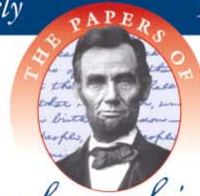


LINCOLN EDITOR

The Quarterly Newsletter of



July - September 2004

Volume 4 Number 3

Abraham Lincoln

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

PROJECT RECEIVES *WE THE PEOPLE* DESIGNATION FROM NEH

The National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) recently awarded the Papers of Abraham Lincoln a three-year grant for \$170,000, which the project reported in the previous newsletter. Last month, NEH Chairman Bruce Cole named the Papers of Abraham Lincoln as one of its *We the People* projects.

In September 2002, President George W. Bush announced the new *We the People* initiative to "explore significant events and themes in our nation's history and share these lessons with all Americans" and to improve the teaching, learning, and understanding of American history and culture. Applicants to NEH do not specifically request *We the People* status. The NEH chairman

determines which grants the funding agency will designate.

The Papers of Abraham Lincoln was one of ten scholarly editing projects to receive this recognition. The project falls within one of the *We the People* missions: to preserve our nation's historic documents, such as newspapers and presidential papers, and to support scholarly research, while expanding access to these important documents.

The major objective of the Papers of Abraham Lincoln is to preserve all of Lincoln's correspondence and speeches with digital images, to provide authoritative transcriptions of those documents, to offer historical context for each document through annotation, and to make the images and transcriptions freely available over the Internet.



NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES

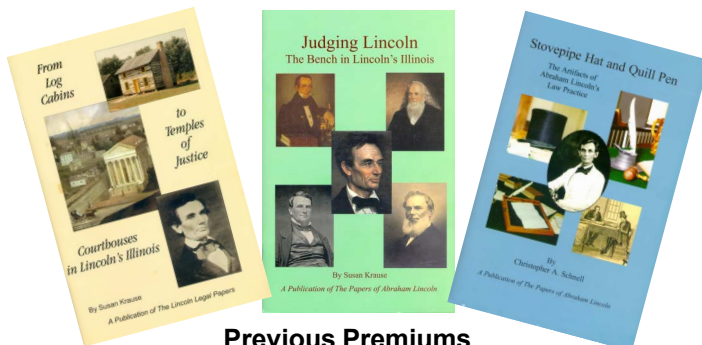
PREVIEW OF THIS YEAR'S DONOR PREMIUM

At the end of the year, The Papers of Abraham Lincoln will offer another booklet for donors who make a minimum contribution to the project. Previous booklets—*From Log Cabins to Temples of Justice: Courthouses in Lincoln's Illinois*, *Judging Lincoln: The Bench in Lincoln's Illinois*, and *Stovepipe Hat and Quill Pen: The Artifacts of Abraham Lincoln's Law Practice*—

have received rave reviews, and the upcoming booklet promises to be a hit as well.

The new 200-page booklet will contain biographies, photographs of people and gravestones, and documents of Lincoln contemporaries who are buried at Oak Ridge Cemetery in Springfield, Illinois, the site of Lincoln's tomb. The booklet will feature friends and neighbors of the Lincoln family, Lincoln's colleagues at the bar and in politics, and local business people with whom Lincoln interacted.

Inside this quarter's newsletters are two sneak previews of the upcoming booklet. In the *Lincoln Editor*, there is an entry for Robert Irwin, a Springfield merchant and Lincoln's friend. An entry for Henrietta Ulrich, a proprietor of a Springfield lumber company and a client of Lincoln's, is located in the *Lincoln Legal Briefs*.

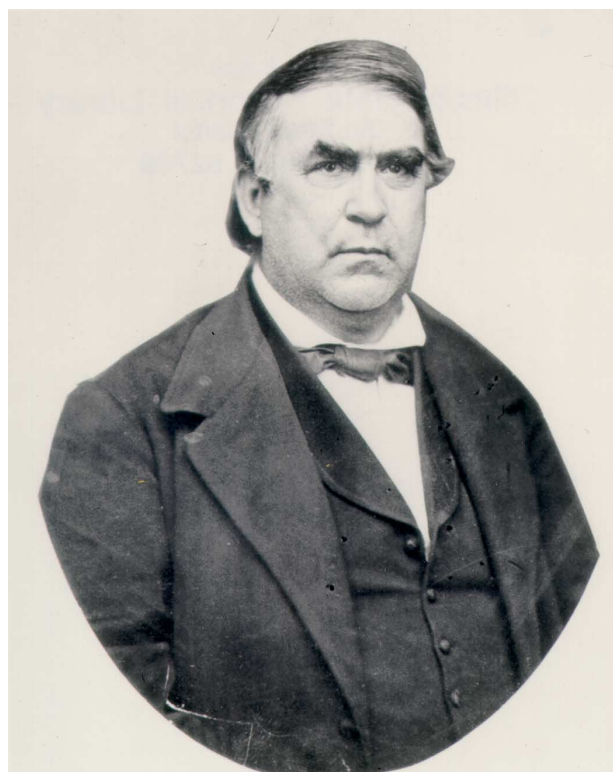


Previous Premiums

ROBERT IRWIN

As a young man, Robert Irwin moved from Pennsylvania to St. Louis, Missouri, where he opened a mercantile business with John and Augustus Carr. He married Clara C. Doyle in 1833. The next year, he moved to Springfield, Illinois, where he joined a dry goods partnership with John Williams, one of the pioneer merchants of Springfield. Later, his brother, John Irwin, joined the company, which counted among its customers Abraham and Mary Lincoln. When the Illinois General Assembly chartered the Springfield Marine and Fire Insurance Company in 1851, Robert Irwin was among the first to purchase shares of stock. The stockholders elected Irwin as one of seven directors of the company, and the directors elected him vice president. Irwin also served as the company's secretary and later as cashier.

In 1853, Irwin opened a new account for his friend Abraham Lincoln at the Springfield Marine and Fire Insurance Company, which operated not only as an insurance provider, but also as a banking house. Robert Irwin was one of ten Republican Party leaders who financed \$12,500 in local expenses for Lincoln's presidential campaign in 1860.



Robert Irwin

Born November 7, 1810, Monongahela City, Pennsylvania;
Died March 8, 1865, Springfield, Illinois.

*Photograph courtesy of
the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum.*



Robert Irwin's Gravesite at Oak Ridge Cemetery

In February 1861, when Lincoln left Springfield for Washington, D.C., he entrusted Robert Irwin as his agent to collect the payments on interest-bearing notes and mortgages for money that Lincoln had loaned to numerous individuals. Lincoln published a notice in the *Illinois State Journal* announcing that "the notes and papers of Mr. Lincoln are left with Mr. Robert Irwin, where persons interested can find them." The administrator of Lincoln's estate noted that Irwin had collected \$9,044.41 for Lincoln before Lincoln's death in 1865.

WRAP-UP RESEARCH TRIP TO BROWN UNIVERSITY

In September, editors Daniel Stowell and Chris Schnell traveled to Providence, Rhode Island, to digitize Lincoln documents in the Hay Library at Brown University. Stowell and Research Associate Kelley Boston began this task in June 2003, capturing digital images of nearly two-thirds of the institution's Lincoln holdings. The project has now digitized more than 1,000 Lincoln documents from Brown, one of the largest collections of Lincoln materials in the country.

THE TROUBLE WITH PATRONAGE

In February 1861, Robert Irwin wrote to President Lincoln, asking him to appoint Irwin's friend George Denison, an attorney from New York, as a naval officer of the port of New York.¹ On March 20, Lincoln wrote to Irwin regarding his reservations about the appointment.

Abraham Lincoln to Robert Irwin

Private

Washington D.C.

March 20. 1861

Robert Irwin, Esq

My dear Sir:

I am scared about your friend Dennison. The place is so fiercely sought by, and for, others, while, except what has come through you, his name is not mentioned at all, that I fear appointing him will appear too arbitrary on my part.

I have made no appointments at the City as yet; but ^it^ has pained me that among the scores of names urged, his has not occurred once.

Your tired friend

A. Lincoln

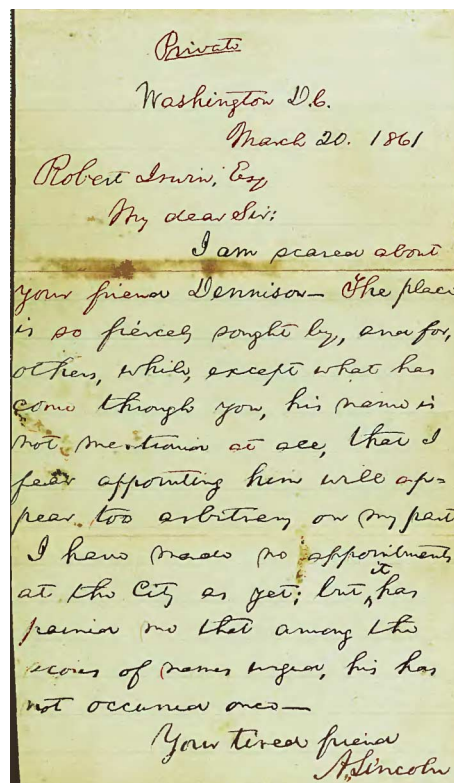


Image courtesy of the Henry Horner Lincoln Collection
Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum.

On May 16, 1861, Lincoln wrote to Secretary of the Treasury Salmon P. Chase, asking him to send a commission for Denison.² Chase sent the commission the same day, but in his letter to the President, he offered a word of caution: "I send a Commission for Mr. Dennison; but I shall not fulfill my duty to you if I do not say that I fear, if you make this appointment, you will regret it." Chase went on to tell Lincoln that there were several influential men in New York who held unfavorable opinions of Denison.³

¹Robert Irwin to Abraham Lincoln, 27 February 1861, Robert Todd Lincoln Collection of Abraham Lincoln Papers (RTL), Library of Congress (DLC).

George Denison was a lawyer in New York. During the Civil War, he was a naval officer in charge of the Naval Office under the Collector of Customs of the Port of New York. Abraham Lincoln to Salmon P. Chase, 18 May 1861, John G. Nicolay and John Hay, eds., *Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln*, 12 vols. (New York: Francis D. Tandy Co., 1905), 6:274-75; *Register of Officers and Agents, Civil, Military, and Naval, in the Service of the United States on the Thirtieth of September 1861* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1862).

²Abraham Lincoln to Salmon P. Chase, 16 May 1861, Nicolay and Hay, *Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln*, 6:273.

Salmon Portland Chase, b. 13 January 1808, in Cornish, New Hampshire; d. 7 May 1873, in New York, New York. After the death of his father, Chase went to Ohio to live with his uncle, Episcopal bishop Philander Chase. Chase graduated from Dartmouth College in 1836 and moved to Washington, D.C., where he opened a school. He taught school and studied law, gaining admission to the bar in 1829. He started practicing law in Cincinnati, Ohio. He won election as a Whig to the Cincinnati City Council in 1840. As a candidate of the Free Soil Party in 1849, he won election to the U.S. Senate (1849-1855). He stayed with the party and won election as governor of Ohio in 1855. He won reelection to that office in 1857 as a Republican. He maintained his affiliation with the Republicans, and voters reelected him to the U.S. Senate in 1860. Two days after taking his Senate seat, he resigned

Lincoln wrote back to Chase, stating that the request for Denison's appointment came as an "urgent solicitation of an old friend (Irwin) who has served me all my life, and who has never before received or asked anything in return." Lincoln then provided his reasoning for continuing with Denison's appointment, arguing in part that the opinions against Denison were unfounded. By September 1861, Denison had assumed his duties as a naval officer in the U.S. Customs Service in New York, earning a handsome annual salary of \$4,950.⁴

to accept an appointment from Abraham Lincoln as Secretary of the Treasury (1861-1864). John A. Garraty and Mark C. Carnes, eds., *American National Biography*, 24 vols. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 4:739-43; David Niven, *Salmon P. Chase: A Biography* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995).

³Salmon P. Chase to Abraham Lincoln, 16 May 1861, RTL, DLC.

⁴Abraham Lincoln to Salmon P. Chase, 18 May 1861, Nicolay and Hay, *Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln*, 6:274-75; *Register of Officers and Agents*.

DONORS

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

Mr. and Mrs. Edward Armstrong

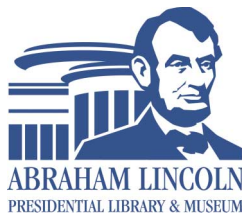
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A Project of



How You Can Help:

- By advising project staff of known or reported Lincoln documents in your locality. We are seeking copies of any document, letter, or contemporary printed account that relates to Abraham Lincoln's entire life, 1809-1865.
- By making a tax-deductible donation to the Papers of Abraham Lincoln in support of the project. Such gifts provide crucial support in furtherance of the project's objectives.

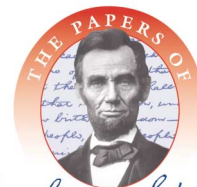
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Abraham Lincoln

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