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Galesburg Debate

Great Outpouring of the People!

20,000 Persons Present!

The expectations of all parties were far surpassed in the results of Thursday. The crowd was immense notwithstanding the remarkably heavy rains of the day previous, and the sudden change during the night to a fiercely blowing, cutting wind which lasted during the whole day, ripping and tearing banners and sending signs pell-mell all over town.

At early dawn our gunners announced the opening day and at an early hour the people began to pour in from every direction in wagons, on horseback and on foot.

At about ten o'clock the Burlington train arrived with Mr. Douglas and a large delegation of both Douglas and Lincoln men from the west.

Mr. Douglas was escorted to the Bancroft House, when a portion of the students of Lombard University presented him with a beautiful banner. A well prepared but somewhat fulsome address was made on its delivery by Geo. Edwards who was followed by two young ladies, each with a symbolic address, the whole of which we could not catch.

Mr. Douglas responded with great felicity, and his friends were well satisfied with their part of the performance.

Digital Image, 2011. The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library

The banner was a "true circle" of silk, with a beautiful embroidered wreath within which was inscribed "Presented to Stephen A. Douglas by the students of Lombard University." The speaker said the "circle" was emblematic of Mr. Douglas' course. So it was in a different sense from that meant by them.

Mr. Douglas was then escorted to the Bonney House, where a large multitude of all parties gathered to see and shake hands with him.

At 12 o'clock the Republicans with the military went to meet Mr. Lincoln, who was to come in with the Knoxville delegation. - Hard by two they reached the place of rendezvous, when the delegation came along; "mammoth" would describe it. It was like one of Cobb's tales, of monstrous length and to be continued. Lincoln was escorted to the house of Mr. Henry R. Sanderson, when a reception speech was made by T. G. Frost, Esq., and a most beautiful banner of the day presented by the ladies of Galesburg was presented by Miss Ada Hurd. It was an American Shield handsomely embroidered. Upon one side was the inscription, "Presented to the Hon. A. Lincoln by the Republican Ladies of Galesburg, Oct. 7, 1858." On the reverse was the Declaration of Independence upon a scroll, executed with a pen by Mr. Clark of Peoria. Miss Hurd, who is of a queenly appearance, rode up at the head of a troop of equestrians and receiving the banner from the attendant presented it in a very neat and well spoken address.

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A representation of the Capitol, and over the Senate room door. Douglas' complaint. "He's got my place." Douglas is turning away while Lincoln is coming in.

A representation of a two donkey act, or Douglas attempting to ride Popular Sovereignty and Dred Scott. The straddle is remarkable but not equal to the Earl as both animals kicking up their heels and him sprawling.

"Knox College goes for Lincoln," stretched across the south front and north end of the College building

"We will subdue you" Stephen A. Douglas.

"We Lincoln the Champion of Freedom" Upon this banner was also a portrait of "Long Abe"

"Popular Sovereignty" in a

+ see p 5

Three figures, one taking a chair from beneath Mr. Douglas and dropping him plump upon the floor, at which he exclaims, "Oh my place!" Mr. Lincoln standing by blandly remarks, "The people say it. The "place" Mr. Douglas referred to was doubtless the portion which came in contact with the floor. Upon a flourished banner the following:

"Macomb Lincoln Club." "We honor the man who brands the Traitor and Nullifier." "Small fisted Farmers, Mud Sills of Society, Greasy Mechanics, for A. Lincoln."

Digital Image, 2011. The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library.

"The dose of milk the poor Dog down in Egypt made him very sick".

A well painted banner with a terrible Lion on one side and ditto Dog on the other, with the inscription "Douglas the dead Lion, Preferr'd the Living Dog". If we are not mistaken this came upon the cars from the west with Douglas.

The best banner upon the ground was a painting of the locomotive "Freedom" with a long train of Free States cars rushing round a curve, with the warning, "Clear the track for Freedom", while sticking upon the track a little in advance of the train was Douglas' ox cart laden with cotton. His negro driver had just taken the alarm and springing up in terror exclaims "Fore God, Massa, I believes we's in danger!"

Another ludicrous banner had a representation upon one side of Douglas going down to Egypt, pail in hand, to bring Abe to his milk. On the other, "How he succeeded". — Like Mr. Briggs, in his first effort at milking a cow, he gave the customary command to "hist" the foot. She listed and Douglas and his pail are seen "laying around loose".

Star spangled banners were numberless.

The principal banner on the Douglas side was a large blue one with an inscription in favor of Douglas and Popular Sovereignty. Lithographs of Douglas abounded.

Digital Image, 2011. The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library

Knox College, by the east end of which the stand was erected, was gaily decorated with flags and streamers. Immediately over the stand was one bearing the inscription, "Knox College for Lincoln."

At noon the people began to collect and for an hour before the appointed time more than ten thousand people stood waiting the arrival of the speakers, in the meantime the crowd was addressed by Mr. Reed of the Abolo Record, in spicy and humorous speech, as the Lincoln friends thought.

At 2 o'clock Lincoln and Douglas in two four horse carriages drawn abreast, were escorted to the ground by the military and a large body of citizens on horseback and on foot.

Hon. James Knox, of Knoxville, acted as chairman, and as soon as order could be obtained he introduced Mr. Douglas who by the arrangement was to occupy one hour, the Mr. Lincoln an hour and a half and Mr. Douglas a half hour in conclusion.

From the Galesburg Democrat
Saturday Morning, Oct 9th 1858

Thursday, Oct 7, 1858.

Digital Image, 2011. The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library