



THE LITTLE GIANT

A NEWSLETTER of the STEPHEN A. DOUGLAS ASSOCIATION

Volume V, Number 1, January 1993

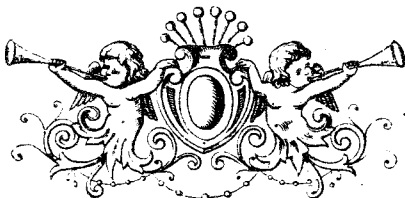
Douglas Association to Host Dinner on April 23

The Stephen A. Douglas Association will begin a new tradition this year. In honor of the one hundred eightieth anniversary of the birth of Senator Douglas, a dinner will be held on the evening of Friday, April 23. (This will be in lieu of the annual June luncheon.) Ceremonies at the Douglas Tomb will take place the following morning.

The Prairie Restaurant, in the Hyatt on Printers Row, will be the site of the dinner, which will be followed by a program. The program will include both an address and a dramatization.

George Buss and Richard Sokup, who portrayed Abraham Lincoln and Stephen A. Douglas in Freeport last August, will present a reenactment of the Chicago "pre-debate speeches" of Douglas and Lincoln. It was during the course of several speeches given by both the senatorial candidates in Chicago in July of 1858 that Lincoln conceived the idea of a series of debates between himself and Senator Douglas. In subsequent correspondence, the two men determined the ground rules and sites for their now-famous debates. (One of these letters is now in the Douglas Collection at the University of Chicago Library. See the article on page 3.)

More specific information about the dinner will be provided in a special issue of *The Little Giant*, which will come out in late March. Reservation cards will accompany the newsletter.



Astrological Journal Predicted a Douglas Victory in 1860

by Barbara Hughett

Broughton's Monthly Planet Reader and Astrological Journal, in the cover story of its August 1, 1860 issue, predicted that Stephen A.

Douglas would be the victor in the November presidential election. Speaking of the senator in an article titled "Nativity of Hon. S.A. Douglas," the writers say: "He is confident, has much self-esteem, and is not a little proud; delights in contention, having plenty of combativeness, and generally becomes conqueror. The Sun being in square to the planet Jupiter, and the Moon will give

him great energy and perseverance in accomplishing what he thinks is right and just; and he will often cause himself enemies among the higher classes, on that account, yet perhaps there is not a more honorable man living, and one that will be more merciful to enemies when he has proved himself conqueror. . ."

They do hedge their bet a little, though, allowing for some other possibilities and giving some excuse for error. They aren't sure, for instance, that

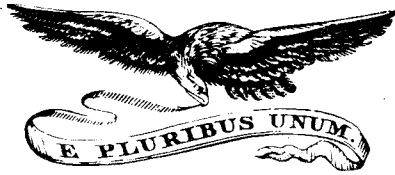
they have the correct birth date for John C. Breckenridge, and thus their reading of his possibilities may not be accurate. However, they state that Douglas "will have the planet Jupiter transiting over his own place and over the ascendant which is a very fortunate aspect, and we are of the opinion if there is a President elected by the people this coming election he will be the MAN."



Cover of the August 1860 issue of a popular astrological journal

But, although the writers stand by their "opinion that if there is any one elected President by the people, Douglas is the man," they add that "the aspects indicate that it is very doubtful about any one being elected President by the people this next November, but that it

(continued on page 2)



**THE STEPHEN A. DOUGLAS
ASSOCIATION**

175 East Delaware Place
Suite 5112
Chicago, Illinois 60611
312 / 787-1860

Officers

Ralph G. Newman
Chairman of the Board
Brooks Davis
President
Ernest A. Griffin
Vice President
Faye Schwimmer
Secretary
C. Robert Douglas
Treasurer

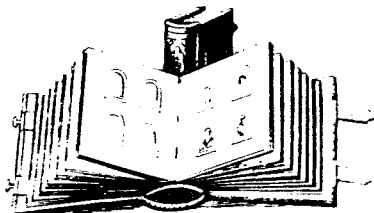
Directors

Ellsworth H. Brown
John B. Duff
Barbara Hughett
Jerry Slechta

Honorary Directors

Corneal A. Davis
Robert W. Johannsen
Madeline Nash
Damon Wells

.....
Barbara Hughett
Newsletter Editor
Muriel Underwood
Designer / Typographer



*"I trust the time will never
come when I shall not be will-
ing to make any needful sacri-
fice of personal feeling and
party policy for the honor and
integrity of my country."*

S. A. Douglas

May 10, 1861

"The History of Camp Douglas" Was the Topic of Address at June 1992 Annual Luncheon

by Barbara Hughett

Douglas Association Director Ernest A. Griffin gave the address at the annual luncheon on Saturday, June 6, 1992. Speaking on "The History of Camp Douglas," Griffin talked about conditions at the U.S. Army recruiting center and prisoner-of-war camp and about the men who spent time there—as guards and as prisoners. He also spoke about his own family's history.



Ernest A. Griffin

Griffin's business, the Griffin Funeral Home, is located on land that was once part of Camp Douglas, on Chicago's South Side. It was on this site that his grandfather, Charles H. Griffin, enlisted in the Union Army on January 5, 1864. Charles Griffin had come back to this country from his home in Canada to enlist, soon after it became permissible for African American men to serve in the United States Army. (The family of his wife had moved to Canada from New York to escape the racial bigotry they had been subjected to in New York, because of his mother-in-law's German heritage.)

Private Charles H. Griffin served in Company B, 29th Infantry Regiment of the United States Colored Troops, and was one of the survivors of the July 1864 Battle of the Crater. He was mustered out of the Army on November 6, 1865.

Griffin's address was complemented by photographs and maps showing the boundaries of Camp Douglas. The sixty-acre camp included land which was part of the estate of Stephen A. Douglas. Surviving the prison camp has been called "a triumph of spiritual as well as physical endurance." Over the nearly five years of its existence, some 26,000 prisoners were incarcerated at Camp

Douglas; 6000 died there.

The luncheon program also featured "The Rail Splitter vs. The Little Giant," performed by Harry Hutchinson and Lawrence Jahn. The dramatization is part of the Chicago Historical Society's "Voices From History" series. Those attending the luncheon had the opportunity of viewing a "Lincoln and Douglas Debates" display created by Cari Owens, a tenth-grade student at Von Steuben High School, for the Metro History Fair.

The luncheon was preceded by ceremonies at the Douglas Tomb, commemorating the 131st anniversary of the death of Senator Douglas, on June 3, 1861. A moving invocation was given by Douglas Association Honorary Director Corneal A. Davis.



Astrological Journal

(continued from page 1)

is very likely to go to the House."

The article continues with its rather ambiguous predictions: "Should that be the case [the election being decided in the House of Representatives], it will cause much contention and broils in that building, and there will be much excitement throughout the country. But Douglas will be very likely to come off conqueror after all, as he has the strongest Nativity of the whole four candidates. Should it be delayed in the House until December, Lincoln has a very fortunate aspect that will come up about that time, but we should say that it will be too late to be of any use to him in that respect."

In the article's conclusion, the readers are reminded that "it even may be possible for an Astrologer to make mistakes, just the same as a professor of any other science may make mistakes, and perhaps more so." And yet, many people still—in this "enlightened" age—believe such predictions and follow the advice of their astrologer.

Douglas Family Makes Significant Gift to the University of Chicago Library

by Daniel Meyer,
Associate Curator, Special Collections,
The University of Chicago Library

The Department of Special Collections of the University of Chicago Library has acquired a group of more than two thousand manuscripts, historical records, newspaper clippings, and photographs documenting the life and work of Senator Stephen A. Douglas. A gift from four members of the Douglas family, the collection constitutes a significant addition to the library's existing holdings of fifteen thousand historical manuscripts related to Douglas.

The original Douglas Collection was purchased by the library from the Douglas family in 1932. In reuniting the two parts of the papers, the new gift will make it possible to consolidate all the Douglas-related manuscripts into a single, integrated whole.

A number of items in the Douglas family gift will be of particular interest to researchers. Among these are:

- A fifty-five-page manuscript draft of Douglas's autobiography
- Douglas's 1852 passport
- Douglas's visa for travel in Russia in 1853
- Invitation cards of Senator and Mrs. Douglas
- Three architectural sketches, including floor plans, for a Douglas house, presumably in Washington
- A survey plat of Douglas's Oakenwald subdivision in Chicago along the lakeshore near 35th Street
- Newspaper clippings collected during Douglas's presidential campaign in the South in 1860
- A list of books charged to Senator Douglas that were returned to the Library of Congress after his death
- A sketch and two letters from L.W. Volk to Mrs. Douglas regarding a planned monument in honor of Douglas.

The greater part of the Douglas family's gift consists of letters received

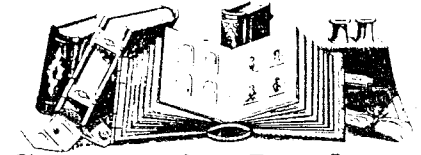
by Douglas while he served in the U.S. Senate in the decade of the 1850s. Letters from constituents in Illinois deal with such subjects as Douglas's positions on the political issues of the day and requests for appointments to government jobs. Douglas's national role as a leader in the Democratic party is reflected in the large group of political letters from correspondents across the nation: New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Ohio, New York, and other northern states are represented, as are southern states from Virginia to Mississippi and Tennessee, and western states and territories from New Mexico and California to Oregon.

Among the letters are a number written by notable figures in American public life, all of them sent to Senator Douglas or acquired by him during the course of his career. Of these, the most important historically is an original letter from Abraham Lincoln to Senator Douglas, dated July 29, 1858, setting the terms of the Lincoln-Douglas Debates; this letter is one of a series which is known to have been exchanged on the subject. The personal acquaintance between the two political leaders in their early years is indicated by a promissory note of 1847 from Douglas to Lincoln in the amount of \$167. Other letters of note include those written by Andrew Jackson, Daniel Webster, James Buchanan, Winfield Scott, Millard Fillmore, Joseph Smith, Brigham Young, Jefferson Davis, and James K. Polk; accompanying the letters is a group of twenty-three franked envelopes bearing the signatures of James Madison and Dolley Madison.

The Douglas family gift also includes smaller groups of papers of two descendants: Judge Robert M. Douglas, one of the Senator's two sons, who served as private secretary to President U.S. Grant; and Martin F. Douglas, a grandson of the Senator and son of Robert, who practiced law with his father in Greensboro, North Carolina.

The Douglas family gift to the University of Chicago Library will be available for use by researchers when it is fully described. Those interested in learning more about the new material or the library's existing collection of

Douglas papers are encouraged to contact the Department of Special Collections, University of Chicago Library, 1100 East 57th Street, Chicago, Illinois 60637, telephone 312-702-8705. The department is open from 8:30 to 5:00, Monday through Friday, and from 9:00 to 1:00 on Saturday.



Community Leaders Honored at Summer Tomb Ceremonies

Ceremonies were held at the Douglas Tomb State Historic Site, 636 East 35th Street, on Sunday, August 9, and Sunday, September 13. A severe rain storm caused the cancellation of a third ceremony, which had been planned for July 12.

Reverend Michael L. Pflieger, pastor of St. Sabina Catholic Church and well-known civic activist, was honored on August 2. Since 1968, Father Pflieger has lived and ministered in the African American community on the West and South Sides of Chicago. He is known for his recent campaign to stop the saturation of African American and Hispanic communities with alcohol and tobacco billboards and his aggressive attack on the sale of drugs and drug paraphernalia in Chicago.

Robert Miller, curator of the Vivian G. Harsh Collection of Afro-American History and Literature at the Carter G. Woodson Library, 9525 South Halsted Street, was the honoree on September 13. The Harsh Research Collection is the second largest collection of its kind in the United States. It includes nearly 70,000 volumes and a substantial periodicals collection. Prior to coming to Chicago, Miller held positions at major libraries in New York City and Atlanta, Georgia.

Both events featured the participation of Company K, Reactivated 58th New York Infantry, with Captain Kenneth Pacanowski commanding. The Civil War reenactors appeared in period costume and fired volleys from Civil War-era muskets.

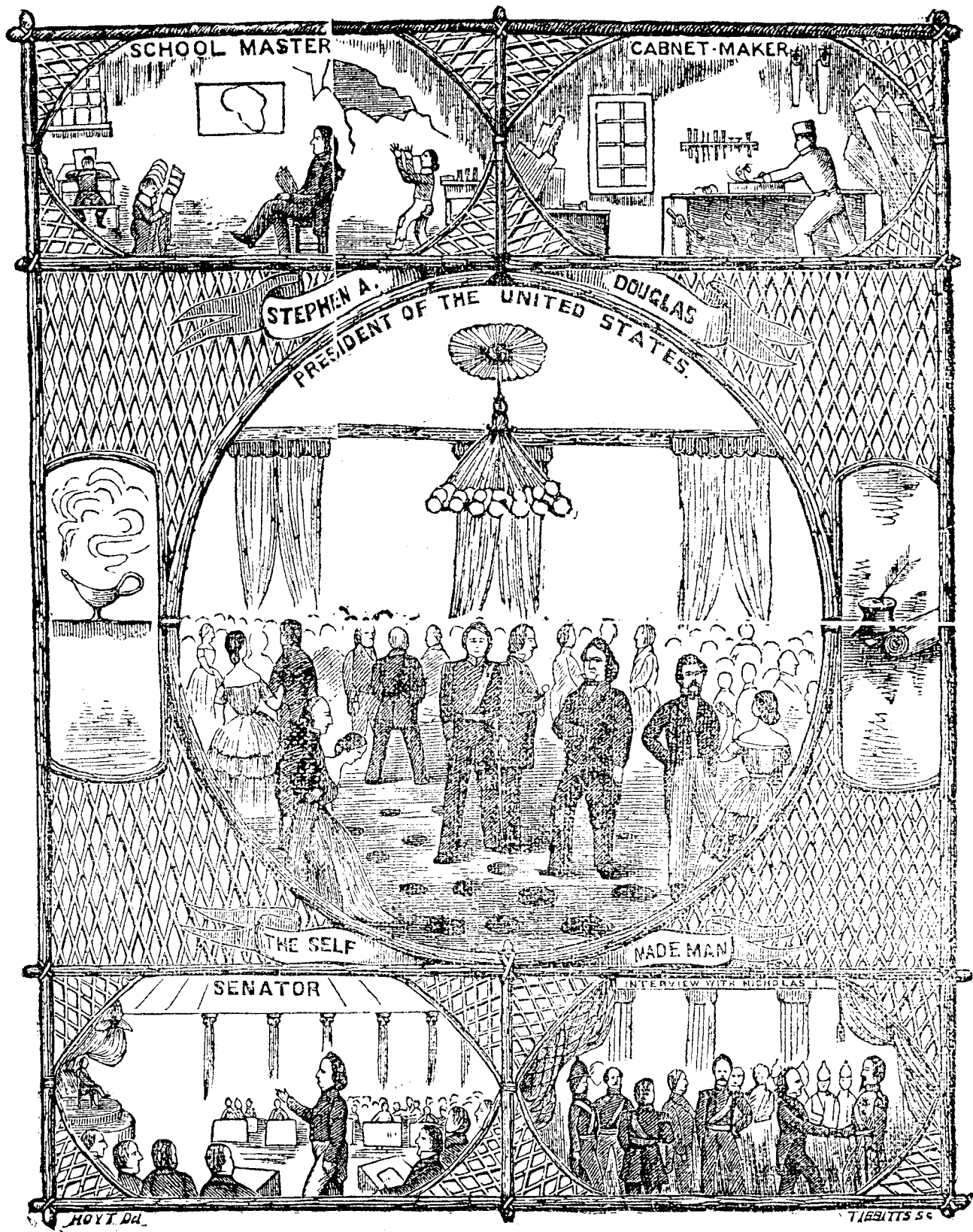


Illustration from the July 21, 1860 issue of the *Campaign Plain Dealer and Popular Sovereignty Advocate*, the newspaper of the 1860 Douglas presidential campaign.