

Rediscovering Lincoln's Bible - A Gift from the Ladies of the Philadelphia Volunteer Hospital Association

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ELSAH - In June 1864, President Abraham Lincoln and first lady Mary Todd Lincoln traveled to Philadelphia to help raise money for the care of wounded Union soldiers. There, the Lincolns attended a very large, educational and entertaining 'sanitary fair,' the Civil War name for voluntary, locally sponsored, fund-raisers for the Union cause.

For his part, President Lincoln contributed forty-eight signed copies of the Emancipation Proclamation, which sold for \$10 each. As a thank-you for attending, the women members from one of the sponsoring organizations gave Lincoln a very large, ornate, presentation-style Bible.

After Lincoln's assassination, Mary Lincoln kept the Bible until 1872 when she gave it Reverend Noyes W. Miner. Miner had befriended the Lincolns when he lived across the street from them in Springfield in the mid-1850s.

Miner's descendants safely preserved the Bible and kept it out of sight for generations. In late 2018, the family decided to donate the Bible to the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum in Springfield, where it is currently on display.

To learn more about these events, Historic Elsay Foundation will host a presentation from Ian Patrick Hunt, Chief of Acquisitions, ALPLM, entitled, "Rediscovering Lincoln's Bible - A Gift from the Ladies of the Philadelphia Volunteer Hospital Association." Hunt, who was instrumental in the discovery, acquisition, and transportation of the Bible from the donors to Springfield, will also provide details of the Bible's printing and provenance on Thursday, November 12, 2020, at 7:00 pm.

Hunt's presentation is the one of this year's Hosmer-Williams Lectures sponsored by Historic Elsay Foundation and underwritten by Liberty Bank. The presentation will be via ZOOM. Attendees should pre-register at historicelsah.org.

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