

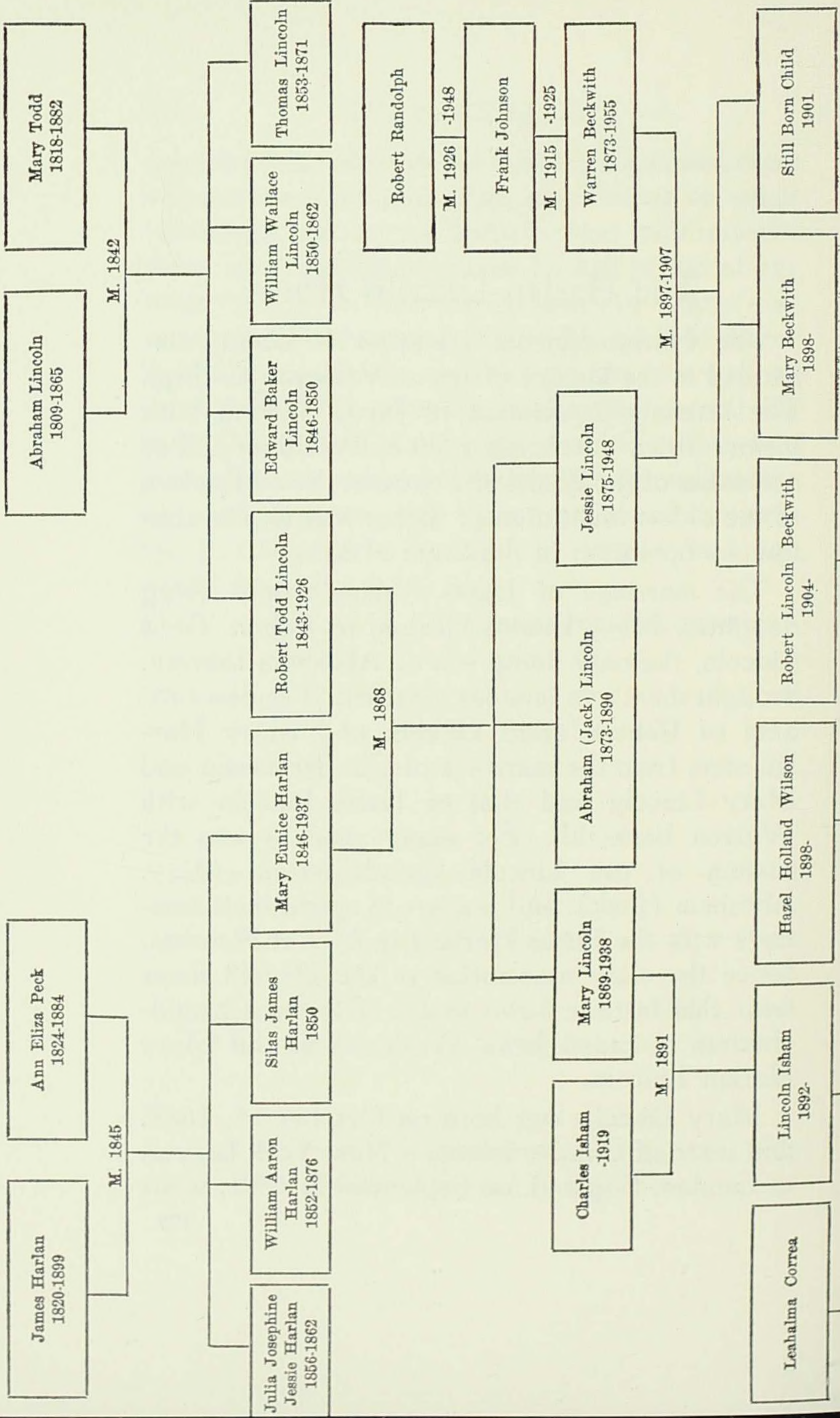
The Harlan-Lincoln Home

The Harlan-Lincoln tradition is deeply imbedded in the history of Iowa Wesleyan College. The intimate association of James Harlan with historic Iowa Wesleyan, both as President and as a member of the Board of Trustees, drew him close to the oldest institution of higher learning in continuous operation in the State of Iowa.

The marriage of James Harlan's only living daughter, Mary Eunice Harlan, to Robert Todd Lincoln, the only living son of Abraham Lincoln, brought these two families together. The descendants of Robert Todd Lincoln and Mary Harlan stem from the marriage of Charles Isham and Mary Lincoln and that of Jessie Lincoln with Warren Beckwith. For many years it was the custom of the Lincoln grandchildren—Mary, Abraham (Jack), and Jessie—to spend their summers with the James Harlans in Mount Pleasant, hence the close association of the Lincoln name with this historic Iowa home. All three grandchildren attended Iowa Wesleyan as did Mary Harlan Lincoln.

Mary Lincoln was born on October 15, 1869, and married Charles Isham, a New York lawyer, in London, England, on September 2, 1891, while

THE HARLAN-LINCOLN FAMILY



her father was serving as Minister to the Court of St. James. Their only child, Lincoln Isham, was born in New York City on June 8, 1892.

Abraham "Jack" Lincoln was born August 14, 1873. He was the only grandson of the Sixteenth President from whom the Lincoln name could be transmitted in order to perpetuate the direct blood line. Unhappily, "Jack" died on March 5, 1890, in London, England, while his father was Minister to the Court of St. James.

Jessie Lincoln married Warren Beckwith of Mount Pleasant on November 10, 1897. The first offspring of this union, Mary Lincoln Beckwith, was born on August 22, 1898. Jessie's second child, Robert Lincoln Beckwith, was born at Riverside, Illinois, on July 19, 1904.

These were the grandchildren of James Harlan and Abraham Lincoln who spent many happy summers in the Harlan Home in Mount Pleasant.

The Harlan Home, situated just across the street from Iowa Wesleyan on the north side of the campus, became the property of Mrs. Robert Todd Lincoln following the death of James Harlan in 1899. Eight years later, in 1907, Mrs. Lincoln gave the home to Iowa Wesleyan, with the thought that it might become the home of future presidents of the college. This hope never materialized and for a number of years the house stood lonely and unoccupied, until the spring of 1931, when it was remodeled and made habitable

again. It was while in the process of remodeling that the door measuring the height of the three Lincoln grandchildren was discovered and preserved. As the pressure for space developed on the Wesleyan campus the home was gradually taken over by the art department.

The approaching Centennial of the Civil War and the role of James Harlan in that epic struggle helped crystallize feeling on the Wesleyan campus that the Harlan Home, with its rich Harlan traditions and its associations with the name of Lincoln, should be preserved and restored as it would have appeared when James Harlan still lived in it. President J. Raymond Chadwick was thoroughly in sympathy with the idea and the restoration was well underway by 1960. The Harlan Home is destined to become one of Iowa's most important historic shrines.

WILLIAM J. PETERSEN