

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.  
**RECOLLECTIONS of ABRAHA  
M LINCOLN**

1847-1865 By

**WARD HILL LAMON**

TEILLARD  
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**PREFACE.**

The reason for thinking that the public may be interested in my father's recollections of Mr. Lincoln, will be found in the following letter from Hon. J. P. Usher, Secretary of the Interior during the war:—

Lawrence, Kansas, May 20, 1885.

*Ward H. Lamon, Esq., Denver, Col.*

Dear Sir, — There are now but few left who were intimately acquainted with Mr. Lincoln. I do not call to mind any one who was so much with him as yourself. You were his partner for years in the practice of law, his confidential friend during the time he was President. I venture to say there is now none living other than yourself in whom he so much confided, and to whom he gave free expression of his feeling towards others, his trials and troubles in conducting his great office. You were with him, I know, more than any other one. I think, in view of all the circumstances and of the growing interest which the rising generation takes in all that he did and said, you ought to take the time, if you can, to commit to writing your recollections of him, his sayings and doings, which were not necessarily committed to writing

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and made public. Won't you do it? Can you not, through a series of articles to be published in some of the magazines, lay before the public a history of his inner life, so that the multitude may read and know much more of that wonderful man? Although I knew him quite well for many years, yet I am deeply interested in all that he said and did, and I am persuaded that the multitude of the people feel a like interest.

Truly and sincerely yours, (Signed) J. P. Usher.

In compiling this little volume, I have taken as a foundation some anecdotal reminiscences already published in newspapers by my father, and have added to them from letters and manuscript left by him.

If the production seems fragmentary and lacking in purpose, the fault is due to the variety of sources from which I have selected the material. Some of it has been taken from serious manuscript which my father intended for a work of history, some from articles written in a lighter vein; much has been gleaned from copies of letters which he wrote to friends, but most has been gathered from notes jotted down on a multitude of scraps scattered through a mass of miscellaneous material.

D. L.

Washington, D. C., March, 1895.

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## PREFACE

### TO THE SECOND EDITION.

In deciding to bring out this book I have had in mind the many letters to my father from men of war times urging him to put in writing his recollections of Lincoln. Among them is one from Mr. Lincoln's friend, confidant, and adviser, A. K. McClure, one of the most eminent of American journalists, founder and late editor of "The Philadelphia Times," of whom Mr. Lincoln said in 1864 that he had more brain power than any man he had ever known. Quoted by Leonard Swett, in the "North American Review," the letter is as follows:—

Philadelphia, Sept. 1, 1891.

*Hon. Ward H. Lamon, Carlsbad, Bohemia:*

My dear old Friend, — ....I think it a great misfortune that you did not write the history of Lincoln's administration. It is much more needed from your pen than the volume you published some years ago, giving the history of his life. That straw has been thrashed over

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and over again and you were not needed in that work; but there are so few who had any knowledge of the inner workings of Mr. Lincoln's administration that I think you owe it to the proof of history to finish the work you began. — and — never knew anything about Mr. Lincoln. They knew the President in his routine duties and in his official ways, but the man Lincoln and his plans and methods were all Greek to them. They have made a history that is quite correct so far as data is concerned, but beyond that it is full of gross imperfections, especially when they attempt to speak of Mr. Lincoln's individual qualities and movements. Won't you consider the matter of writing

another volume on Lincoln? I sincerely hope that you will do so. Herndon covered about everything that is needed outside of confidential official circles in Washington. That he could not write as he knew nothing about it, and there is no one living who can perform that task but yourself....

Yours truly, (Signed) A. K. McClure.

I have been influenced also by a friend who is a great Lincoln scholar and who, impressed with the injustice done my father, has urged me for several years to reissue the book of "Recollections," add a sketch of his life and publish letters that show his standing during Lincoln's administration. I hesitated to do this, remembering the following words of Mr. Lincoln at Lancaster, Pennsylvania, on his way to Washington: "It is well known that the more a man speaks the less he is

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understood—the more he says one thing, the more his adversaries contend he meant something else." I am now yielding to these influences with the hope that however much the book may suggest a "patchwork quilt" and be permeated with Lamon as well as Lincoln, it will yet appeal to those readers who care for documentary evidence in matters historical.

Dorothy Lamon Teillard.

Washington, D. C., April, 1911.

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## **WARD HILL LAMON.**

### **MEMOIR OF WARD H. LAMON.**

Ward H. Lamon was born in Frederick County, about two miles north of Winchester, in the state of Virginia, on the 6th day of January, 1828. Two years after his birth his parents moved to Berkeley County in what is now West Virginia, near a little town called Bunker Hill, where he received a common school education. At the age of seventeen he began the study of medicine which he soon abandoned for law. When nineteen years of age he went to Illinois and settled in Danville; afterwards attending lectures at the Louisville (Ky.) Law School. Was admitted to the Bar of Kentucky in March, 1850, and in January, 1851, he was admitted to the Illinois Bar, which comprised Abraham Lincoln, Judge Stephen T. Logan, Judge David Davis, Leonard Swett, and others of that famous coterie, all of whom were his fast friends.



### **Conclusion of a Legal Document signed by Lincoln and Lamon.**

They all rode the circuit together, there being no railroads at that time in the State. And it has been said that, "It is doubtful if the bar of any other state of the union equalled that of the frontier state of Illinois in professional ability when Lincoln won his spurs." A legal partnership was formed between Mr. Lamon and Mr. Lincoln for the practice

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of law in the eighth District. Headquarters of this partnership was first at Danville and then at Bloomington. Was elected District Attorney for the eighth District in 1856, which office he continued to hold until called upon by Mr. Lincoln to accompany him to Washington. It was upon Mr. Lamon that Mr. Lincoln and his friends relied to see him safely to the National Capitol, when it became necessary at Harrisburg to choose one companion for the rest of the journey.<sup>[A]</sup>

He was appointed Marshal of the District of Columbia, which position at that time was much more of a social function than it was in after years. The Marshal performed some of the ceremonies which have since been delegated to the Superintendent of Public Buildings and Grounds. He introduced people to the President on state occasions and

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was the general social factotum of the Executive Mansion. The position of Marshal was not of his own choosing. Had he consulted his own taste he would have preferred some appointment in Europe.<sup>[B]</sup> It was almost settled that he was to be sent as Consul to Paris, but in deference to Mr. Lincoln's wish to have him near him in the trying times which he anticipated, he shouldered the duties of Marshal at this dangerous period, when it was one of much friction and difficulty, as slavery ruled for a hundred miles north and a thousand miles south and west of the Capitol.

After the law was passed emancipating the slaves in the District of Columbia, that territory was made, or sought to be made, the asylum for the unemancipated slaves of the States of Maryland and Virginia. Mr. Lincoln was not yet ready to issue his general emancipation proclamation; the Fugitive Slave law was still in force and was sought to be enforced. This condition of things was seized upon by many

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