

THE LITTLE GIANT



A NEWSLETTER of the STEPHEN A. DOUGLAS ASSOCIATION

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Illinois' First State Memorial

The Tomb of Stephen A. Douglas

by Barbara Hughett

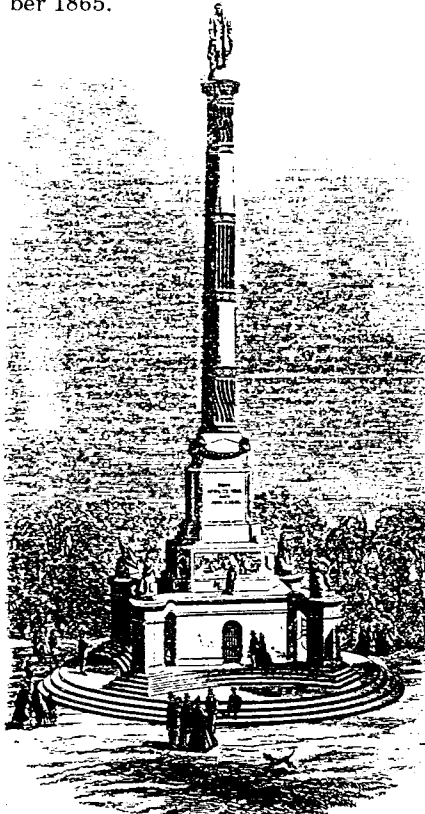
THE practice of state-owned historic sites began in 1865 when the state of Illinois purchased the grave of Stephen A. Douglas. Senator Douglas had been buried on his Chicago estate, Oakenwald, after his death on June 3, 1861; the following October a group of his friends and associates organized the Douglas Monument Association. Sculptor Leonard W. Volk, a relative of Douglas by marriage, presented a plan for an eighteen-member board of trustees and served as the Association's secretary.

Fundraising proceeded slowly. As this was occurring in the midst of the Civil War, many potential donors felt their charitable contributions should go for the care and relief of Union soldiers.

Although some donations were received, most of the money collected in the Association's early days came from membership subscriptions. For one dollar, each donor received a "diploma of membership," which featured a "fine portrait" of Douglas and a "bird's eye view" of his grave.

The Douglas Monument Association requested state assistance in a letter to legislators in May 1863. The Association needed \$25,000 to buy the grave site and \$50,000 to construct a monument. The state ultimately

granted the financial assistance and approved a design for the monument submitted by Leonard Volk. The first phase of the work was begun in October 1865.



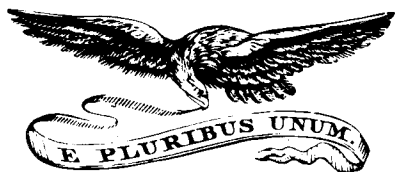
The Douglas Monument was designed by Leonard W. Volk. The forty-six-foot column supports a nine foot-nine-inch bronze figure of Douglas. Each of the four pedestals at the base are occupied by life-size statues representing Illinois, History, Justice, and Eloquence.

The Association invited President Andrew Johnson to participate in the cornerstone laying ceremony. He accepted and stopped in Chicago, as part of his "swing around the circle" political tour of the eastern half of the country. Accompanying Johnson were several members of his cabinet, as well as Generals Grant, Rawlins, Dix, Meade, and Custer, and Admiral Farragut.

The ceremony took place on September 6, 1866. Shops, businesses, and banks were closed. The Illinois Central Railroad ran trains to the grave every ten minutes. Over one hundred thousand people lined the parade route. The Association capitalized on the event by selling seats in front of the speakers stand for three dollars each. Tin boxes for donations to the Douglas Monument Association were placed in public places, and five thousand medals were sold for one and two dollars apiece.

Even though this event was a success, the Association soon ran out of money again. Attempts to secure additional funding from the legislature in 1868, 1873, and 1878 failed. But in 1877, the legislature appropriated \$50,000 for the completion of the monument and appointed a three-member commission to oversee its construction. Commission members

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**THE STEPHEN A. DOUGLAS
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*The Stephen A. Douglas
Association
extends warmest wishes for a
joyous holiday season
and a healthy and prosperous
new year.*



TOMB (continued from page 1)

were Robert Lincoln, Potter Palmer, and Melville Fuller.

By July 1878 the column was completed and Volk's newly finished statue of Douglas was hoisted into place. But it was not until the summer of 1881 that the last of the four life-size statues at the base of the monument was lifted to its place. The memorial to "The Little Giant" had taken twenty years to become a reality.

1990 Annual Meeting and Luncheon Held on June 2 at Chicago Historical Society

by Barbara Hughett

THE 1990 annual meeting of the Stephen A. Douglas Association took place on June 2. The day's activities began at 11:00 a.m. with ceremonies at the Douglas Tomb, commemorating the 129th anniversary of the death of Stephen A. Douglas. (Senator Douglas died on June 3, 1861.) The ceremony included a reenactment by the Reactivated 58th New York Infantry and an address by Douglas Association member Corneal Davis, former Illinois legislator, who was elected to eighteen consecutive terms in the Illinois Legislature before his retirement in 1980. On this occasion, Mr. Davis was made an Honorary Director of the Stephen A. Douglas Association.

The tomb ceremonies were followed by a catered luncheon at the Chicago Historical Society. Douglas Association member Ellsworth Brown, president and director of the Society, presented some remarks on "Stephen A. Douglas and Company," in which he emphasized the role Senator Douglas plays in the "A House Divided: America in the Age of Lincoln" exhibit.

Luncheon guests were given an opportunity to view items related to Douglas not previously displayed in the Society's exhibits. Among these items was a three-page letter written and signed by Senator Douglas on April 13, 1854. Douglas was writing from Washington to Ninian Wirt

Edwards in Illinois. Among other subjects covered in the letter, the Senator apologizes for not being able to honor a request Edwards had made, on behalf of a friend, for an appointment to West Point. Douglas explained that he had received Edwards' letter too late to act on the request.

Another three-page letter, dated July 4, 1856, was written in someone else's hand but was signed by Douglas. The Senator wrote to Joseph E. Roy in Chicago to refute charges in Roy's sermon at Chicago's Plymouth Congregational Church that Douglas had stood by while Preston Brooks caned Charles Sumner on the floor of the United States Senate. In this letter, Douglas also refuted charges that he advocated the use of physical force to carry out "the policy of slavery."

After a viewing of a film on the exhibit and some additional comments by Dr. Brown and Douglas Association President Brooks Davis, luncheon guests went to the second floor of the Society to see "A House Divided." Among those in attendance at this year's annual event was former Illinois Governor William G. Stratton.

Civil War scholar and author Walter H. Hebert, who attended the June 2 annual luncheon, died on November 5. The Douglas Association offers its sincere condolences to his family.

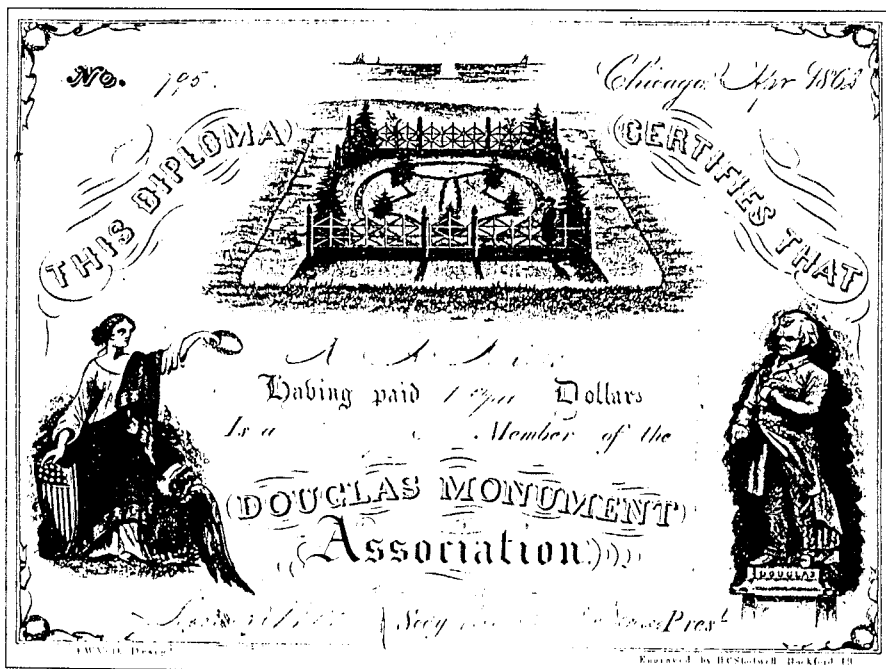


Great-granddaughter of Stephen A. Douglas is Made Honorary Member

Madeline Nash, a great-granddaughter of Stephen A. Douglas, was recently made an honorary member of the Stephen A. Douglas Association. Nash, who lives in the Chicago area, is working on a simple genealogy of her family.

*... that the Constitution
and Union may be preserved
inviolable, and the Union main-
tained forever, is [my] ardent
hope and fervent prayer.*

November 13, 1860



Copies of "Diploma of Membership" Made Available to Douglas Association Members

Copies of a "diploma of membership" in the Douglas Monument Association are being made available to members of the Stephen A. Douglas Association. The certificate, pictured to the left, was issued in April 1862 and was signed by William B. Scrates and Leonard W. Volk, president and secretary of the Douglas Monument Association. To receive your photographic copy, send \$10.00 per diploma to the Stephen A. Douglas Association, 175 East Delaware Place, Suite 5112, Chicago, Illinois 60611.

Heritage Memorial Wall Dedicated on May 26

by Barbara Hughett

THE Heritage Memorial Wall, built on the grounds of the Griffin Funeral Home, owned by Ernest A. Griffin, Stephen A. Douglas Association board of directors member, was dedicated in a moving and impressive ceremony on May 26. "A Prelude to Memorial Day" included the participation of Civil War reenactment groups, a performance by the Kennedy-King College Community Chorus, and addresses by Ralph G. Newman, chairman of the Douglas Association board of directors, and Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley. Five hundred people attended the event, including Illinois Comptroller Roland Burriss, State Senator Margaret Smith, and other dignitaries.

The Griffin establishment is located on land that was part of Camp Douglas during the Civil War. It was at this site that Griffin's grandfather, Private Charles H. Griffin, enlisted in the Union Army on January 5, 1864. He served in Company B, 29th Infantry Regiment of the United States Colored Troops.

Griffin built the wall to honor his grandfather and all those who fought "in that tragic period often called 'the brothers' war'"—North and South. One side honors Union soldiers; the other side commemorates Confederate soldiers. The Griffin Funeral Home is located at 3232 Martin Luther King Drive in Chicago.



Ernest Griffin at the Heritage Memorial Wall

The Civil War Round Table Includes Douglas Tomb in Civil War Tour of Chicago

by Barbara Hughett

AS a concluding event of its gala Fiftieth Anniversary Celebration weekend, The Civil War Round Table sponsored a Civil War Tour of Chicago on Sunday, October 14. Included on the tour itinerary was a visit to the Douglas Tomb. C. Robert Douglas, secretary of the Douglas Association, gave a brief address about Senator Douglas and the history of the tomb.

The tour also visited the Heritage Memorial Wall, where Ernest A. Griffin, member of the board of directors of the Douglas Association, talked about Camp Douglas, the experience of his great-grandfather in the Union Army, and what inspired him to build the Wall. The final stop of the day, the Confederate Mound at Oak Woods Cemetery, was highlighted by the participation of Civil War reenactors from the 1st Michigan Engineers and the 154th Tennessee. The chairman of the tour was Brooks Davis, president of the Stephen A. Douglas Association and former president of The Civil War Round Table.

Patrick Williams Featured in *Chicago Tribune* Article

PATRICK Williams, caretaker of the Douglas Tomb and son of longtime caretaker Herman Williams, was the subject of a feature story in the *Chicago Tribune* in October. In the article, Patrick Williams talked about the effort that goes into the upkeep of the grounds. "It's a lot of work," he said. "The flower beds settle, so I build them up with earth each year. . . . The plants are all annuals, put in fresh each year."

The Douglas Association appreciates the fine job done by Herman Williams for over thirty-five years and is pleased that this tradition of excellence is being carried on by his son.

Herman Williams, who has been ill, is currently recuperating in California. His son reports that he is feeling much better and is expected to be home by Christmas.



Upcoming Events In 1991

April 23: The 178th anniversary of the birth of Stephen A. Douglas.

June 1: Annual luncheon of the Stephen A. Douglas Association. The luncheon will be preceded by ceremonies at the Douglas Tomb.

July 7, August 4, September 1 (Sundays): Ceremonies at the Douglas Tomb at 5:00 p.m., featuring the participation of the Reactivated 58th New York Infantry, with Captain Kenneth Pecanowski commanding.



The Stephen A. Douglas Association is seeking ideas for possible honorees at the summer ceremonies at the Douglas Tomb. Please submit your suggestions to the Stephen A. Douglas Association, 175 East Delaware Place, Suite 5112, Chicago, Illinois 60611.



Summer Honorees at Douglas Tomb Ceremonies

The following people received flags, in the name of the Stephen A. Douglas Association, during ceremonies at the Douglas Tomb during the summer of 1990:

June 2: Retired State Representative
Corneal Davis

July 1: Theodore D. Saunders, Jr.,
chairman, Illinois Veterans Task
Force

August 5: Jacqueline Vaughn,
president, Chicago Teachers Union,
Local 1, Illinois Federation of
Teachers

Reverend Herbert Martin, pastor,
Progressive Community Church

September 3: Captain George Bicek,
accepting for Commander Donald
Hilbring, 21st District, Chicago
Police Department



Ralph G. Newman Honored

RALPH G. Newman, chairman of the board of directors of the Stephen A. Douglas Association, was honored at the fiftieth anniversary celebration of The Civil War Round Table. Newman, a founder of The Round Table, was presented with a plaque, proclaiming that the Civil War Collection of the Chicago Public Library will henceforth be known as the Ralph G. Newman Civil War Collection. The presentation was made on October 12 by John Duff, commissioner of the Chicago Public Library. "Future generations," Duff noted, "will know that they benefited from the foresight and generosity of Ralph G. Newman." The plaque will be placed in the Library's Cultural Center until the completion of the new Harold G. Washington Library, projected for September 1991. At that time, a ceremony of dedication will be held.

A DOUGLAS CHRONOLOGY

- 1813** Born 23 April in Brandon, Vermont
- 1828** Worked as an apprentice cabinet-maker at Middlebury, Vermont
- 1831** Student at the Academy, Canandaigua, New York; studied law
- 1833** Admitted to the Illinois bar
- 1835** Elected State's Attorney by the Illinois legislature
- 1836** Elected to the Illinois legislature
- 1837** Appointed Register of the Federal Land Office at Springfield by President Van Buren
- 1838** Defeated for Congress
- 1840** Campaigned for Van Buren for President
- 1841** Appointed Secretary of State of Illinois; elected justice of the Illinois Supreme Court
- 1842** Elected to the United States House of Representatives
- 1844** Reelected to the House of Representatives
- 1846** Became Chairman of the Committee on Territories of the House
- 1847** Elected to the United States Senate by the Illinois legislature; became Chairman of the Committee on Territories of the Senate; married Martha Denny Martin
- 1850** Instrumental in drafting the Compromise of 1850
- 1852** Sought nomination for the Presidency; reelected to the Senate
- 1853** Death of Mrs. Douglas; traveled to Europe
- 1854** Directed the Kansas-Nebraska Act through Congress
- 1856** Defeated for the Presidential nomination; married Adele Cutts
- 1857** Supported the Dred Scott Decision; broke with President Buchanan over the Lecompton Consitution
- 1858** The Lincoln-Douglas debates in Illinois; reelected to the Senate
- 1860** Received Democratic nomination for President; defeated by Lincoln; went South in support of the Union cause
- 1861** Died 3 June in Chicago