

Last Words & Acts

DRAWER 13A

Assassination - Related Events

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The Assassination of Abraham Lincoln

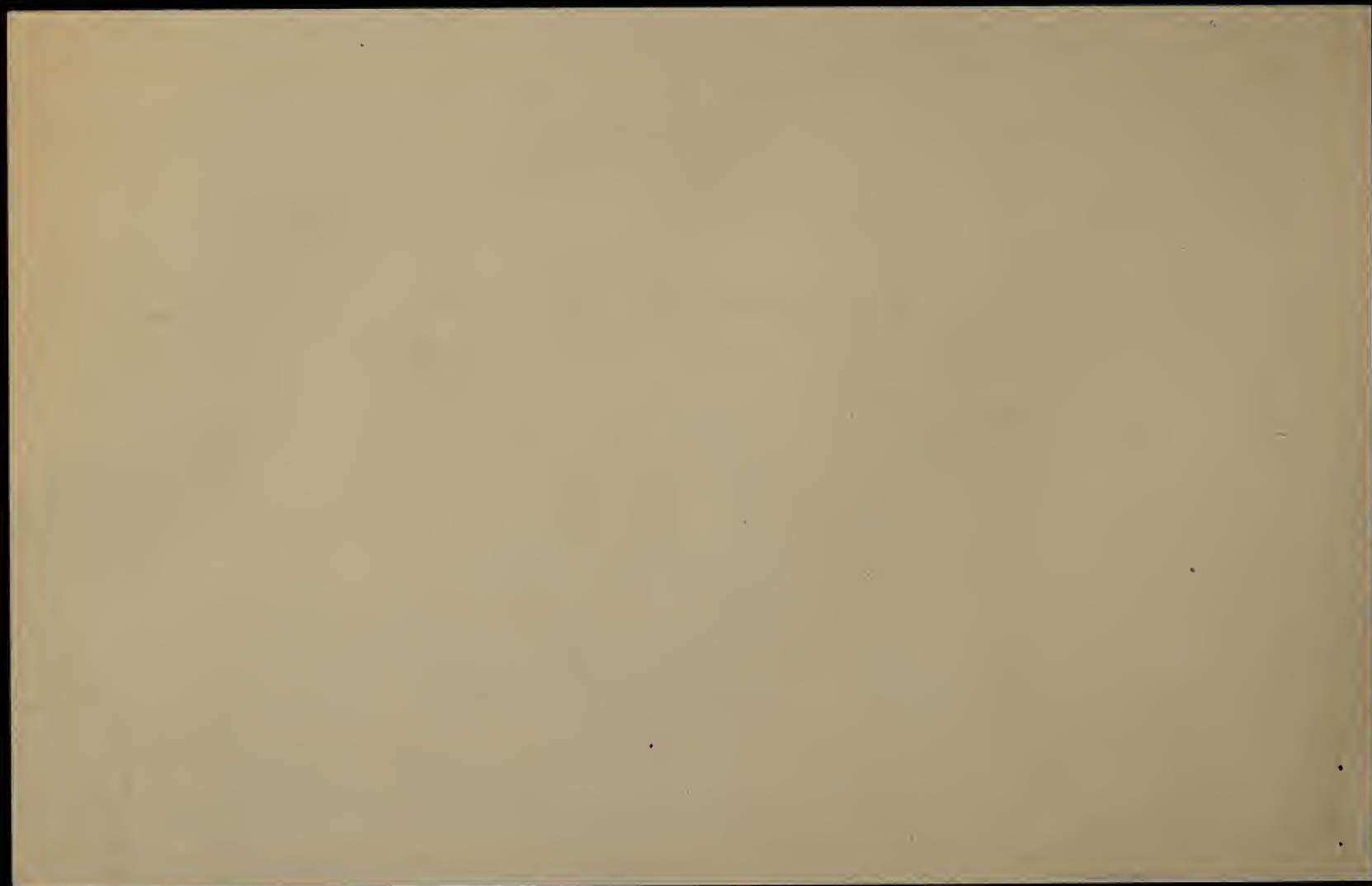
Last Words and Acts

Excerpts from newspapers and other
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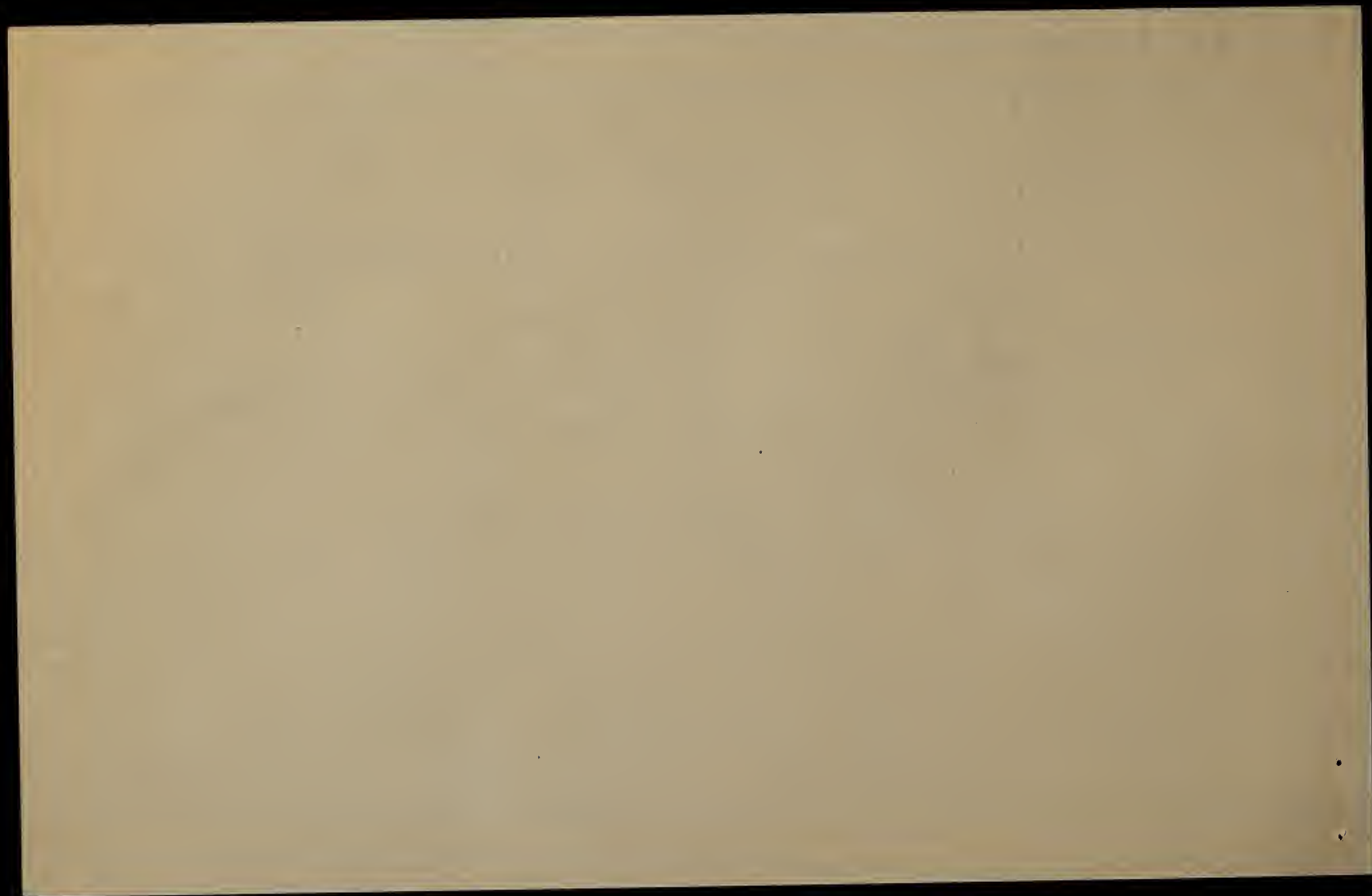
DESERTER

A boy sentenced to be shot for desertion was pardoned by Lincoln which caused him to sign the necessary papers. It is said that he remarked upon so doing, "Well, I think the boy can do us more good above ground than under ground."



CONFEDERATE

What one author calls, "Lincoln's last official act," occurred shortly after the condemned boy was pardoned. A petition for the release of a Confederate prisoner was presented and he endorsed it with these words, "Let it be done. A. Lincoln"



CRESSWELL

General John J. Cresswell, of Maryland, was one of the President's earliest visitors on that fatal day. He came to see the President about the pardon of a Southern soldier. Lincoln took occasion to tell a story which indicated he was very anxious to see the prisons emptied and would cooperate with those who were attempting to bring about a normal condition in the country. He endorsed the Cresswell affidavit.

cresswell

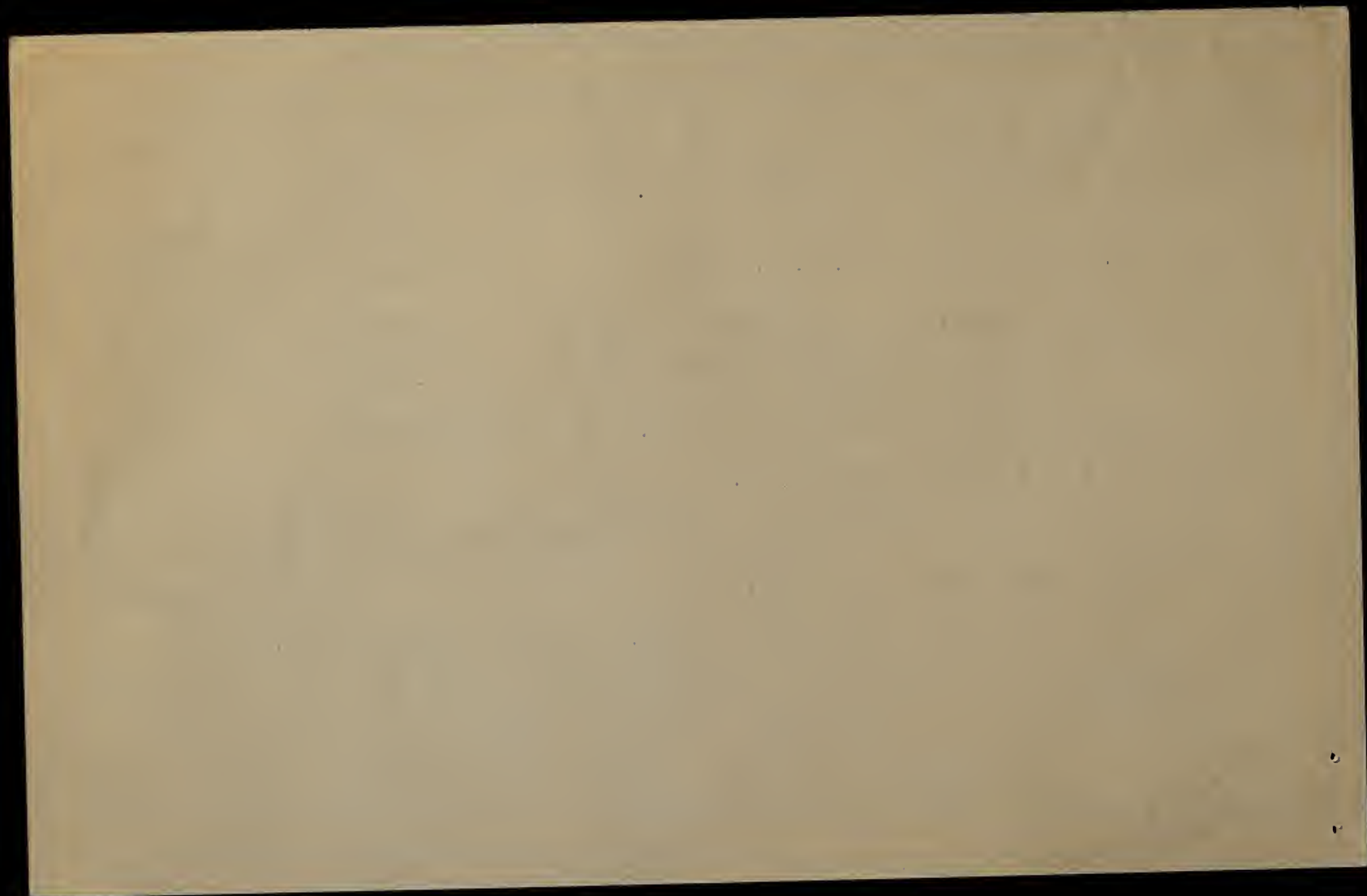
HERRON

Rev. S. D. Herron, a well known Methodist clergyman, wrote a four page letter, dated, Washington, April 13, 1865 to Lincoln, asking that he pardon George S. Herron, a Confederate prisoner, of Maryland. This endorsement was written on the back of the letter.

"Let this Prisoner be discharged on taking the oath of December 8, 1863.

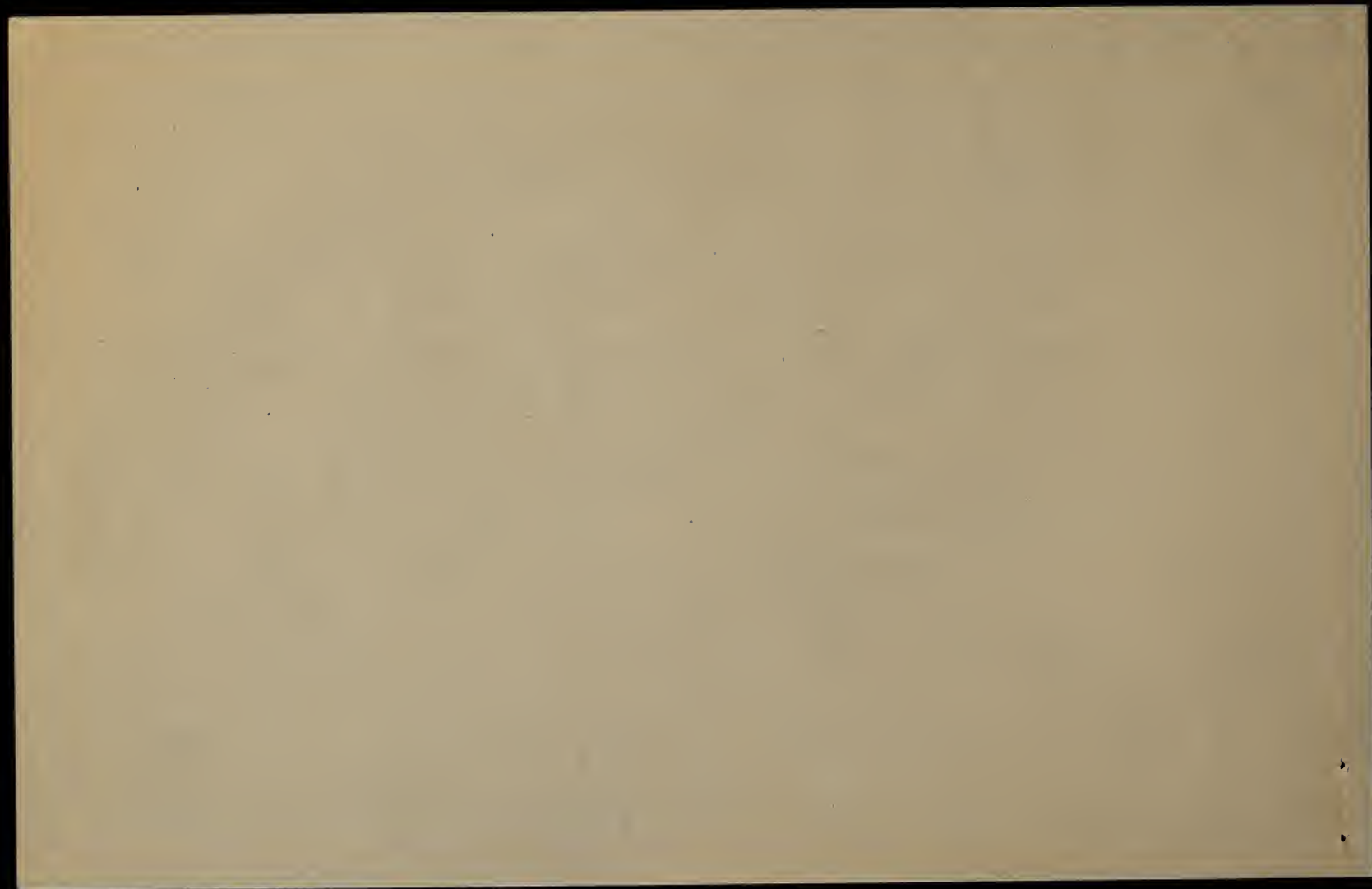
"A. Lincoln"

April 14, 1865



Henderson

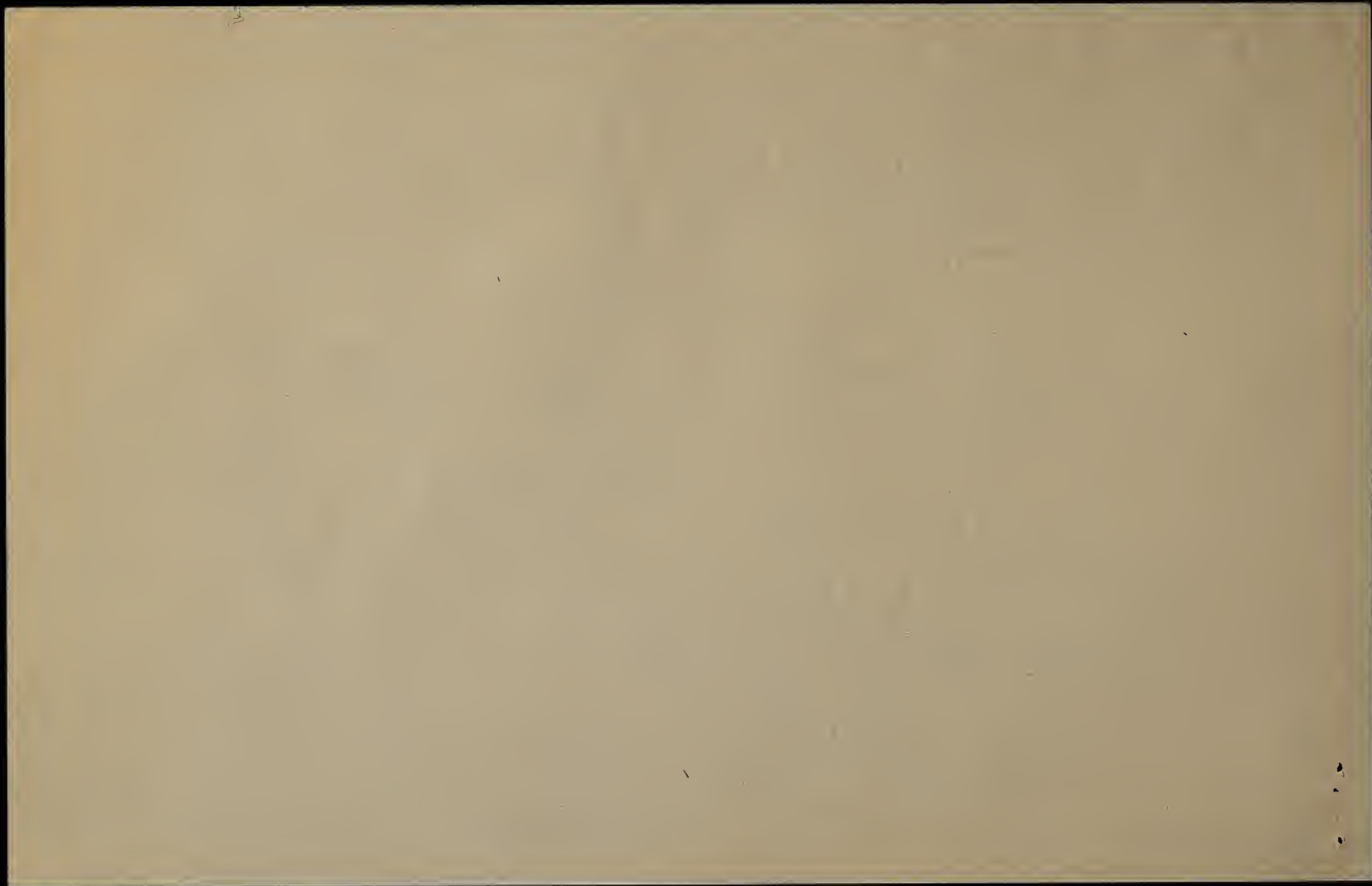
Senator John B. Henderson, of Missouri, appealed in person for the release of a Southern prisoner by the name of George Vaughn. Twice, appeals for the prisoner's release had been solicited unsuccessfully. Stanton objected, so Lincoln signed a pardon saying, "I think that this will have precedence over Stanton."



Governor of Maryland

Benefactor

The Governor of Maryland was a visitor and
brought a friend with him who requested a favor and Lincoln
wrote the necessary order.



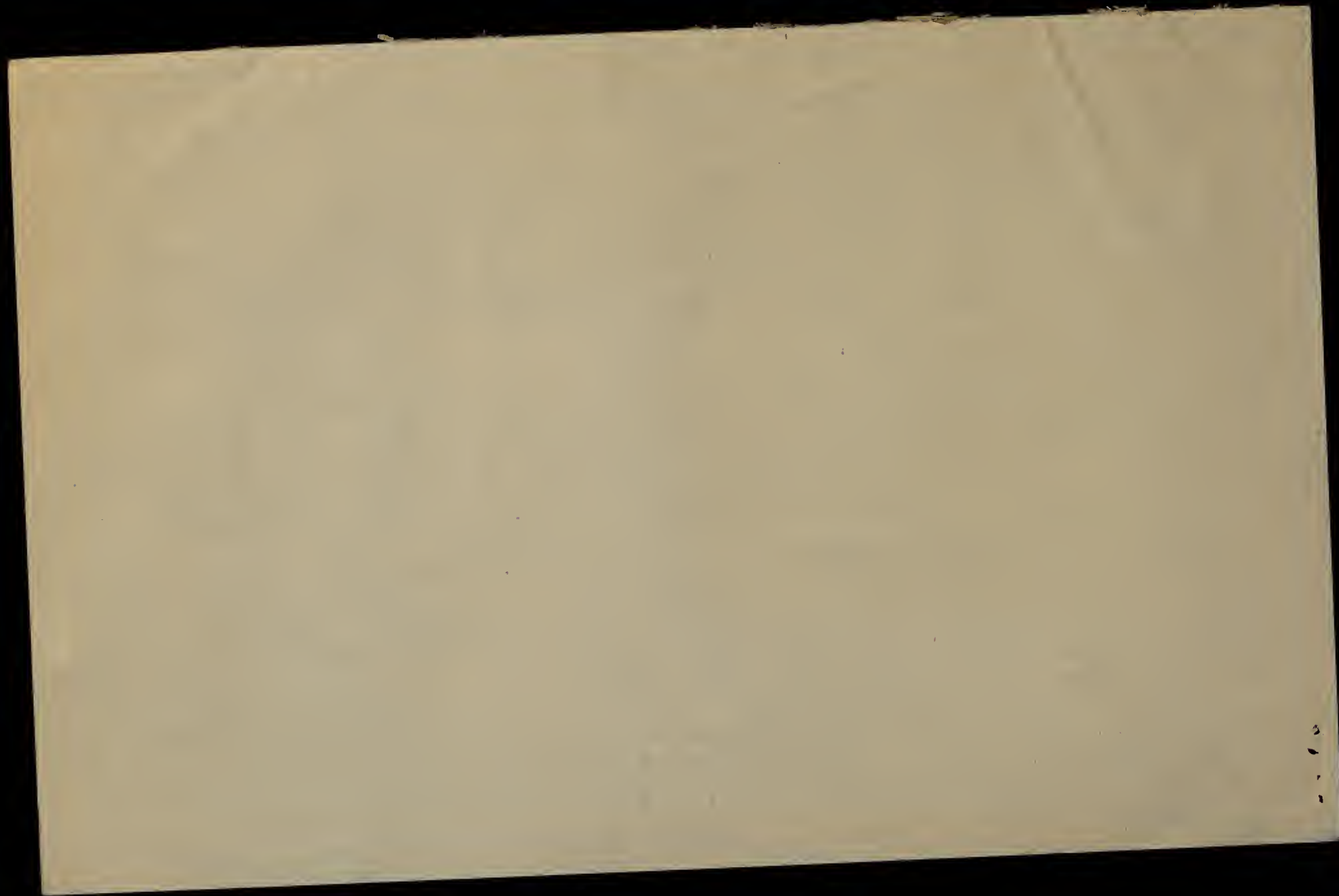
GEARY

The war over, Lincoln's desire to bring about normal conditions is illustrated by such memorandums as the following:

"Let Thomas Geary be discharged from the service upon refunding any bounty received."

April 14, 1865

"A. Lincoln"



Lincoln's Last Laugh.

Mr. George Van Duzer, of New York, has presented to the Grand Lodge library, a portion of the collar worn by Abraham Lincoln at the time of his assassination. Mr. Van Duzer was present at Ford's theater on that fatal night, and relates the following incident:

The army under Gen. Lee having surrendered to Gen. Grant a few days previously, Secretary Stanton, on April 13, 1865, telegraphed to Governor John A. Dix to stop the draft, as it was considered that the war was virtually over. 3, 14, 68

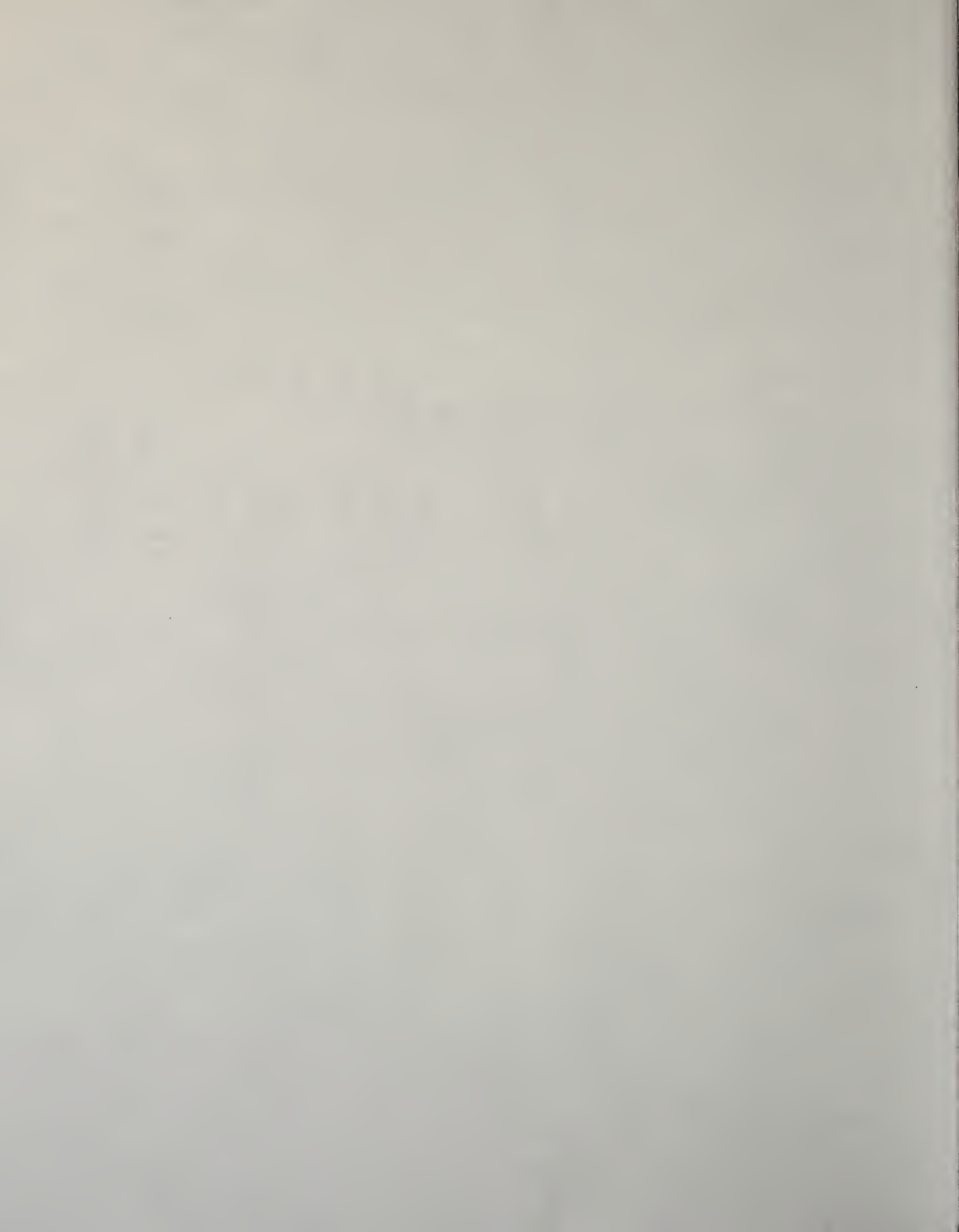
At Ford's theater, Washington, D. C., on the evening of April 14 1865, the play of "Our American Cousin" was being enacted. In the scene, just before the fatal shot of the assassin, a garden settee was standing on the stage opposite the President's box. Mary Meredith (one of the characters of the play), followed by Lord Dundreary (with her shawl thrown over his arm), came upon the stage, and the lady took a seat upon the settee. Glancing over first one shoulder and then the other, she exclaimed:

"My Lord, will you please be so kind as to throw that shawl over my shoulders? There appears to be such a draft here."

Lord Dundreary immediately replied:

"You are mistaken, Miss Mary—there is no draft. The draft is all over."

The President instantly saw the point and laughed very heartily, as did the audience, who arose and cheered. In a few moments more the assassin had done his work, and a nation was in tears.



A Letter Which All Americans Will Read with Interest and Emotion.

[Andrew James Symington, F. R. S. N. A., in New York Independent.]

In 1865 a sixteen-page letter, written that year by Miss Harris, who was in the theater box with the Lincoln party when the President was shot, was given me by a friend who had just received it from Mrs. Stowe. Of this letter Mrs. Stowe remarked that, under the circumstances, it would one day be regarded as historically valuable and of national interest. At all events, in it intelligent and reliable testimony is borne to the domestic virtues of one of the gentlest, wisest and best of men.

It is sad to know that other tragic events followed the party, for Miss Harris, who afterward married her step-brother, Maj. Rathbone, was killed by him in Germany, and Rathbone, I believe, is at present the inmate of a lunatic asylum.

Although not written for publication, and touching toward the end on other matters, after the lapse of four-and-twenty years, I venture to give the whole letter in its integrity.

WASHINGTON, April 29.—MY DEAR M—: I was very glad to hear from you again; your letter proving that in all the events of your matronly life our old friendship is not forgotten.

"You may well say that we have been passing through scenes sad indeed. That terrible Friday night is to me yet almost like some dreadful vision. I have been very intimate with Mrs. Lincoln and the family ever since our mutual residence in Washington, which began at the same time, and we have been constantly in the habit of driving and going to the opera and theater together. It was the only amusement, with the exception of receiving at their own house, in which the President and Mrs. Lincoln were permitted, according to custom, to indulge, and to escape from the crowds who constantly thronged to see them more than from any decided taste for such things. They were in the habit of going very often to hear Forrest, Booth, Hackett and such actors when playing in Washington.

"The night before the murder was that of the general illumination here, and they drove all through the streets to see it; a less calculating villain might have taken that opportunity for his crime, or the night before, when the White House alone was brilliantly illuminated, and the figure of the President stood out in full relief to the immense crowd below, who stood in the darkness to listen to his speech. He spoke from the center window of the Executive Mansion. I had been invited to pass the evening there, and stood at the window of an adjoining room with Mrs. Lincoln, watching the crowd below as they listened and cheered. Of course, Booth was there, watching his chance. I wonder that he did not choose that occasion, but probably he knew a better opportunity would be offered. After the speech was over we went to Mr. Lincoln's room; he was lying on the sofa, quite exhausted; but he talked of the events of the past fortnight, of his visit to Richmond, of the enthusiasm everywhere felt through the country; and Mrs. Lincoln declared the past few days to have been the happiest of her life. Their prospects indeed seemed fair—peace dawdling upon our land, and four years of a happy and honored rule before one of the gentlest, best and loveliest men I ever knew. I never saw him out of temper—the kindest husband, the tenderest father, the truest friend, as well as the wisest statesman. 'Our Beloved President'—when I think that I shall never again stand in his genial presence, that I have lost his friendship so tried and true, I feel like putting on the robe of mourning which the country wears.

"My own dear father was deeply attached to Mr. Lincoln; they thoroughly sympathized in many things, and Mr. Lincoln, perhaps being able to discern in him an honest, unselfish nature, in that akin to his own, was wont with him to throw off the restraints of the politician and talk over things as with an old friend.

"The shock has been a terrible one to him; he feels his death to be a deep personal affliction.

"You are right in supposing the Maj. Rathbone who was with us to be the Henry you knew in Albany.

"We four composed the party that evening. They drove to our door in the gayest spirits, chatting on the way—and the President was received with the greatest enthusiasm.

"They say we were watched by the assassins; yes, as we alighted from the carriage. Oh, how could any one be so cruel as to strike that dear, kind, honest face? And when I think of that head baring himself in alone with us my blood runs cold. My dress is saturated with blood; my hands and face were covered. You may imagine what a scene, and so all through that dreadful night, when we stood by that dying bed. Poor Mrs. Lincoln was, and is, almost crazy.

"Henry narrowly escaped with his life. The knife was struck at his heart with all the force of a practiced and powerful arm; he fortunately parried the blow and received a wound in his arm, extending along the bone from the elbow nearly to the shoulder. He concealed it for some time, but was finally carried home in a swoon, the loss of blood had been so great from an artery and veins severed. He is now getting quite well, but can not yet use his arm.

"I hope you will pardon me this dreadfully long letter. I did not realize how much I was writing. I have been quite ill, and have as yet answered scarcely any of the numerous letters I have received in the last two weeks. . . . Ever yours sincerely,

"CLARA H. HARRIS."

The most interesting story regarding the president which Mr. Lossing related he told me had been repeated to him lately by the Rev. Mr. Minor, a clergyman well acquainted with Mr. Lincoln's wife, who had related the story to him. "All day long the last day of the president's life," said his wife, "Mr. Lincoln seemed in the most happy and jubilant mood; he flitted from one portion of the white house to another, as if he had been a boy of 20, and constantly I heard him singing snatches of songs. Toward evening he declared to me his intention of going to the theater, but from this idea I tried to dissuade him. 'No! no!' he said, 'I will go. The war is over now, there will be no more bloodshed, and I am happy. I need a little amusement, and I am going to the theater to get it!'"

At last, as Mrs. Lincoln found there was no dissuading him, she consented to accompany her husband to Ford's Opera House. Once arrived at the theater she said that the president did not appear to take the slightest interest in the performance, but apparently ~~he was thinking deeply upon some~~ subject. At last he turned to her and remarked: "Mary, I need rest. I know what we will do; after this administration is over we will go abroad, where I am personally comparatively unknown. I would like to travel through Europe, and I have a desire to visit the Holy Land, and especially would I like as far as possible to tread the same ground that Jesus trod. I would like to walk the streets of Jerusalem." At that moment, before Jerusalem had scarcely passed his lips, the assassin's bullet entered his brain.

1850
Little did the president realize when he spoke these words that "rest" was near.

RECALLS LINCOLN'S LAST ACT.

Death of George S. E. Vaughan, Who
Was Pardoned on the Evening of
the Assassination.

Maryville, Mo., Aug. 26.—[Special.]—George S. E. Vaughan, who was the subject of Abraham Lincoln's last official act, died here this afternoon. He was a resident of Canton, Lewis County, Mo., at the outbreak of the war, and served under General Mark E. Green in a confederate regiment. He was sent to Canton with a message from General Green to his wife, when he was captured near Le Grange by union soldiers. He was tried twice in St. Louis and once in Alton, Ill., as a spy, and each time sentenced to death, but Senator John B. Henderson induced President Lincoln to interfere. The President finally signed his pardon the evening of April 14, 1865, just before he left for the theater where he was assassinated.

February 12, 1927.

Lincoln's Last Story

By Charles T. White, in New York Tribune

David Homer Bates, secretary of the United States Military Telegraph Corps, during the four years of the Civil War cipher code operator and manager of the War Department telegraph office, author of "Lincoln in the Telegraph Office," says the last story told by Abraham Lincoln was during the Cabinet meeting at midday on April 14, 1865, his assassination occurring the same evening at Ford's Theater.

"At each recurring Lincoln anniversary our thoughts easily revert to colorful episodes in the life of the great emancipator," said Mr. Bates yesterday. "While it is almost a truism that Lincoln was too busy to joke, still it is true that even when the clouds were blackest he would relax into a light vein of talk.

"He spent more of his working hours during the four years of the Civil War in the War Department telegraph office than anywhere else except the White House. As he himself stated more than once, indulging in a jest was a sort of life-saving thing to him.

"But after the collapse, or the evident collapse, of the Confederacy, and especially after Appomattox, he was delightfully jovial, radiating sunshine whenever he came into the War Department telegraph office, where he spent literally hours at a stretch when battles were on or impending, waiting for news from Grant, Sherman, Meade, Sheridan or Thomas.

"At the last Cabinet meeting, following an interchange of views over certain departmental matters, there came up for discussion something all were interested in—namely, the disposition of Jefferson Davis, President of the Confederacy, who, it was hoped and

expected, would soon be a prisoner of war in the custody of our troops on Southern soil.

"There were all sorts of suggestions. One Cabinet member thought hanging was none too severe. Another wanted him locked up for a term of years. Each member of the Cabinet voiced his judgment. There was intense curiosity about the President's views. Previously in a private conversation he had suggested to Assistant Secretary of War Charles A. Dana, afterward editor of 'The New York Sun,' who had asked him about the disposition of Jacob Thompson, Secretary of War in Davis's Cabinet, arrested at Portland, Me., in trying to reach Canada, that—to use his own words:

"'When you have got an elephant by the hind leg and he is trying to run away, it's best to let him run.'

"Lincoln listened to every one, and when it came time for him to speak his face took on a quizzical expression, a signal that something out of the ordinary was coming, and then he said:

"'What to do with Jefferson Davis reminds me of an Irishman in Springfield, Ill., who during a temperance wave signed a total abstinence pledge. He withstood all pressure to get him to break his pledge. On one extraordinary occasion when all the others were drinking and when his friends bore on harder than ever Pat said: 'I'll not break me pledge, but if some one should put some whisky in me glass of water unbeknownst-like to me, sure I'd be all the happier.'

"'And so,' said Lincoln, 'if it could be managed that Davis could escape unbeknownst-like to the government, it might be a happy solution of the matter.'"

LINCOLN LORE

Bulletin of the Lincoln National Life Foundation - - - - - Dr. Louis A. Warren, Editor.
Published each week by The Lincoln National Life Insurance Company, of Fort Wayne, Indiana.

No. 210

FORT WAYNE, INDIANA

April 17, 1933

WASHINGTON AND CHARLESTON—APRIL 14, 1865

A strange coincident of national significance which presents a peculiar paradox occurred on Friday, April 14, 1865. Upon the victory of northern forces Washington, the capital of the Union, was dressed in gala attire while Charleston, the early center of the Confederacy, lay in ruins. By night, however, a different story was to be told. In Washington the president had been assassinated, and in Charleston the celebration of the raising of the flag at Fort Sumter was drawing to a close with a brilliant illumination in the harbor and the firing of cannon.

With the Union troops in possession of Charleston, people throughout the North felt that there should be some formal program for the raising of the flag again on Fort Sumter. It so happened that April 14, 1865, came on Good Friday, the same day of the week as April 14, 1861, when Sumter fell. This fact contributed much to the general feeling that a flag raising should be held at Charleston on the fourth anniversary of the day the flag was lowered.

Inasmuch as such a program would first appeal to the War Department, which would look upon the anniversary as an occasion to build up the morale of the troops and create enthusiasm throughout the North, it is quite likely that the idea originated in the office of the Secretary of War. Stanton's biographer, Fowler, implies this. The order follows:

General Order No. 50

War Department, Adjutant-General's Office
Washington, March 27, 1865

Ordered—1. That at the hour of noon, on the 14th day of April, 1865, Brevet Major-General Anderson will raise and plant upon the ruins of Fort Sumter, in Charleston Harbor, the same United States flag which floated over the battlements of that fort during the rebel assault, and which was lowered and saluted by him and the small force of his command when the works were evacuated on the 14th day of April, 1861.

2. That the flag, when raised, be saluted by one hundred guns from Fort Sumter, and by a national salute from every fort and rebel battery that fired upon Fort Sumter.

3. That suitable ceremonies be had upon the occasion, under the direction of Major-General William T. Sherman, whose military operations compelled the rebels to evacuate Charleston, or, in his absence, under the charge of Major-General Q. A. Gillmore, commanding the department. Among the ceremonies will be the delivery of a public address by the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher.

4. That the naval forces at Charleston and their commander at that station be invited to participate in the ceremonies of the occasion.

By order of the President of the United States,
Edwin M. Stanton, Secretary of War.

The supposition that the order for the celebration originated with Stanton is strengthened by Lincoln's communications with him about it. On March 27, Lincoln, who was then at City Point, received from Stanton the above order relating to the Charleston celebration. The President replied to Stanton the same day as follows:

March 27, 1865—Telegram to Secretary Stanton.

City Point, Virginia, March 27, 1865. 3:35 P. M.
Hon. Secretary of War, Washington, D. C.:

Yours inclosing Fort Sumter order received. I think of but one suggestion. I feel quite confident that Sumter fell on the 13th, and not on the 14th of April, as you have it. It fell on Saturday, the 13th; the first call for troops on our part was got up on Sunday, the 14th, and given date and issued on Monday, the 15th. Look up the old almanac and other data, and see if I am not right.

A. Lincoln.

The following day Lincoln sent another telegram to Stanton as follows: "After your explanation, I think it is little or no difference whether the Fort Sumter ceremony takes place on the 13th or 14th." It will be noted that Lincoln had little interest in the arranging of the details of the celebration and apparently it was entirely under the jurisdiction of Secretary Stanton.

Between the time the order was issued and the date set for the celebration, Richmond was captured and Lee had surrendered which brought the war to a close. Those who are unfriendly to Abraham Lincoln argue that he should have called off the celebration, inasmuch as the war was over. His failure to do so some people have declared was evidence that it was "Lincoln's purpose to rub salt into those wounds and put fear into the hearts of the southern people."

Those who were to take part in the celebration had already left Washington for Charleston, before the news of Lee's surrender was received, and the one hundred and eighty citizens of New York who had planned for nearly two weeks to attend the celebration left New York for Charleston by boat the very morning the papers announced Grant's victory.

Even if Lincoln had elected to call off the Fort Sumter program after learning of Lee's surrender, it would have been physically impossible for him to do so unless he had acted immediately. The announcement of the victory of the Union forces did not reach Charleston until the night before the memorable fourteenth of April.

Noon Program at Fort Sumter

1. Introductory Prayer by Rev. Matthias Harris, who had been with Major Anderson at the Fort in 1860.

2. Selection from the Psalms by Rev. R. S. Storrs, Jr., of Brooklyn.

3. Reading of Major Anderson's dispatch to the Government on the fall of Fort Sumter.

4. Raising of original flag upon the ruins of Fort Sumter by Brevet Major-General Robert Anderson.

5. National salute.

6. Address by the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher.

7. Singing of the Doxology.

8. Closing prayer and benediction by Rev. R. S. Storrs, Jr.

The program at night can best be told in the words of one of the eye witnesses:

"In the evening, at 8 o'clock, we were summoned to the decks, to witness a most unique and beautiful illumination, as the closing demonstration of the day. At a given signal from the flag-ship, every man-of-war, transport and monitor in the harbor, became a skeleton pyramid of flame. Lanterns thickly slung to the rigging and culminating at the top of the mainmast flashed out a starry light or line of lights, reduplicated by reflection in the water, while on the decks the most brilliant Gregorian fires of red, white, blue, green, pink, purple and gold, were lighted, whose columns of smoke, rolling lazily upward and illuminated respectively by their own peculiar flame, presented a spectacle of almost dazzling beauty. Rockets of great power and towering flight screamed skyward from every deck, and, bursting with a muffled sound, dissolved into various gorgeous tints, dropped gently downward, and quenched their splendor in the tide. . . . Thus ended the celebration of April 14, 1865, the day of the flag's resurrection."

The tragedy which occurred in Washington on the evening of April 14, 1865, is well known to all, and stands out in vivid contrast to the brilliant celebration which was originally planned to commemorate a single event but which proved to be the most significant demonstration associated with the close of the war.

Advertisers Press, Inc.

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FLINT 3, MICHIGAN

Publishers of

Flint News-Advertiser

Nov. 1, 1957

Why Lincoln was assassinated on anniversary of lowering
and raising flag over Ft. Sumter.

Dear Mr. Sanburg:

The late Justice Frank Murphy some years ago wanted this writer to send you the story of Sgt. William Hamner, the QM Serg't. who was ordered by Major Anderson to lower the colors over Ft. Sumter when that works were evacuated in 1861.

Hamner later was retired as a Lt. Col. and a paymaster in the Army, and he was on the rolls of the Army for 69 years. He died at the age of 85. His widow, a cousin to my grandmother (maternal) lived here and I took care of her for twenty years, and I got his papers most of which I presented to the military school at Charlestown, S.C., where my old chief and friend, General Summerfield, was commandant. Mrs. Hamner died at the age of 99, four years ago.

I believe there is a good story in the fact that President Lincoln refused to agree with that vicious general order No. 50 which Stanton personally wrote and submitted to Lincoln. When the president, shocked at the order, which related to the ceremonies to be held at the ruins of Ft. Sumter on the anniversary of the evacuation, he ordered Stanton to not put it out.

Stanton stopped from Lincoln's presence, and without the knowledge of Lincoln, put out a worse order. That order No. 50 and at its point of issuance to the Army of the South at Hiltonhead, S.C., was No 40. Like all general orders it was signed

By Order of the President of the
United States
Edwin Stanton,
Secretary of War

It might have been G.O. 40 in Washington and S.O. 50 at Hiltonhead Hqrs. But it ordered "every rebel fort and battery to fire a 100 gun salute", put in General Sherman to take charge of the ceremonies, or, in his absence, General Cronkite; Henry Ward Beecher was the speaker of the Day, etc. And the day it was issued, the conspiracy to assassinate Lincoln, Grant, and cabinet members, was in motion. Those people thought President Lincoln wrote the order or condoned it. But he never did. A first cousin of Mrs. Hamner, Capt. C.S. Eldridge was on General Grant's staff. I have all the facts, but you should write the story. It could be released as a SatPost story on a date near Lincoln's birthdate, perhaps. Let me know. Thanks.

G.H. Maines

PS My father was lecture manager for Elbert Hubbard, Rev. Russell H. Conwell, Opie Read, Rev. Francis C. Kelly, others. I was 70 Oct. 18.

LINCOLN LORE

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Published each week by The Lincoln National Life Insurance Company, of Fort Wayne, Indiana.

No. 331

FORT WAYNE, INDIANA

August 12, 1935

THE FAR WEST—LAST THOUGHTS OF LINCOLN

The last spoken word used by Abraham Lincoln in business conversation was "San Francisco," and the Golden Gate City was the first metropolis to honor Lincoln's name, after his death, by the erection of a heroic statue in his likeness. This statue by Pietro Mezzaro was destroyed by the great fire which swept the city on April 18, 1906, but it has recently been replaced by an excellent bronze statue of Lincoln by Haig Patigan.

To Schuyler Colfax was given the privilege of having the earliest as well as the latest interview with the President at the White House on the fatal fourteenth of April, 1865. While Lincoln was at breakfast, it was announced that Colfax had arrived; and, when the carriage drew away from the White House for Ford's Theatre that evening, it was Colfax to whom Lincoln was speaking. The subject of the conversation on both of these visits had to do with the Far West.

Colfax, as chairman of the Committee on Post Office and Post Roads, had been instrumental to a large extent in securing the Overland Mail and Telegraph to the Pacific coast. In recognition of this service he was invited to make a western trip and expected to go in 1861, but the war interrupted. With the close of the war plans for the trip were again made and he was scheduled to leave Washington April 15, 1865.

There were many things he wished to talk over with the President before leaving, so we find him at the White House bright and early the morning of April 14. Mr. Lincoln and Speaker Colfax were in conference for about an hour and policies of reconstruction were discussed, among them the part the Far West was to play in the program.

It was this phase of the discussion which caused Lincoln to suggest that Colfax on his western trip convey a message to the miners of Colorado, Nevada, and California. It is very fortunate indeed that Mr. Colfax took occasion to write down the message he had received from Mr. Lincoln, and it is so seldom seen in print that it should comprise a part of this monograph. It follows as recorded by Mr. Colfax:

MESSAGE TO THE MINERS OF THE WEST BY ABRAHAM LINCOLN

"I have very large ideas of the mineral wealth of our nation. I believe it practically inexhaustible. It abounds all over the Western country from the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific, and its development has scarcely commenced. During the war, when we were adding a couple of millions of dollars every day to our national debt, I did not care about encouraging the increase in the volumes of our precious metals. We had the country to save first. But now that the rebellion is overthrown, and we know pretty nearly the amount of our national debt, the more gold and silver we mine, makes the payment of that debt so much easier. Now I am going to encourage that in every possible way. We shall have hundreds of thousands of disbanded soldiers, and many have feared that their return home in such great numbers might paralyze industry by furnishing suddenly a greater supply of labor than there will be demand for. I am going to try to attract them to the hidden wealth of our mountain ranges where there is room enough for all. Immigration, which even the war has not stopped, will land upon our shores hundreds of thousands more per year from over-crowded Europe. I intend to point them to the gold and silver that waits for them in the West. Tell the miners, from me, that I shall promote their interests to the utmost of my ability, because their prosperity is the prosperity of the nation; and we shall prove in a very few years that we are indeed the TREASURY OF THE WORLD."

At the request of the President, Colfax was back at the White House again for a further interview in the evening, and Mr. George Ashmun of Massachusetts was also with him. It will be recalled that this is the same Ashmun who presided over the Chicago Convention and who was chairman of the committee to notify Lincoln of his nomination in 1860.

During the conversation President Lincoln mentioned that one of his friends had the gavel used by the Confederate Congress at Richmond and told Colfax that he insisted it be presented to him as Speaker. "Tell him from me to hand it over," he said. The mention of the gavel caused Mr. Ashmun to remark that he still had the gavel used at the Chicago Convention.

Although Lincoln was an hour late in starting for the theatre performance, he was still reluctant to go. He stated that as General Grant had not been able to attend, as already announced, he felt obliged to go, as he did not want the people to be disappointed inasmuch as it was announced that they would both be there.

Just before entering the carriage Mr. Lincoln said, "Colfax, do not forget to tell the people in the mining regions as you pass through them, what I told you this morning about the development when peace comes." After he had entered the carriage, according to one authority, he called back, "I will telegraph you, Colfax, at San Francisco." These were his last words in business conversation.

The people of the West had known of the President's interest in the development of the western country, and to them Speaker Colfax delivered what might be called the last public message authorized by Abraham Lincoln.

Accompanying Colfax on this overland trip were Mr. Bowles of the Springfield (Massachusetts) Republican, Mr. Richardson of the New York Tribune, and Lt. Governor Bross of the Chicago Tribune.

The tour of these distinguished people, coming just at the time of Lincoln's assassination, seemed to take the form of a public mission and great numbers along the route traversed heard Lincoln's last message to the people delivered by Colfax.

LINCOLN LORE

Bulletin of the Lincoln National Life Foundation - - - Dr. Louis A. Warren, Editor
Published each week by The Lincoln National Life Insurance Company, of Fort Wayne, Indiana

Number 560

FORT WAYNE, INDIANA

January 1, 1940

SEVENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE TRAGIC YEAR

All persons who may have an interest in Lincoln history are conscious that the year 1940 marks the seventy-fifth anniversary of many important events associated with the Emancipator. It would be a sad comment on our patriotism if we did not utilize the atmosphere created by the occurrences of these anniversaries to again recall the episodes which finally brought to the nation a lasting peace and to the President his martyrdom.

There have been several attempts to center attention on the last hours and the last days of Lincoln's life, but it seems there has not been a concentrated effort to emphasize the important and far-reaching events taking place during those weeks preceding "The Terrible Tragedy at Washington."

Beginning with this issue, *Lincoln Lore* at intervals will review the more important happenings in which the President was primarily interested between January 1, 1865, and the time of his assassination.

The editor of *Harper's Weekly* in the first issue of 1865 made this prophetic statement: "A Happy New Year! There are few faithful American citizens who can doubt that the New Year will be a happy one, because it will see the virtual overthrow of the rebellion against the principle of free popular constitutional government; the restoration of the Union, and the destruction of the only present cause of national danger."

If Abraham Lincoln made any New Year's resolutions in 1865, he must have resolved to be even more lenient with offenders, if that were possible, than he had been in the past. This supposition is quite important if we approach a study of these clemency cases as indicative of what might be expected of Lincoln in the reconstruction period which was soon to follow.

Early in January the charge against Lieutenant-governor Richard T. Jacob of Kentucky was called to Lincoln's attention. The reaction to it indicates that the public mind as well as Lincoln's was becoming more magnanimous toward those out of step with some of the government regulations.

On January 5 Lincoln wrote to General Grant with reference to Jacob, who was then at Richmond and under orders by General Burbridge "not to return to Kentucky." Lincoln asked that Jacob be allowed to confer with him in Washington. After the conference Lincoln wrote Jacob on January 18 as follows:

"You are at Liberty to proceed to Kentucky, and to remain at large so far as relates to any cause now past. In what I now do, I decide nothing as to the right or wrong of your arrest, but act in the hope that there is less liability to misunderstanding among Union men now than there was at the time of the arrest."

Lincoln was also taking the same conciliatory measure in dealing with dissatisfied executives. Governor Fenton of New York had made a complaint and Lincoln wrote the following note to Stanton about the problem:

"The Governor has a pretty good case. I feel sure he is more than half right. We don't want him to feel cross and we in the wrong. Try and fix it with him."

A letter written on January 9 referring to the granting of a pardon at the request of an unidentified woman is of sufficient interest to copy:

"It is with regret I learned that your brother, whom I had ordered to be discharged on taking the oath, under the impression that he was a private, is a captain. By an understanding, the commissary of prisoners detains such cases until a further hearing from me. I now distinctly say that if your father shall come within our lines and take the oath of December 8, 1863, I will give him a full

pardon, and will at the same time discharge your brother on his taking the oath, notwithstanding he is a captain."

On January 11 Lincoln wrote to General Hooker about a man who had been sentenced to "imprisonment at hard labor." The President commented, "While I incline to the belief that you are technically right, please let General Hovey's modification be acted upon until further order from me."

Early in January Mrs. Harriet C. Bledsoe, wife of Col. Albert Taylor Bledsoe of the Confederate army, appealed to President Lincoln for a pass south through the Union lines. She had managed to run the blockade coming north in hopes of getting wearing apparel for her children. Mrs. Bledsoe had been a close acquaintance of the Lincolns in Springfield, Illinois, and had been especially helpful to Mrs. Lincoln when Robert Todd Lincoln was born. Lincoln gave the southern officer's wife this memorandum:

"Allow the bearer Mrs. Harriet C. Bledsoe to pass our lines with ordinary baggage and go south."
"January 16, 1865. A. Lincoln."

Nowhere is the attitude of Lincoln toward southern sympathizers who might be living quietly in the territory held by the north, more clearly revealed than in a telegram sent to General G. M. Dodge at St. Louis on January 15, 1865. It follows:

"It is represented to me that there is so much irregular violence in northern Missouri as to be driving away the people and almost depopulating it. Please gather information, and consider whether an appeal to the people there to go to their homes and let one another alone . . . may not enable you to withdraw the troops, their presence itself (being) a cause of irritation and constant apprehension, and thus restore peace and quiet, and returning prosperity. Please consider this and telegraph or write me."

Mrs. Mary E. Morton, whose husband was in the Confederate army, had been living peaceably in her home with her children during the period of the war when, sometime in January 1865, her property was seized and she was ejected from her home. She secured a sympathetic hearing from President Lincoln and he advised Major-general Reynolds that any confiscation of property was a matter for the courts and not for the Provost Marshall. The President wrote to Reynolds: "If Mrs. Morton is playing traitor to the extent of practical injury, seize her, but leave her home to the court."

To Major-general Dodge at St. Louis, Lincoln wrote on January 24, "It is said an old lady in Clay County, Missouri, by name Mrs. Winifred E. Price, is about being sent South. If she is not misbehaving let her remain."

The building of good will between all classes at variance with one another was well under way in the early weeks of 1865.

DR. WARREN'S FEBRUARY ITINERARY

For several years the first January issue of *Lincoln Lore* has published the names of the cities where the Director of the Lincoln National Life Foundation will speak during his annual February itinerary. He would be pleased to meet any subscribers of *Lincoln Lore* who may be residing in or near the places named and may be reached at the offices of The Lincoln National Life Insurance Company in these cities: January 23, Richmond, Va.; 24, Roanoke, Va.; 25, 26, Norfolk, Va.; 29, 30, 31, February 1, 2, Newark, N. J.; 5, 6, Philadelphia, Penn.; 7, 8, 9, Baltimore, Md.; 12, 13, 14, Washington D. C.; 19, Racine, Wis.; 20, 21, Milwaukee, Wis.; 22, 23, 24, 25, Madison, Wis.; 26, 27, Appleton, Wis.; 28, Green Bay, Wis.; 29, March 1, Chicago, Ill.

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Section

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LINCOLN ON HIS LAST BIRTHDAY

By EMANUEL HERTZ

ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S last birthday on earth fell on a Sunday. No record survives to show that any notice of it was taken in the White House, or anywhere else. We know from the diary of Attorney General Edward Bates that "beautiful, moderate weather" prevailed, but Bates made no further entry and his fellow-Cabinet members, Welles and Chase, found nothing to set down in their journals.

Lincoln himself left no written comment. We do find among his papers an order issued on that day which shows how little nearly four years of war had done to turn the Illinois lawyer into a military dictator. It went to Major Gen. John Pope in St. Louis, and it directed him to stop the practice of permitting military provost marshals in Missouri to seize the property of rebel sympathizers who had given bond for good behavior. "The courts and not provost marshals," Lincoln wrote, "are to decide such questions unless when military necessity makes an exception."

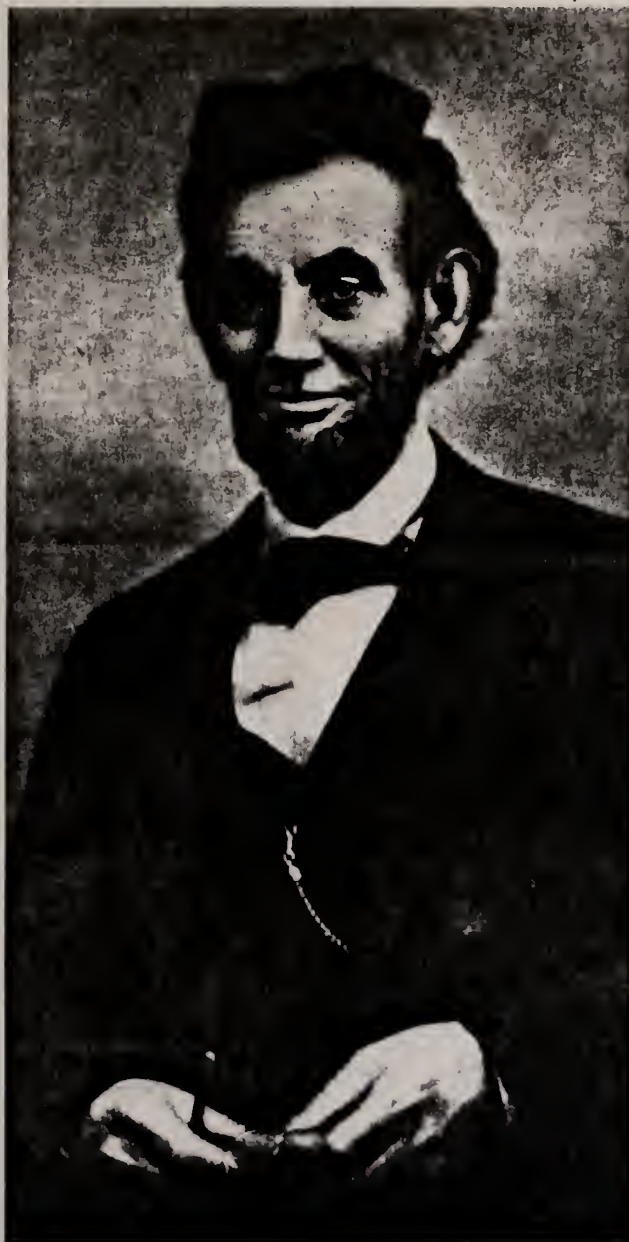
Probably Lincoln did not feel the lack of a birthday party, for despite continuing worries and some disappointments he had reason to believe that the war was coming to a victorious close. What hurt him most was the thought that lives must continue to be sacrificed after the military outcome was all but certain. In the past his generals had often made it hard for him to show mercy. Now in a few months, if all went well, there would no longer be a cruel "military necessity" to destroy.

MERCY was in Lincoln's mind on this last birthday. On that day he, who was to die on April 15 by the hand of a demented fanatic, pardoned a physician who had been held for some breach of war-time regulations. The man, he thought, was "partially insane." On that account "he should be discharged."

His deepest thoughts, the broodings of these final days and nights, we cannot fully know. We do know that they were not darkened by dread of approaching assassination. He sorrowed with North and South alike over the lives that had been spent and were to be spent, but he had no fear for himself. If risk had to be taken he, above all men, was ready to take it. The Commander in Chief, he must have reasoned, could not send other men to their deaths and take too much thought for his own safety.

To Ward H. Lamon he once said, "I long ago made up my mind that if anybody wants to kill me he will do it; if I wore a shirt of mail and kept myself surrounded by a bodyguard it would be all the same." To Colonel Charles G. Halpine he spoke in the same vein: "It would never do for a President to have guards with drawn sabers at his door, as if he fancied he were, or were assuming to be, an emperor." He figured shrewdly, too, that the South would prefer a man known to be kindly in his feelings toward his enemies rather than the more belligerent Johnson, who would succeed him if he were killed.

So he faced this birthday saddened and wearied by the frightful ordeal he had been through, yet beginning to see light ahead. The dawn was coming, just as he



Alexander Gardner from Frederick H. Meserve Collection

"Lincoln the great humanitarian was more and more in evidence during these final days" — The photograph made six days before his death.

On the last Feb. 12 of his life the war President was planning that moral reunion of North and South which the bullet of an assassin was to postpone for a generation.

had seen it years ago breaking over the Illinois prairies—coming with the splendor of victory, but also, for him, with something far more important—peace, forgiveness, the beginning of a new friendship between the sections.

LINCOLN wanted reconciliation with all his heart. It is true that he would not accept a compromise which left any vestige of slavery intact, or which weakened the Union. He had made that plain and may have been reflecting on the sad necessity as he sat in the White House on this last Feb. 12 he was to know.

First, he had urged his generals to an early victory. When Sheridan wrote him, "If the thing is pressed I think Lee will surrender," he had replied, "Let the thing be pressed." But he did not want to press into the mud the people of the South, whom he never ceased to look on as fellow-Americans.

He had left no stone unturned. Nine days earlier he had gone to Hampton Roads, with Secretary Seward, to confer with three Confederate representatives on a possible truce. The three men were Vice President Alexander H. Stephens of the Confederate States, Senator R. M. T. Hunter and Assistant Secretary of War John A. Campbell.

He must have chuckled a little, and sighed, as he thought of that conference. There was little Aleck Stephens, who had come wrapped up in two big overcoats. Lincoln remarked aside to Seward that Stephens was "the smallest nubbun that ever came out of so much husk." Good old Aleck, anyhow! He and Lincoln had been together in Congress years before. Lincoln had been moved, even to tears, by the Georgian's eloquence in those days. Aleck was the kind of man Lincoln might appeal to to help rebuild the South when the war was ended.

There had been informal and friendly talk, for in the midst of a frightful civil war these old friends could not hate each other. Lincoln would have been thinking of what he had said to Stephens as they parted. "Well, Aleck, there has been nothing we could do for our country; is there anything I could do for you personally?"

Stephens had thought a while. "Nothing," he had said finally, "unless you can send me my nephew, who has been for twenty months your prisoner on Johnson's Island."

LINCOLN wrote the name down—Lieutenant John A. Stephens. A moment later the two friends parted for ever—though this could not be known to either of them. The big overcoats went on again and the little Georgian went back to Richmond and his lost cause. But Lincoln did not forget the imprisoned lieutenant. He had taken steps to get him out of prison, bring him to Washington, and send him home. He would see him, speak kindly to him, use him to prove to Stephens and the others that the Northern Government had something besides gall in its heart.

The conference had failed. Lincoln had to admit that. Lincoln had gone farther to make it a success than the public was to know for many years afterward. He had taken a sheet of paper and said to Stephens: "Aleck, you let me write the

LINCOLN IN 1865



January—"New Year Calls."
In this cartoon Lincoln asks the Confederate leaders: "Which one of these ladies (Peace and Extinction) did you say I should give these cards to?"



February—"The Peace Commission: Flying to Abraham's Bosom."
A comment on the fruitless negotiations for a truce conducted at Hampton Roads by Northern and Southern leaders.



April—"All Seems Well With Us."
Published on the day of Lincoln's death, this cartoon celebrated the North's victory by depicting Lincoln as "our special war correspondent."

So near to martyrdom and immortality, Lincoln, seventy-five years ago, was working out the lines of his second inaugural.

word Union on top of this sheet and you may write whatever you wish below." Stephens verified this incident seventeen years later at a dinner given when he was inaugurated Governor of Georgia—his last political honor. Both Colonel Henry Waterson and the younger Clark Howell, present at the dinner, later confirmed what Stephens had to say.

But Stephens had his own word to write at the top of the sheet. That word was Independence. The slaughter of brother by brother had to go on until one or the other of these words was erased in blood.

STILL Lincoln thought there might be a way out. He came back to Washington, and on Feb. 5, just a week before this last birthday, he had made a proposal to his Cabinet. The Thirteenth Amendment, abolishing slavery forever, had gone to the States on Jan. 31 and had been ratified by Illinois on the following day. The Northern commonwealths were hurrying to get it into the Constitution.

Lincoln would not compromise with the principle of abolition. Yet he would soften the blow, for North and South alike. He had told Stephens his bog story, and must have smiled at the recollection. It was about the man who had a large herd of bogs, and to save the trouble of feeding them had planted a field of potatoes in which they could root. A neighbor pointed out that butchering time for bogs came in December or January, whereas the ground in Illinois froze a foot deep after the early frosts. "He scratched his head," said Lincoln, "and at length stammered, 'Well, it may come pretty hard on their snouts, but I don't see but that it will be root, hog, or die.'"

The South would have to root or die if its labor system were suddenly abolished, and the old system of property rights turned topsy-turvy. But the Lincoln who could tell this robust story longed to ease the transition. So, a week before his birthday, he had pointed out that the war was costing \$2,000,000 a day and would therefore cost \$400,000,000 if it dragged out for 200 days longer. Why not pay this sum to the South to compensate it for the loss of its slaves?

The Cabinet unanimously said no. Lincoln sadly entered an endorsement on the back of his proposal: "Today these papers, which explain themselves, were drawn up and submitted to the Cabinet and unanimously disapproved by them. A. Lincoln." Perhaps on this last birthday he took the packet out and looked at it. He longed so terribly for this shedding of blood to cease, this agony to pass.

BUT he would shake off the mood of despondency. He had work to do. He was looking ahead. Sooner or later—probably this year, 1865—the war must end. He had plans for reconstruction, and was quietly building an organization which would help him to carry them out. He had been growing steadily toward the magnitude of that task. If he had sometimes been a hesitating, cautious Executive in 1862 and 1863 he was such no longer. He was sure of his powers and of his resources. He was using the gifts of a supreme politician to carry out statesmanlike projects. He knew that mountains had to be climbed by slow and laborious steps.

He had built up a political "machine" for the safety of the Union and the reconciliation of its people. Patiently, through endless days and nights, he had conciliated the political leaders of the North, giving them patronage where it would do the least harm, in return for their support. He knew the best angle of approach to almost every man in public life, knew his whims, his special interests, his soft spots.

He was looking toward the men of the

South, too; Stephens, of course, who might have been President of the Confederacy had he not originally opposed the attack on Sumter; Robert Toombs, the eloquent Confederate Secretary of State, who had also left the Union with regret; Governor Brown of Georgia, Governor Vance of North Carolina, another early opponent of secession. These men were not rebels and traitors. They were Americans caught in a fix. They wanted peace and justice as much as he did. He could use them when the fighting was over.

The times were in flux. The swift current of destiny was sweeping the nation along. Lincoln, perhaps sitting with his feet cocked on his desk, a slouching, ungainly figure of a man who was none the less majestic, could imagine the Ship of State coming into calmer seas and more favorable winds. He could not know that a little later Walt Whitman would be writing, "Captain, O My Captain!"

A YEAR earlier Lincoln had been doubtful of his re-election. Now there was even talk of a third term. The people of the North were less and less willing to let him go, even after another four years. Four years of peace, perhaps—four years to "bind up the nation's wounds."

A Committee of Congress had been to call on the President three days earlier. They had news for him, though he had heard it before. They announced to him with profound solemnity that the electoral votes had been duly canvassed and that he had been the chosen candidate. He was moved, saying to them:

With deep gratitude to my countrymen for this mark of their confidence; with a distrust of my own ability to perform the duty required under the most favorable circumstances, and now rendered doubly difficult by existing national perils; yet with a firm reliance on the strength of our free Government, and with eventual loyalty of the people to the just principles upon which it is founded, and above all with an unshakable faith in the Supreme Ruler of Nations, I accept this trust.

The "trust" had two months to run, but this fact was mercifully unknown to Lincoln—except as it may have been fore-shadowed in troubled dreams.

He meditated his plans. He could straighten out a number of things, big and little. He would send Secretary of State Seward to London as Ambassador and make that fiery enemy of slavery, Senator Charles Sumner, his successor. He could tame Sumner and teach him mercy and forgiveness. He had overcome Secretary of War Stanton's earlier hostility and changed it into idolatry. He could use Stanton; "It is not for you to decide when your duty to your country ceases," he had told the Secretary. Salmon P. Chase had been more of a problem as head of the Treasury, but Chase was safely removed from politics into the Chief Justiceship.

Lincoln had taken pains to conciliate the radical leaders in Congress who might ruin his plans for reconstruction—Coxsack of Indiana, the botheaded and bungling Ben Butler of Massachusetts, and especially Thaddeus Stevens of Pennsylvania, the most powerful member of the House. He had made allies of them. If Stevens wanted a constituent appointed consul to St. Helena, Stevens could have his way—provided there wasn't another deserving Republican already sitting on the lonely rock.

LINCOLN looked far ahead. He was already restoring order in the conquered parts of the South. He would go ahead. He foresaw little opposition. He thought patience, kindness, magnanimity armed with political sagacity would do wonders. Was he not a Kentuckian by birth? Hadn't he had Southern friends? Didn't he know the South and couldn't he teach it to trust him?

He could not (Continued on Page 19)

LINCOLN LORE

Bulletin of the Lincoln National Life Foundation - - - - Dr. Louis A. Warren, Editor
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LINCOLN'S LAST REQUEST FULFILLED

Memorial Day will always invite moments of quiet meditation, and the far removed resting places of those recently fallen in battle will accentuate the silent hours in which memory can best approach the shrines of the lamented dead.

During the first week in April the editor of *Lincoln Lore* spent some time in central Illinois, and while there took occasion, for the first time, to visit the graves of many of Abraham Lincoln's close associates, who are buried in Oak Ridge Cemetery, at Springfield. It was at this season of the year, the last week in March and the first week in April, 1865, that Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln were at City Point, Virginia. An incident occurring there was called to mind by the earliest spring flowers which were just then beginning to open at Oak Ridge.

Isaac N. Arnold, in 1874, was in conversation with Abraham Lincoln's widow when the subject of her husband's burial place was mentioned. Mrs. Lincoln revealed to Mr. Arnold the incident above mentioned which is seldom recalled even by the best informed Lincoln students. She told Mr. Arnold that at the time of the visit to City Point and Richmond with the President, shortly before his death, one day they took a carriage drive along the banks of the James River. She said that they came to an old country graveyard and Mr. Arnold relates her reminiscences about that place in these words:

"It was a retired place, shaded with trees, and early spring flowers were opening on nearly every grave. It was so quiet and attractive that they stopped the carriage and walked through it. Mr. Lincoln seemed thoughtful and impressed. He said: 'Mary, you are younger than I. You will survive me. When I am gone, lay my remains in some quiet place like this.'"

It was with great difficulty, however, that the widow of Abraham Lincoln was finally allowed to carry out the wish of her husband with respect to his burial place, although it was less than a week after Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln returned from the City Point visit that her husband was assassinated.

Much pressure was brought to bear upon Mrs. Lincoln to have the body of the martyred President buried in the Capitol building at Washington. A crypt had been prepared there for the remains of George Washington, which were finally deposited at Mt. Vernon. It was the opinion of many that the remains of the illustrious Lincoln had become the property of the entire nation, superseding private, municipal, or even state claims. It appeared at one time as if the body of Lincoln might repose in the vault prepared for Washington.

Preliminary steps for the reception of the body at Springfield were taken on April 24, 1865, which resulted in the formation of the National Lincoln Monument Association. Correspondence dated May 10, 1865, Springfield, Illinois, and appearing in the *Chicago Republican* makes this comment about the division of opinions in Springfield, as to where the body of the President should be interred.

"It is an error to suppose the people of Springfield are united on the subject of the proper place for the monument. Probably a majority favor the Mather property in this city, one of the finest sites for a monument which could be selected. To this place, however, it is understood, Mrs. Lincoln is unalterably opposed. She refuses ever to allow Mr. Lincoln's remains to be placed there. The reason given by her friends is, that some relatives of hers, with whom she has not been for some time on speaking terms, reside on adjoining property.

"Other citizens of Springfield favor the selection of a fine lot of land, offered by Major Iles as a donation, and situated in the southeastern part of the city. Others again say that there is no more beautiful spot for the monument than the block on which the Governor's residence stands. Others again suggest that the monument might be placed at the intersection of two leading streets in the city, as is the case in Baltimore and other places. Then again others favor the Oak Ridge Cemetery, the only objection to which is that it is too far from the city. It is a very beautiful and romantic spot." . . .

Mr. Harry Pratt in his valuable source book, *Concerning Mr. Lincoln*, published a brief note which Henry P. H. Bromwell, a Charleston, Illinois lawyer, wrote to his parents on April 30, 1865, five days before the arrival of Lincoln's body from Washington. He mentioned the preparations being made for the interment of the body, stating that the people had purchased the Mather grounds and had a vault nearly completed. He then continued, "but last night Mrs. Lincoln telegraphed that she would not let him be buried there. The people are in a rage about it, and all the hard stories that ever were told about her are told over again. She has no friends here. . . ."

Another letter published by Mr. Pratt and written by Julia Kirby to her brother, Joseph Duncan, on May 7, 1865, mentions the Mather burial site and indicates that regardless of Mrs. Lincoln's wishes the vault was completed as the Kirby letter states. "It seems strange that Mrs. Lincoln should act the way she does after all they have done. The vault is complete and Abraham Lincoln engraved on the arch over the door, and a lovelier spot could not be found in Springfield."

But a "lovelier spot" was found in Springfield, which apparently measured up to the specifications mentioned by Mr. Lincoln in the City Point conversation with his wife but a short time before. Of course, the gossips and the city fathers of Springfield thought they knew more about what should be done, than the distressed and almost distracted little woman in Washington, who was still prostrated in the White House. But no one in Springfield today, except some go-getter who has an eye for business, would want Lincoln buried on some street corner, or even on the state capitol grounds, or where the governor's mansion stands.

The first purchase of land at Oak Ridge for burial purposes was in 1855, and the following year an additional purchase was made. On Thursday, May 24, 1860, the day after Abraham Lincoln had formally accepted the nomination for the presidency, at the Chicago Convention, the dedication ceremony of Oak Ridge Cemetery was held. The speaker of the day was James C. Conkling, a close friend of Lincoln's. An excerpt from Conkling's address, which assumes a deeper significance when re-read after the lamented President's body was interred there, helps to confirm Mary Lincoln's choice of Oak Ridge as the burial place of her husband:

"How solemn, how impressive the scene! Far away from the haunts of busy life, far distant from the ceaseless rush of active enterprise, far removed from the giddy whirl of fashion and of pleasure, we are assembled to consecrate this ground . . . here, with naught but the pure arch of heaven above us, and Nature in all her silent beauty and loveliness around us, we dedicate the City of the Dead."

The Oak Ridge Cemetery fulfills Lincoln's last request: "When I am gone, lay my remains in some quiet place like this."

Lincoln's Last Action May Have Been Naming

BY ANNE LONGMAN
Staff Writer

Was Abraham Lincoln's last official act on historic April 1, 14, 1865, the signing of a docu-

ment relating to Nebraska which is now in possession of the Nebraska State Historical society?

Alvin Saunders, Nebraska

territorial governor renamed to that post by Lincoln in 1865, believed that it was. He declared the "Abraham Lincoln" appearing at the bottom of his

mission as governor was the "last official signature" made by the martyred president.

"He signed it," Saunders later wrote at the bottom of the

Abraham Lincoln,

President of the United States of America:

To all who shall see these Presents, Greeting:

Know Ye, That reposing special trust and confidence in the Integrity and Ability
of Alvin Saunders, of Iowa, I

do appoint him to be governor of the Territory of Nebraska;
and do authorize and empower him to execute and fulfil the duties of that Office according to Law;
and to have, and to hold, the said Office, with all the powers, privileges and emoluments thereunto of right
appertaining, unto him, the said Alvin Saunders, during the pleasure of the President of the United States
for the time being, and until the end of the next session of the Senate of the United States, and no longer.



In Testimony whereof, I have caused these Letters to be made patent
and the seal of the United States to be hereunto affixed.

Given under my hand, at the City of Washington, the Thirteenth
day of April, in the year of our Lord, one thousand eight hundred
and Sixty-five, and of the Independence of the United States of
America, the Eighty-ninth.

Abraham Lincoln

By the President:
William B. Seward

Secretary of State

LAST LINCOLN SIGNATURE?—This is Governor Saunders' commission, now in possession of the Nebraska State Historical society. Lincoln signed it at lower right.

Nebraska Governor

document, "just before leaving for the theater where he was assassinated and left the commission in his desk without stopping to fold it and where it was found when the room was opened after his death. These facts were communicated to me by one of the clerks."

Myriads of books have been written on the life and works of Abraham Lincoln, and many of these detail the happenings of April 14, climaxing with the fatal shot at Ford's theater.

THE DAY—Good Friday—was soft and sunny in Washington, the dogwood was blooming, willows were green along the Potomac.

The president, rising at 7:30 a.m., read morning newspaper stories concerning suspension of the draft, stopping purchase of military supplies and removing military restrictions on trade. The war was now considered virtually at an end.

It seemed a day of "deep and tranquil happiness." The air was bright with promise, and it was remarked that the president's look of "indescribable sadness" had given way to one of serenity.

At the 11 o'clock cabinet meeting Lincoln, in a relaxed mood, looked forward to peace and the reuniting of north and south.

THREE INCIDENTS, probably little noted at the time, are now chronicled by historians as prophetic. At the cabinet meeting Lincoln related a dream of the preceding night which he said had occurred before, and always just in advance of some "great event."

He had, he said, seemed to be a passenger on a "singular" vessel moving with great rapidity toward a "dark and indefinite shore." "Gentlemen," he told his cabinet, "something very extraordinary is going to happen, and that very soon."

In the afternoon he asked to ride with Mrs. Lincoln alone and on this ride he discussed

the future—returning to Springfield and the practice of law.

Some historians mention another dream he was said to have related to Mary Lincoln during this ride, in which he wandered thru empty white house rooms to find, finally, a catafalque on which some one was lying and to be told by soldiers on guard that the president had been assassinated.

AFTER DINNER at 6 o'clock, he dressed for the theater, which he and Mrs. Lincoln were to attend with two young friends, and with a guard walked over to the war department.

Seeing a group of rough looking men along the way he exclaimed, "Do you know, I believe these are men who want to take my life. And I have no doubt they will do it." There is no indication that they were the actual conspirators.

During the afternoon he had signed a pardon for a soldier sentenced to be shot for desertion and ordered release of a confederate prisoner sentenced to death as a spy.

BEFORE STARTING for Ford's theater, where Laura Keane was starring in "Our American Cousin" he wrote a note granting audience to a caller the next morning. This note is displayed at Lincoln museum in Washington as the last words written by Lincoln.

An attempt to substantiate Saunders' claim that signing of his commission was Lincoln's last official act would entail exhaustive search of a great mass of material.

The commission was donated to the Nebraska State Historical society by Saunders' daughters, Mary Saunders Harrison of Washington, D. C.

The document was presented at the 1942 annual meeting by her son, William Henry Harrison, who was the grandson of former President Benjamin Harrison as well as of former Governor Saunders.

18-A THE MIAMI HERALD Friday, February 10, 1961

Hand of Death Held Reins of Lincoln Horses

By JIM BISHOP

THERE WERE four people in the coach that night...

It was 8:05 when Mrs. Lincoln, short and plump, stood in the office doorway pulling on gloves, and said: "Would you have us be late?" She



looked pretty in a bonnet with pink flowers and a low necked white dress. Mr. Lincoln fumbled for his watch. He was talking to Congressman Ashmun and he looked at his wife and then Bishop at the congressman and he asked if Ashmun would mind coming back in the morning.

He got up, picked up his silk hat, and ran his bony hand through the matted mass of dark hair. He looked in the mirror framed on the lavatory door, and saw sagging molasses skin, thin brown lips, and tired eyes. He was 56, and he followed his wife down the broad staircase carefully, holding onto the bannister.

She was still a pace ahead in the lower hall, chattering about Laura Keane and reminding the President that this was the last night — positively the last night — of "Our American Cousin." She was sure that Mr. Lincoln would be amused.

★ ★ ★ *Lincoln Waved At Servants*

OUT FRONT, he stood and pulled on his white cotton gloves as Burns helped Mrs. Lincoln into the closed carriage. It had been warm and sunny; now a cool mist had come up and it swirled like little gay ghosts among the bare oaks on the lawn.

The servants stood watching and he waved absent-mindedly as he stepped into the carriage. Two plush double seats faced each other. The President and Mrs. Lincoln sat facing front. The door was clicked shut, the coach lamps looked like fireflies as they danced out the curving driveway. Two cavalrymen followed.

It was too bad, the President thought, that General and Mrs. Grant could not have joined them. The war was over; Grant was the hero; the people in Washington were entitled to a look at the man of the hour.

Grant had declined, with thanks. He wanted to oblige, but Mrs. Grant still remembered Mrs. Lincoln's obsessive hysteria. Once, when the White House grocer complained about Mrs. Lincoln's shrieking, the President had laid a hand on his shoulder and murmured: "Can you not stand for 15 minutes what I have stood for 15 years?"

★ ★ ★

Miss Harris, Fiancee Join

THE CARRIAGE bounced along the cobbles to Fifteenth Street, turned north, then east on H Street. It stopped at the home of Senator Ira Harris. The Footman got down off the box and rang the bell. Miss Clara Harris, the Senator's daughter, answered the bell. She was buxom and pale of skin. She and her fiance, Major Henry R. Rathbone, had been told at 4 p.m. that they were to be the guests of the President and Mrs. Lincoln at the theatre.

They got in the carriage carefully, saying "Good evening." Miss Harris sat facing Mrs. Lincoln, who chattered about how pretty the young lady looked. The major, who was as tall as Mr. Lincoln, sat facing the President. He managed to alternate his knees between the President's.

The major wore muttonchop whiskers and a walrus moustache. He felt tense in the presence of the President, and he stammered when he wanted to sound casual. The dark horses pulled the carriage down Fourteenth Street and over F, into Tenth Street. If the President noticed that the major was out of uniform, and unarmed, he said nothing.

★ ★ ★ Inside, Act I Was on Stage

THE COACHMAN got down off the box, and walked the horses up to the wooden plank-ing in front of Ford's Theatre. He did not want the bouffant skirts of the ladies to be muddied. Outside, a small group of soliders on leave stood watching. They wanted to see Mr. Lincoln. Inside, Act One was on. Laura Keane, fluttering a paper fan, was engaged in a duel of puns with Lord Dundreary about drafts.

On the street, Negro coachmen in cocked hats sat dozing on the boxes of carriages. The night mist haloed the lights around the theatre. The major stepped down. He helped Miss Harris to alight. Then Mr. Lin-

coln emerged, holding his head low to get out of the carriage. He assisted Mrs. Lincoln. The President said something softly, and the four broke into laughter.

Two cavalrymen, who had been riding guard behind the President's carriage, swung their horses away. A mile away, a man on a skittish mare swung away from a group of horseman. He had given instructions to each of the others. He held his young handsome face up to the mist and spurred the mare toward the theatre.

There were four people in the coach that night. They rode with destiny. In two hours, the President would be shot. In two years, Mrs. Lincoln would be declared insane. In a few more years, Major Harris would murder his wife, Clara Harris, and spend the rest of his days in an asylum.

Four people in a coach.
Death did the driving.

| *Famous Last Words* |

Abraham Lincoln:

The President and his wife were attending a performance of "Our American Cousin," and when she asked coyly what the others in the box would think of their holding hands, Lincoln replied: "They won't think anything about it." At that moment, John Wilkes Booth came behind him and fired his pistol. —By Barnaby Conrad

Recalls Story of Assassination

Evanstonian's Father Wrote Account

Lyndon H. Tracy, 85, of 2254 Sherman av., Evanston, recalled yesterday, on the 100th anniversary of Lincoln's assassination, that his father worked for one of the last men to see Lincoln before he entered Ford's theater 100 years ago yesterday.

"My father was working for George Ashmun in the spring of 1865, in Springfield, Mass., and took him to the train the morning of April 14 when Ashmun went to Washington on a summons from the President," Tracy said.

Tracy said his father, Wheeler A., who died at the age of 87 in Madison, Wis., wrote an account of what Ashmun told him several days after Lincoln's assassination.

Gets Last Signature

Ashmun, a congressman and a close friend of Lincoln's, started to the White House in a carriage after arriving in Washington. On the way, Ashmun later told Wheeler Tracy, he met Lincoln who was traveling in a carriage toward the the-

ater where, a few hours later, he was to be shot fatally by John Wilkes Booth. Lincoln at that time, Tracy was told, wrote for Ashmun a note on a card confirming an appointment for the congressman at the White House the next day. It read:

"Allow Mr. Ashmun
& friend to come in at
9 A.M. tomorrow

A. Lincoln April 14, 1865"
Historians generally agree
this was Lincoln's last signature.

Recalls Ashmun Statement

Lydon Tracy disagrees with
generally accepted belief that

Ashmun encountered Lincoln in the White House.

"The other accounts are not true," he said. "My father told me that Ashmun told him as soon as he got back from Washington that he met the President en route to the White House and not in the White House."

Ashmun kept the note with Lincoln's signature and asked Wheeler Tracy to place it behind a picture of the President so it would not be misplaced or stolen. The note was later given to the Congressional Library by one of Ashmun's relatives.

Tracy said his father worked for Ashmun for about two years as a handyman.



MARY TODD
LINCOLN

Her Life and Letters



JUSTIN G. TURNER
LINDA LEVITT TURNER



With an Introduction by Fawn M. Brodie

Alfred A. Knopf New York 1972



April 1865

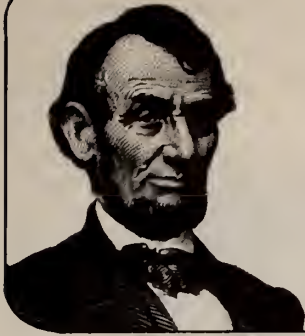
★ afternoon still enveloped them in its happy glow. At one point during the third act, Mary Lincoln turned to her husband, slipped her hand in his, and leaned into his lap. "What will Miss Harris think of my hanging on to you so [?]" she whispered. Lincoln replied softly, "She won't think any thing about it."⁷

The next moment there was a sudden sharp sound, followed by a wild flurry of movement. Mrs. Lincoln, sitting so close to the President, must have realized before anyone else that something had happened to him. Her terrified screams were the first to rouse the audience; her arms, the first to reach out convulsively to keep her husband's body from slumping to the floor. Some accounts say she lost consciousness after that; others describe her wheeling frantically about the box like a caged animal. Whatever her actions, she was clearly in a state of shock and unmindful of the tumult that raged about her after the assassin had jumped to the stage. It was Laura Keane—not Mrs. Lincoln—who asked and received permission to cradle the President's head in her lap as the doctor probed his wound.

When the decision was made to move Lincoln to a house across the street, his wife could only follow dumbly, weeping and wringing her hands. Once admitted to the room where the President lay, she fell to her knees beside the bed, oblivious of staring eyes, sobbing, calling him by intimate names, crooning words of endearment, begging him to speak to her. When no conscious sound came from the form on the bed, she asked that Tad be sent for in hopes that Lincoln would at least respond to the son he had loved so dearly. Robert came, but not Tad.

After some time Mrs. Lincoln left the President's room and returned to the front parlor. As the night wore on, most of the leaders of the government came in and out of the house, among them her special friend Senator Charles Sumner, but she spoke to no one and acknowledged no one. Between spasms of weeping and stumbling trips to the President's bedside, she sat on the front room settee, dazed with shock. When her befuddled brain at last assimilated the fact that there was no hope, the hysterical crying began in earnest.

⁷ Quoted by Dr. Anson G. Henry in a letter to his wife, Washington, April 19, 1865. Photostat in the Illinois State Historical Library, Springfield.



Lincoln Lore

February, 1980

Bulletin of the Louis A. Warren Lincoln Library and Museum. Mark E. Neely, Jr., Editor.
Mary Jane Hubler, Editorial Assistant. Published each month by the
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Number 1704

THE LAST BOOK LINCOLN READ

J.G. Randall said of Lincoln that the "continual interweaving of good fun in his writings and speeches shows that humor was no mere technique, but a habit of his mind." His fondness for humorous writers was lifelong. All students of Lincoln's tastes in reading note his affection for such humorists as Orpheus C. Kerr (a pun on "office seeker" and the pseudonym of Robert H. Newell). Petroleum V. Nasby (the pseudonym of David Ross Locke) was another favorite. The day Lincoln first presented the Emancipation Proclamation to his Cabinet, he began the meeting by reading "High Handed Outrage in Utica," a humorous piece by Artemus Ward (the pseudonym of Charles Farrar Browne). Lincoln's penchant for reading aloud from comical books apparently persisted to his dying day, when he regaled old friends with anecdotes from *Phoenixiana*; or, *Sketches and Burlesques*.

John Phoenix was the pseudonym of George Horatio Derby. Born in Dedham, Massachusetts, in 1823, Derby graduated from West Point in 1846. He served with distinction in the Mexican War and later led several exploring expeditions in the West, mostly in California. A wit and a notorious practical joker, he first gained literary distinction in California in 1853, when he was put in temporary charge of the *San Diego Herald*, a Democratic newspaper. Derby was a Whig in politics, one of a great tradition of Whig humorists, and he quickly turned the newspaper on its head politically. California howled with laughter. In 1856 he published *Phoenixiana*, a collection of humorous sketches which became immediately popular.

Naturally, Lincoln was attracted to the Whig humorist. In his debate with Stephen A. Douglas at Freeport on August 27, 1858, Lincoln charged his opponent with inconsistency on the question of the power of states to exclude slavery from their limits. Douglas, Lincoln insisted, had once charged that the Democratic administration of James Buchanan was conspiring "to rob the States of their power to exclude slavery from their limits." Douglas withdrew the charge when Robert Toombs of Georgia stated that only one man in the Union favored such a move.

It reminds me of the story [Lincoln continued] that John Phoenix, the California railroad surveyor, tells. He says they started out from the Plaza to the Mission of Dolores. They had two ways of determining distances. One was by a chain and pins taken over the ground. The other was by a "go-it-ometer" — an invention of his own — a three-legged instrument, with which he computed a series of triangles between the points. At night he turned to the chain-man to ascertain what distance they had come, and found that by some mistake he had merely dragged the chain over the ground without keeping any record. By the "go-it-ometer" he found he had made ten miles. Being skeptical about this, he asked a drayman who was passing how far it was to the plaza. The drayman replied it was just half a mile, and the surveyor put it down in his book — just as Judge Douglas says, after he had made his calculations and computations, he took Toombs' statement.

The reporters covering the speech noted that "Great laughter" followed.

The Louis A. Warren Lincoln Library and Museum recently acquired a copy of *Phoenixiana*, notable because it belonged to David Davis, Lincoln's friend and Judge for the Eighth Judicial Circuit. Davis wrote his name and the date, "March 28th . . . 1856," in pencil on the back of the frontispiece. The Sangamon County Circuit Court was then in session in Springfield, and Lincoln argued before the Court that day. One cannot help speculating that Judge Davis very likely showed the book to his friend.

If Lincoln owned a copy of *Phoenixiana* himself, its present location is unknown. It seems likely that he did, however. The description of Lincoln's last day by Katherine Helm, Mary Todd Lincoln's niece, mentions the book. After their carriage ride in the late afternoon, President and Mrs. Lincoln separated. The President entered the White House with Richard J. Oglesby, the Governor of Illinois, and some other political friends. According to Miss Helm, Governor Oglesby later recalled:

Lincoln got to reading



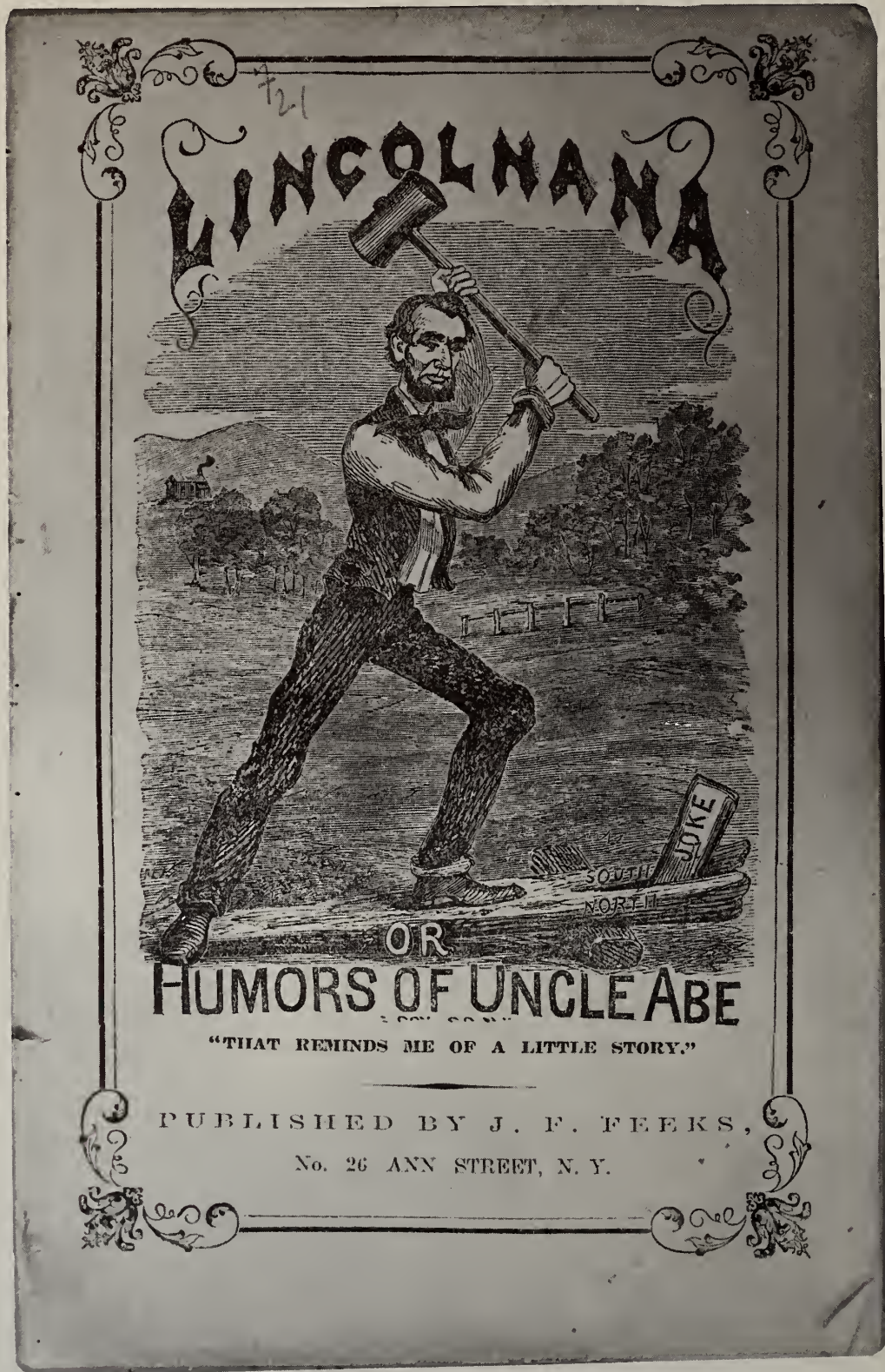
Yours respectfully
John P. Squibob

From the Louis A. Warren
Lincoln Library and Museum

FIGURE 1. The frontispiece of *Phoenixiana*, shown above, has this note printed under it: "This autograph may be relied on as authentic, as it was written by one of Mr. Squibob's most intimate friends."

some humorous book — I think it was by "John Phoenix." They kept sending for him to come to dinner. He promised each time to go, but would continue reading the book. Finally he got a sort of peremptory order that he must come

to dinner at once. It was explained to me by the old man at the door that they were going to have dinner and then go to the theater.



From the Louis A. Warren
Lincoln Library and Museum

FIGURE 2. *Lincolnana* was one of several cheap paperbacks published during the Civil War which capitalized on the President's reputation for enjoying humor. Though this trait endears Lincoln to us today, it was not universally admired in his own day. Note that the cover of this book shows him splitting the Union with a joke. Lincoln was often pictured as a vulgar jokester, too small for the great office he occupied.

LINCOLN'S POLITICAL EDUCATION

President Lincoln gets high marks for political skill from almost all modern historians, but few have attempted to account for this skill. It often seems as though Lincoln burst from his mother's womb as a full-fledged politico, ready to wheel and deal, bestow patronage, and walk into a strong Presidency. Like everything else in Lincoln's life, however, political savvy came by dint of a gradual and difficult learning experience. In fact, Lincoln's political education may have been more difficult than his learning experience as a writer, a lawyer, or an orator. Politics can only be learned the hard way.

After his original apprenticeship under "Jerry Sly," the nickname of Lincoln's first law partner and political mentor John Todd Stuart, Lincoln learned the toughest lessons from Zachary Taylor. This is not to say that Lincoln had the close relationship with Taylor which he had with Stuart. Lincoln's political involvement with the Taylor Presidency, however, brought with it some stinging lessons the young Illinois legislator never forgot.

The Whig party in part grew from criticism of the organizational methods of the Democratic party, and Whigs, therefore, tended to be reluctant to adopt the organizational methods of the Democrats. Among Illinois Whigs, Lincoln and his close political allies like Anson G. Henry were leaders in urging better organization. Lincoln knew that this was the only hope of success for the party in his overwhelmingly Democratic state. In 1840 Lincoln wrote a confidential circular for the Whig State Committee suggesting that the way to "overthrow the *trained bands* that are opposed to us, whose salaried officers are ever on the watch, and whose misguided followers are ever ready to obey their smallest commands" was "to organize the whole State." The letter recommended the establishment of committees in every county to canvass voters to determine their preferences. When



From the Louis A. Warren
Lincoln Library and Museum

FIGURE 3. John Todd Stuart.



From the Louis A. Warren
Lincoln Library and Museum

FIGURE 4. Zachary Taylor.

Democrats seized on the circular as a campaign issue, Lincoln responded: "They set us the example of organization; and we, in self defence, are driven into it. . . . Let them *disband* their double-drilled-army of 'forty thousand office holders.'" Lincoln continued to "justify . . . urge . . . organization on the score of necessity." Still, Lincoln was Whig enough to tell John Todd Stuart, while advising him on local appointments after William Henry Harrison's election as President, "I am, as you know, opposed to removals to make places for our friends." Lincoln insisted on having some reason beyond mere partisan identification for removing officeholders.

Lincoln's Whig campaign address in 1843 continued to stress the necessity of organization. He favored the convention system for nominations, and he urged Whigs to run candidates for Congress in every district in the state, "regardless of the chances of success." He was still ahead of average Whig sentiment on these questions and "got thunder" as his "reward" for writing the address. When he served in the United States House of Representatives (1847-1849), Lincoln did what he could to gain offices and appointments for Whig allies, but there was little he could do. President James K. Polk was a Democrat and "could hardly be expected to give them to whigs, at the solicitation of a whig Member of Congress." Things changed with the election of Whig Zachary Taylor. Lincoln promised offices, for example, to Walter Davis: "When I last saw you I said, that if the distribution of the offices should fall into my hands, you should have *something*." In the end he shared a good deal of the power of distribution with incoming Whig Congressman Edward D. Baker of Galena. When he recommended a Whig appointee as Springfield's postmaster, Lincoln admitted that the only objection to the Democratic incumbent was that he was "an active partizan in opposition to us." He would "give no opinion . . . as to whether he should or should not be removed." He did not say, as he had to Stuart almost a decade before, that such men should not be removed.

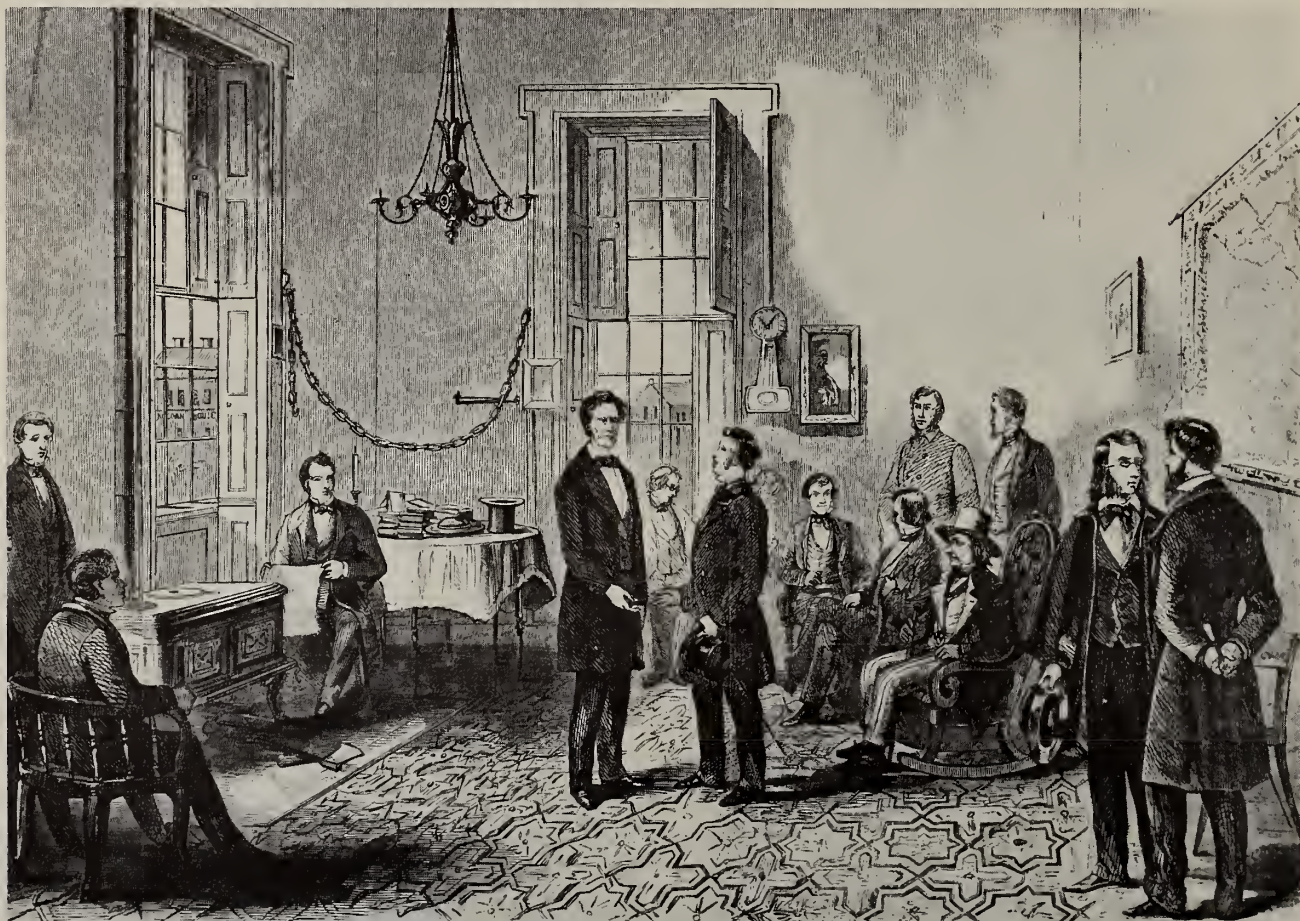
Since he did not run for reelection, Lincoln himself began to think of receiving a patronage appointment. But, he said frankly, "there is nothing about me which would authorize me to think of a first class office; and a second class one would not compensate me for being snarled at by others who want it for themselves." Eventually, Lincoln did become an aspirant for appointment to the lucrative General Land Office. He admitted that his major competitor, Justin Butterfield of Chicago, was "qualified to do the duties of the office," as were "quite one hundred Illinoisans." Lincoln argued that the office "should be so given as to gratify our friends, and to stimulate them to future exertions." Butterfield "fought for Mr. Clay against Gen Taylor to the bitter end," and it would "now mortify me deeply," Lincoln said, "if Gen. Taylors administration shall trample all my wishes in the dust."

Taylor's weak partisanship gave Lincoln a new appreciation for the importance of the patronage. Taylor, Lincoln realized, "will not go the doctrine of removals very strongly." Leaving many Democratic incumbents in office, Lincoln insisted, gave "the greater reason, when an office or job is not already in democratic hands, that it should be given to a Whig." If "less than this is done for our friends, I think they will have just cause to complain." The appointment of Butterfield doubtless accelerated Lincoln's appreciation for distributing the patronage to friends as the ultimate bond of party loyalty.

Lincoln was out of office and largely uninvolved in patronage matters for more than a decade before becoming President in 1861. He brought with him to the office the traditional habits of a good party man, toughened by the

unhappy experience of the Taylor administration and heightened by the organizational needs of a new party, the Republican, now enjoying its first taste of national office. Lincoln was widely criticized for spending too much time on petty patronage matters while the Nation fell apart into civil war. However, the Republican party was only six years old and was as yet a loose coalition of former Whigs, former Democrats, and former Know Nothings. Lincoln had to exercise great care in distributing the patronage to keep this new coalition together. For this task Lincoln was peculiarly well equipped, for, though no one appreciated loyalty more than he, Lincoln was also free of any vindictive spirit. When Republicans who had supported other candidates than Lincoln at the nominating convention in 1860 worriedly wrote him, Lincoln responded that such things were "not even remembered by me for any practical purpose." He would not go "back of the convention, to make distinctions among its members."

Personal loyalty was one thing, but party loyalty was quite another. Lincoln initiated the most sweeping removal of federal officeholders in the country's history up to that time. Of 1,520 Presidential officeholders, 1,195 were removed; since most Southern offices were left unfilled, this was almost a complete overturn. He appointed Republicans to almost all of these jobs. Lincoln's administration, the President explained frankly in 1862, "distributed to it's party friends as nearly all the civil patronage as any administration ever did." Lincoln never forgot the lessons of the weakly partisan Taylor administration.



RECEIVING HIS VISITORS IN THE GOVERNOR'S ROOM IN THE STATE HOUSE, SPRINGFIELD, ILL.—FROM A SKETCH BY OUR SPECIAL ARTIST, MR. HENRI LOVER.

From the Louis A. Warren
Lincoln Library and Museum

FIGURE 5. This comes as close as any contemporary picture to showing Lincoln in the act of distributing offices. After his election in 1860, Lincoln established a temporary office in the Illinois State Capitol to receive visitors. Needless to say, most of these visitors were seeking offices from the new administration either for themselves or their friends.

chicagotribune.com

Expert: Ohio man may have a late Lincoln signature

Associated Press

8:09 AM CDT, August 17, 2009

SOUTH AMHERST, Ohio

An expert at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library says he thinks an Ohio man's flea market find is one of the last Lincoln signatures.

It's on an envelope that was with papers Bruce Steiner bought in 2006 in South Amherst, 30 miles southwest of Cleveland. The writing says: "Let this man enter with this note. April 14, 1865," and it's signed "A. Lincoln." The date is the day the president was shot.

A handwriting analysis has been done by John Lupton, associate director of the Papers of Abraham Lincoln preservation project at the Lincoln library in Springfield, Ill. He says he's "pretty sure" the signature is genuine, because it has Lincoln's distinct characteristics.

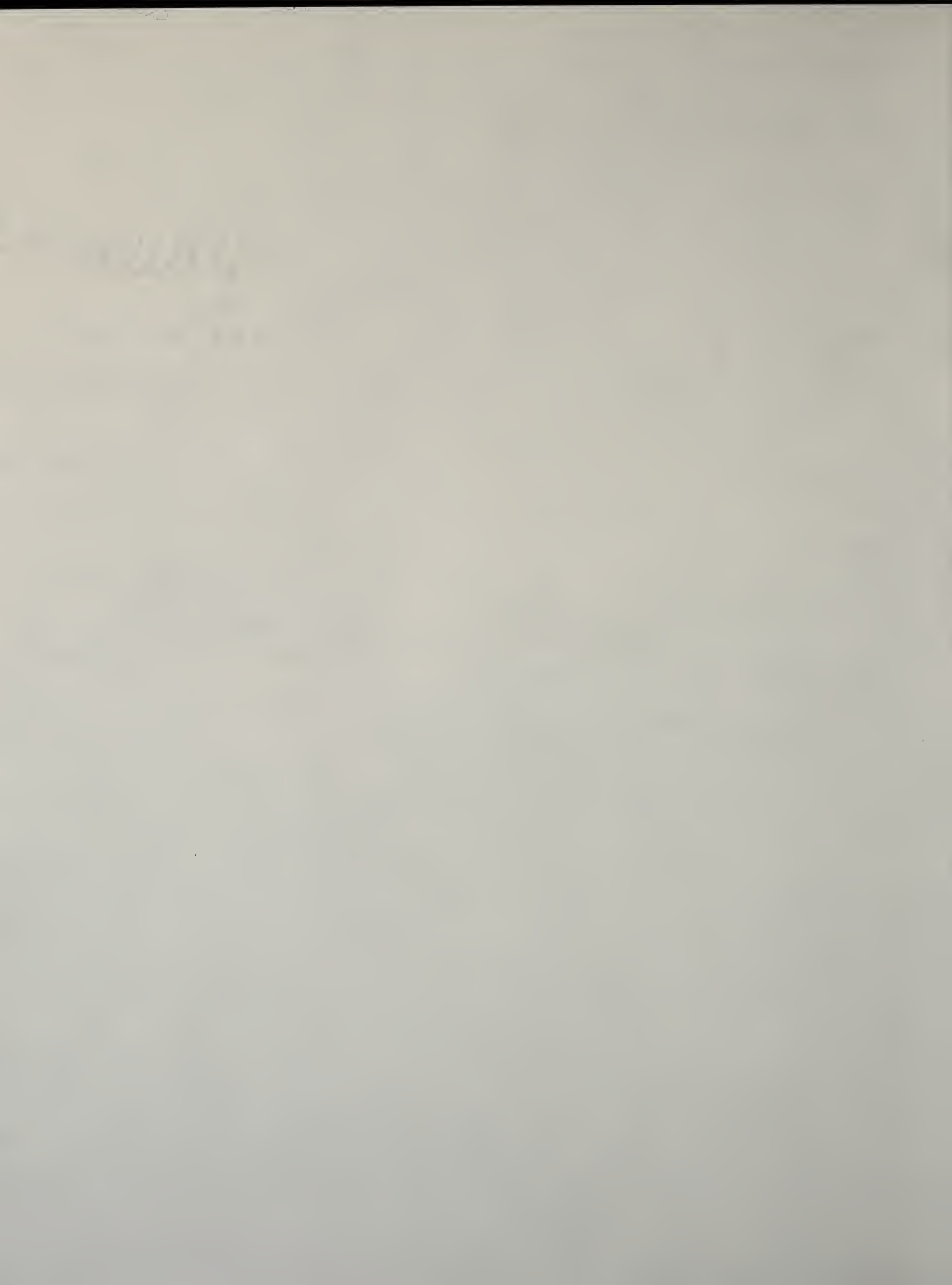
A Lincoln memorabilia dealer says it could be worth up to \$25,000.

Steiner doesn't plan to sell.

Information from: The Morning Journal, <http://www.morningjournal.com>

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LINCOLN'S LAST LAUGH.

An Incident of the Night on Which the Nation Lost Its President.

Mrs. Amy D. Hawley, of Burlington, Mich., sends to The Free Press clipping many years old, from a Batavia, N. Y., paper narrating an incident of the sad night on which the nation was plunged into grief by the cruel assassination of its great-hearted president, Abraham Lincoln. It is here reproduced:

George Van Duzer, of Washington, D. C., has presented to the Grand Lodge library a portion of the collar worn by Abraham Lincoln at the time of his assassination. Mr. Van Duzer was present at Ford's theater on the fatal night, and relates the following incident:

The army under Gen. Lee having surrendered to Gen. Grant a few days previously, Secretary Stanton, on the 13th of April, 1865, telegraphed to Gov. John A. Dix to stop the draft, as it was considered that the war was virtually over.

At Ford's theater, Washington, on the evening of April 14, 1865, the play of "Our American Cousin" was being enacted. In

the scene just before the fatal shot of the assassin, a garden settee was standing on the stage opposite the president's box. Mary Meredith (one of the characters of the play), followed by Lord Dundreary, (with a shawl over his arm), came upon the stage, and the lady took a seat upon the settee. Glancing over first one shoulder and then the other, she exclaimed:

"My lord will you be so kind as to throw that shawl over my shoulders? There appears to be such a draft here."

Lord Dundreary immediately replied:

"You are mistaken, Miss Mary—there is no draft. The draft is all over."

The president instantly saw the point and laughed most heartily, as did the entire audience, who arose and cheered. In a few minutes more the assassin had done his work, and a nation was in tears.—Detroit Free Press.

Cut out LINCOLN'S LAST LAUGH. *long ago*
From The New-York Asylum.

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Colonel Ingersoll, in his eulogy on Lincoln, at the Lincoln dinner in Brooklyn the other day, gave Lincoln credit for good qualities enough to satisfy his most ardent admirers. But there was one notable omission. He said nothing to indicate that Lincoln had any religion, although coupled with the toast to which our famous infidel responded, was a sentence from Lincoln's memorable Gettysburg speech, which derived much of its force from its reverent mention of the Deity. In any other orator such an omission would have been regarded as singular. With Colonel Ingersoll, it was simply just what might have been expected. For Lincoln's abiding faith in God was something which Colonel Ingersoll couldn't extol; which in fact, to be consistent, he could hardly do other than apologize for. For by just as much as Lincoln believed in God did he fall short of realizing Colonel Ingersoll's ideal of what a man should be.

cut out long
Before making the speech, which, by the way, was not a new one, Colonel Ingersoll had it in his mind to institute some comparison between Lincoln and Darwin, suggested by the fact that they were born on the same day. To some one to whom he confided this idea, he said:

"They were two of the greatest liberators of the age. Lincoln liberated the slaves, and Darwin liberated the human mind from fear."

"How did Darwin do it?" he was asked.

"Why," replied the Colonel, with the air of a man who is announcing an axiomatic truth that only an idiot would dispute, "why, if Darwin is right, then religion is all rot."

The sort of answer that Lincoln himself would have made to such a remark would have been worth hearing.

When ——— sent Lincoln

Lincoln's Last Wish

ON THE evening of April 14, 1865, Mr. Lincoln attended the performance of *Our American Cousin* at Ford's Theater on Tenth Street. He was accompanied by Mrs. Lincoln and two friends—Miss Harris, a daughter of Senator Ira Harris, of New York, and Major Henry R. Rathbone. Between the acts he was conversing with Mrs. Lincoln regarding some contemplated travels. "There is no place I should like so much to see as Jerusalem," he remarked to Mrs. Lincoln as the curtain rose again. These were his last words. As the play continued the assassin opened the door of the box and discharged a pistol at the head of the President from behind, the bullet penetrating the brain. Mr. Lincoln rose from his chair, but immediately sank back into it and lapsed into unconsciousness from which he never roused. He was carried to a small house on the opposite side of the street in order to spare him a ride over the cobblestones to the White House, and on the following morning at seven o'clock he breathed his last.

After nearly three years Mary Lincoln returned to Chicago, but not to the freedom from loss she sought. In all this tragic period after Mr. Lincoln's death, Tad had been her one unfailing joy. He seems to have tried to be to her something of what he sensed his father had been. He never left her, sought diversions for her, brought people to her.

Hardly a letter of hers written in these days does not pay tribute to his care. In them he was her "dear good son," "her bright and loving boy," "her comfort, her support."

In 1871 Tad died in Chicago.

LINCOLN'S LAST OFFICIAL ACT

It Was the Signing of George Vaughan's Pardon. Now Living in Missouri.

Tupelo Blade: The last official act performed by Abraham Lincoln as president of the United States was the signing of the pardon of George S. E. Vaughan, under sentence of death, charged with being a confederate spy. Mr. Vaughan, now an old and broken man, lives in Maryville, Mo.

Before the war George S. E. Vaughan lived in Canton, Lewis county, Mo. He had a wife and several children, and was one of the most prominent men of the village. One of his intimate friends was Mark E. Green, who had already begun to attain prominence as a democrat of the pro-slavery type, and who afterwards became a colonel in the confederate army and later received a commission as major general from the southern government. The Vaughan family, like many others, was divided on the question of the war. George enlisted in Green's regiment and his brother Allmon, who was a captain in the Missouri state guards, stuck to the union.

After the battle of Shiloh, Green and Vaughan were in camp at Tupelo, Miss. Green had not heard for a long time direct from his home and was almost entirely unacquainted with the progress of affairs in Missouri. It was desirable that he should know more about them, and Vaughan was chosen to go on the perilous mission. Mr. Vaughan denies that he came north as a spy. He declares that the inaction of camp life had become distasteful to him and that he was desirous only to see his own family and to carry messages from Gen. Green to his wife.

However that may be, he was captured by union troops near LaGrange, Mo. He was tried as a spy and sentenced to death. Senator John B. Henderson took up his case at the solicitation of his union brother and received an order from the president for a new trial. This resulted in the same verdict. Another appeal was made to Lincoln, a third trial was held and the result was the same.

Senator Henderson's blood was up now

and he determined to make a last stand. He went directly to the president. He called his attention to the fact that the war was practically over, insisted that, to use his own words, "the pardon would be in the interest of peace and conciliation," and urged it as a matter of public policy, as well as a thing in which he (Henderson) has a personal interest. The president, after hearing him through, said:

"Senator, go over to Stanton and tell him that this man must be released."

"But, Mr. President," Henderson protested, "I have been to Stanton twice and he will do nothing."

"You go and tell Stanton what I tell you and I believe he will do it," replied Lincoln. "And," he added, "if he doesn't, come back here."

Henderson went to the war secretary's office and that which he expected took place. Stanton lost his temper, swore he would do no such a thing and the two gentlemen parted in an unpleasant frame of mind.

Senator Henderson was in deadly earnest now, however. The courtmartial had decided that Vaughan should be shot on April 16, 1865, and if anything was to be done it must be done quickly. After supper he went back to the White House. It was the evening of April 14, a black letter day in American history. The president was dressed to go to the theater, and was in his office when the Missouri senator was shown in. The senator related in a few words what had happened. Lincoln thought pensively a few moments; then, turning to his desk, he picked up a sheet of official paper, wrote a few lines on it, and handed it to him with the remark: "I guess that'll stand a little over Stanton." It was an order for unconditional release and pardon, and it was the last official paper he ever signed. An hour later he was assassinated in the old Ford theater by Wilkes Booth.

Mr. Vaughan is now 75 years old. Ten years ago he suffered a paralytic stroke, and paralysis has since confined him to his house. He has lost entirely the use of

his legs, and is able to move about his house only by means of a rolling chair. His mind, in spite of his debilitated physical condition, is still bright and clear. Naturally enough, he reveres the memory of Lincoln above that of all other men.

