

Herndon-Weik Collection of Lincolniana

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**Manuscript Division, Library of Congress
Washington, D.C.**

1997

Revised 2010 March

Contact information:

<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/mss.contact>

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<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/eadmss.ms001002>

LC Online Catalog record:

<http://lcn.loc.gov/mm74025791>

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Revised by T. Michael Womack

Collection Summary

Title: Herndon-Weik Collection of Lincolniana

Span Dates: circa 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

Location: Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Summary: Collection composed of the papers of Abraham Lincoln, United States president, United States 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.

People

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 A. (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--Correspondence.

Hay, John, 1838-1905.

Haycraft, Samuel, 1795-1878--Correspondence.

Helm, John B.

Herndon, William Henry, 1818-1891. William Henry Herndon papers. 1849-1891.

Johnston, John D., b. 1815--Correspondence.

Judd, Norman B. (Norman Buel), 1815-1878--Correspondence.

Lincoln family.

Lincoln, Abraham, 1809-1865. Abraham Lincoln papers. 1824-1865.

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--Correspondence.

Swett, Leonard, 1825-1889.

Thomas, Richard S. (Richard Symmes)--Correspondence.
Trumbull, Lyman, 1813-1896--Correspondence.
Wallace, Frances, b. 1817.
Weik, Jesse William, 1857-1930. Jesse William Weik papers. 1830-1927.
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.

Organizations

Illinois. General Assembly.
Republican Party (U.S. : 1854-)
Weik Manuscript Corporation.
Whig Party (U.S.)
White House (Washington, D.C.)

Subjects

Lincoln-Douglas Debates, Ill., 1858.
Practice of law--Illinois--Springfield.
Presidents--United States--Biography.
Presidents--United States--Election--1856.
Presidents--United States--Election--1860.

Places

Illinois--Politics and government--To 1865.
Springfield (Ill.)--History.
United States--Politics and government--1861-1865.
United States--Politics and government--19th century.

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.

Additional Guides

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.

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.).

Access and Restrictions

The Herndon-Weik Collection of Lincolniana is open to research. Researchers are advised to contact the Manuscript Reading Room prior to visiting. Many collections are stored off-site and advance notice is needed to retrieve these items for research use.

Microfilm

A microfilm edition of these papers is available on fifteen reels. Consult reference staff in the Manuscript Division concerning availability for purchase or interlibrary loan. To promote preservation of the originals, researchers are required to consult the microfilm edition.

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

<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>
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 <i>Herndon's Lincoln: The True Story of a Great Life</i> (Chicago: Belford, Clarke. 3 vols.)

1891 March 18	Died, Springfield, Ill.
Jesse William Weik	
<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>
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 <i>Herndon's Lincoln: The True Story of a Great Life</i> (Chicago: Belford, Clarke. 3 vols.)
1892	Published <i>Abraham Lincoln: The True Story of a Great Life</i> (New York: D. Appleton. 2 vols.), a revised edition of <i>Herndon's Lincoln: The True Story of a Great Life</i> (Chicago: Belford, Clarke. 3 vols.)
1930 August 18	Died
Abraham Lincoln	
<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>
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 circa 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.

Organization of the Papers

The collection is arranged in six series:

- [Group I: Arithmetic Book and Scrapbooks, circa 1824-1860](#)
- [Group II: Correspondence of Abraham Lincoln, 1833-1865](#)
- [Group III: Legal Documents, 1834-1860](#)
- [Group IV: Papers of William Henry Herndon, 1849-1891](#)
- [Group V: Papers of Jesse William Weik, 1830-1927](#)
- [Group VI: Miscellany, circa 1824-1933](#)

Description of Series

Container

BOX 1

REEL 1

Series

Group I: Arithmetic Book and Scrapbooks, circa 1824-1860

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

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

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

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

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, circa 1824-1933

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

<i>Container</i>	<i>Contents</i>
BOX 1 REEL 1	Group I: Arithmetic Book and Scrapbooks, circa 1824-1860 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), circa 1824-1826 Scrapbooks Newspaper clippings allegedly used by Lincoln in his debates with Stephen A. Douglas in 1858, circa 1850-1858, undated Newspaper clippings, circa 1854-1860, undated
BOX 2 REEL 1	Group II: Correspondence of Abraham Lincoln, 1833-1865 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 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
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BOX 8 REEL 4	Le-Mal

Group III: Legal Documents, 1834-1860

Container

Contents

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REEL 5

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Miscellany

BOX 14-27
REEL 7-11

Group IV: Papers of William Henry Herndon, 1849-1891

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

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REEL 7-8

1865 July 30-1866 January 12

BOX 16
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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

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 V: Papers of Jesse William Weik, 1830-1927

<i>Container</i>	<i>Contents</i>
BOX 28 REEL 12	1830 February 20-1886 February 4
BOX 29 REEL 12	1886 March 15-1889 January 3
BOX 30 REEL 12-13	1889 January 11-1898 December 15
BOX 31 REEL 13	1898 December 27-1913 November 20
BOX 32 REEL 13	1913 November 25-1918 February 15
BOX 33 REEL 14	1918 March 5-1927 December 4, undated
BOX 34-35 REEL 14	Undated

Group VI: Miscellany, circa 1824-1933

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 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.
BOX 36 not filmed	Herndon family genealogy, undated <i>Herndon v. Smith</i> praecipe, 1837 June 9 Lincoln, Abraham, duplicate holograph transcription of letter to Abraham Jonas, 1860 February 4 Newspaper and magazine clippings, 1856-1921, undated Photocopies and facsimiles, circa 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, undated 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

Group VI: Miscellany, circa 1824-1933

Container

Contents

- Beveridge, Albert J., *Abraham Lincoln*, vol. 2, chapter 7, undated
- 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*, undated
- 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," undated
- Weik, Mary Hays, "My Father and Lincoln," undated