At that time there was no hall in Washington suitable for an Inaugural Ball and the authorities had put up a temporary structure not far from the City Hall.

The dancing was not supposed to begin until 11 o'clock and after the new President's arrival, but he and his party were late so that the floor was full when they came in.

The Mayor of Washington accompanied Mr. Lincoln and the general comment of the onlookers, which found its way into the press, was that he looked weary, worn out, as indeed he well might.

There was a ripple of excitement when the guests saw Mrs. Lincoln on the arm of Stephen Douglas. On the whole, everyone was pleased; it meant that the ancient enemies had settled their feud - - were going to get together for the tussle that awaited the administration.

Of course there were plenty of sharp and knowing eyes to look over Mrs. Lincoln to see what she wore and how she wore it. According to the newspaper reports, it was a "rich watered silk, an elaborate point lace cape deeply bordered, camelias in her hair and pearl ornaments."

One of the guests in the group of ladies at the ball was Mrs. Squire, the wife of our Minister to Colombia (?). It is rather surprising to one who looks at her costume today, to read that it was considered the masterpiece of all

Digital Image, 2009. The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library

the elaborate collection; but possibly that was because her wit and beauty, by general consent, made her the belle of the ball.

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