The Herndon-Weik Collection of Lincolniana

A Register of the Collection in the Library of Congress

Prepared by Mary M. Wolfskill and David Mathisen
Revised by T. Michael Womack

Manuscript Division, Library of Congress

Washington, D.C.

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Collection Summary

Title: The Herndon-Weik Collection of Lincolniana
Span Dates: ca. 1824-1933
ID No.: MSS25791
Collector: Herndon, William Henry, 1818-1891
Creator: Lincoln, Abraham, 1809-1865
Collector: Weik, Jesse William, 1857-1930
Extent: 4,600 items; 36 containers; 10 linear feet; 15 microfilm reels
Language: Collection material in English
Repository: Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
Abstract: Collection composed of the papers of Abraham Lincoln, U.S. president, U.S. representative from Illinois, and lawyer; William Henry Herndon, Lincoln's law partner, collector, and biographer from Springfield, Illinois; and Jesse William Weik, lawyer of Greencastle, Indiana, and coauthor of Herndon *Lincoln.* Includes records (1933) of the Weik Manuscript Corporation and miscellaneous material collected chiefly by Herndon and Weik for use in writing Herndon's *Lincoln: The True Story of a Great Life* (1889).

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

Names:
Bell, John, 1797-1869--Correspondence
Beveridge, Albert Jeremiah, 1862-1927--Correspondence
Conkling, James Cook, 1816-1899--Correspondence
Dana, Richard Henry, 1815-1882--Correspondence
Delahay, Mark W. (Mark William), 1818?-1879--Correspondence
Douglas, Stephen Arnold, 1813-1861
Edwards, Ninian Wirt
Friend, Charles
Gentry, Kate Roby
Giddings, Joshua R. (Joshua Reed), 1795-1864--Correspondence
Graham, Mentor, 1800-1886
Hanks, Dennis
Hay, John, 1838-1905
Hay, John, 1838-1905--Correspondence
Haycraft, Samuel, 1795-1878--Correspondence
Helm, John B.
Johnston, John D., b. 1815--Correspondence
Judd, Norman B. (Norman Buel), 1815-1878--Correspondence
Lincoln, Mary Todd, 1818-1882
Lincoln, Sarah Bush Johnston, 1788-1869
Logan, Stephen T. (Stephen Trigg), 1800-1880
McCallen, Andrew--Correspondence
Nicolay, John G. (John George), 1832-1901--Correspondence
Pierce, Edward Lillie, 1829-1897--Correspondence
Speed, Joshua F. (Joshua Fry), 1814-1882--Correspondence
Stevens, Thaddeus, 1792-1868--Correspondence
Swett, Leonard, 1825-1889
Swett, Leonard, 1825-1889--Correspondence
Thomas, Richard S. (Richard Symmes)--Correspondence
Trumbull, Lyman, 1813-1896--Correspondence
Wallace, Frances, b. 1817

Wentworth, John, 1815-1888--Correspondence
White, Horace, 1834-1916--Correspondence
Whitney, Henry Clay, 1831-1905--Correspondence
Williams, Archibald, 1801-1863--Correspondence
Wilson, R. L. (Robert L.)
Yates, Richard, 1815-1873--Correspondence
Lincoln family
Illinois. General Assembly
Republican Party (U.S. : 1854-)
Weik Manuscript Corporation
Whig Party (U.S.)
White House (Washington, D.C.)
Herndon, William Henry, 1818-1891. Papers of William Henry Herndon (1849-1891)
Lincoln, Abraham, 1809-1865. Papers of Abraham Lincoln (1824-1865)
Weik, Jesse William, 1857-1930. Papers of Jesse William Weik (1830-1927)

Subjects:
Lincoln-Douglas debates, 1858
Practice of law--Illinois--Springfield
Presidents--United States--Biography
Presidents--United States--Election--1856
Presidents--United States--Election--1860
Illinois--Politics and government--To 1865
Springfield (Ill.)--History
United States--Politics and government--19th century
United States--Politics and government--1861-1865

Occupations:
Biographers
Collectors
Lawyers

Administrative Information

Provenance:

The Herndon-Weik Collection of Lincolniana was purchased by the Library of Congress from G. A. Baker and Co. in 1941. Material relating to Abraham Lincoln acquired by the Library from other sources between 1929 and 1982 is also included in the collection.

Processing History:

The Herndon-Weik Collection of Lincolniana was first processed in 1974; additional material received was incorporated into the collection in 1984. This register was revised in 1997.

Transfers:

Items have been transferred from the Manuscript Division to other custodial divisions of the Library. Photographs and etchings have been transferred to the Prints and Photographs Division. A broadside has been transferred to the Rare Book and Special Collections Division. All transfers are identified in these divisions as part of the Herndon-Weik Collection of Lincolniana.

Copyright Status:

The status of copyright in the unpublished writings of Abraham Lincoln, William Henry Herndon, and Jesse William Weik in these papers and in other collections of papers in the custody of the Library of Congress is governed by the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.).

Microfilm:

A microfilm edition of these papers is available on fifteen reels. Consult a reference librarian in the Manuscript Division concerning purchase or interlibrary loan.

Preferred Citation:

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container or reel number, Herndon-Weik Collection of Lincolniana, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Notes

William Henry Herndon

Date	***Event***
1818 December 25	Born, Greensburg, Ky.
1820	Moved to Illinois
1821	Moved to Sangamon County, Ill.
1825	Moved to Springfield, Ill.
1836-1837	Student, preparatory department, Illinois College, Jacksonville, Ill.
1840	Married Mary Maxcy (died 1861)
1844	Admitted to bar and formed law partnership with Abraham Lincoln
1854	Elected mayor of Springfield, Ill.
1862	Married Anna Miles
1889	Coauthored with Jesse W. Weik *Herndon's Lincoln: The True Story of a Great Life* (Chicago: Belford, Clarke. 3 vols.)
1891 March 18	Died, Springfield, Ill.

Jesse William Weik

Date	***Event***
1857 August 23	Born, Greencastle, Ind.
1875	A.B., Indiana Asbury (now DePauw) University, Greencastle, Ind.
1883	A.M., Indiana Asbury University, Greencastle, Ind.
1880	Admitted to bar but never practiced
1889	Coauthored with William H. Herndon *Herndon's Lincoln: The True Story of a Great Life* (Chicago: Belford, Clarke. 3 vols.)

1892	Published *Abraham Lincoln: The True Story of a Great Life* (New York: D. Appleton. 2 vols.), a revised edition of *Herndon's Lincoln: The True Story of a Great Life* (Chicago: Belford, Clarke. 3 vols.)
1930 August 18	Died

Abraham Lincoln

Date	***Event***
1809 February 12	Born, Hardin County, Ky.
1816	Moved to Indiana
1830	Moved to Macon County, Ill.
1831	Moved to New Salem, Ill.; employed as storekeeper
1832	Served in Black Hawk War; became partner in Lincoln & Berry, a general store
1833-1836	Postmaster, New Salem, Ill.
1834-1836	Deputy county surveyor, Sangamon County, Ill.
1834-1841	Member, Illinois state legislature (Whig)
1836	Licensed as attorney
1837	Moved to Springfield and practiced law in partnership with John T. Stuart and later Stephen T. Logan
1842	Married Mary Todd
1844	Formed law partnership with William H. Herndon
1847-1849	Member, U.S. House of Representatives (Whig) from Illinois, Thirtieth Congress
1849	Resumed law practice
1856	Joined Republican party
1858	Unsuccessful Republican candidate for U.S. Senate in opposition to Stephen A. Douglas
1860	Elected president
1864	Reelected president
1865 April 14	Shot by John Wilkes Booth
1865 April 15	Died, Washington, D.C.

Scope and Content Note

Shortly after the death of Abraham Lincoln, William Henry Herndon began gathering material for a biography of his former law partner. In 1885, Jesse William Weik brought new inspiration and assistance to the endeavor, and in 1888 Herndon's biography was completed through their joint effort. This collection of Lincolniana is the product of their research. The material covers the time period ca. 1824-1933 and is divided into six groups: I: Arithmetic Book and Scrapbooks; II: Correspondence of Lincoln; III: Legal Documents; IV: Papers of William Henry Herndon; V: Papers of Jesse William Weik; and VI: Miscellany.

Group I consists of one leaf (two pages) of an arithmetic book, into which Lincoln, as a young man, entered tables and exercises in linear measure, and two scrapbooks of newspaper clippings. One scrapbook contains editorials, news items, letters, and a number of statistical tables dealing with such subjects as demographics, slavery, geography, religion, railroads, agriculture, immigration, and monetary matters. Lincoln is alleged to have gathered the material for his debates with Stephen Arnold Douglas during their race for the United States Senate in 1858. The other scrapbook contains similar clippings and also includes material on the presidential election of 1860.

Group II, comprised largely of correspondence, is divided into three sections. Section A consists of twelve letters and a certificate of survey in Lincoln's hand. These items are listed as Nos. 3-14 and 770 in the inventory and include six letters from Lincoln to Mark William Delahay. Section B consists chiefly of reproductions of letters and papers written by Lincoln. Several letters from Lincoln to Joshua Speed document the friendship between the two men and their close communication on personal and public affairs. Other recipients include Joshua R. Giddings, Samuel Haycraft, John D. Johnston, Andrew McCallen, Leonard Swett, Richard S. Thomas, Henry Clay Whitney, and Archibald Williams. Letters to Lincoln from 1848 through 1861 and listed as Nos. 774-806 in the inventory constitute Section C of Group II. The campaign of 1856 is the subject of much of the correspondence. The candidates, Millard Fillmore, John C. Fremont, and James Buchanan; campaign strategy; and the strength of the Democratic, Republican, and Know-Nothing parties are among the topics discussed. The correspondents include John Bell, Joshua R. Giddings, Norman B. Judd, Thaddeus Stevens, John Wentworth, Richard Yates, and others. This section also contains newspaper clippings and miscellaneous printed material.

Group III comprises documents related to Lincoln's legal cases. It contains certificates, petitions, affidavits, notices, abstracts, writs, briefs, depositions, and other papers dealing with such subjects as divorce, slander, assault and battery, and usury. Most of this material is described as Nos. 15-773 and 2000-78 in the inventory.

The largest series in the collection, Group IV, consists of correspondence, interviews, recollections, notes, newspaper clippings, and other material of William Henry Herndon. Included are an interview with Mary Todd Lincoln in 1871, two long interviews with Dennis Hanks, letters from Hanks to Herndon written in 1865 and 1866 mainly on family history, letters to Herndon from Charles Friend on the Enlow story, and letters and notes from Herndon to Weik between 1881 October 1 and 1891 February 27 containing reminiscences of Lincoln's life.

Prominent in this series are Lincoln's family members, schoolmates, neighbors in New Salem and Springfield, Illinois, law partners, colleagues at the bar and in the Illinois legislature, political party allies, and White House associates. Representative names include Ninian Wirt Edwards (brother-in-law), Kate Roby Gentry (schoolmate), Mentor Graham (teacher), John Hay, whose letter of 1866 September 5 discusses Lincoln's daily life in the White House and ends with the statement that he was "the greatest character since Christ," John B. Helm (store clerk), Sarah Bush Johnston Lincoln (stepmother), Stephen T. Logan (law partner), Leonard Swett (lawyer), Frances Wallace (sister-in-law), and Robert L. Wilson (one of the "Long Nine," a group of tall Whigs, including Lincoln, who served together in the Illinois legislature). Also in Group IV are manuscripts by Herndon bearing such titles as "Lincoln's Development," "Lincoln's Courtship with Miss Owens," "The Lincoln-Douglas Debates," "Miss Rutledge and Lincoln," and "Lincoln's Ways."

Group V, the papers of Jesse William Weik, consists of correspondence, notes, extracts, interviews, typed and handwritten copies of documents, and other items. Correspondents include Albert Jeremiah Beveridge, James Cook Conkling, Richard Henry Dana, John Hay, John G. Nicolay, Edward Lillie Pierce, Lyman Trumbull, and Horace White.

Group VI is an assortment of unbound material which includes photostatic copies and facsimiles of documents mostly by Lincoln, a printed sermon and speech by Theodore Parker, newspaper clippings, magazine articles, pamphlets, one chapter of Albert Jeremiah Beveridge's *Abraham Lincoln (1928)*, Charles M. Thompson's report on the "Lincoln Way" investigation, records of the Weik Manuscript Corporation, and negative photographs of documents collected by Herndon and Weik.

Other Guides to the Herndon-Weik Collection

An annotated inventory describing each item in the collection, but in an order different from the current arrangement, and a negative photostatic copy of the inventory with fewer annotations may be found in the Manuscript Division Reading Room reference collection. Special card file indexes for the collection exist but are housed separately from the items themselves. A microfilm version of these indexes may be found on reel 15 of the Miscellany series. To use the original indexes consult the reference staff in the Manuscript Division Reading Room.

Organization of the Papers

The collection is arranged in six series:

- Group I: Arithmetic Book and Scrapbooks, ca. 1824-1860, n.d.
- Group II: Correspondence of Abraham Lincoln, 1833-1865, n.d.
- Group III: Legal Documents, 1834-1860, n.d.
- Group IV: Papers of William Henry Herndon, 1849-1891, n.d.
- Group V: Papers of Jesse William Weik, 1830-1927, n.d.
- Group VI: Miscellany, ca. 1824-1933, n.d.

Description of Series

Container	*Series*
BOX 1 **REEL** 1	**Group I: Arithmetic Book and Scrapbooks, ca. 1824-1860, n.d.** One leaf from Lincoln's arithmetic book and two scrapbooks with clippings of statistical tables, articles, editorials, and extracts from speeches. Arranged by type of material.
BOX 2 **REEL** 1	**Group II: Correspondence of Abraham Lincoln, 1833-1865, n.d.** Original correspondence, copies of documents, and other miscellaneous items. Arranged chronologically in three sections. See original index in Manuscript Division Reading Room or microfilm copy in Group VI, reel no. 15.
BOX 3-13 **REEL** 2-6	**Group III: Legal Documents, 1834-1860, n.d.** Briefs, complaints, petitions, and other legal documents relating to Lincoln's law cases. Arranged alphabetically by name of plaintiff with separate papers for each case file by the date entered with the clerk of court. See original index in Manuscript Division Reading Room or microfilm copy in Group VI, reel no. 15.
BOX 14-27 **REEL** 7-11	**Group IV: Papers of William Henry Herndon, 1849-1891, n.d.** Correspondence, notes, interviews, collections, copies of documents, and miscellaneous material. Arranged chronologically. See original index in Manuscript Division Reading Room or microfilm copy in Group VI, reel no. 15.
BOX 28-35 **REEL** 12-14	**Group V: Papers of Jesse William Weik, 1830-1927, n.d.** Correspondence, notes, interviews, copies of documents, and miscellaneous material. Arranged chronologically. See original index in Manuscript Division Reading Room or microfilm copy in Group VI, reel no. 15.
	Group VI: Miscellany, ca. 1824-1933, n.d.
REEL 15	**Microfilmed material.** Microfilm of indexes not physically housed with collection; to use original indexes, consult reference staff in Manuscript Division Reading Room.
BOX 36 not filmed	**Unfilmed material.** Photocopies and facsimiles, newspaper clippings, pamphlets, magazine articles, report, sermon, speech, Weik Manuscript Corp. records, and other items. See original index in Manuscript Division Reading Room or microfilm copy in Group VI, reel no. 15.

Container List

Container	*Contents*
BOX 1 **REEL** 1	**Group I: Arithmetic Book and Scrapbooks, ca. 1824-1860, n.d.**
	One leaf from Lincoln's arithmetic book and two scrapbooks with clippings of statistical tables, articles, editorials, and extracts from speeches. Arranged by type of material.
BOX 1 **REEL** 1	Lincoln's arithmetic book, one leaf (two pages), ca. 1824-1826
	Scrapbooks Newspaper clippings allegedly used by Lincoln in his debates with Stephen A. Douglas in 1858, ca. 1850-1858, n.d. Newspaper clippings, ca. 1854-1860, n.d.
BOX 2 **REEL** 1	**Group II: Correspondence of Abraham Lincoln, 1833-1865, n.d.**
	Original correspondence, copies of documents, and other miscellaneous items. Arranged chronologically in three sections. See original index in Manuscript Division Reading Room or microfilm copy in Group VI, reel no. 15.
BOX 2 **REEL** 1	Section A, letters and documents in Lincoln's hand, 1834 January 14-1861 March 13
	Section B, copies of letters and documents mostly by Lincoln, 1833 October 19-1865 April 6 Section C, original letters to Lincoln, 1848 September 7-1861 March 11
BOX 3-13 **REEL** 2-6	**Group III: Legal Documents, 1834-1860, n.d.**
	Briefs, complaints, petitions, and other legal documents relating to Lincoln's law cases. Arranged alphabetically by name of plaintiff with separate papers for each case file by the date entered with the clerk of court. See original index in Manuscript Division Reading Room or microfilm copy in Group VI, reel no. 15.
BOX 3 **REEL** 2	A-Bro
BOX 4 **REEL** 2	Bru-De
BOX 5 **REEL** 2-3	Do-Gre
BOX 6 **REEL** 3	Gru-Hi
BOX 7 **REEL** 3-4	Ho-La
BOX 8 **REEL** 4	Le-Mal

Container	*Contents*
BOX 9 **REEL** 4-5	Man-Pad
BOX 10 **REEL** 5	Par-Rob
BOX 11 **REEL** 5	Rog-Spi
BOX 12 **REEL** 5-6	Spr-Van
BOX 13 **REEL** 6	Vau-You
	Miscellany
BOX 14-27 **REEL** 7-11	**Group IV: Papers of William Henry Herndon, 1849-1891, n.d.**
	Correspondence, notes, interviews, collections, copies of documents, and miscellaneous material. Arranged chronologically. See original index in Manuscript Division Reading Room or microfilm copy in Group VI, reel no. 15.
BOX 14 **REEL** 7	1849 July 24-1865 July 21
BOX 15 **REEL** 7-8	1865 July 30-1866 January 12
BOX 16 **REEL** 8	1866 January 13-1866 August 10
BOX 17 **REEL** 8	1866 August 11-1866 November 16
BOX 18 **REEL** 8	1866 November 18-1866 December 30
BOX 19 **REEL** 9	1867 January 5-1874 January 10
BOX 20 **REEL** 9-10	1874 February 9-1887 January 2
BOX 21 **REEL** 10	1887 January 6-1889 January 4
BOX 22 **REEL** 10	1889 January 5-1891 February 27
BOX 23-24 **REEL** 11	Undated
BOX 25-27 **REEL** 11	Drafts of portions of *Herndon's Lincoln*
BOX 28-35 **REEL** 12-14	**Group V: Papers of Jesse William Weik, 1830-1927, n.d.**
	Correspondence, notes, interviews, copies of documents, and miscellaneous material. Arranged chronologically. See original index in Manuscript Division Reading Room or microfilm copy in Group VI, reel no. 15.
BOX 28	1830 February 20-1886 February 4

Container	*Contents*
REEL 12	
BOX 29	1886 March 15-1889 January 3
REEL 12	
BOX 30	1889 January 11-1898 December 15
REEL 12-13	
BOX 31	1898 December 27-1913 November 20
REEL 13	
BOX 32	1913 November 25-1918 February 15
REEL 13	
BOX 33	1918 March 5-1927 December 4, n.d.
REEL 14	
BOX 34-35	Undated
REEL 14	

Group VI: Miscellany, ca. 1824-1933, n.d.

REEL 15 **Microfilmed material.**

Microfilm of indexes not physically housed with collection; to use original indexes, consult reference staff in Manuscript Division Reading Room.

REEL 15 Special indexes

Not physically housed with collection; to use original indexes, consult reference staff in Manuscript Division Reading Room.

BOX 36 **Unfilmed material.**
not filmed

Photocopies and facsimiles, newspaper clippings, pamphlets, magazine articles, report, sermon, speech, Weik Manuscript Corp. records, and other items.

See original index in Manuscript Division Reading Room or microfilm copy in Group VI, reel no. 15.

BOX 36 Herndon family genealogy, n.d.
not filmed

Herndon v. Smith praecipe, 1837 June 9

Lincoln, Abraham, duplicate holograph transcription of letter to Abraham Jonas, 1860 February 4

Newspaper and magazine clippings, 1856-1921, n.d.

Photocopies and facsimiles, ca. 1824-1888

Proceedings of the first annual meeting and dinner of the Lincoln Fellowship, 1908 February 12

Weik, Jesse William, photocopy of pages from diary, 1876 July 4-5

Weik, Jesse William and Mary (daughter), photocopies of photographs, 1910, n.d.

Weik Manuscript Corp.

- Certificate of incorporation and minutes, 1933
- Stock book, 1933
- Stock certificates, 1933

Writings

- Barton, William E., "The Lincolns in Their Old Kentucky Home," 1923
- Beveridge, Albert J., *Abraham Lincoln*, vol. 2, chapter 7, n.d.

Container	*Contents*
	Houser, M. L., "Abraham Lincoln's Message to Horace Greeley," 1929
	Lambert, William H., "Lincoln Literature," 1909
	Lamon, Ward H., pamphlet containing letter to General A. Gridley in answer to attack of *Chicago Tribune*, n.d.
	Parker, Theodore
	"The Effect of Slavery on the American People," 1858
	"The Relation of Slavery to a Republican Form of Government," 1858
	Rugg, Arthur P., "Abraham Lincoln in Worcester," 1914
	Starr, John W., "Lincoln As President," 1910
	Thompson, Charles M., report on "Lincoln Way," n.d.
	Weik, Mary Hays, "My Father and Lincoln," n.d.