

Quincy Ills Oct 2 1882

K K Jones Esq Custom House
Chicago Ill
Dear Sir.

Your of the 29th ultimo is
ad hand as also a copy of the
Tribune of the 28. containing your
letter headed "Abraham Lincoln -
How he was nominated &c &c
In speaking of Mr Abraham Jones
at the Chicago convention - his
zeal and wide awake policy, the
blue ticket &c I do not doubt your
statements in the main are correct.
I was not at the Chicago con=
=vention of 1860, but Mr Jones
who was then my law partner
upon his return told me all
about it, with great good humor &
glee. You are mistaken ^{however} in saying
that Mr Jones was Presidential

Elector for our District in 1860.
 He did not I think attend the
 Decatur Convention of 1860. we
 were said Pastors at the time &
 I attended, he staying at home.
 Mr Lincoln was at Decatur and
 when the convention appointed
 the delegates at large - some one
 stated that Mr Browning was
 for Judge Bates, but Mr Lincoln
 insisted that Mr Browning should
 be one of the delegates at large
 no matter who he might prefer.
 and he was appointed and
 after the resolution of the conven-
 =tion instructing for Lincoln no
 one was more efficient constant
 and zealous for Lincoln than
 Browning.

Our elector for our district was Mr
 Stark of Augusta Hancock
 Co. - I was perhaps more
 responsible for this than any
 one else - Mr Jones & I then
 had a large law practice, I
 supposed he did not care

to be presidential elector, as being so would require the loss of time, in stripping the district, but ^{afterwards found that} though he was not ~~the~~ elector, he made many speeches all the same.

In our district meeting, I nominated Stark, and he was chosen.

Perhaps on the nomination of the delegates from our district, the fact that Mr Browning, of Quincy was one of the delegates at large prevented Mr Jones' appointment as a delegate to the Chicago convention. Though he attended - as stated. At Decatur

The principal business of the convention being over, there came a dead calm in the afternoon - there was something coming, but what, the great body of delegates did not know - we observed some

one or two persons come in with,
 or placing themselves, near to Mr
 Lincoln, they pushed him upon
 the president's platform, where he
 sat down upon a bench—
 There he sat for a short
 time, Silence still reigning, through-
 out the building—after a few
 minutes, the convention
 were astonished to see two
 men, come in, with a couple
 of ^{old} fence rails on their shoulders—
 the one behind the other— They
 made their way up to, or in
 front of the platform and
 stood, neither saying a word
 which could be heard at any
 considerable distance— One
 of those men was I believe
 old John Banks, though I
 did not hear him speak a
 word— I think he said in

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a low tone of voice, "She
has some of our rails" - Mr
Lincoln arose looking a little
sheepish for him - and said I
do not know exactly what is
meant by this proceeding, but
I understand that these rails
are ^{said to be} some that I made, I can't
identify them, but if I did
not make these, I have made
a good many better ones.

By this time the whole meaning
of the proceeding had taken hold
of the delegates, and such a
big shout and hurra, for
"Abel Lincoln" the rail splitter -

Candidate, for president, went
up, that it made the Wigwam
shake - In about 30 minutes
these rails were sawn up and
split into pieces, and nearly every
delegate got a piece - I have mine
yet

I have not seen the letter of
 Edward Jones referred to by you
 in your published letter in the Tribune
 of 28 Sept. Send me
 you state in your letter to me of
 the 29 of Sept - among other
 matters that you are gathering
 scraps of material for a paper
 about the convention of 1860 - the
 paper of Carpenter mentioned by
 you in the Century of October I
 have not seen. In your paper
 you propose to deal with Why
 Lincoln was nominated - not
 how - &c and you ask me
 to write you a letter to be used
 in your paper giving my views
 briefly why he was nominated &c
 I might say in a short way
 that Mr Lincoln was nominated
 and elected to the Presidency because
 he was a great man - which
 necessarily includes, that he was
 an honest man. He was great
 enough intellectually and

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physically to arrive through
patient labor at the best
and safest conclusions, upon
every subject; and honest
enough to pursue and adhere
to the right - that right which
was proven and tested by common
sense and the experience of
Mankind. About the time
that Mr Lincoln had attained
the matured strength of manhood
with strong intellectual powers,
Our Country afforded a vast
theatre for intellectual develop-
ment and progressive thought.

The day had passed for the
domination of ^{either} Machiavellism,
or for the following of these
carpet knights. The retentive
demands to labor, and the
enlargement of free thought,
just at this time made it
apparent that honesty was
the best and safest policy
for us all -

in public life &
No Man in America ~~has~~ ^{ever} made
it a life long maxim - that
honesty and candor ^{was} the best
policy, to an equal extent with
Abraham Lincoln. As I remem-
ber him now, and go back
upon his speeches and public
acts, I can remember no instance
when he appeared unconfid-
ent or disingenuous. That homely
expression "Honest Old Abe" ~~was~~
was universally accepted - as the
judgment of our people, and
this, lies at the foundation
of Mr Lincoln's nomination
and election to the Presidency,
more than all else.

With patient ear, and liberal
heart Mr Lincoln listened to
and held, all the suggestions
of his friends, with instan-
taneous decision he perceived
their value or rejected their
suggestions as worthless, but
insulting none.

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It was not till after and during
1858 - that Mr Lincoln's strength -
and value in political matters and
questions began to be known and
understood among the masses of
the people. His debates with Douglas
and his Springfield, and other political
speeches made in the East fixed in
the minds of the people, ^{a conviction} that he was
an honest and great man,
and not afraid to stand up for
the right. It was Mr Lincoln's real
strength rooted with, and upon,
the masses of our people. The
^{elder} politicians of Illinois and of
the east came slowly to his
support as a candidate for
the highest office. Though after
his nomination all republicans
in the state supported him.
As illustration of what I have said
above, allow me to narrate a
circumstance which occurred in
the office of Jonas F. Asbury in Quincy

during the latter part of the winter
 or early spring of 1860 - I think - or
~~probably earlier~~ Mr Greeley of the New York Tribune
 in returning from a trip upon
 the Western Plains and Mountains
 stopped at Tunney, delaying here his
 departure for a day. Mr Jones hearing
 that Mr Greeley was in Town, imm-
 -ediately called at his hotel to see him.
 Mr Greeley said at once, before I go
 back to New York and all along
 the way, Editor like, I shall try
 to find out all I can about
 politics and who the people are
 for in the next presidential race,
 and as I shall stay here all
 day I would like to see and
 talk with some of your leading
 men and politicians. Mr Jones
 at once appointed a meeting at
 our office at eleven o'clock, where
 Mr Greeley was requested to meet, such
 of our people as could be notified
 in time to go there.

With that indomitable energy and
 readiness, characteristic of Jonas, by eleven
 o'clock he had notified and gathered
 us to the office to meet Mr Grady - as
 I remember the following persons -
 Archibald Williams, Governor Wood, O H
 Browning, N Bushnell ~~and~~ ^{and} ~~and~~
 Mr Jonas and Mrs J. ^{whose names I have ~~been~~ ^{am} sorry to forget -} think one
 or two others. Mr Grady was at the time
~~and~~ in one of his most pleasant moods,
 and as time was important, after shaking
 hands all round he plunged into the
 the question of the presidential candid-
 -acy. Gentlemen who are you all for?
 Some are asked how about
 Mr Semard, to this Mr Grady replied
 I want to know what you Western
 men think who are you for.
 Mr Browning asked how Judge
 McLean would do, Mr Grady
 said he would not do - Mr
 Browning said Judge McLean

was a statesman and a wise
 man, and that Mrs McLean was
 a most splendid woman and
 would make a superb Lady
 President. Mr Gochy said he would
 go for Mrs McLean but not, ^{for} ~~the~~
 judge. Mr Browning seemed a little
 plagued - but mentioned Judge
 Bates. Mr Gochy seemed better
 pleased with this suggestion than
 that relating to Judge McLean.
 Several names were mentioned pro
 and con. Mr Seward's name
 was referred to more than once
 but Mr Gochy said nothing.
 After some further general talk
 all in good humor, I said
 Gentlemen there is one name
 you have not mentioned, one
 that I think we shall all
 hear of before long. To this

Mr Grady and one or two
 others asked who I meant. I
 said gentlemen I mean Abraham
 Lincoln of Illinois. I am sorry
 to say that my suggestion fell
 flat, it was not even discussed,
 none of them seemed for Lincoln - I
 felt a little mortified, finally, some
 one said Lincoln might do for
 Vice President. at this point Mr
 Jonas ^{probably} to relieve my embarrassment
 - or ~~probably because he concurred~~ -
 said: gentlemen there may be
 more in Astburs suggestion than
 any of us now think. Here the
 whole subject was dropped and
 the caucus dispersed. ~~any one~~
 acquainted with the men above
 mentioned will regret to remember
 that they ^{are} all now dead but myself.
 and that but seldom do we meet
 all together such men as ^{Grady} Wood, Williams
 Browning, Bushnell and Jonas. and
 though they all voted for Lincoln in

November 1860 it was not till
after the Decatur Convention, that they
were for 'Lincoln'—

I do not now remember that Mr
Lincoln was made president by
any man or set of men who
had been prominent as party leaders.
The Chicago Tribune I think, was early in the field
his nomination was more of a
real people's nomination, and his
election was more the result of
a people's movement, than any
that had occurred for many
years. I am not saying that there
were not many prominent men
in Illinois, who were for the
nomination of Lincoln at and
for a ^{short} time before the Decatur
Convention. That Convention
settled the Republicans of Illinois
unanimously for Lincoln of course,
but after all, now no man can
be pointed out who made Lincoln
president many helped and in doing
so helped their own convictions of duty.

That Mr Lincoln was ambitious for
 distinction and for honorable official
 station none will dispute, and of
 his election to the presidency it may
 be said that there was a tide in his
 pathway, which taken at its ebb, led him
 onto victory. But who but Lincoln as
 leader could have so honorably, safely and
 lovingly have ridden the tempest of
 1860. Our old chronic national
 disease of human slavery ~~was~~
^{able to} culminated. The people of the U States
 were divided substantially into two
 parties, north and south. As early as
 1858. Mr Lincoln had in his Freeport
 speech through questions put by him
 to Judge Douglas, compelled him
 to say that the people of a territory
 might ^{either} by unfriendly legislation, or
 non protection, prevent slavery
 in a U States Territory, or that
 they had no such right or power,
 one thing or the other he was compelled to say

Mr Douglas affirmed their power
of prevention - and was elected
Senator. (I have before me as I
write Mr Lincoln's letter, dated at
Springfield July 31 1858 in which
he acknowledges the receipt of my
letter to him of the 25th in which I
had asked ~~Mr Lincoln~~^{him} to prep upon
Judge Douglas the questions put
afterwards at Foxport - but which
questions at that time Mr Lincoln
declined to put. because he anti-
-~~ipated~~^{ipated} substantially what the
Judge would answer, and which
answer might affect the Senatorial
contest in favor of Judge
Douglas. It appears that after
the date of this letter Mr Lincoln
changed his mind about it,
and put the questions at
Foxport -) This letter of Mr
Lincoln having been an-
-~~swered~~^{swered} published here I deem it not
necessary to insert it now. In
its publication here, the editorial

heading, was entirely, unauthorized
by me and caused me great
annoyance,

After the election of the Illinois legislature
in 1858 resulting in a victory for
Judge Douglas, I wrote to my son
= Coln to which letter ~~of mine to him~~ ^{he replied -}
~~dated Nov 18 1858~~ ~~enclosed~~
see the following -

" Springfield Nov 19 1858.

" Henry Ashbury Esq.

" My Dear Sir. Yours of the
" 13th was received some day ago,
" the fight must go on. The cause
" of civil liberty must not be
" surrendered at the end of one
" or even one hundred defeats -
" Douglas had the ingenuity to
" be supported in the late contest
" both as the best means to break
" down and to uphold the
" Slave interest. No ingenuity

- " Can keep those antagonistic
 " elements in harmony long.
 " Another explosion will soon
 " come
 " Yours truly
 " A Lincoln

But we are enquiring why Mr
 Lincoln was nominated, and
 elected to the Presidency, we have
 seen that he was held by the people
 as honest; we need only to remember
 his great intellectual strength and
 vigor; we need only to remember
 that ~~to~~ Lincoln more than ~~to~~
 any other man ~~had~~ had
 forced an issue with Mr
 Douglas upon the question of
 slavery in the Territories,
 and that
 the Judge's answer to the
 question at Freeport, was the
 wedge which split into two
 parts ^{the great Democratic party} Douglas by repealing
 the Mexican Compromise had

split and disintegrated his old antagonistic party - the whig party - Under the staturist blares of Lincoln, he was driven by his replies at 7 report to split the Democratic party, the party of his love and devotion.

The Republican party as early as 1856. had in its national platform declared that the Constitution, confers upon Congress sovereign power over the territories for their government - and that it was both the right and duty of Congress to prohibit in these territories Slavery.

At first and for a time the South had seemed well pleased with the Kansas Nebraska bill. especially with its repeal of the so called Missouri Compromise. In their Democratic platform of 1856. they endorsed the principles contained in the Organic Law establishing the territories of Nebraska and Kansas, x x x x and non interference of Congress,

~~of Congress~~ with Slavery in the
Territories, or in the District of
Columbia. It was not long
however before it became evident
that Kansas would be a Free
State ^{and} when the Charleston
Convention assembled in 1860.
The split of the party ensued
and Douglas and Breckinridge
both together were too many
to beat Lincoln. As showing
the views of the Southern wing
of the party we find Breckin-
ridge in his letter of acceptance
saying among other things, that
"XXX" It follows that the citizens of
"all the States may enter the Territories
"of the Union, with their property of
"whatever kind, and enjoy it, during
"the territorial condition, without let
"or hindrance either by Congress
"or the Subordinate Territorial
"Governments" XX "Inevitable

" Logic, which works its steady
" way through clouds and passions
" Compels the Country the Country
" to meet the issue. Here speaks
another honest man, like
Lincoln he was for no dodging
or prostration - it was pro
Slavery vs Anti Slavery.

Abraham Lincoln I believe
was the first to announce
the "Inevitable conflict" even
before Mr Seward's great
speech at Rochester on the
25th of October A.D. 1858.

The times had changed and
earnest men were taking
sides. Lincoln was only
Nugon as honest and great
his ^{short} record was clean. Does
any man now wonder why
and how he was elected
President of the United States. —
I am Henry Astbury Over

Now friend K K. I dont know
whether the foregoing is what
you want or expected in your
request to me to write - If you
publish it I want the whole
of it published or none, and
what ever you may say of
me - dont either praise, magnify
or gloriate about poor me

Henry Astley