

# THE LITTLE GIANT

NEWSLETTER of the STEPHEN A. DOUGLAS ASSOCIATION

Volume IX, Number 1, April 1997

**SATURDAY, APRIL 12, 1997**

Commemoration of the  
184th Anniversary of the  
Birth of Senator Stephen A. Douglas

**11:00 a.m.**  
**Ceremonies at the Douglas Tomb**  
636 East 35th Street

Wreath-laying and comments by  
C. Robert Douglas,  
President of the Stephen A. Douglas  
Association

**12:30 p.m.**  
**Cocktails and Luncheon**  
Prairie Restaurant in the Hyatt on  
Printers Row, Burnham Room  
500 South Dearborn Street  
Public parking is available nearby.

**ADDRESS BY  
REVEREND ANDREW  
M. GREELEY**

**"THE CAMP DOUGLAS  
CONSPIRACY IN FACT AND  
FICTION"**

**\$25 per person, Cash Bar**

Please return the enclosed  
reservation form, with remittance,  
by Wednesday, April 9.

## REVEREND ANDREW M. GREELEY TO SPEAK ABOUT "THE CAMP DOUGLAS CONSPIRACY IN FACT AND FICTION"

by Barbara Hughett

**R**EVEREND Andrew M. Greeley—Catholic priest, distinguished sociologist, and best-selling novelist—will address the annual luncheon of the Stephen A. Douglas Association on Saturday, April 12. His topic will be "The Camp Douglas Conspiracy in Fact and Fiction." This annual luncheon, which is preceded by a commemorative ceremony at the Douglas Tomb State Historic Site, is held each April in honor of the anniversary of the birth of Senator Stephen A. Douglas. Senator Douglas (D-IL) was born on April 23, 1813, in Brandon, Vermont.

Father Greeley's new novel, *Irish Lace*, has been described as "an exciting mystery and a touching Irish-American love story involving a Civil War controversy, a sophisticated gang of art thieves, corrupt politicians, and international terrorists." Greeley himself has commented, "In my mystery series featuring Nuala Anne McGrail (*Irish Gold*, *Irish Lace*), I constrain my detective and her 'spear carrier' (Dermot Michael Coyne) to solve a mystery in the past as a key to solving a mystery in the present. The past mystery in this story [*Irish Lace*] is the alleged Camp Douglas conspiracy, a conspiracy which never happened or perhaps only 'half-happened.'"

Camp Douglas, of course, was a U.S. Army recruiting facility and prison for captured Confederate soldiers during the American Civil War (1861-1865). It was located on the South Side of Chicago on part of the family estate of Senator Stephen A. Douglas, who died on June 3, 1861. The tomb of Senator

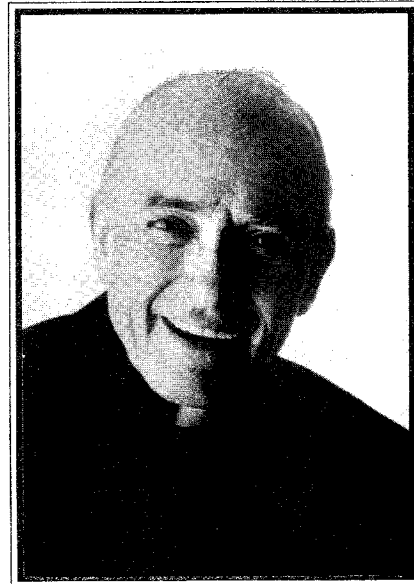
Douglas—Stephen A. Douglas State Historic Site—is presently located on a portion of that land. Many thousands of Confederate prisoners died at Camp Douglas, most of diseases they contacted during the War and while they were confined in the prison camp. They are buried in the Confederate Mound at nearby Oak Woods Cemetery.

A native of Chicago, Reverend Andrew M. Greeley currently serves as professor of social sciences at both the University of Chi-

cago and the University of Arizona, as well as holding the position of research associate at the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago. His current sociological research focuses on current issues facing the Catholic Church—including the celibacy of priests, the ordination of women, religious imagination, and the sexual behavior of Catholics.

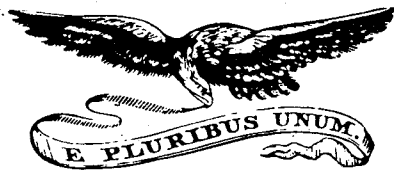
Father Greeley received the S.T.L. from St. Mary of the Lake Seminary. His

(continued on page 4)



Reverend Andrew M. Greeley

## THE LITTLE GIANT



### THE STEPHEN A. DOUGLAS ASSOCIATION

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Chicago, Illinois 60645  
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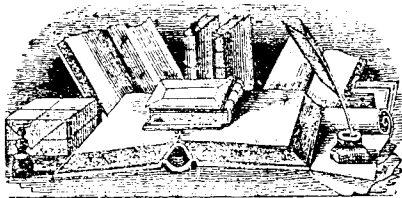
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### UPDATE: STEPHEN A. DOUGLAS STATE HISTORIC SITE

**H**ISTORIC Site Manager Patrick B. Williams reports that new construction and planting is progressing at the Stephen A. Douglas State Historic Site, located at 636 East 35th Street, in Chicago. The construction of public bathrooms, including those that are accessible to persons with physical disabilities, has been completed.

The 1997 Spring plantings will begin on May 15. Among these plantings, the fruition of which always make a visit to the Douglas State Historic Site such a delightful pleasure during our late spring and summer visits, include the following varieties: Dusty Millers, Safari Yellow Marigolds, Neon Rose Geraniums, Blue Ageratom Geraniums, White and Red Begonias, and Tall Red Salvias.

The site manager also reports that at least three or four tour buses per month arrive from Chicagoland area public schools to visit the Stephen A. Douglas State Historic Site.

### RICH SOUKUP IS ELECTED PRESIDENT OF THE FREEPORT LINCOLN-DOUGLAS SOCIETY

**A**T THE annual meeting of the Board of Directors of the Lincoln-Douglas Society on February 25, 1997, Rich Soukup, Freeport insurance executive who is acclaimed for his portrayal of Stephen A. Douglas, was elected president. Other officers are: George Buss (who reenacts Abraham Lincoln in performances, in which Soukup plays the role of Douglas), vice-president; Quenton Valkema, vice president; Bob Plager (immediate past president), secretary/treasurer.

### A HISTORY OF THE LINCOLN-DOUGLAS SOCIETY

**T**HE FREEPORT Lincoln-Douglas Society was organized in 1929 by J. R. Jackson and several other prominent Freeporters to keep alive the memory of the Freeport Debate in the community. The Society has been active since that time, promoting local interest in the debate. In 1958, the centennial of the debate, an extensive celebration was held under the chairmanship of Bob Schmelzle. Schmelzle acted as president of the Society for a number of years, and continues to be involved in it's activities.

Over the last several years, the Debate Square, through the help of the Freeport City Council, has been expanded. Landscaping was begun, and "Lincoln and Douglas in Debate," a statue by Lily Tolpo, was dedicated in 1992. In 1994, C-Span television network televised to a nationwide audience a reenactment of the Freeport Debate (as well as reenactments of the other six debates).

The Society published a book, *Freeport Remembers*, to commemorate the activities that surrounded the C-Span telecast. The Society has also republished two books: *Henry's Lincoln*, by Louise Neyhart; and *Freeport's Lincoln*, by W.T. Rawleigh. Numerous other activities have been sponsored by the Society to keep the memory of the debate alive among the members of the Freeport community.

### GROUND IS BROKEN FOR FREEPORT DEBATE SITE IMPROVEMENTS

**G**ROUND was broken last August 27 at the site of the Lincoln-Douglas Freeport Debate, at the corner of State Avenue and Douglas Street in Freeport, Illinois. Changes to the site will include the planting of five-foot oak and maple trees and other aesthetic improvements.

By this summer, the life-sized statues, by sculptor Lily Tolpo, commemorating the August 27, 1858, U.S. senatorial campaign debate of Abraham Lincoln and Stephen A. Douglas will be complemented with a patio made from old brick paving stones, antique wrought iron benches, and lantern lighting. The project's estimated cost is \$90,000. Leading the fundraising effort is the Lincoln-Douglas Society of Freeport.

Noted Lincoln scholar Harold Holzer spoke at the groundbreaking ceremony. Holzer, vice-president of communications for the Metropolitan Museum of Art, is the author, editor, or coauthor of several books about Abraham Lincoln and the Civil War era. Among those works is *The Lincoln-Douglas Debates: The First Complete Unexpurgated Text* (1993).

Holzer stated, "This is the site of the second debate [of the 1858 series of seven], but I consider it the first debate because it was here that Lincoln really came out swinging, 138 years ago today before 15,000 people.... Debates like those are a vanished experience ... people today have lost their taste for that rough-and-tumble politics that got its start in Freeport."

Freeport High School literature teacher, Ed Finch, spoke for a few moments about the significance of the debate statue: "This statue, perhaps better than any statue I've ever seen represents democracy ... and what freedom of speech means in a free society. Lincoln, who is depicted as the listener was the winner. It shows our obligation as citizens to listen to what is said."

*Keep the Ball rolling—  
arouse the country on the  
great issues of self govern-  
ment & all will end well.*

*S. A. Douglas*

February 15, 1858

# THE FOREBEARS OF STEPHEN ARNOLD DOUGLAS

## AN ANCESTOR TABLE WITH NOTES

by David W. Dumas

**A**ERICAN political biography has swung between two poles on the matter of ancestry. On occasion, the great man is made to spring from the earth, armed and ready, asking nothing and owing nothing. At other times, there has been an excessive emphasis on origins, as if to say that to understand the remotest source of a person (or an institution) is to understand the product.

I will not attempt to resolve so vexed a question, except to say that, in a general way, common sense tells us that genetics, environment, and family tradition must each have *some* influence. In the case of Stephen Arnold Douglas, however, it may be that his ancestry sheds light on a specific issue.

The writer was first drawn to this project by mere antiquarian curiosity. Much of Douglas's ancestry was from Rhode Island, and I was interested to see to what extent his ancestry overlapped with that of friends and relations here. On further investigation, I found something possibly significant, namely that many of his forebears, especially on his father's side, came from the plantation culture (unique in New England) of King's (now Washington) County, Rhode Island, also called the "Narragansett country" and (then and now, by the natives) "South County."



Stephen A. Douglas, about 1859-60  
(Collection of Brooks Davis)

The Narragansett planters raised livestock and—where the soil permitted—grew grain, mostly for export to the sugar islands of the West Indies. These farms were worked by gangs of slaves, who were the offspring of intermarriages between black slaves imported from the islands and the remnants of the Narragansett Indians.

The American Revolution removed the lucrative West Indian market, and the plantation culture was largely a memory by the time of Douglas's birth, but he could have spoken, and doubtless did speak, with relations raised in that society. His father died shortly after his birth, his paternal grandmother when he was just short of five, and her mother (Martha Gardiner, #11 below) when he was six. The two last were certainly raised with (and probably by) slaves; but there were aunts, uncles, great-aunts and great-uncles in Vermont aplenty whom Douglas would have known, and who could have told him about this aspect of his heritage.

It has often been observed that Douglas was indifferent to slavery. Various explanations have been offered, including his first wife's ownership of slaves. I think we can also add his own descent from the "Narragansett planters," Yankee slaveowners on a Southern scale. More particular notes on Douglas's ancestors and their slaveholding are included in the table below.

For more on this unique culture, see Carl Woodward, *Plantation in Yankee-land* (Chester, Connecticut, 1971), a popular but thoroughly informed treatment, and Edward Channing, *The Narragansett Planters: A Study of Causes* (Baltimore, 1886).

### ANCESTOR TABLE OF STEPHEN A. DOUGLAS

Note: An ancestor table (or *ahnentafel*, to use the German original) works thus: to find an individual's father, multiply his or her number by two; for his or her mother, multiply by two and add one.

1. **Stephen Arnold Douglas [Jr.]** born 23 April 1813 in Brandon, Vermont, died 3 June 1861 in Chicago, Illinois; married (1) on 7 April 1847 Martha Denny Martin, (2) on 20 November 1856 Adele Cutts.

#### HIS PARENTS

2. **Stephen Arnold Douglas**, born 1781 in Stephentown, Rensselaer County,

New York, died 1 July 1813 in Brandon, Vermont, a physician; married on 10 January 1811 to

3. **Sarah Fisk**, born 24 March 1789 (in Danby, Vermont ?), died 30 May 1869 near Canadaigua, Ontario County, New York; she was married (2) to Gelazi Granger of Canadaigua.

#### HIS GRANDPARENTS

4. **Benajah Douglas**, born 15 December 1760 in Canaan, Connecticut, died 29 October 1829 in Brandon, Vermont; married to

5. **Martha Arnold**, born ca. 1762 probably in Kingston, Rhode Island, died 1 April 1818 in Brandon, Vermont, "aged 56 years."

6. **(Rev.) Nathaniel Fisk**, born ca. 1735 in Rhode Island, died in 1807, removed in 1768 to Danby, Vermont, and is buried on his farm there; a Quaker preacher; married (4) to

7. **Sarah (Arnold) Rhodes**, widow of Charles Rhodes of Warwick, Rhode Island, born ca. 1753 in Rhode Island, died 1803 in Brandon, Vermont.

#### HIS GREAT-GRANDPARENTS

8. **Asa Douglas**, born 11 December 1715 in Plainfield, Connecticut, died 12 November 1792 in Stephentown, New York; removed from Plainfield to Canaan, Connecticut, in 1746 and to Stephentown in 1766; married ca. 1737 to

9. **Rebecca Wheeler**, born 26 August 1818, died 12 June 1809. I do not place her among the Stonington, Connecticut, Wheelers, and think she is likely a granddaughter of John Wheeler, merchant in New London, Connecticut, in 1667.

10. **Stephen Arnold**, born 20 April 1739 in Exeter, Rhode Island, died 24 February 1810 in Stephentown, New York, aged 71 years, and buried there; he is probably the Stephen Arnold listed in the 1774 census of North Kingstown, Rhode Island in a household which also contained one 'black,' probably a slave; married on 3 March 1760 in Exeter, Rhode Island, to

11. **Martha Gardiner**, born 31 August 1739, died September 1819, probably in Stephentown, New York, where she is buried.

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### Stephen Arnold Douglas Forebears (continued from page 3)

12. **Benjamin Fiske**, born 8 March 1706 in Swansea, Massachusetts, died probably in 1785 when his will was proved in Scituate, Rhode Island; married

13. **Susannah Briggs**, born probably in Kingston, Rhode Island.

14. **Edward Arnold**, born probably in the Pawtuxet section of Cranston, Rhode Island, died 10 June 1775 in Clarendon, Vermont; married 8 June 1729 to his first cousin

15. **Hannah Sheldon**, born ca. 1707, probably in Providence, Rhode Island.

### HIS GREAT-GREAT- GRANDPARENTS

16. **William Douglas**, born 19 February 1672/3 (i.e., 1673) in New London, Connecticut, the son of William and Abiah (Hough) Douglas, died 10 August 1719 in his 46th year in Plainfield, Connecticut, to which he had removed in 1699; married to

17. **Sarah Proctor**.

18. ?

19. ?

20. **Joseph Arnold**, born ca. 1710, probably in that part of North Kingstown, Rhode Island, which later became Exeter, the son of Dr. Samuel and Mary (Sheffield) Arnold and great-grandson of Governor Benedict Arnold (1615-1678) whose 1677 will leaves "all servants of what sorts however" to his wife; died 29 August 1776, probably in Exeter, although I do not find him in the 1774 census of Exeter; married (2) on 30 August 1737 in North Kingstown to the sister of his first wife, Patience Gifford,

21. **Hannah Gifford**, daughter of Yelverton and Ann (Northrup) Gifford.

22. **Nicholas Gardiner**, born 6 December 1710 in North Kingstown, Rhode Island, probably in the part now Exeter, son of Nicholas and Mary (Eldred) Gardiner and a descendant through his mother of Ann (Marbury) Hutchinson; died 9 June 1801, probably in Exeter; deputy (i.e., representative) to the Rhode Island General Assembly in 1746, 1753, and 1754; Lt. Col. in 1767. The 1790 Exeter census shows his household as comprised of himself, his wife, and seven slaves—the largest slaveholding in Exeter at that time. The 1774 census of Exeter has four Nicholas Gardiners, two having slaves — he is probably the one with 15 slaves. In the

same census his son Huling Gardiner had one slave. Caroline E. Robinson in her *The Gardiners of Narragansett*; notes of Nicholas (p.53), "He was a large landowner and the owner of many slaves." His will, dated 11 May 1801 and proved 15 June 1801, mentions Negro man Tom and Negroes Pero, Tabitha, Lucinda, Dick, and Rachel. Nicholas was married on 12 [month illegible, but probably January, February, or March because of the 'double dating'] '1729/30' (i.e., 1730) in North Kingstown to

23. **Martha Havens**, died September 1746, daughter of William Havens.

24. **Benjamin Fiske**, died 14 February 1765 in Scituate, Rhode Island; married 24 July 1701 (1704 says Bullock manuscript at Rhode Island Historical Society Library) at Rehoboth, Massachusetts, to

25. **Abigail Bowen**, daughter of Obadiah Bowen, Jr., and Abigail (Bullock) Bowen.

26. **James Briggs**, born 12 February 1669/70 (i.e., 1670) per Austin's *Genealogical Dictionary of Rhode Island*, p. 25, but 21 December 1669 per Lilla Briggs Sampson's very thorough typescript found at Rhode Island Historical Society Library, *John Briggs of North Kingstown, R.I.*, p. 24; died in 1757; resided in Kingston, Providence, and Cranston, Rhode Island; married to

27. **Sarah [Wickes ? — if so, daughter of John and Rose (Townsend) Wickes of Warwick].**

28. **Stephen Arnold**, son of Deputy Governor Stephen and Sarah (Smith) Arnold and thus nephew of Governor Benedict Arnold (see #20 above); born 27 November 1654 in Pawtuxet, Rhode Island; a deputy (i.e., a representative) in 1704, 1706, 1719; died 1 March 1720 in Cranston; married on 12 January 1688 to

29. **Mary Sheldon**, born ca. 1669, daughter of John and Joan (Vincent) Sheldon and sister of Nicholas Sheldon (#30 below), died 28 April 1735.

30. **Nicholas Sheldon**, born ca. 1670, died 23 November 1747 in Providence; son of John and Joan (Vincent) Sheldon and brother of Mary Sheldon (#29 above); married to

31. **Abigail Tillinghast**, born 30 January 1674 in Providence, daughter of Pardon Tillinghast; died 1744.

David W. Dumas is a practicing attorney and genealogist in East Greenwich, Rhode Island. He was formerly Minority Leader in the Rhode Island House of Representatives and is currently its Parliamentarian.

### Reverend Andrew M. Greeley (continued from page 1)

graduate work was done at the University of Chicago, where he received both his M.A. and Ph.D. degrees.

He has written scores of books and hundreds of popular and scholarly articles on a variety of issues in the areas of sociology, education, and religion. His column on political, church, and social issues is carried by the *New York Times* Religious News Service. He is the author of twenty-seven best-selling novels (the latest of which is *Irish Lace*) and an autobiography, *Confessions of a Parish Priest*.

In 1984, Father Greeley contributed a \$1 million endowment to establish a Chair in Roman Catholic Studies at the University of Chicago. In 1986, he established a \$1 million Catholic Inner-City School Fund, which provides scholarships and additional financial support to schools in the Chicago Archdiocese having a minority student population of more than fifty percent. He has also funded an annual lecture series on "The Church in Society" at St. Mary of the Lake Seminary in Mundelein, Illinois.

Among the honors conferred on Father Greeley are the Thomas Alva Edison Award for the "Catholic Hour" radio programs (1962); the Catholic Press Association Award for the best short story for young people (1965); the Mark Twain Award of the Society for the Study of Midwestern Literature (1987); the Freedom to Read Award of the Friends of the Chicago Public Library (1989); and the U.S. Catholic Award for furthering the cause of women in the church (1993). He has received Honorary Doctorates from the following institutions of higher learning: St. Joseph's College (1967); St. Mary's College (1967); Bowling Green State University (1986); Lincoln College (1989); St. Louis University (1991); and Northern Michigan University (1993).

A reviewer for the *Chicago Tribune* said this of Father Greeley's previous Nuala McGrail book, *Irish Gold*: "A tale of young love and faith, as modern as U2 ... yet those who have followed his work in the past will find the same storytelling mastery and the same understanding of the heart."

