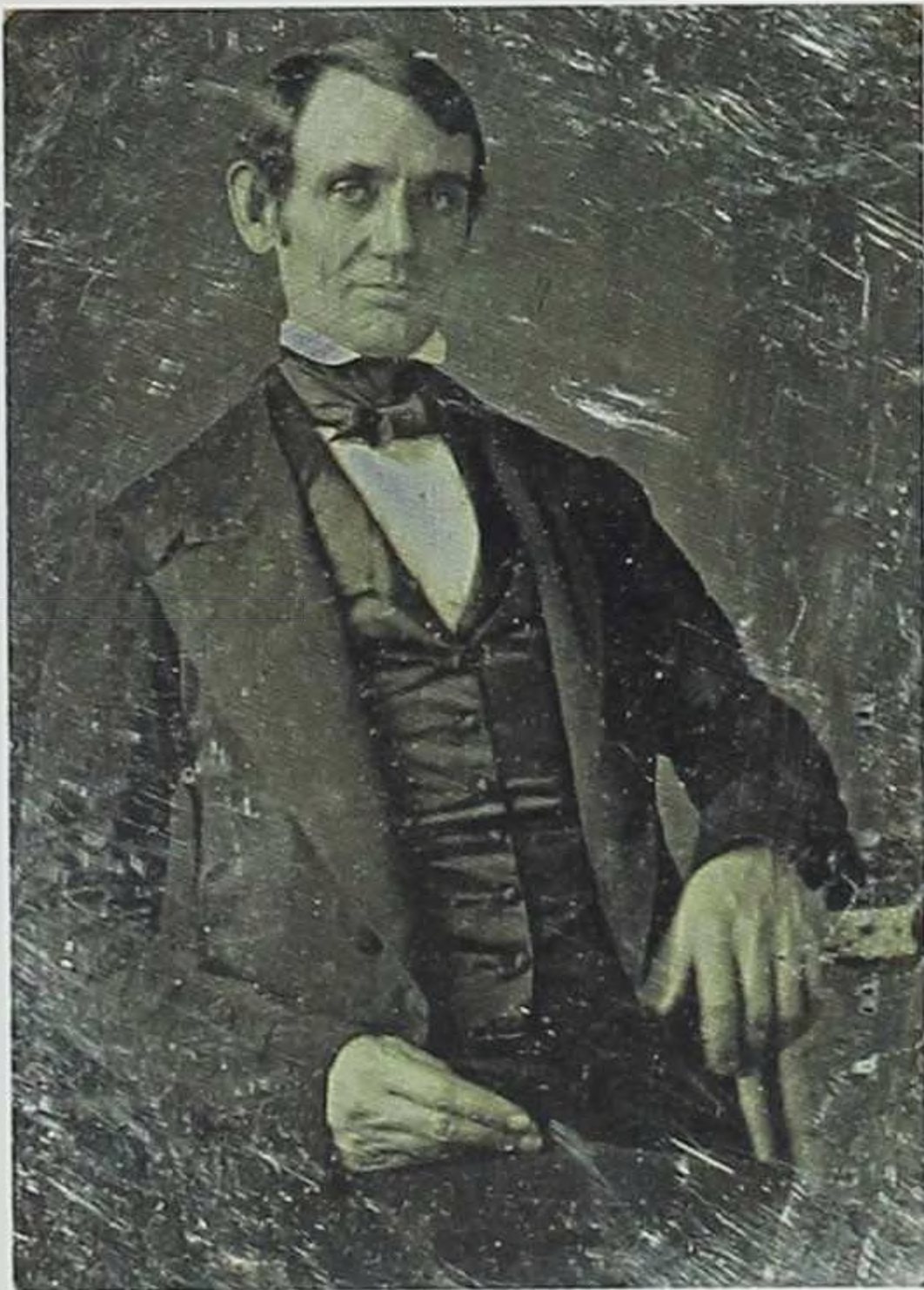


# ABRAHAM LINCOLN

AND THE

# HAWKEYE STATE



1846: CONGRESSMAN-ELECT FROM ILLINOIS. EARLIEST KNOWN PHOTOGRAPH OF LINCOLN

1860: CANDIDATE FOR U.S. PRESIDENT

1865: PRESIDENT, IN FINAL MONTHS OF SECOND TERM

SOURCE: LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



**T**o celebrate the bicentennial anniversary of Abraham Lincoln's birth, historians and biographers are writing an astounding number of books and articles about our 16th president. The attention is well deserved: we owe Lincoln the lion's share of credit for saving the United States from disintegration and ending its abhorrent reliance on slavery.

But the attraction to Lincoln goes beyond his mighty acts of state. His unaffected nature, his compassion, and his martyr's death have bestowed a historic charisma upon him that attracts adherents from all lands and eras.

It is an intensely human reaction to seek to discover what we might have in common with such a beloved figure. Iowans will be pleased to find that Lincoln was connected to Iowa in ways that closely tied him to many aspects of the early history of our state.

BY GRANT VEEDER



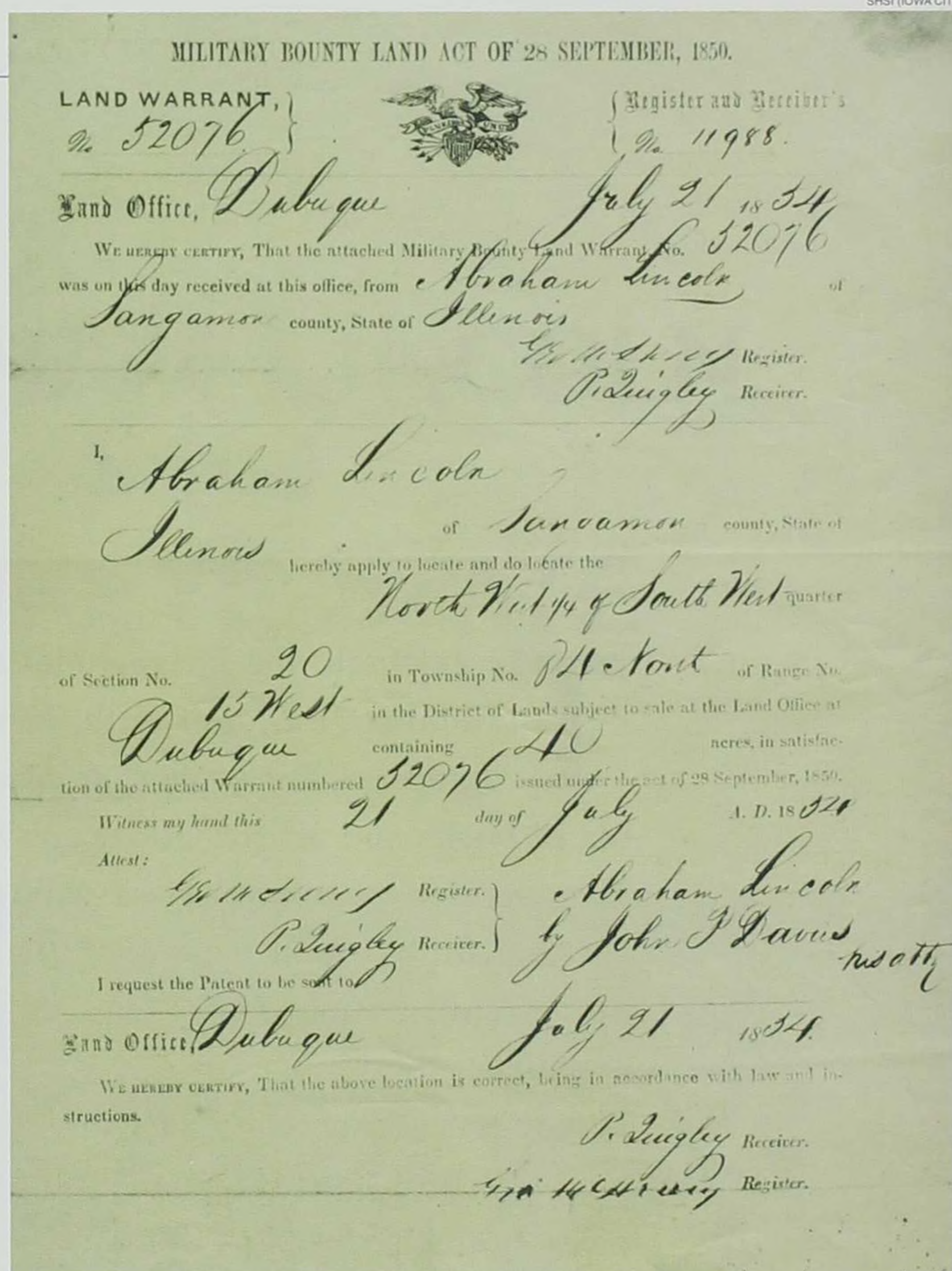
# Lincoln acquires land in Iowa

EARLY IN HIS ADULT LIFE, Lincoln had a frontier experience that led to his owning property in Iowa. The Black Hawk War of 1832 was started by a discontented band of Sac Indians (Sauk) and embroiled the Fox (Meskwaki) in a struggle that eventually led to their loss of ancestral lands. The U.S. government had officially combined the Sac and Fox into a single group for treaty-making purposes. The two tribes historically lived on both sides of the Upper Mississippi, but President Andrew Jackson had ordered the removal of Indians who returned annually to their village at Saukenuk, on the Illinois side. The white squatters lived in fear of the Indians led by warrior Black Hawk, and the situation soon deteriorated into hostile relations.

Meanwhile, Lincoln had recently struck out on his own, locating in the village of New Salem, Illinois, in 1831 at age 22. A natural storyteller with a knack for self-deprecating wit, Lincoln quickly became popular, and in 1832 he announced for the state legislature. The Black Hawk War intervened between his announcement in March and the election in August.

As panic spread across the Illinois prairie, the governor called for troops. Lincoln enlisted, and embarked upon the unique experience of the early American militiaman. The poor training and discipline of state militias invited the scorn of regular army soldiers, but the U.S. Army before the Civil War was a tiny force. Quick-developing emergencies (usually Indian uprisings) had to be met, at least initially, by local militia.

The fierce Yankee pride in democracy of our early republic is nowhere better demonstrated than by the long-held tradition of the militia electing its officers. A popular citizen with utterly no military experience could be elected captain of his company, and this is just



For service in the **Black Hawk War**, Lincoln received two land warrants. This is a facsimile of the 1854 document, which is held in the **National Archives**.

what happened to Lincoln. So Lincoln went off to war at the head of his troop of neighbors from Sangamon County. He said in the late 1850s that this election was "a success which gave me more pleasure than any I have had since."

Lincoln re-enlisted twice as a private after his initial month of service expired. "I was out of work," he later explained. "There being no danger of more fighting, I could do nothing better than enlist again." His words display some amount of modesty: even though he saw no action, his later enlistments were in units that did advance scouting and put Lincoln in situations where he could easily have been ambushed.

In July, with more federal troops on the scene, provisions grew scarce during the chase after Black Hawk in northern Illinois and southern Wisconsin. The militiamen were discharged and Lincoln went home. The war



ended on August 2 in a massacre of women and children, as well as Sauk warriors and a few Meskwaki warriors, at the Battle of Bad Axe on the Mississippi River.

Back in time for a little campaigning, Lincoln relied more on his personality than a detailed platform. "My politics are short and sweet, like the old woman's dance," he quipped from the stump. The top four vote-getters in Sangamon County would win seats in the legislature in the August 6 election. Lincoln ran eighth out of thirteen candidates.

Thus ended Lincoln's campaigns, military and political, of 1832. His political experience would bear fruit in two years when he ran successfully for the legislature; his military service would result, after a much longer time, in the acquisition of real estate.

Following an established tradition for other conflicts, Congress passed a law in 1850 that awarded land grant warrants to veterans of any Indian war after 1790. Lincoln received a warrant good for 40 acres. He eventually engaged Dubuque attorney John P. Davies to use it to acquire a parcel in Tama County. His title was perfected in 1855, for the following described land: "The Northwest quarter of the Southwest quarter of Section 20 in Township 84 North, Range 15 West." The land is marked by a plaque, four miles north and two miles west of Toledo.

Again in 1855, Congress gave veterans more land. Lincoln this time received a warrant for 120 acres, which he ultimately used for a piece of ground in Crawford County. Acting as his own attorney, he took possession shortly before his 1860 election to the presidency, of the following described parcel: "The East half of the North East quarter and Northwest quarter of the North East quarter of Section Eighteen in Township Eighty four North of Range Thirty nine west." A plaque marks this site as well, a mile east of Schleswig.

Lincoln also held property in the city of Council Bluffs. Lincoln's friend, Norman B. Judd, was a railroad attorney who had borrowed \$2,500 from Lincoln in 1857, at 10 percent interest per year, to purchase land there, believing the area was destined for a major rail-

road. In 1859, Judd wanted to renew and increase the loan, and offered seventeen city lots in Council Bluffs and ten acres along the route of the Mississippi and Missouri Railroad as collateral. After visiting the Missouri Slope town that year, Lincoln accepted the terms, and the land was quitclaimed to him.

Lincoln the land baron never made it big. After he became president, he knew he might be criticized for starting a transcontinental railroad at the town where he owned land, but he did just that because it made the most sense. However, he realized nothing from the venture—the property reverted to Judd when the loan was repaid after Lincoln's death.

Lincoln died without seeing the land he acquired in Tama and Crawford counties. In 1874, his widow, Mary Todd Lincoln, sold the 40 acres to their son Robert for \$100. The next year Robert and his wife, Mary Harlan Lincoln, sold the land to Adam Brecht of Tama County for \$500.

After Mary Todd Lincoln's death in 1882, Robert was the sole surviving heir of his parents, his three brothers all having died before reaching full adulthood. He and his wife sold the 120-acre Crawford County parcel in 1892 while living in London, where Robert was serving as American minister to Great Britain. Henry Edwards of Crawford County bought the land for \$1,300.

There's a postscript that brings this story full circle. Although the U.S. government had attempted to remove the entire Meskwaki tribe to Kansas after the 1832 Black Hawk War, they refused to abandon their homelands in Iowa. In 1857, the Iowa legislature, in unprecedented fashion, allowed the tribe to purchase land in Tama County, just a few miles from Lincoln's land, and the tribe lives there to this day.



## *'I have loved the name of Rutledge to this day'*

FEW STORIES OF LINCOLN'S YOUTH are as romantic, or as controversial, as his relationship with Ann Rutledge. And there's enough of an Iowa connection that we should repeat the story here.

Around 1832, Ann was betrothed to a New Yorker calling himself John McNeil, whose visit home that year to assist his family became indefinitely prolonged. She waited in vain three years for his return. Meanwhile, young Abe Lincoln came to board at her father's tavern. Lincoln was gawky and uncomfortable in the company of eligible females, but he was often a great favorite of women who came to know him in relaxed circumstances, and besides, Ann wasn't technically eligible, was she?

The Rutledges moved from New Salem to nearby Sand Ridge, but Lincoln continued to visit. His status in Sangamon County was steadily improving, as he became the New Salem postmaster in May of 1833 and assistant Sangamon County surveyor later that year, and was elected to the state legislature in 1834. Various witnesses claim he was paying court to Ann, and some believe that they made an agreement to marry once McNeil finally showed himself so Ann could break their engagement. However, in the summer of 1835, Ann became ill with typhoid. Lincoln visited her alone during her illness and left much distressed. After she died on August 25, Lincoln sank into a depression so profound that his friends maintained a suicide vigil. Ann was 22; Lincoln, 26.

This story is one of a long list of tragedies that Lincoln had to overcome in his life, but it is one that only came to light after his death, which succeeded Ann's by 30 years. And the reputation of the man who first spread the tale doomed it to skepticism and outright scorn by many historians.

William Herndon, nine years Lincoln's junior, became Abe's law partner in 1844, and their practice wasn't dissolved until Lincoln's death in 1865. After the assassination, Herndon was obsessed with the idea of telling the true story of the martyr whom he knew so well as a mortal. He began gathering information from

Lincoln's friends and acquaintances for a biography that he never quite finished, although his research and recollections provided the basis for works by at least two other authors.

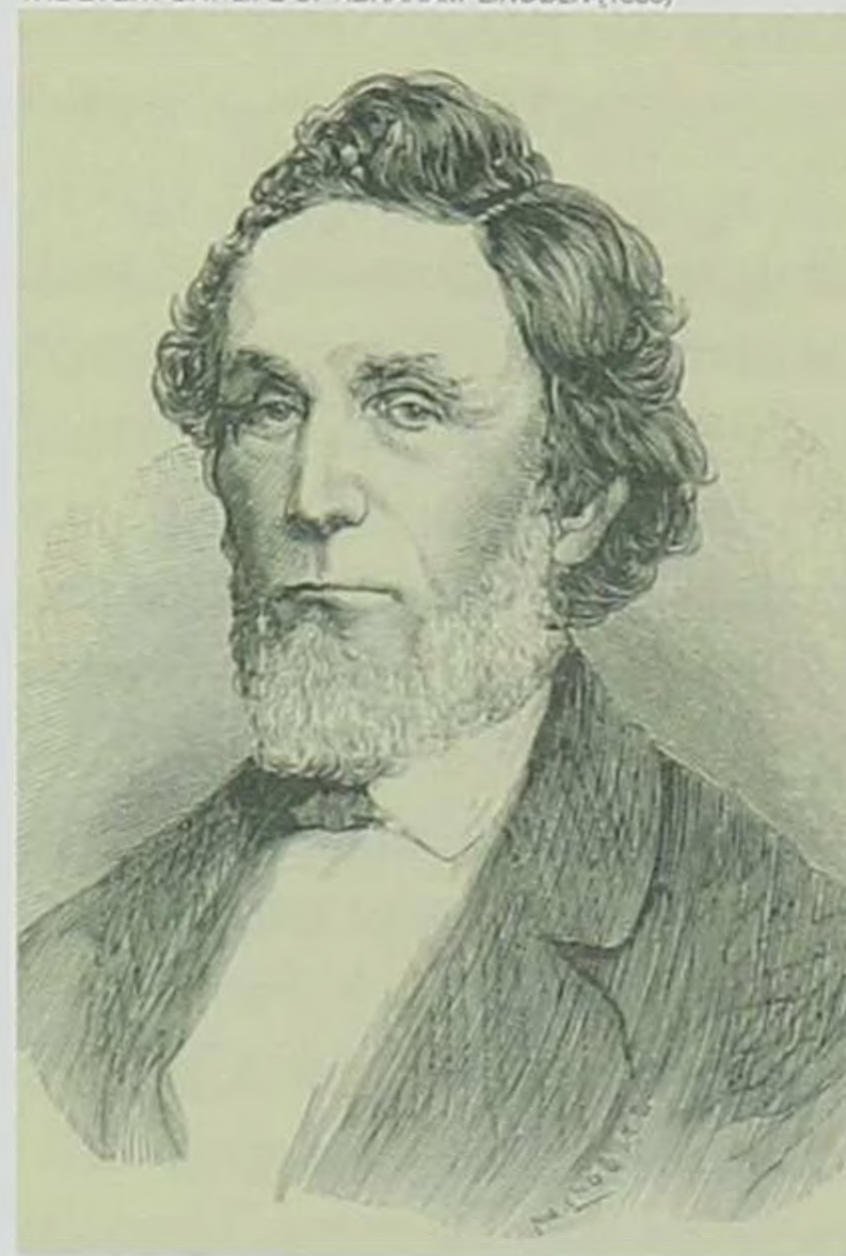
While long an associate of Lincoln, Herndon was not a favorite of Lincoln's wife. When sophisticated Mary Todd first came to Springfield, Illinois, in 1837, she met the frontier-bred Herndon at a social. Impressed with his dance partner's gracefulness, Herndon blurted that she "seemed to glide through the waltz with the ease of a serpent." You try that sometime. Mary was mortified, and in time she and Herndon became bitter enemies. Mary and Abe married in 1842, and Billy Herndon, who would see Lincoln daily at their law office, was never welcome in the Lincoln home.

Years later, after getting wind of the touching story of Lincoln and his sweetheart Ann Rutledge, Herndon tracked down 1830s residents of New Salem and quizzed them on the romance. He pulled his research together in an 1866 lecture. Despite indignant protests from the late president's wife and eldest son, Herndon published his talk in a small booklet, and soon no biography of Lincoln was complete without this intimate look at the adored leader as a young man.

Later historians, some reacting to the traditional portrayal of Mary Todd Lincoln as a hysterical harpy, criticized Herndon for asking leading questions and inventing unwarranted assumptions, such as asserting that Ann died of anguish over being engaged to two swains at once. By the mid-20th century,



THE EVERY-DAY LIFE OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN (1886)



Lincoln's law partner and biographer William Herndon (c. 1870).



it became fashionable to deny that anything more than an innocent friendship existed between Abe and Ann.

However, the dispute never completely died down, and there are now serious historians who are willing to overlook Herndon's excesses and accept the earnestness of his eyewitnesses. You may draw your own conclusions, but I choose to believe that Lincoln captured the heart of the winsome Ann, only to see his darling decline and perish. Her death did, in fact, affect him so deeply that it pained him to think about the rain falling on her grave.

And now, the Iowa connection: the village of New Salem petered out when the adjacent Sangamon River proved ill suited to navigation. The Rutledge family, minus Ann and her father, James, who also succumbed to typhoid in 1835, moved in 1839 to Iowa. Ann's mother, Mary, took her surviving three sons and three daughters to Birmingham in northern Van Buren County in Iowa. Some of them wound up in Oskaloosa, and some eventually left the state. Robert Rutledge became sheriff of Van Buren County.

Lincoln's regard for the family remained constant, and he supposedly told an old friend visiting shortly after his election as president that "I have loved the name of Rutledge to this day." Evidence of this attachment may be found in the fact that he appointed Robert Rutledge as U.S. provost marshal in Iowa's First Congressional District during the Civil War.

Pilgrims still go to Ann Rutledge's grave near the restored New Salem, but Iowans may visit the grave markers of her mother (*top left*) and her brother John

PHOTOS OF GRAVE MARKERS: SHS (IOWA CITY)



(*above*) at Bethel Methodist Episcopal Cemetery in Lick Creek Township in Van Buren County. Nancy Rutledge Prewitt, Ann's sister, is buried in Fairfield's Evergreen Cemetery.





## Springfield attorney argues the Mississippi Bridge case

LINCOLN WAS A NATURAL public speaker whose abilities to clearly explain difficult concepts and to emotionally sway his listeners formed a strong underpinning to his successful legal career. The wide respect for his reputation led to his involvement in a lawsuit that had a dramatic effect on Iowa's early growth.

The first bridge across the Mississippi River, three years in the building and completed in 1856, connected Rock Island, Illinois, and Davenport, Iowa, and was a major breakthrough for western travel and commerce. Riverboat operators previously had a monopoly on the large-scale movement of passengers and goods, and had tried unsuccessfully to block construction of the railroad bridge.

Fifteen days after the bridge's gala opening, a steamboat, the *Effie Afton*, struck one of its piers. A stove on the boat overturned, and the *Effie Afton* burned to the waterline. The bridge also caught fire and suffered extensive damage. News of the bridge fire prompted riverboats all along the Mississippi to ring bells and blow whistles in celebration.

The owners of the steamboat sued the railroad company that built the bridge, saying it was a hazard to navigation and should be dismantled. The lawsuit, *Hurd et al. v. the Rock Island Railroad*, would be a crucial test of the powers of the established river traffic forces and of the upstart railroads. Noted Springfield lawyer Abraham Lincoln had experience working for both sides, but in this case he was one of several attorneys hired by Norman Judd for the railroad companies.

According to a long-accepted but possibly apocryphal story, Lincoln traveled to the bridge site to get the facts firsthand. He supposedly walked out on the repaired bridge and met a boy from Davenport who turned out to be the son of the resident engineer on the project. Lincoln and the boy are said to have timed a floating log to calculate the speed of the current. Lincoln also familiarized himself with details like the dimensions of the bridge, the angle of the piers, the curve of the river, and the depth of the channel.

The trial took place in Chicago in September 1857.

Lincoln handled the summation for the defense team, and his speech was recorded in both a pro-riverboat newspaper and a pro-railroad sheet. He displayed an impressive mastery of the pertinent data, and was able to demonstrate that the accident occurred not because the bridge was a hazard but because the *Effie Afton's* starboard paddle wheel failed. He also stressed the vital importance of allowing railroads to span the Mississippi. He said that east-to-west travel was "growing larger and larger, building up new countries with a rapidity never before seen in the history of the world."

Incidentally, several prominent citizens of Rock Island and Moline who had witnessed float tests were called as witnesses at the trial, including Moline plow manufacturer John Deere. The 55-year-old Deere testified that he did not see a cross-current affecting the draw under the bridge, but under cross-examination he admitted that he had no knowledge of river navigation.

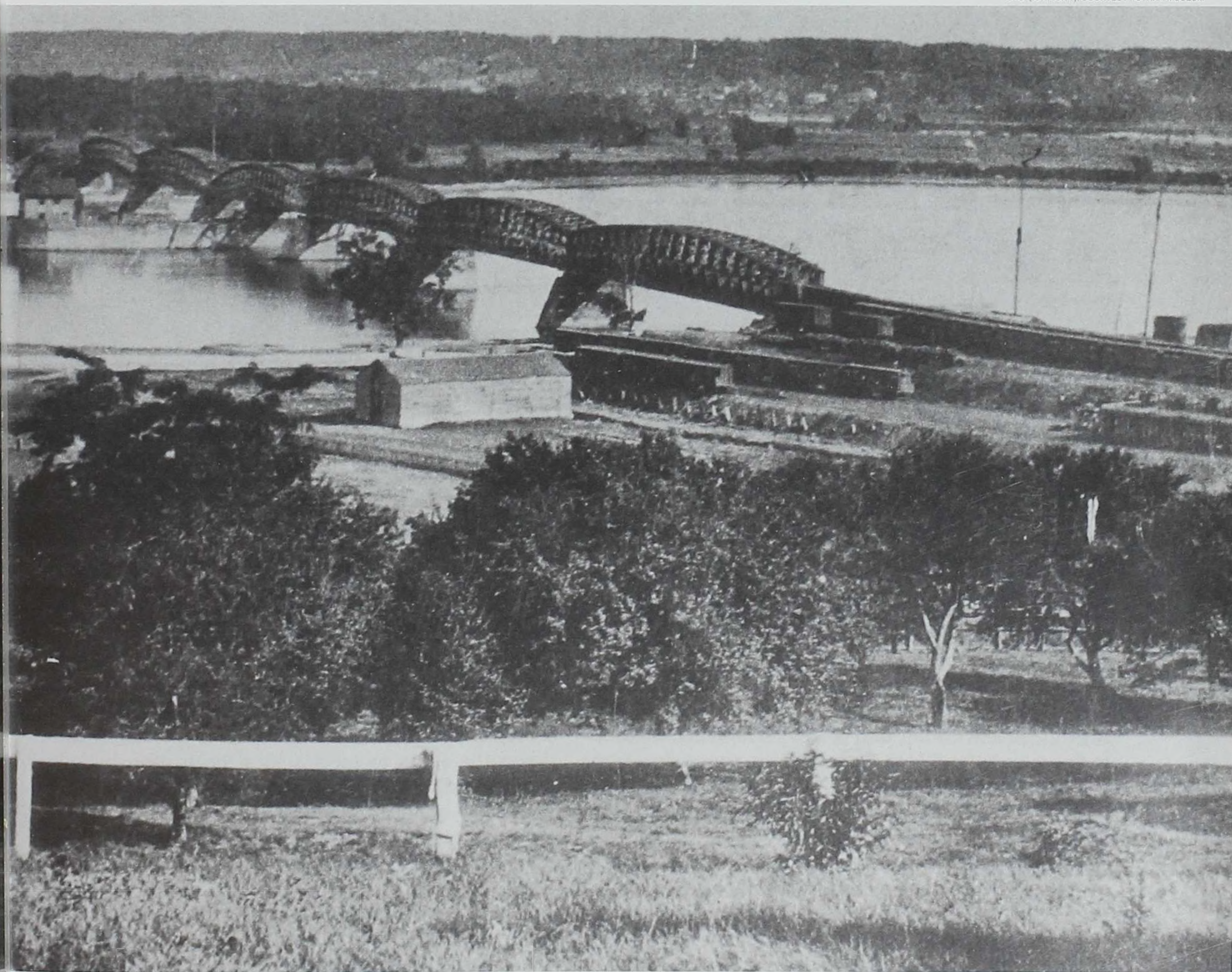
The trial resulted in a hung jury, which allowed the bridge to stand. Further litigation reinforced this result. The decision helped to hasten the end of the riverboat era and quickened the pace of expansion and economic growth in the trans-Mississippi West, particularly in Iowa. From his earliest days in politics Lincoln had championed internal improvements, by both water and rail, and he pushed for new railroads in both his professional and political careers.

The current Government Bridge in the Quad Cities is near the site of the original bridge. Completed in 1896, it is the fourth to cross what is now Arsenal Island from Rock Island to Davenport.





SHSI (IOWA CITY), COURTESY PUTNAM MUSEUM



Photographed here in 1865, the first bridge across the Mississippi River, between Rock Island and Davenport, came to symbolize railroad interests winning out over steamboat operators, and thus a general shift in economic power. Opposite: Lincoln was campaigning in Chicago for the U.S. Senate on October 27, 1854, when this photograph was taken.



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LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

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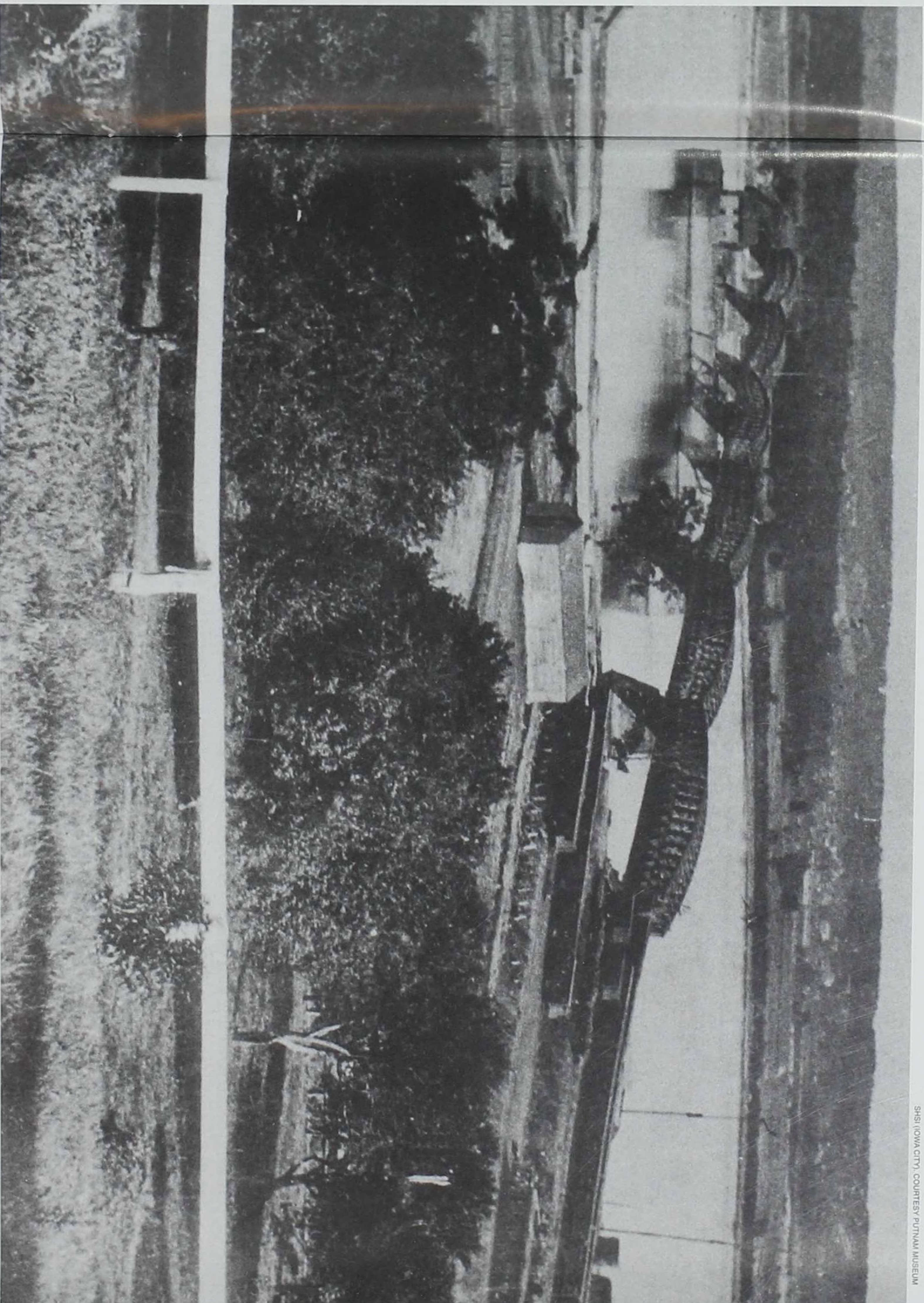
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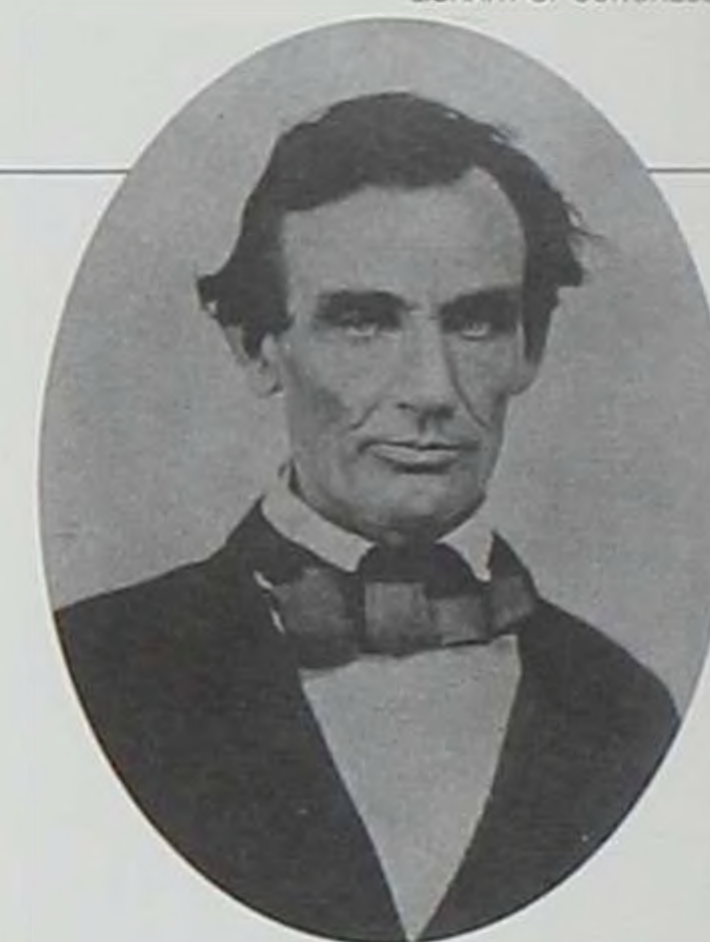
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SHSIL (IOWA CITY) COURTESY/ POTTAWAMIE MUSEUM

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## Burlington says 'huzza for Lincoln'

LINCOLN'S LEGAL PRACTICE saw steady growth, while his political career advanced by fits and starts. After an unsuccessful run for one of Illinois's U.S. Senate seats in 1854-55, he stood for the other in 1858. In October of that year, he went to Burlington, Iowa, to give a speech. There may not have been any voters in Burlington who could help him in his Senate race, but he had a number of reasons to make such a visit.

One reason was the doggedness of Burlington residents over the years in inviting Lincoln to come. He had turned down invitations in 1844, 1856, and 1857 that we know of. Burlington was a small settlement at the time, but it had served as the second capital of the Wisconsin Territory in 1837 and was from 1838 to 1840 the capital of the Iowa Territory after it separated from Wisconsin. Thus, it was an important political center in the state, and it was the home of James W. Grimes. A member of the first territorial legislature at Burlington who was elected governor in 1854, Grimes authored at least two of the requests for Lincoln visits.

Lincoln explained his disinclination to visit in 1856 in his reply to Grimes: "1. I can hardly spare the time. 2. I am superstitious. I have scarcely known a party preceding an election to call in help from the neighboring States, but [that] they lost the State."

When Grimes invited him again in 1857, Lincoln wrote that he was very anxious for Republican success in Iowa's 1858 congressional elections but "I lost nearly all the working-part of last year, giving my time to the canvass; and I am altogether too poor to lose two years together."

When 1858 came around, Lincoln was trying again to fulfill his life's dream of election to the Senate. His opponent was Democratic incumbent Stephen A. Douglas, whose Kansas-Nebraska Bill of 1854, which gave new states the right to vote on allowing slavery, had electrified the slavery issue and brought Lincoln out of self-imposed political exile.

Lincoln proposed a series of debates, and Douglas agreed to hold seven. The fifth was scheduled for October 7 in Galesburg, about 46 miles east of Bur-

lington. They would follow that debate with one down the Mississippi River in Quincy on October 13. Des Moines County Republican Chairman Charles Darwin reasoned that Burlington wouldn't be out of Lincoln's way, so he sent him an invitation to speak.

Another factor influenced Lincoln's acceptance of Darwin's request. Part of Lincoln's electoral strategy was to speak in a town after Douglas had spoken there so that he could answer Douglas's points, and Douglas had already agreed to talk in Burlington. Consequently, after a 1 p.m. speech in Oquawka, Illinois, on October 9, Lincoln immediately embarked on the Rock Island packet to travel 20 miles downriver to address an Iowa crowd in Burlington that evening. The staunchly Republican *Burlington Hawk-Eye* had given details of the impending visit in its October 8 edition, and wound up by saying of Lincoln, "He says he has got so used to speaking that it don't hurt him a bit, and he will talk just as long as we want to hear him! Huzza for Lincoln!"

On his arrival, Lincoln checked in at the Barret House to freshen up before his speech. Years later, eyewitnesses at the hotel recalled instances of Lincoln's simplicity. On arrival, he handed the clerk a small packet wrapped in newspaper and said, "Please take good care of that. It is my boiled shirt. I will need it this afternoon." Apparently it was also the sum total of his luggage.

Later, the editor of the *Hawk-Eye* saw him putting the shirt on. Clark Dunham said that Lincoln came down the stairs to meet a local delegation with his arms stretched high as he struggled to pull his white shirt over his head. He finished tucking his shirttail into his trousers just as he reached the group.

What Dunham did after meeting Lincoln at the hotel is something of a mystery, because his October 11 newspaper reporting on the speech stated, "We regret exceedingly that it is not in our power to report his speech in full this morning." No transcript of the oration has yet been uncovered. Still, the *Hawk-Eye* described the speech as "a logical discourse, replete with sound argument, clear, concise and vigorous, earnest,





Burlington, about 1860. Lincoln spoke here in 1858, addressing the public and visiting Governor James Grimes. Opposite: A week before Lincoln spoke in Burlington, he posed for this photograph.

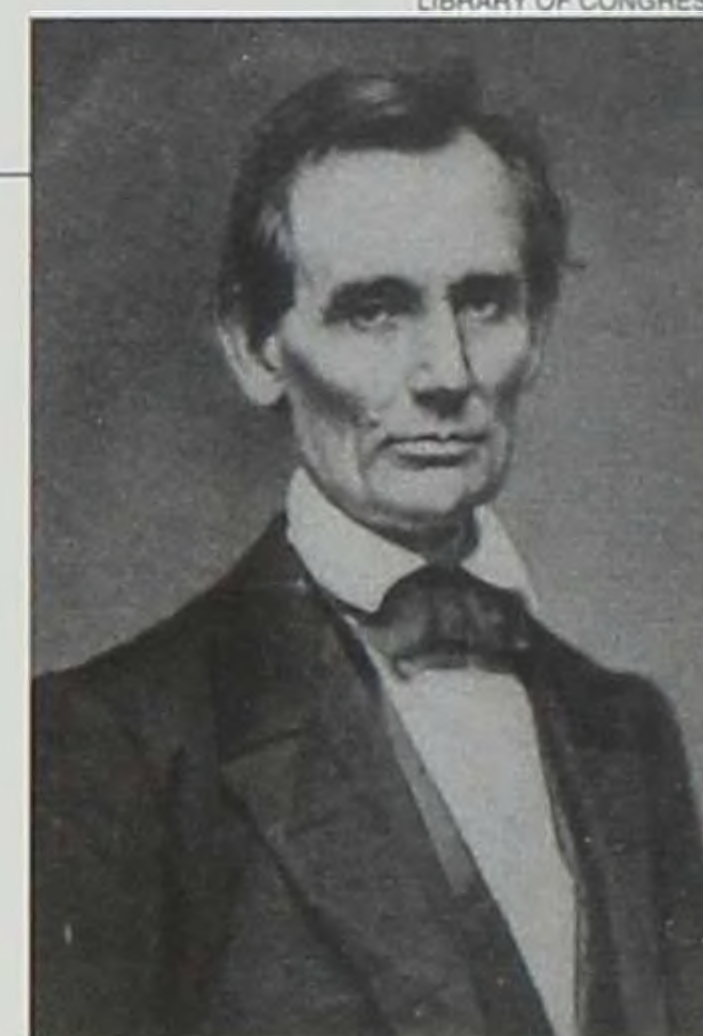
impassioned and eloquent." It estimated the crowd at "twelve to fifteen hundred ladies and gentlemen." Lincoln spoke for two hours, and it apparently didn't "hurt him a bit": the newspaper reported (perhaps with a touch of bias) that Lincoln "appeared Saturday evening fresh and vigorous. There was nothing in his voice, manner or appearance to show the arduous labors of the last two months." This in contrast to Douglas, "whose voice is cracked and husky, temper soured and general appearance denoting exhaustion."

The speech was given at Grimes House, a hall owned by Governor Grimes. After spending the night at the Barret House, Lincoln visited Grimes at his home

on Sunday before leaving town. Presumably, Lincoln had devoted at least a portion of his speech to politicking for Grimes, who, like Lincoln, was running for the Senate. Unlike Lincoln, he was successful.

The loss was disappointing to Lincoln, but Grimes's biographer, William Salter, who heard both Lincoln and Douglas speak in Burlington, put it in perspective. "Had Mr. Lincoln been elected senator," he wrote, "in all probability he would never have become President." And his visit to Burlington would likely have been forgotten.





## *Lincoln and railroad notables visit Dubuque*

LINCOLN'S NEXT recorded Iowa visit was to Dubuque, where he arrived with little fanfare but in first-class style. He was wearing his attorney hat again, although by now his political renown went before him.

The man who had grown up in log cabins was a big noise in the Republican Party after his 1858 Senate race against Douglas. The contest received nationwide coverage, which largely focused on the seven debates between the two held from August through October. Lincoln's debate oratory put him on the road to the White House, although he wasn't seriously considered as a presidential candidate until after his Cooper Union speech in New York in February 1860.

At the time of his Dubuque visit in the spring of 1859, he was a popular political speaker on a mainly regional basis who still needed to work his day job to provide for his wife and four sons. As he said of his public speaking in a letter to Hawkins Taylor of Keokuk later in the year, "I am constantly receiving invitations which I am compelled to decline." He couldn't afford to accept them. "It is bad to be poor," he stated somewhat exaggeratedly. "I shall go to the wall for bread and meat, if I neglect my business this year as well as last."

Lincoln the lawyer took on local cases riding Illinois's Eighth Judicial District from 1837 until the year he was elected president. However, by the late 1850s he was a highly respected attorney frequently in the hire of the railroad companies, which deserve much of the credit both for Lincoln's relative prosperity and for the phenomenal growth in Illinois's population and economy. Lincoln received an annual retainer and a free railroad pass from the Illinois Central, which kept employing him even after he sued them to collect a then-enormous \$5,000 fee for their 1856 case against McLean County, Illinois.

In April 1859, Lincoln was reportedly in Galena, Illinois, arguing successfully in a trial on the Illinois Central's behalf. More court hearings involving the railroad company were forthcoming in Galena, and Lincoln and his clients took advantage of the hiatus

to travel 15 miles or so to the Key City of Dubuque. Since there wasn't a bridge there until 1868, they had to detrain in Dunleith (now East Dubuque) and take the ferry across the Mississippi.

Lincoln wasn't just traveling on his free railroad pass. He and the railroad officials arrived in Dunleith in a private car, and then put up at the swank Julien House in Dubuque.

The Illinois Central hoped at that time to establish a western terminus in Dubuque, and also to extend its line through eastern Iowa. However, we can only guess whether the railroad officials and their hotshot attorney transacted any business to this end while spending a day and a night at the hotel. No records have come to light that detail their activities except the scanty remembrances presented in F. I. Herriott's article "Iowa and the First Nomination of Abraham Lincoln." Herriott wrote that a number of young Republican leaders, including future Senator William B. Allison, "attended at the Julien House to observe the notables," and were mightily impressed by their private car.

Herriott also briefly described what was apparently a separate private meeting, where a number of local lawyers got to meet "Senator Douglas' great antagonist." Despite lingering rumors, there is no record that Lincoln gave a speech or did any politicking beyond this small group.

After the brief side trip, it was back to work at the courthouse in Galena for Lincoln, and on to greater fame and greater trials.

The Illinois Central eventually expanded into Iowa, leasing the Dubuque and Sioux City road from Dubuque to Iowa Falls in 1867, and reaching Sioux City in 1870. The Julien House burned down in 1913. The present Julien Inn stands on the same site at Second and Main streets.

**Right: Acclaimed for his public speaking, Lincoln wrote Hawkins Taylor, a prominent Keokuk Republican, that he must reject his invitation to speak. Above: Lincoln posed for Mathew Brady on February 27, 1860, only hours before speaking at Cooper Union in New York—a speech and a photograph, he later said, that landed him in the White House.**



Springfield, Ill., Sept. 1. 1859.

Hawkins Taylor, Esq.

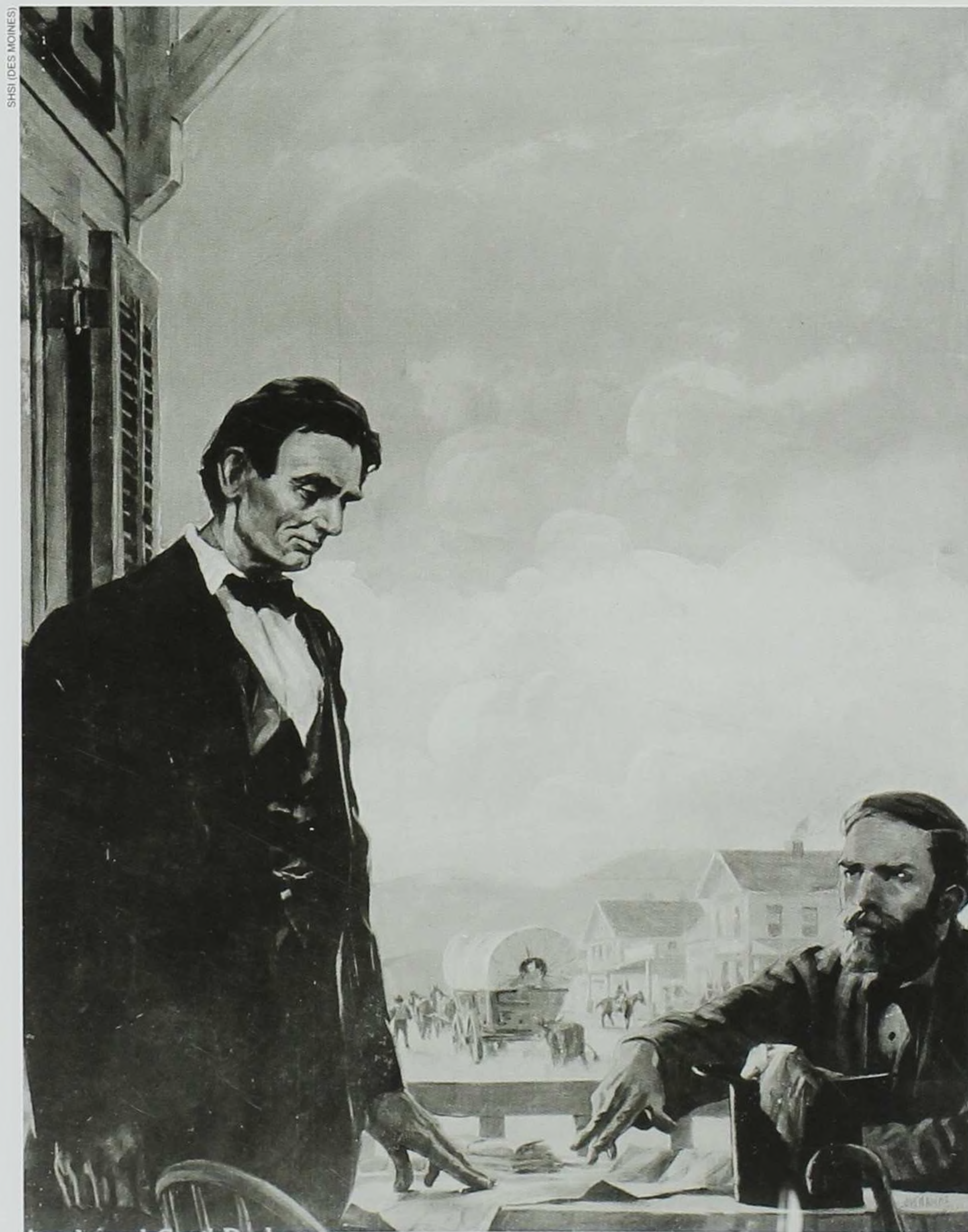
My dear Sir:

Yours of the 3<sup>rd</sup> is just received. There is some mistake about my expected attendance of the U. S. Court in your City on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of this month. I have had no thought of being there. It is hard to be poor. I shall go to the wall for bread and meat, if I neglect my business this year as well as last. It would please me much to see the City, and your people, of Keokuk, but for this year it is little less than an impossibility. I am constantly receiving invitations which I am compelled to decline. I was pressing urged to go to Minnesota; and I now have two invitations to go to Ohio. These last are prompted by Douglas' going there; and I am really tempted to make a flying trip to Columbus & Cincinnati.

I do hope you will have no serious troubles in Iowa. What thinks Gurie about it? I have not known him to be mistaken about an election in Iowa. Present my respects to Col. Carter, & any other friends; and believe me  
Yours truly, A. Lincoln



## *The distinguished 'Sucker' from Illinois tours Council Bluffs*



Lincoln confers in Council Bluffs with civil engineer Grenville Dodge over possible sites for the eastern terminus of a transcontinental railroad. In the background, a covered wagon heads west. (This depiction was derived from a painting by C. Everett Johnson.)

LIKE HIS VISITS to Burlington and Dubuque, Abraham Lincoln's stop in Council Bluffs was brief. However, the long-term effects on his personal affairs and the history of Iowa and the nation were much more profound.

In the summer of 1859, Lincoln traveled to the Kansas Territory with Illinois Secretary of State Ozias Hatch to speak on behalf of the Republican Party. When finished, instead of heading home by train, they arranged to return to Illinois by steamboat down the Missouri. First, however, they went upriver to Council Bluffs. A trip to Iowa's western slope had been on Lincoln's mind for several months. As noted earlier, Norman Judd was offering some parcels in Council Bluffs as security on a loan he wanted from Lincoln. Lincoln also had several old friends from Springfield he could visit in Council Bluffs. On a tour of the hilly town, Lincoln and Hatch and their friends saw the riverboat hang up on a sandbar. "Now we have you as prisoners for two or three days," said the hosts, knowing it would take that long to lighten the craft sufficiently to float it.

In addition to viewing Judd's properties, Lincoln now had time to deliver a



speech. On short notice, the *Council Bluffs Nonpareil* spread the word, referring to Lincoln by a quaint epithet applied to Illinoisans: "The distinguished 'Sucker' has yielded to the solicitations of our citizens and will speak on the political issues of the day at Concert Hall. The celebrity of the speaker will most certainly insure him a full house. Go and hear 'Old Abe.'"

The local Republicans also liberally distributed handbills, and Concert Hall was packed. The Republican *Nonpareil* said that Lincoln's "masterly and unanswerable speech" was remarkable for "the dexterity with which he applied the political scalpel to the Democratic carcass." (The *Democratic Weekly Bugle* found him uninspiring.)

The next day, Lincoln was introduced to Grenville Dodge. This was perhaps the single most crucial meeting that Lincoln ever held with an Iowan. Dodge was a civil engineer working for the Mississippi and Missouri Railroad. At this time there was no railroad in Council Bluffs running in any direction, but many railroad men thought like Judd—that this location had great potential as the starting point of a transcontinental line. When Lincoln heard that Dodge had surveyed the area extensively, he was keen to meet him. By the 1850s, the location of a transcontinental railroad had become part of the fierce sectional rivalry between the North and South, but the terminus was also a bone of contention within regions: Dodge recalled that "there was a great competition for this initial point, extending from Sioux City to Kansas City."

As Dodge told it, Lincoln had asked him, "Dodge, what's the best route for a Pacific railroad to the West?" and Dodge rejoined, "From this town out the Platte Valley." He explained that the river valley of the meandering, shallow Platte provided uniform grade all the way to the Rocky Mountains. Lincoln skillfully interrogated him to draw out the pertinent facts. Dodge wasn't a totally disinterested party. He, like Judd and others, was speculating on property in Council Bluffs, and it wouldn't hurt him to convince a rising politician of the advantages of this route. But we shouldn't

see Dodge's sales job as completely cynical, because he was utterly convinced of the superiority of the Platte Valley route.

Lincoln's steamboat was soon ready, and he disappeared down the muddy Missouri, never to return to Iowa. But an impression had been made. The proposed security on the loan looked good, so he okayed the deal and Judd deeded him the lots. Eventually, it was Lincoln's choice to locate the railroad's eastern terminus, something no one could have predicted in August 1859. On November 17, 1863, two days before he delivered his Gettysburg Address, Lincoln signed the order designating Council Bluffs as the site.

By the time Judd's \$3,000 plus interest was paid, Lincoln was dead. It was up to his heirs to convey the property back to Judd.

Why didn't Lincoln try to make a killing on real estate, as did Judd and many speculators of that period? (Lincoln had dabbled in potential canal lands back in the 1830s.) Lincoln's friends wondered the same thing. While conversing in Council Bluffs with one of his old Springfield neighbors, Lincoln pulled out the land warrant that Congress had awarded him four years earlier for his service in the Black Hawk War.

"Mr. Lincoln, why did you not . . . enter this in the Danville Land District as your friend Judge David Davis did, which was the foundation of his great wealth?" exclaimed a friend. Lincoln said that he had been thinking about using the land warrant to get some land in Iowa or Kansas. (Within the year he used it to buy 120 acres in Crawford County.) He then added, with visible emotion, that he initially had a great desire to give the warrant to his sons, "that they would always be reminded that their father was a soldier!" The man who would in a few years be called "Father Abraham" by a nation demonstrated in Council Bluffs, as he did wherever he went, why he inspired such affection.



## Governor Kirkwood *politicks for Lincoln*

LINCOLN'S ASCENT in politics introduced him to governmental figures across the nation, including various Iowans. For instance, Governor Samuel J. Kirkwood (*right*), who was one of Iowa's most popular politicians in the Civil War era, had occasion to become acquainted with Lincoln.

Kirkwood's background was similar to Lincoln's in many respects. Lincoln was born in the slave state of Kentucky, went with his family to clear and farm land in Indiana, and moved to Illinois, where he held various jobs, including deputy county surveyor and store clerk, before becoming a lawyer and a politician. Kirkwood was born in the slave state of Maryland, and went with his family to clear and farm land in Ohio, where he subsequently held various jobs, including deputy county assessor and store clerk, before he, too, became a lawyer and a politician. He was actively involved in the Ohio constitutional convention of 1850, and moved to Iowa City in 1855, then the state capital. He quickly became politically involved in Iowa, getting himself elected to the legislature in 1856 and becoming a candidate for governor in 1859.

Transportation being what it was in the mid-19th century, prominent people, even in neighboring states, often knew each other by reputation rather than by personal acquaintance. Thus it was that Lincoln stumped for Kirkwood for governor and Kirkwood worked Lincoln's candidacy at the Republican convention before the two ever met. Lincoln put in the good word for Kirkwood during his speech in Council Bluffs in August 1859. Kirkwood went on to win his election, taking the oath as governor in January 1860.

At the time of his Council Bluffs visit, Lincoln had some presidential candidate buzz, although it was fairly minor. His prominence grew after his well-received and widely reported speech at Cooper Union in New York in February 1860, but he still wasn't in the front rank of candidates. However, a number of factors were converging in his favor. The convention was being held in Chicago, which made it easier for Lincoln's handlers to pack the hall with his supporters. Lincoln

also benefited from misgivings within the party about two more prominent candidates, Salmon P. Chase of Ohio and William H. Seward of New York, the clear front-runner.

Seward was seen by some as too liberal, and Chase had alienated various Republican elements, even in his own state, as governor of Ohio. Lincoln, like Seward and Chase, was staunchly opposed to the expansion of slavery into federal territories, but he was more successful at conveying a less divisive and hence more electable stance. In the eyes of Kirkwood, he had the stature of a statesman rather than a politician. Kirkwood, though not a delegate, went to the convention to work for Lincoln's nomination.

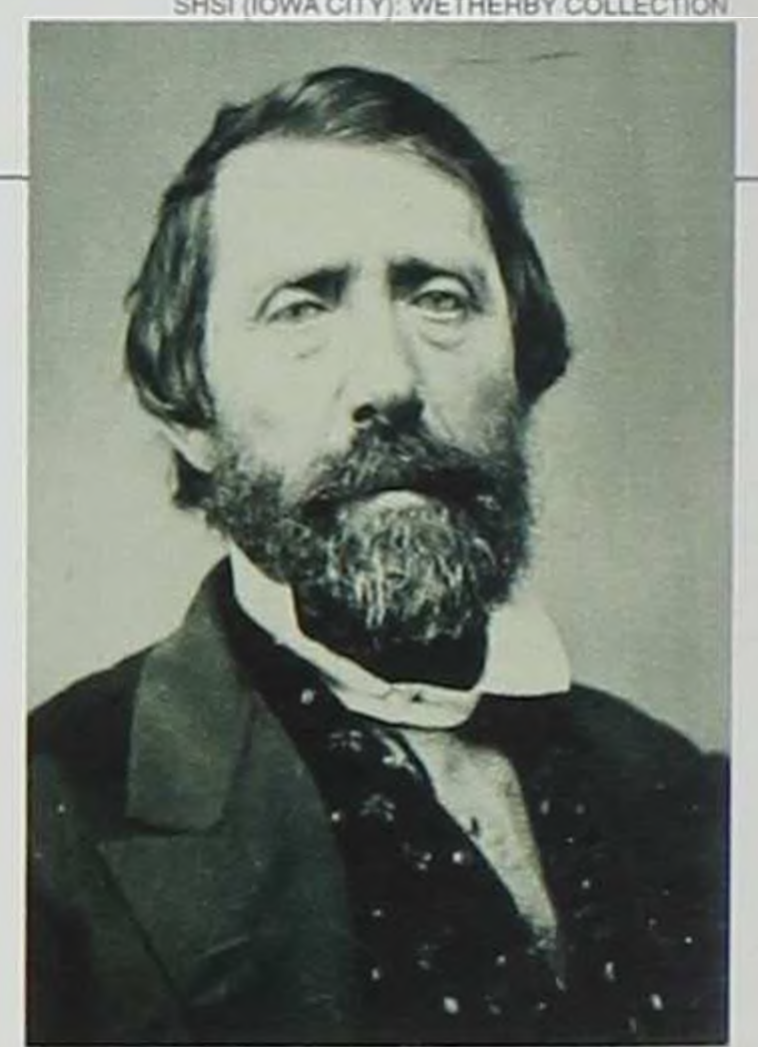
Without primaries and caucuses determining events in advance, the conventions of that era were comparatively wide open. Campaign operatives like Kirkwood worked tirelessly to bag votes. Acquainted with much of the delegation from his former state of Ohio, Kirkwood was able to capitalize on the fact that Chase did little to ensure the support of his home state.

One of the Iowa delegates recounted how Kirkwood had come to his room late on the night before the nomination vote. Iowa Attorney General Charles Nourse said Kirkwood was "nervous and very uneasy and glum." However, the picture began to improve in the wee hours of the morning. Lincoln's men started banking an increasing number of "second choice" commitments.

This was important because Seward, generally expected to be the nominee, didn't have the votes needed to win on the first ballot. After he fell short, Lincoln's strength quickly grew, and he was nominated on the third ballot.

The established practice at the time was for presidential candidates to stay away from conventions and to not campaign once nominated. Thus it was that Kirkwood started thinking in the months after Lincoln's election that he should finally meet the president-elect before he left Illinois for his March inauguration in Washington.

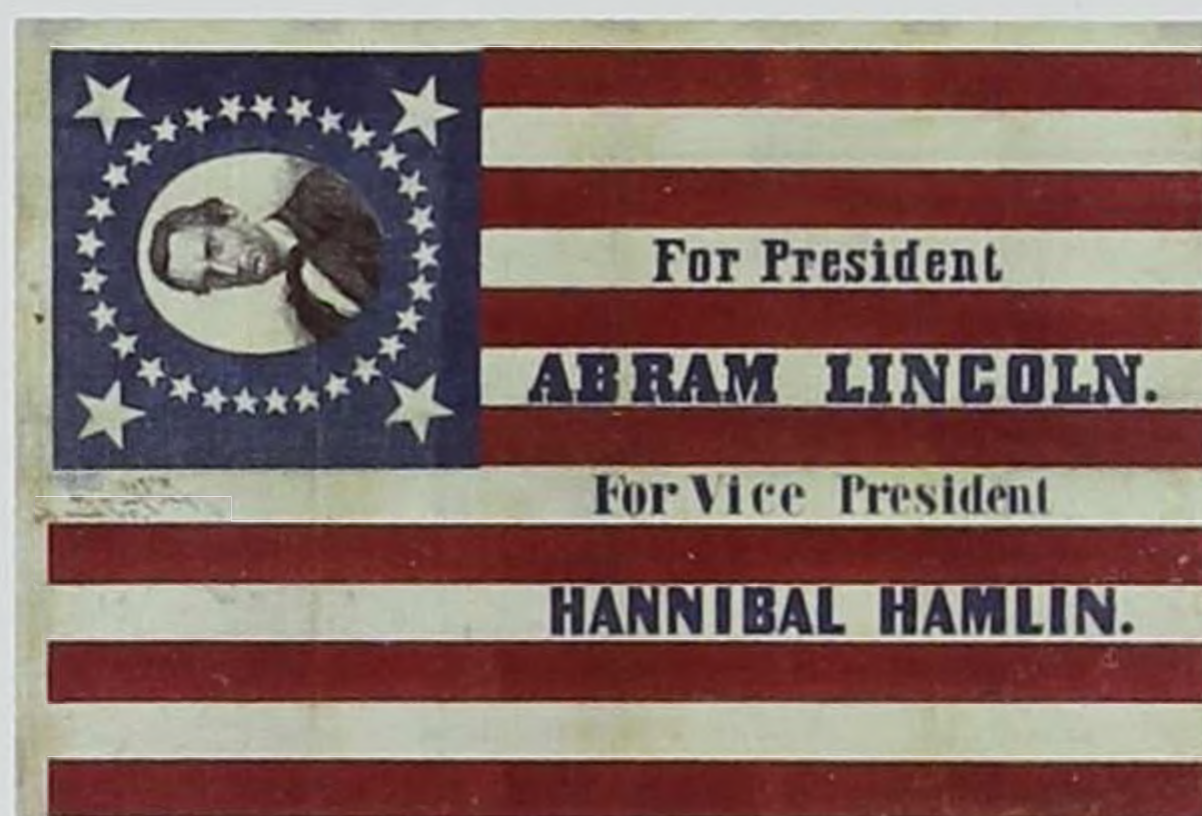
Kirkwood traveled to Springfield in January 1861



SHSI (IOWA CITY); WETHERBY COLLECTION



In January 1861, Iowa Governor Samuel Kirkwood (left) met privately with the newly elected president in his home in Springfield (right). Center: 1860 campaign banner.



BOTH IMAGES: LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

and had a singular experience. Arriving unannounced, he was fortunate to find Illinois Secretary of State Ozias Hatch, whom he had met at the convention. Hatch and Governor Richard Yates proposed that rather than trying to meet Lincoln at his temporary office, which was constantly besieged by office seekers and well-wishers, Kirkwood should walk with them to Lincoln's house.

Kirkwood was uneasy about this, but he was also in a hurry to return to Iowa, so he consented. By chance they met Lincoln coming in the opposite direction. After introductions, Lincoln said he was on an errand and they should go ahead and wait for him at the house. As they were about to separate, Lincoln offered that he and Kirkwood could have a more private conversation if they met in Kirkwood's hotel room. Within an hour they were doing just that.

Their talk centered on the secession crisis. South Carolina had seceded in December and six more states would be out of the Union by February 1. Lincoln was gratified to hear Kirkwood say that the Iowa people "were devotedly attached to the Union of the States, and would never consent to its dissolution on any terms." When they were finished, Kirkwood walked Lincoln to the door of the hotel, exciting considerable curiosity about who he was and why he was there.

In the conflict that ensued, Kirkwood, as Iowa's war governor, made several trips to Washington and saw Lincoln on various occasions. One of the more memorable of these followed the Loyal War Governors' Conference in Altoona, Pennsylvania, in September 1862. The war was going badly for the North, but the governors agreed to support the president's policies, including his recently announced and controversial Emancipation Proclamation, which was to take effect on January 1, 1863. The delegation moved on to Washington to report their consensus to the president.

Some at the conference had also expressed their dissatisfaction with the Union Army's leading general, the arrogant and dilatory George B. McClellan. Kirkwood thought he knew Lincoln well enough by this time that he could speak candidly on the subject, and

found himself saying, "Mr. President, our Iowa people fear and I fear that the Administration is afraid to remove General McClellan." When he saw Lincoln's face coloring, Kirkwood realized he had expressed himself less than adroitly. He did his best to recover, and after a brief silence, Lincoln told him that he would fire McClellan if and when he felt it would benefit the Union cause. McClellan was removed less than two months later; he became Lincoln's Democratic opponent in the 1864 presidential election.

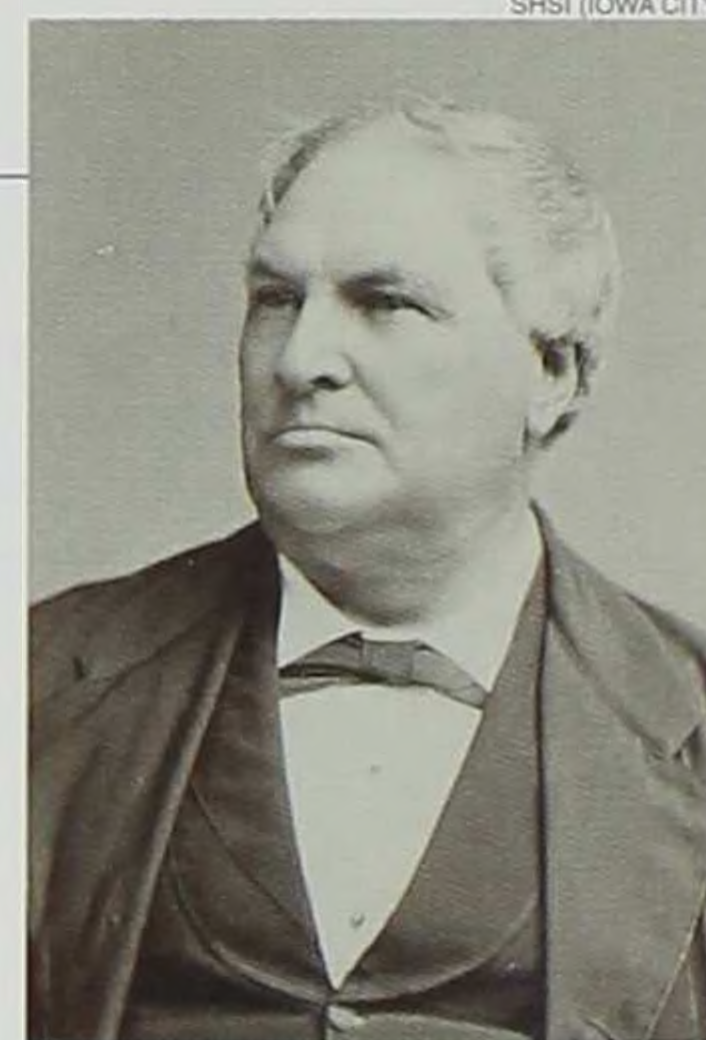
By that time Kirkwood was no longer governor, having declined, as was then customary, to seek a third term. During his tenure (January 1860 to January 1864), the course of the Civil War created responsibilities that governors today would find bizarre. For example, when he found he was being unfairly criticized for Iowa soldiers going without wages due to lack of funds in the state treasury, he personally borrowed money to pay them. He also risked his life by going in advance of a military contingent to face down a large force of Southern sympathizers who had gathered after the murder of one of their leaders in Keokuk County. The press of his duties caused him to decline a presidential appointment as minister to Denmark in 1863.

Although he was out of office at the time of Lincoln's assassination, Kirkwood was asked to deliver a eulogy in Iowa City after a mile-long funeral procession halted at the State University of Iowa campus. In it, he said that Lincoln had "an almost intuitive knowledge of the habits and peculiarities of the mass of our people with whom he was so thoroughly identified, a frank, genial nature, and heart so kindly in all its impulses that I do not believe he ever knew what it was to hate any man."

Kirkwood filled an unexpired term as U.S. senator, 1866-1867, was once again elected governor, 1876-1877, and was elected to a full term as senator in 1877, but did not complete it, owing to his appointment as secretary of the interior, where he served from 1881 to 1882 under Presidents Garfield and Arthur. He died in 1894 and is buried in Iowa City.



## *The Effie Afton catches up with Justice Miller*



AS LINCOLN BECAME the first Republican president in 1860, he and his administration had both the opportunity and the burden of appointing a daunting number of officeholders, over 40,000 by one count. He appointed Iowans to various positions, some high, some not so high. The president can make no appointments more prestigious than those to the United States Supreme Court, and Lincoln used one of these rare opportunities to elevate Samuel Freeman Miller of Keokuk, Iowa.

Miller (*right*) was born in Kentucky in 1816 and started his professional life as a doctor. However, he found he didn't like practicing medicine, so he became a lawyer. He also didn't like slavery, so he moved to Iowa. He was a successful lawyer in Keokuk, where, as fate would have it, he became involved in a dispute that Illinois lawyer Abraham Lincoln had also litigated.

As recounted earlier, in 1856 the steamboat *Effie Afton* had crashed into the first bridge to cross the Mississippi River, and when the boat's owners brought suit in Chicago against the Rock Island Railroad, Lincoln appeared for the railroad. The trial ended in a hung jury, strengthening the steamboat owners' belief that they couldn't get a fair jury in a railroad town like Chicago. They then brought suit against the bridge's co-owner, the Mississippi and Missouri Railroad Company, which was located in Davenport. That meant the trial would be held in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Iowa in Keokuk, where pro-river traffic sentiment prevailed. They hired local attorney Samuel F. Miller to prosecute the case.

Miller was successful in the *Effie Afton* trial heard from April to June 1860. The jury found for the plaintiffs and the three spans on the Iowa end of the bridge were ordered to be torn down. The defendants appealed the case to the U.S. Supreme Court.

In the meantime, Supreme Court Justice Peter Daniel died while the suit was being tried in Keokuk. His vacancy on the high court was still unfilled when Lincoln took the presidential oath in March 1861.

Although his prior political experience looks scant

on paper, Lincoln was a well-seasoned operative who had helped bring the Republican Party into existence. He knew the importance of judiciously applied political patronage. He had to perform a balancing act that satisfied key constituencies, one of which was the strongly Republican western state of Iowa.

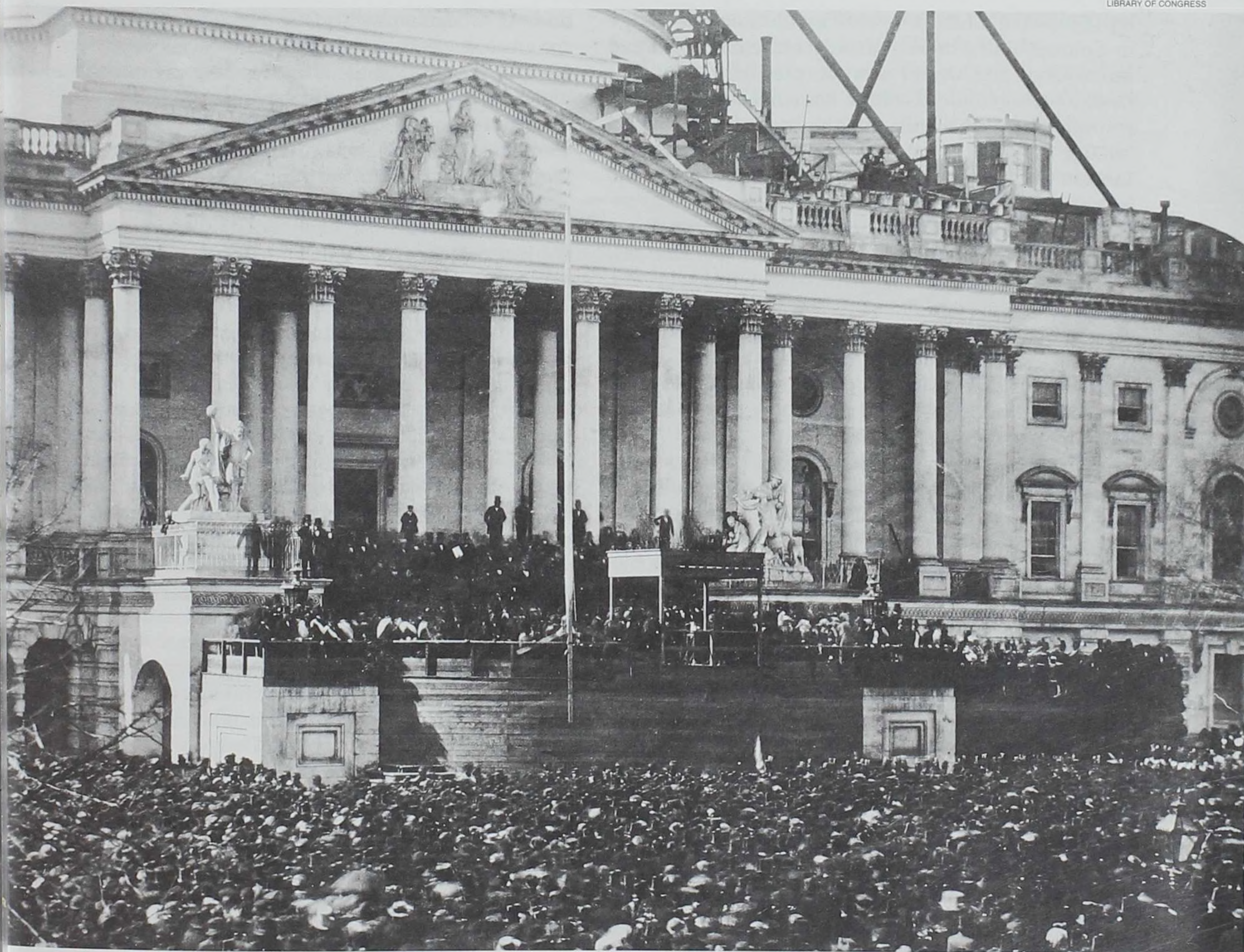
Despite having in common their respective *Effie Afton* lawsuits, Lincoln and Miller didn't know each other. But Miller was widely respected and strongly endorsed by politicians, lawyers, and judges in Iowa and nearby states. Miller's politics were also congenial to the president, a key element in any Supreme Court appointment. Lincoln finally appointed Miller in July 1862 to fill Justice Daniel's vacancy.

Miller hadn't been on the court for six months when the *Effie Afton* caught up with him. The appeal of his successful case against the Mississippi and Missouri Railroad came before the Supreme Court in December 1862. Miller excused himself from hearing the appeal, and in January 1863 the Court reversed the lower court's ruling on a 5-3 vote. In essence, the majority said that because the main channel of the river was on the Illinois side, it made no sense to remove the Iowa end of the bridge. Another reason was more understood than spoken: with the Civil War now raging, it would be folly for the federal government to remove a major railroad link across the Mississippi River.

Miller quickly became a very active jurist and made a significant imprint on constitutional law in the United States. He authored over 100 decisions, more than any other justice to that time. Among them was *Wabash v. Illinois*, which ruled that the federal government could regulate commerce between states and led to the formation of the Interstate Commerce Commission. In the 1880s, he was looked upon as a possible presidential candidate. He died in 1890 while still a member of the Court, and is buried in Keokuk.



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Lincoln's first inauguration, March 4, 1861. (Note that the capitol is not yet completed.) Among his duties as president would be filling a vacancy on the Supreme Court. He chose Iowan Samuel Freeman Miller (opposite).



## *General Dodge confers with 'that tall, gaunt, stooping, homely man'*



BY 1859, WHEN LINCOLN MET with Grenville Dodge in Council Bluffs, he had already rocketed to national prominence and would soon be president. Similarly, Dodge (*right*) would rise from a town leader to a well-respected army general, a highly successful railroad builder, and a political deal-maker. His path crossed Lincoln's several more times in the last five years of the president's life.

Dodge was born in Massachusetts in 1831 and moved west in 1851 after studying civil engineering at Norwich University. He soon became involved in railroad surveys, which took him from Illinois to Iowa to Nebraska. Settling in Council Bluffs in 1856, he partnered in a banking and real estate company but continued to work closely with officials of the Mississippi and Missouri and other railroads, who hoped to build a railroad across Iowa from Davenport to the Missouri River.

The ending point on the Missouri stood a good chance of being the starting point of a transcontinental line, so the location question inspired much strategizing, lobbying, and unsavory dealing, and Dodge was in the middle of all of it. At one point he assured his friends in Council Bluffs that their town would get the railroad "if we only try. I think of nothing else."

Dodge's meeting with Lincoln in 1859 proved especially serendipitous when Lincoln became a serious challenger for the Republican nomination for president in 1860. Railroad interests backed Lincoln because they knew he supported a railroad to the Pacific. Lincoln's friend Norman Judd, now acting as one of his political managers, summoned Dodge to the Republican convention in Chicago, where he worked alongside Governor Kirkwood and others. Dodge considered himself a mere messenger in the effort, but he was part of the machine that got Lincoln the candidacy. Lincoln's election led directly to civil war, which would have a profound effect on Dodge's life, but before the war started it was politics as usual, and Dodge joined friends in Washington to lobby for patronage appointments for Iowans. He strongly supported Lincoln's determination to preserve the Union. After hearing Lincoln deliver his inaugural

address, Dodge wrote his wife that "Old Abe delivered the greatest speech of the age. . . . It is backbone all over." He visited Lincoln at the White House a few weeks later, and largely succeeded in his lobbying efforts.

Before Dodge left Washington, the newly formed Confederate army fired on Fort Sumter. Dodge, who had received military training at Norwich and had drilled a militia in Council Bluffs, sought an officer's commission. He wasn't immediately successful, but the dogged persistence that was becoming one of his trademarks led to his appointment as colonel of an Iowa regiment. His political connections and his solid leadership in the Battle of Pea Ridge led to Lincoln recommending his appointment to brigadier general in April 1862.

Dodge's reputation as a superb officer and his knowledge of railroad building put him in close cooperation with Generals Grant and Sherman. The war in the West saw Dodge and his men building railroads and railroad bridges with a rapidity that astonished both armies. Less visible was his success as a spymaster. Dodge paid liberal sums to Southern Unionists who risked their lives to gather information for the North. When his immediate superior demanded the names and messages of his agents, Dodge successfully petitioned Grant to keep the network secret. His intelligence regarding rebel troop strengths enabled Grant to deploy his forces decisively in the successful siege of Vicksburg in mid-1863.

Now a corps commander, Dodge was bedeviled by thousands of escaped slaves following his troops around northern Mississippi. For their safety, he armed some as guards on his own authority. Soon thereafter, he was summoned to the White House. Worried that he was going to be punished for making such a sensitive decision without orders, he was relieved to learn that Lincoln was instead ready to settle on a Missouri River terminus for a transcontinental railroad. Dodge reviewed the pros and cons of sites from Sioux City to Kansas City, with emphasis on the merits of his hometown. A few months later, Lincoln followed his advice and ordered the Union Pacific to start in Council



Bluffs. Dodge immediately wrote his brother, "I want property in Omaha if you can get any."

His ambition in his military career matched that in his business endeavors. Influential friends like Grant and Sherman lobbied for his promotion to major general, but his independent streak didn't always help them. Capturing a soldier from one of his Southern Unionist units who had deserted to the enemy, Dodge had him executed before his trial could be passed up the ladder for review. Lincoln—notoriously lenient in such appeals—was shocked, and he didn't forget this breach of protocol. When Dodge's promotion was suggested, he answered, "Do you mean a man who shoots a deserter and then sends the proceedings to the President for approval should be promoted?"

However, Dodge's outstanding record in the field continued to grow, and by the time of Sherman's campaign against Atlanta in 1864, where his spies were again critical, Lincoln had sent his appointment as major general to the Senate for approval. Soon after his confirmation, Dodge's service was interrupted. Trying to view the enemy lines from an advanced trench position, he was directed to a peephole. As soon as he put his eye to the aperture he was shot in the head. The bullet didn't penetrate his skull, but he was severely injured and spent several months recovering.

While on what he called "confederate leave of absence," Dodge visited Grant at City Point, Virginia, from where the latter directed the Army of the Potomac. Things weren't going well, and Dodge detected many differences from the more practical Western army that Grant had molded. As he departed, Grant asked him to stop in Washington and visit the president. Dodge was puzzled by this, but Grant offered no explanation. Calling at the White House, Dodge experienced a characteristic Lincoln interlude.

Lincoln was engaged with other guests when Dodge arrived, so after a short time he started to make a respectful exit. Lincoln asked him to stay. The other visitors left, and, sensing Dodge's nervousness, Lincoln indulged his habit of reading aloud from a book by the

comic writer Artemus Ward. Dodge soon laughed and began to relax. Lincoln invited him to lunch.

In a conversation reminiscent of their discussion in Council Bluffs five years earlier, Lincoln quizzed Dodge about what he had seen at City Point. After hearing Dodge's misgivings about the situation there, Lincoln asked his opinion of Grant. Dodge asserted his complete confidence in the general-in-chief, and said that he had no doubt he would whip Lee's army. Lincoln grasped Dodge's hand in both of his and said, "You don't know how glad I am to hear you say that."

When Dodge was recovered enough to return to active duty, Lincoln appointed him as the commander of the guerrilla-plagued Department of Missouri, where he became widely hated for his draconian efficiency. He was in St. Louis when Lincoln was assassinated, and he and his troops took part in the final funeral ceremonies in Springfield. He also embarked on a campaign against Plains Indians that continued after the South was defeated.

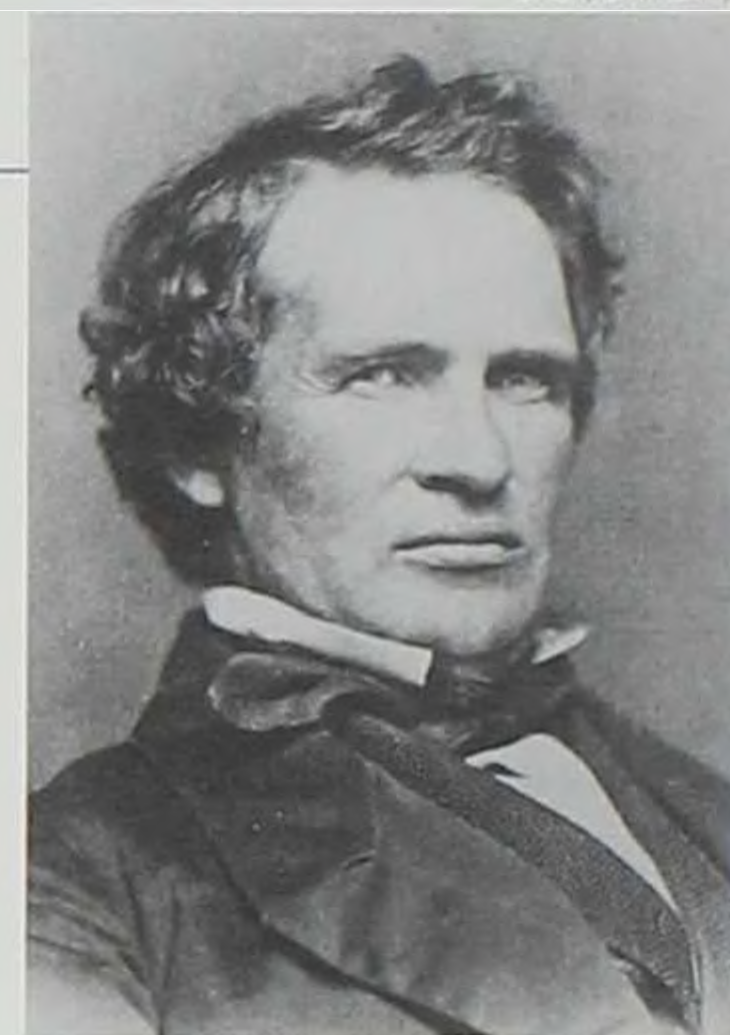
When the Civil War ended, Dodge was 34 years old, and his greatest fame lay before him. As chief engineer of the Union Pacific Railroad, he pushed the rails west to their meeting with the Central Pacific at Promontory Point, Utah, in 1869, in one of the greatest engineering achievements of the age. He followed this success with the building of several other major railroads. He served a term in Congress, but found that it interfered with his railroad business. He grew wealthy and traveled in exclusive circles, becoming a particular favorite of President Theodore Roosevelt.

In 1914, Dodge completed his *Personal Recollections of President Abraham Lincoln, General Ulysses S. Grant and General William T. Sherman*. In it, he said of Lincoln, "Back of him were the masses of the people, their eyes fixed with pathetic faith and loyalty upon that tall, gaunt, stooping, homely man, who to their minds meant everything that makes a cause worth dying for."

Dodge died in 1916, and was mourned throughout the country that Dodge helped Lincoln to save and Lincoln helped Dodge to build.



## *Lincoln and Senator Grimes test their friendship*



LINCOLN WAS WELL ACQUAINTED with both of Iowa's senators while he was president, but his relationships with them were vastly different. Senator James W. Grimes of Burlington was a political ally of Lincoln for many years, but that changed once Lincoln became president and the Civil War began.

James Wilson Grimes (*right*) was born in New Hampshire in 1816. He attended Dartmouth College and studied law before moving west in 1836, settling in Burlington. Iowa became a territory in 1838, and Grimes was a member of its first Legislative Assembly. In a bit of foreshadowing, he fought with Territorial Governor Robert Lucas over what he perceived as executive interference with legislative prerogatives, comparing Lucas with Britain's King George III.

Grimes, like Lincoln, was a Whig, and being in adjacent states, they came to one another's notice. As recounted earlier, Grimes had invited Lincoln to Burlington a number of times, and they finally met in 1858, while then-governor Grimes and Lincoln were both seeking seats in the U.S. Senate. Lincoln was unsuccessful but Grimes was elected, and took office in March 1859.

Lincoln and Grimes likely counted themselves friends by this time, but their friendship would be tested to the breaking point.

Southerners considered Lincoln a threat to their "peculiar institution" of slavery, and his election in 1860 set off a chain reaction of secession that saw eleven states leave the Union. Faced with the nation's greatest crisis, he responded with an exercise of executive authority that met with a storm of criticism even from many supporters of the Union. Given Grimes's experience in the Iowa territorial legislature, it's no surprise that he was one of Lincoln's critics.

After the fall of Fort Sumter, Lincoln began to call up troops on his own authority. Grimes felt that this was the exclusive domain of the legislative branch, and in a private letter he called Lincoln's order "the most extraordinary assumption of power that any President has attempted to exercise." In letters and utterances for

the public, Grimes was careful to support the president for the sake of the Union and party unity. But on the floor of the Senate, he jealously asserted that body's rights as he saw them delineated by the Constitution. Once, when Lincoln proposed legislation for Senate action, Grimes said, "I do not recognize the right of the President to send a bill in here."

Furthermore, he had little confidence in Lincoln's ability to deal with the huge burden that the war placed upon his office. He wrote to Salmon P. Chase, who served Lincoln as secretary of the treasury but who hoped to replace him in the 1864 election, as follows: "I need not tell you that the expressions of confidence in the management of the President . . . proceed from the confessed necessity of supporting him as the only tangible head of the loyal Government, and not from any real confidence in his wisdom."

Despite his disagreement about methods, Grimes was a stalwart supporter of Union forces. He met several times a week with Gustavus Fox, the assistant secretary of the navy, and soon became the Senate's acknowledged expert on that branch of the service. He also agitated frequently and passionately for the emancipation of slaves and was frustrated when Lincoln countermanded the orders of military commanders who had freed slaves in their districts.

Grimes and many of his brethren in the Senate felt Lincoln was too much under the influence of Chase's rival, Secretary of State William H. Seward. After the disastrous federal defeat at Fredericksburg in December 1862, the Senate Republicans caucused to discuss this and other grievances. Grimes was one of a delegation of nine senators who presented their complaints to the president, hoping this would result in the removal of Seward.

Lincoln, already chagrined by the bloody losses at Fredericksburg, was agitated by this revolt. "They wish to get rid of me, and I am sometimes half disposed to gratify them," he told a friend. However, he skillfully maneuvered Chase into backing down from the rumors he had been spreading about Seward,





After the 1864 election, Lincoln called Senator James Grimes (opposite) “a valuable friend, a dangerous enemy.” Left: Campaign button from the election. Center and right: Crowds gather in Washington for the 1865 inauguration.

and emerged from the crisis more in control than ever.

The war, with its appalling losses, continued year after year. For a time in 1864, it appeared that Lincoln's re-election was in jeopardy, but Union victories in the fall ensured his success. Presidential secretary John Hay recorded in his diary an election post-mortem that Lincoln held with Navy Secretary Gideon Welles and Assistant Secretary Fox. Fox voiced his satisfaction with the defeat of some of the administration's most vocal critics. Lincoln responded that he usually bore little personal resentment, and expressed bewilderment at the antipathy of these officeholders.

Undoubtedly aware that Fox would repeat his words to Grimes, Lincoln went on: “But my greatest disappointment of all has been with Grimes. Before I came here, I certainly expected to rely upon Grimes more than any other one man in the Senate. I like him very much. He is a great strong fellow. He is a valuable friend, a dangerous enemy. . . . But he got wrong against me, I do not clearly know how, and has always been cool and almost hostile to me. I am glad he has always been the friend of the Navy and generally of the Administration.”

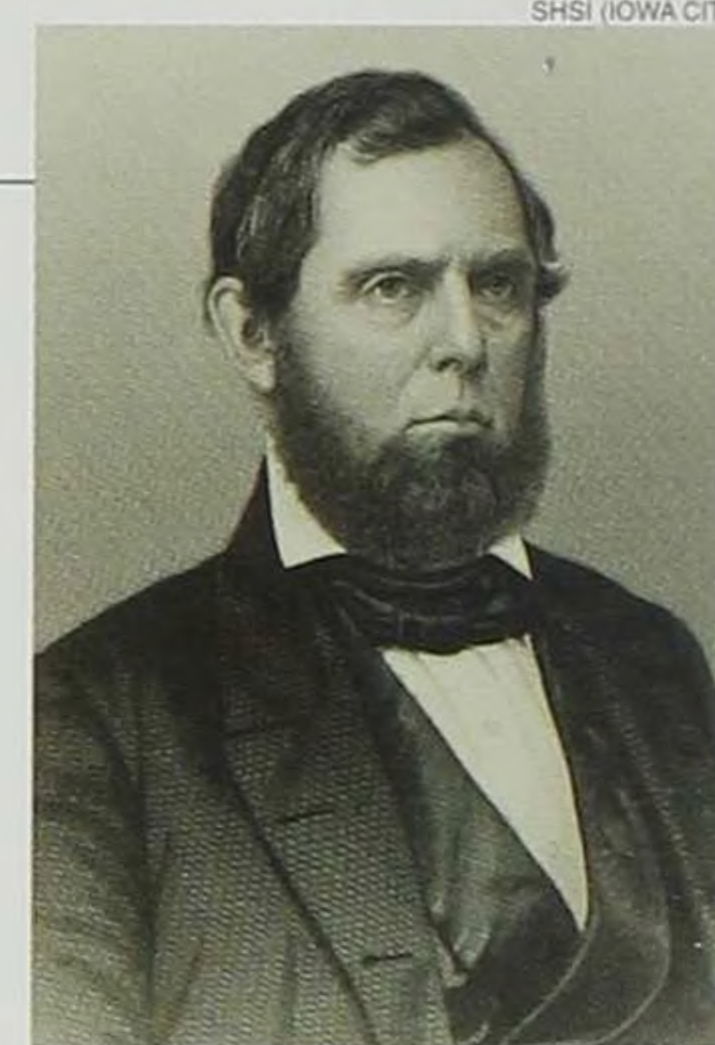
Grimes's greatest fame came after Lincoln's death, when President Andrew Johnson fell foul of the Radi-

cal Republicans. The dispute lay in disagreement over Southern reconstruction, but the result was a presidential impeachment by the House of Representatives in 1868 over Johnson's firing of Secretary of War Edwin Stanton. When the Senate met to consider conviction, a very ill Grimes rose with assistance to vote no, preventing the necessary two-thirds majority. Once again, Grimes was standing on principle and a strict reading of the law, and it led to much bitter abuse. It was years before public sentiment began to appreciate that cooler heads had prevailed.

Grimes's health problems became chronic, and he resigned his Senate seat in 1869. He died in 1872 at the age of 55.



## Senator Harlan advises the president



AT THE OTHER END of the spectrum from his sour relationship with Senator Grimes was Lincoln's friendship with Iowa's senior senator, James Harlan (*right*).

Born in 1820, Harlan was an Illinois native who grew up in Indiana. He moved to Iowa in 1843, where he worked as a schoolteacher and a lawyer before becoming head of the Mount Pleasant Collegiate Institute (later Iowa Wesleyan College) in 1853. He was elected U.S. senator in 1855 and quickly became one of the prominent antislavery Republicans in the passionate days leading to the Civil War.

Harlan first met Lincoln shortly before the latter's inauguration, when Lincoln came to the capital and asked him for advice on cabinet selections. Lincoln specifically asked whether he should appoint Simon Cameron of Pennsylvania as secretary of war and Salmon P. Chase of Ohio as secretary of the treasury, or the other way around. Lincoln's final decision (using the above configuration) matched Harlan's assertive recommendation, leading Harlan years later to write in an autobiographical manuscript, "I soon had reason to think, and still think, that my advice was effective in settling that question." It is possible that Lincoln had already made up his mind on the issue, so he may have been appealing to Harlan's vanity more than sincerely consulting him. Either way, he had taken the first step in building a friendship that would have a lasting effect on both men and their families.

Once the War Between the States had begun in earnest, Harlan was one of the radicals who called for emancipating the slaves and allowing them into the military, and he gave a speech to this effect on July 11, 1862. Lincoln announced his Emancipation Proclamation (which eventually included a provision for arming former slaves) on September 22, but this time Harlan was rather more modest about his role. Regarding the effect of his speech, he later wrote, "Whether, or not, it had any influence on the President's mind, is not for me to say."

Also in 1862, Lincoln appointed Samuel F. Miller of Keokuk to the Supreme Court. Harlan lobbied heavily for this appointment, and felt that he swayed Lincoln's deci-

sion. "I think [Miller] was indebted to me, more than to any one man living, for this great distinction," he wrote. Lincoln contemplated several changes in his cabinet after his re-election in 1864. Prominent Methodist interests successfully pushed Harlan's name in connection to the Interior portfolio. Harlan was reluctant to leave the Senate, but accepted Lincoln's offer, believing he could be of more use in the Department of the Interior.

The friendship between Lincoln and Harlan grew to the point where Harlan became a fixture in Lincoln's entourage during public occasions. Most noticeably, Harlan escorted First Lady Mary Lincoln at her husband's second inaugural on March 4, 1865. At the evening ball, the Lincolns' eldest son, Robert, escorted Senator Harlan's daughter Mary.

Harlan was also present when the president gave what would be his final speech. Lincoln spoke from a White House window to an exultant crowd shortly after Lee's surrender to Grant. The audience then called for remarks from other officials in the president's party, including Harlan, who favored them with a few words.

Present in the crowd that night was John Wilkes Booth; three days later he shot Lincoln. A shaken Harlan served on the congressional committee that accompanied Lincoln's body on a long, circuitous train ride back to Springfield, Illinois. He was also chosen as president of the Lincoln Monument Association.

Although Lincoln had appointed Harlan as secretary of the interior before the assassination, he didn't take office until May. Harlan soon found himself at odds with Lincoln's successor, Andrew Johnson, and he only stayed in office about a year. However, he had entered the position determined to "get the pack of thieves now preying on the Govt. under its auspices out of power." His housecleaning earned him the bitter enmity of many former government workers and their friends.

The Iowa legislature returned Harlan to the Senate after he left his Interior post in 1866, but to get there he had to step over several other interested parties who had expected him to be out of the running, including



the incumbent, former governor Samuel Kirkwood. This caused lingering dissatisfaction that, combined with ongoing allegations (most if not all scurrilous) of corrupt practices while secretary of the interior, prevented Harlan from winning any more elections, though he ran for re-election to the Senate in 1872 and was mentioned as a possible candidate in other campaigns as late as 1895.

Meanwhile, love had blossomed between Harlan's daughter Mary and Lincoln's son Robert, and they were married in 1868. Robert Lincoln became a prominent lawyer and served as secretary of war to Presidents Garfield and Arthur and was minister to Great Britain under Benjamin Harrison. He practiced law in Chicago for many years, and Mary Harlan Lincoln usu-

Having served four years in the depths of a great, and yet unended national peril, I can view this call to a second term, in no wise more flattering to myself, than as an expression of the public judgment, that I may better finish a difficult work, in which I have labored from the first, than could any one less severely schooled to the task.

In this view, and with assured reliance on that Almighty Ruler who has so graciously sustained us thus far, and with increased gratitude to the generous people for their continuous confidence, I accept the renewed trust, with its yet onerous and perplexing duties and responsibilities.

Please communicate this to the two Houses of Congress.

**Notified by a special committee from Congress of his re-election, Lincoln wrote this message of acceptance, as one "severely schooled to the task" of ending the "national peril." Representative James Falconer Wilson of Iowa was on the committee.**

ally took their three children, Mary ("Mamie"), Abraham II ("Jack"), and Jessie, to spend their summers at her parents' home in Mount Pleasant.

James Harlan died in 1899, and the intimate details of his friendship with Lincoln perished with him. His biographer asked him in his later years to write a magazine piece on the private side of their relationship, but Harlan responded, "I fear I cannot trust myself to write on a subject so close to my heart."

Robert and Mary Harlan's son, Jack, died in 1890 at 17. His sisters, Mamie and Jessie, had three children between them; the three died without issue. When Jessie's son, Robert Todd Lincoln Beckwith, died in 1985, the direct lines of Abraham Lincoln and James Harlan were extinguished.

The Harlan-Lincoln House still stands at the corner of Broad and Main on the Iowa Wesleyan campus in Mount Pleasant and may be toured by appointment.

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**Robert Todd Lincoln and Mary Eunice Harlan, eldest children of the president and the senator, married in 1868.**



## ABRAHAM LINCOLN AND THE HAWKEYE STATE

Abraham Lincoln had various personal connections with Iowa in addition to those related here. Other Iowans who knew Lincoln include Henry P. Scholte, one of Pella's founders, who translated Lincoln's 1860 campaign material into Dutch and German for his fellow immigrants,

and Congressman Josiah Grinnell, who visited Lincoln numerous times in the White House. These and other Lincoln/Iowa stories should be kept alive so that Iowans will not only preserve the memory of a revered leader, but will also feel his vivid presence in our shared histories. ❖



*Author Grant Veeder's fascination with Lincoln began when he was studying for his master's degree in history at the University of Northern Iowa. He has served as Black Hawk county auditor since 1988. He represents the Iowa State Association of Counties on the Iowa Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission and has lectured on Lincoln's connections to Iowa on behalf of the commission. An earlier version of this article appeared in Iowa County magazine and on the commission's Web site.*

**Above: A pair of Lincoln's glasses (State Historical Society of Iowa collections-Des Moines). Photo by Charles Scott.**

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Annotations to the original manuscript are held in the Iowa Heritage Illustrated production files, State Historical Society of Iowa (Iowa City).