

McLean County Museum of History

Fraker-Lincoln Collection

Processed by
Aidan Coyne
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Collection Information

VOLUME OF COLLECTION:	2 Boxes
COLLECTION DATES:	1830-2025
RESTRICTIONS:	None
PROVENANCE:	Gift of former attorney Guy Fraker
REPRODUCTION RIGHTS:	Permission to reproduce or publish material in this collection must be obtained in writing from the McLean County Museum of History
ALTERNATIVE FORMATS:	None
OTHER FINDING AIDS:	None
LOCATION:	Archives
NOTES:	See also: - Abraham Lincoln and Related Collection for items 8.1, <i>Funk v. Rutledge</i> pleading.

Brief History

Guy Fraker, born in St. Joesph, Missouri, and raised in the New York suburbs, practiced law in Bloomington for nearly a half century. He studied and wrote extensively on Abraham Lincoln, including authoring two books, *Lincoln's Ladder to the Presidency: The Eighth Judicial Circuit* (2012), and *Looking for Lincoln in Illinois: A Guide to Lincoln's Eighth Judicial Circuit* (2017). He also worked on the PBS documentary "Abraham Lincoln: Prelude to the Presidency," and served as chairman of the New Salem Committee of the Abraham Lincoln Association, among other accomplishments.

Scope

This collection contains articles written by Guy Fraker on Lincoln's connections to Central Illinois, as well as deeds, pleadings, receipts, and financial documents related to Lincoln's life and career. Also included are letters from Lincoln's contemporaries, letters from Union soldiers, memorabilia related to Lincoln, Judge David Davis's copy of the 1851 Illinois Statute book, and receipts authenticating the materials herein.

Box and Folder Inventory

Box 1

Folder 1: General Information

- 1.1.1 "In Lincoln's steps," *Chicago Tribune*, February 1, 2009, Travel section 10, pp. 1, 4-5 (original clipping and color copy).
- 1.1.2 "Lawyer's book brings Lincoln home to Illinois." Interview with Fraker by Paul Engleman. *The Rotarian*, August 2013, pp. 13.
- 1.1.3 *Lincoln's Ladder to the Presidency: The Eighth Judicial Circuit*. Review essay by Brian Dirck, *Journal of the Abraham Lincoln Association*. Summer 2014, pp. 67-70.
- 1.1.4 Open House celebration, Guy Fraker's retirement; Rosie's Pub, Bloomington, November 8, 2014.
- 1.1.5 Guy Fraker's 87th birthday celebration—"four score and seven..." 207 East Washington Street, Bloomington, April 25, 2025.
- 1.1.6 "Abraham Lincoln & Ann Rutledge: Is the Story True?" Flyer for presentation by Fraker, DeWitt County Museum Association open house, May 18, 2025.

Folder 2: Circuit Markers

- 1.2.1 "To mark Lincoln Circuit," *The Daily Pantagraph*, October 16, 1916, pp. 12 (printed copy).
- 1.2.2 "Marking the Lincoln Circuit," The Illinois Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution. Gathered from the Illinois State Historical Society, ca. 1921.
- 1.2.3 "Dedication of the Memorial Line Marker of the Lincoln Circuit of the Eighth Judicial District Between McLean and Woodford Counties," event program, Carlock, July 11, 1923.

- 1.2.4 "Guide post rededicated," *Lincoln Courier*, September 27, 1983, pp. 3.
- 1.2.5 *The Lincoln Landscape, The Real Lincoln Highway: The Forgotten Lincoln Circuit Markers*. Essay by Guy Fraker, *Journal of the Abraham Lincoln Association*. 2004, pp. 74-98.

Folder 3: "Our Link to Lincoln"

- 1.3.1 "The Judge and the Lawyer," *The Pantagraph*, February 9, 2003.
- 1.3.2 "Men of Influence," *The Pantagraph*, February 16, 2003.
- 1.3.3 "Growing Prestige," *The Pantagraph*, February 23, 2003.
- 1.3.4 "Law on the Prairie," *The Pantagraph*, March 2, 2003
- 1.3.5 "The Lawyer Becomes the Martyr," *The Pantagraph*, March 9, 2023.

Folder 4: Central Illinois

- 1.4.1 "Lincoln in Woodford." *The Pantagraph*, February 6-27, 2005. 2 copies.
- 1.4.2 "Lincoln's Bloomington." *Illinois Heritage: A Publication of the Illinois State Historical Society*, January-February 2007, pp. 5-9.
- 1.4.3 "Abraham Lincoln in Macon County," *Illinois Heritage: A Publication of the Illinois State Historical Society*, March-April 2008, pp. 7-31. 3 copies

Folder 5: Sangamon County Deeds

- 1.5.1 Dan Stone, Sangamon County, October 15, 1836.

Folder 6: McLean County Deeds

- 1.6.1 William M. McCullough, Sheriff, to William Flagg, McLean County, October 6, 1845.
- 1.6.2 William Flagg to Asahel Gridley, McLean County, October 9, 1845.
- 1.6.3 James Harrison for lot 637 in Bloomington Cemetery, signed by Cemetery founder Linus Graves, March 21, 1859.

Folder 7: Sangamon County Court Cases

- 1.7.1 A.L. Herndon, surety bond on a case, Sangamon County, October 11, 1830.
- 1.7.2 1830 Pleading, Sangamon County Circuit Court, dated 1835. In numerous pieces; requires difficult restoration.
- 1.7.3 John T. Stuart, attorney for defendant in a lawsuit, Sangamon County, September 26, 1836.
- 1.7.4 John T. Stuart, pleading in the Sangamon County Circuit Court, October 21, 1837.
- 1.7.5 Samuel H. Treat, pleading in the Sangamon County Circuit Court, August 24, 1838. Includes biographical information on Samuel H. Treat.
- 1.7.6 John Calhoun, signature on an order in a lawsuit in the Sangamon County Circuit Court, June 24, 1843. Calhoun was a close friend of Lincoln who inspired him to take up land surveying.

Folder 8: McLean County Court Cases

- 1.8.1 Pleading in the matter of *Jesse Funk v. Robert Rutledge* regarding a dispute over a parcel of land in McLean County, signed by Abraham Lincoln, attorney for Rutledge, defendant, ca. September 1851.

Folder 9: Logan, Menard, Woodford, and Champaign County Court Cases

- 1.9.1 Samuel H. Treat and William Butler, case of *John Gridley v. Hudson Lore*, Postville, Logan County Circuit Court, August 29, 1839.
- 1.9.2 David Rutledge, request to the Circuit Clerk for case pending in Menard County, November 19, 1840.
- 1.9.3 Samuel Hill, New Salem resident, Menard County Circuit Court, April 2, 1842.
- 1.9.4 Henry Clay Whitney and Abraham Lincoln, case of *Illinois Central Railroad v. Brock, Hays & Co.*, Champaign County Circuit Court, November 19, 1848. Includes two printed copies from the Lincoln Library.
- 1.9.5 David Davis, order entered for the partition suit case of *Redding v. John Calhoun et.al.*, Woodford County, September 26, 1850.
- 1.9.6 Ward Hill Lamon, prosecuting attorney, Champaign County Circuit Court, May 1856.

Folder 10: Notarized Documents

- 1.10.1 Asahel Gridley, document notarized by David Davis, May 9, 1849.

Folder 11: Letters from Lincoln's Contemporaries, 1831-184s7

- 1.11.1 William L. May, letter to James Matheny, March 10, 1831.
- 1.11.2 Erastus Wright, letter, Springfield, IL, February 21, 1832.
- 1.11.3 Peter Onslow, letter, Peoria, IL, March 4, 1841.
- 1.11.4 William Kellogg, letter, Clinton, IL, October 21, 1841.
- 1.11.5 Usher Linder, letter, June 4, 1844.
- 1.11.6 Thomas L. Harris, letter to William Martin, July 19, 1847.

Folder 12: Letters from Lincoln's Contemporaries, 1848-1858

- 1.12.1 Archibald Williams, letter, September 12, 1848.
- 1.12.2 Isaac Diller, letter to W.W. Davis, Springfield, IL, November 7, 1852.
- 1.12.3 Norman Purple, letter to Honorable Mills Mead, Springfield, IL, January 4, 1853.
- 1.12.4 Henry Grove, letter to judge (unidentifiable), Peoria, IL, January 12, 1853.
- 1.12.5 Samuel Parks, letter to James Matheny, March 2, 1858.

Folder 13: Receipts

- 1.13.1 John Dawson, receipt from Estel Matte, June 7, 1834
- 1.13.2 A.L Bledsoe, receipt for E.H. Merryman, February 11, 1842
- 1.13.3 James C. Conkling, receipt, October 27, 1850.

Folder 14: Financial

- 1.14.1 Asahel Gridley, O. Covell, and Jesse Fell as borrowers, Isaac and Absalom Funk as sureties. October 1838.
- 1.14.2 Paid postage wrapper, Bloomington, ca. 1840.
- 1.14.3 William Dole, First National Bank of Paris, IL, September 21, 1867.

Folder 15: Letters from Union Soldiers

- 1.15.1 Letter to a soldier's mother after battle, n.d.
- 1.15.2 Letter to a soldier's father, Camp Monmouth, NJ, November 21, 1861.

Folder 16: Lincoln Misc.

- 1.16.1 "100th Anniversary Celebration of Abraham Lincoln's Birthday," program, February 12, 1909, Grand Opera House, Bloomington.
- 1.16.2 Image of Abraham Lincoln featured on a dinner menu from the Princess Hotel, Bermuda, February 12, 1911.
- 1.16.3 "Republican Birthday Party 1856-1928," brochure, Bloomington, IL, May 28, 1928.
- 1.16.4 "Lincoln Migration Centennial," brochure, Vincennes, IN, March 6, 1930.
- 1.16.5 "Pilgrimage to Danville," The Lincoln Group of Chicago, brochure, Chicago, IL, June 9, 2024; outer pages stored separately.
- 1.16.6 *Abraham Lincoln: Illustrated Biographical Dictionary, Family and Associates, 1809-1861*. Norman F. Boas M.D. Mystic, CT, ca. 2009, 20 pages.

Folder 17: Fell Envelope

- 1.17.1 Jesse P. Fell, envelope, Bloomington, IL, n.d.

Folder 18: 1851 Statute of the State of Illinois

- 1.18.1 David Davis, personal volume of the 1851 Statute of the State of Illinois, signed by Davis, n.d.

Folder 19: Images

- 1.19.1 James Shields, image and autograph, n.d. Illinois senator and later general who challenged Lincoln to a duel.
- 1.19.2 Asahel Gridley, portrait, Bloomington, IL, ca. 1876. Includes writing by Herbert W. Fay.

Folder 20: Education

- 1.18.1 Silas W. Robbins, letter involving the establishment of a school district in Springfield, IL, July 26, 1849.

Folder 21: Invoices and Correspondence

- 1.20.1 Chuck Hand, receipt for "Shields Autograph," "Hunt," and "Townsend (Pearson)," \$145, Paris, IL, January 23, 2007.
- 1.20.2 Seaport Autographs, receipts and correspondence between Fraker and store owner Norman Boas, including receipts for the following documents: Albert Taylor Bledsoe and John Dawson, \$473; James C. Conkling, \$130; William L. May, John T. Stuart, and Ward H. Lamon, \$1,095, 2 copies; Charles Emerson, Asahel Gridley, and Harris L. Thomas, \$789; Asahel Gridley, others and, Samuel Hill, \$300.50; William Kellogg, \$127.50; Silas W. Robbins, David Rutledge, and Daniel Stone, \$1,230; Erastus Wright, \$163; and Peter Onslow, \$186, Mystic, CT, 14 pages, November 21, 2007-May 27, 2011.
- 1.20.3 Main Street Fine Book & Manuscripts, Ltd., receipt for "Parks, 5. ALS," \$360, Galena, IL, June 12, 2010.
- 1.20.4 Chuck Hand, receipt for William Florville deed, \$15, Paris, IL, February 25, 2014.
- 1.20.5 Asahel Gridley's Antiques, receipt for "Ives Book," \$271.88, Bloomington, IL, July 22, 2022.

Box 2

Folder 1: Rates of Fees

2.1.1 Rates of fees for Bloomington Bar Association, November 23, 1855.

Folder 2 Florville

2.2.1 William Florville, Sangamon County, January 22, 1836. Florville was among the first Black residents of McLean County, known locally as “Billy the Barber,” and a friend of Abraham Lincoln.

Folder 3: Autobiography

2.3.1 Lincoln’s Autobiography (clipped from a souvenir poster created by Jesse Fell in 1872 and pasted into a blank book) held by Hester V. Fell, who passed it to her granddaughter Helen Stevenson on Christmas, 1902.

See Also:

Item 8.1 is also catalogued in the Abraham Lincoln and Related Collection and stored separately.