

[REDACTED]
Shaker Heights, Ohio 44120
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American Presidents CSPAN
400 N. Capitol #650
Washington, D.C. 200120001

Dear Brian and all the other hosts and historians -

Thanks for the hours of enjoyment and enlightenment I have experienced thru the Presidents' series. The evening of Lincoln meant a lot to me.

Our children, raised in Ohio/Pennsylvania, considered Mr. Lincoln the man who "lived up the road from Grandpa and Grandma." Summer visits to Illinois usually included trips to Springfield and Salem, as well as Vandalia.

I grew up on a dairy farm, Cress Hill Farm, just west of Hillsboro, Ill., which is about halfway between Springfield and Vandalia. Springfield Road, which joined the two, passed in front of and between the residences and farm buildings on Cress Hill. Every time Lincoln went from Springfield to Vandalia, he passed thru the farm.

Family history records the fact that my Gr.-Gr.-Grandfather, [REDACTED] operated a coach line from Springfield to Vandalia and that Mr. Lincoln was often a passenger. At least once he stayed in the [REDACTED] home. At one time there were several houses in Hillsboro which had hosted Lincoln. I know one was destroyed to make room for a gasoline station.

Cress Hill is the second highest hill in Montgomery county. The road at that time was dirt. Legend has it that during rains carriages could not make the hill, so our teams of work horses had to be called into service to pull them out of the mud. In the 1920's the old Springfield Road was replaced by Rt. 16. In order to keep the highway from passing thru the business part of the farm, my Grandad, [REDACTED] made a deal with the Governor routing the highway away from the buildings.

During the Depression, several men who said they were from Springfield, called on my Grandmother Webster in Nokomis, Ill., and expressed an interest in buying her parlor set - settee, gentlemen's chair, side chairs, walnut with black leather upholstery. They said they wanted it to furnish the parlor in Lincoln's home which was being restored, and offered her \$500 for the set. At the time prices were so depressed, one could buy a house for less than that!! She and my mother conferred, decided it had to be a hoax - \$500 for that old furniture!! - and declined the offer. Later we learned it was a legitimate offer. I have two of the chairs in my living room now.

The last time we visited the Lincoln house, maybe 25 years ago, the parlor was furnished with elegant Belter furniture. In your recent segment I did not see any of it. Perhaps it had been a loan.

My great grandparents, the [REDACTED] lived in Lincoln, Ill. During WWII I taught at Lincolnwood High School, Raymond, Ill. Several of your callers mentioned the feelings of awe and reverence they experienced at Lincoln's tomb. During the WWII we lived in Arlington, Va. for a while. Every time we passed the Lincoln Memorial enroute to crossing the Potomac, I had a special feeling of familiarity, reverence, and security.

I was also especially interested in the McKinley program. My lawyer grandfather, [REDACTED] Nokomis, Ill. prepared a lengthy and learned dissertation for publication, justifying his decision to leave the Democratic party and join the Republican party because of disagreements over the gold standard. The effects of this split carried over into my life with one grandfather active in the Republican party and the other in the Democratic party. My Dad and Mother cancelled each other's vote many times. All of this added spice to my life.

These reminiscences are all inconsequential, but I was reminded of these episodes when I heard some of your callers' comments.

Your series makes me wish I was still teaching history. What wonderful source material you offer!! Even as a history major at the University of Illinois I did not have full realization of the many facts and factions which our presidents faced.

Gratefully yours,
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