



# Lincoln Lore

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## "The Image of America in Caricature and Cartoon"

The "last few years have seen a Golden Age of American Political Cartooning," says John Culhane, writing in *The New York Times Magazine* of November 9, 1975. Those who wish to see examples of the work of this "Golden Age," cartoons and caricatures by Pat Oliphant, Tom Wolfe, David Levine, Tomi Ungerer, Paul Szep, Ben Shahn, Draper Hill, Robert Osborn, William Steig, Richard Hess, Paul Conrad, Robert Pryor, Edward Koren, and others, can do so at "The Image of America in Caricature and Cartoon," an exhibition to be seen at the Fort Wayne Public Library from February 2 through March 13, 1976. The Amon Carter Museum of Western Art in Fort Worth, Texas, famous for its Frederick Remington and Charles M. Russell paintings, put the show together with the aid of the Swann Foundation of New

York City and a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency. The catalogue of the exhibition is published by Lincoln National Corporation in cooperation with the Amon Carter Museum and the Swann Foundation. The exhibit is being brought to Fort Wayne, after a popular showing in Fort Worth, by the Lincoln National Corporation.

The exhibition will provide an opportunity to see not only the products of this "Golden Age" but also a sampling of works representative of the two hundred-year tradition of caricature which lies behind this flowering of the art of cartoon. Of special interest to *Lincoln Lore's* readers are the cartoons and caricatures in the show which deal with Lincoln's image. Of these, four will be familiar to readers of Rufus Rockwell Wilson's, *Lincoln in Caricature: 165 Poster Cartoons and Drawings for the Press* (Elmira, New York: Primavera Press, 1945) and Albert Shaw's *Abraham Lincoln. His Path to the Presidency* (New York: Review of Reviews Corporation, 1929).

"The Political Quadrille. Music by Dred Scott" (Figure 2) is a poster cartoon published in New York in the summer of 1860. The unknown cartoonist shows the four Presidential aspirants, all pictured as men of diminutive size, dancing with partners who embarrass them politically to a fiddle tune played by a fiendishly grinning Dred Scott. Most anti-Lincoln cartoons of that election summer drew the beardless Illinois candidate as the representative of a one-issue party, the party of the black man. True to form, "The Political Quadrille" sees Lincoln's partner as a rather loose-looking

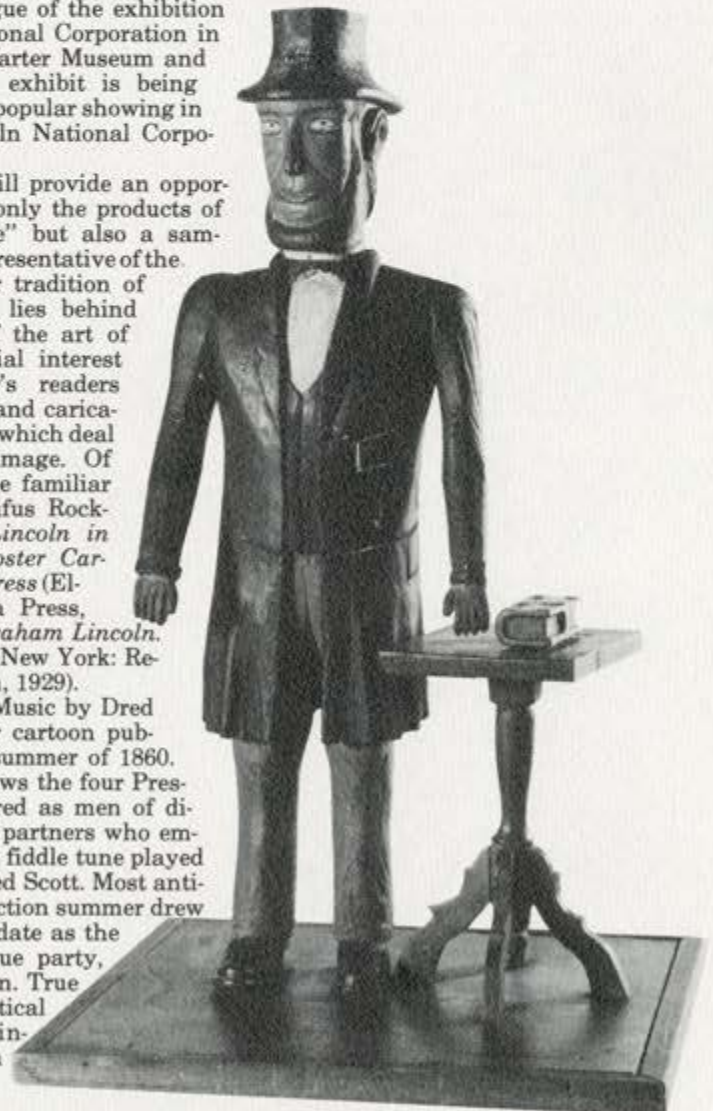


FIGURE 1. Folk sculptures of Abraham Lincoln are rare, and any sculpture of Stephen Douglas is rare. On the left, is an anonymous wood sculpture of Douglas, polychromed, 18 inches high, from the National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. On the right, is an anonymous wood sculpture of Lincoln, polychromed, 17 3/4 inches high, from the Missouri Historical Society, St. Louis. Both photographs are provided by the Amon Carter Museum, Fort Worth, Texas.

black woman. The cartoon is impartial in its scorn, however. Constitutional Union candidate John Bell dances with an Indian. The Constitutional Union party held the remnants of the old Know Nothing or American party, and the cartoonist makes fun of their political identification with "native Americans" against immigrant Americans. Stephen Douglas dances with the traditional cartoon partner of the Democrats, a ragged and vicious-looking beggar. This harks back to the traditional rhetoric of Democratic stump speakers, in use since Andrew Jackson's war on Nicholas Biddle's Second Bank of the United States, a rhetoric which appealed to the poor and laboring classes and denounced the wealthy beneficiaries of government favoritism and paper money. It also identifies Douglas's "popular sovereignty" with "squatter sovereignty." John C. Breckinridge dances with a cloven-hoofed and horned "Old Buck," President James Buchanan, savagely drawn, for in Victorian America the sexuality of animals was often ignored in pictures.

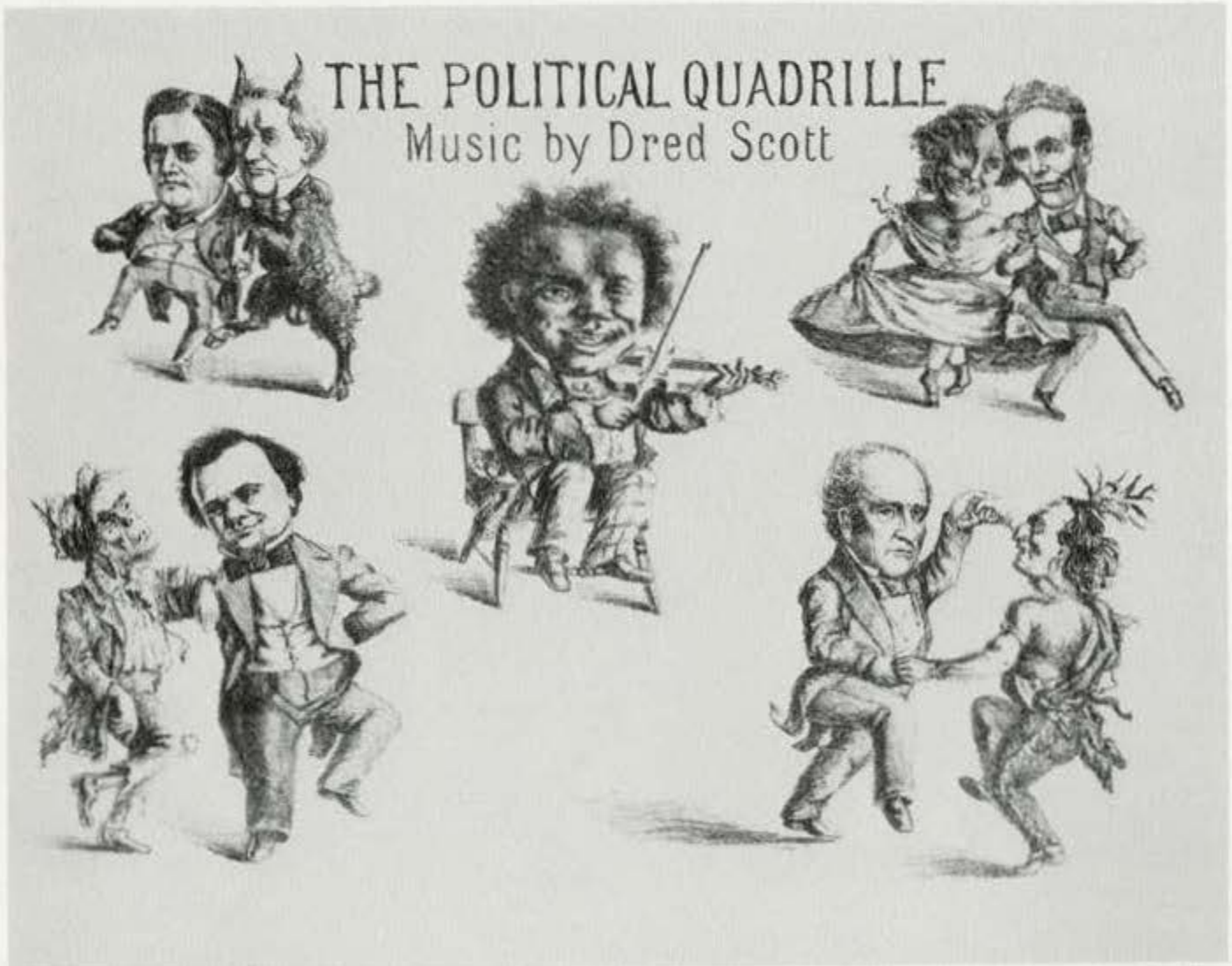
The much cruder Cincinnati cartoon (Figure 3), published by Rickey and Mallory in August of 1860, takes a similar "plague on all your houses" approach to the election of 1860. While Douglas and Lincoln fight over the West, Breckinridge carries the South away; the overall effect, of course, is tearing the nation apart. John Bell is pictured as the candidate of the Northeast and also as the candidate who wants to save the Union; though his pot of glue is tiny, he seems to have a large supply in crates behind him. However, he stands, not on a ladder, but on an infant's high-chair; this is not a pro-Bell cartoon either. Incidentally, the map of Utah shows a man holding hands with six women—an obvious reference to Mormon polygamy. The Ohio map shows the name Spartz just above the tear; this might be the artist's signature, though the car-

toon is usually said to be anonymous.

Louis Maurer drew the pro-Lincoln "Honest Abe Taking Them on the Half Shell" (Figure 4) for Currier and Ives in September of 1860. The capable German-born cartoonist knew no smiling photographs of the Republican nominee and made Lincoln's broad grin up. This cartoon reveals that Americans knew the outcome of the election was a foregone conclusion, because the Democratic party split into pro-slavery "Hard Shells" like Breckinridge and compromising "Soft Shells" like Douglas. Both Democratic candidates had held national office in Washington for some time, and they are pictured as fat morsels which the lean Westerner (with no tie or jacket) will gobble up.

Adalbert Volck's carefully etched caricature of Lincoln as Don Quixote and Benjamin F. Butler as Sancho Panza (not pictured) does what many Civil War satirists did; it associates the sixteenth President with the most colorfully controversial Northern figure. The genius of the cartoon lies in its literary inspiration. The impossible idealist rides side by side with the earthy and sensuous Butler; a knife in the General's belt is a reference to his alleged looting of New Orleans silver chests when he ruled the conquered city.

Four other cartoons of obvious Lincoln interest are more rarely seen. "Virginia Paw-sing" (Figure 5), a cartoon published in Richmond, seems to be urging Virginia to secede, for by pausing she will be pawed by the cat, Uncle Abe, while the first seven states to secede (led by South Carolina) escape. Stephen Douglas (identified by his statement, "the Union must and shall be preserved") is the dead rat. As Lincoln mauls Virginia, he mouths bland words indicating that no one is being hurt, echoes of the words he spoke to the Ohio legislature on February 13, 1861, while on his way to Wash-



Courtesy Amon Carter Museum, Fort Worth, Texas

FIGURE 2. *The Political Quadrille. Music by Dred Scott*, an anonymous 1860 lithograph, 12 3/4 x 17 7/8 inches, is provided by the Library of Congress.



FIGURE 3. *Dividing the National Map*, a lithograph published by Rickey, Mallory & Company in 1860, 13 11/16 x 19 1/4 inches, is provided by The Lilly Library, Indiana University, Bloomington.

Courtesy Amon Carter Museum, Fort Worth, Texas

FIGURE 4. *Honest Abe Taking Them on the Half Shell*, a Currier and Ives lithograph drawn by Louis Maurer, 13 9/16 x 18 1/16 inches, is also from the collection of The Lilly Library, Indiana University, Bloomington.



Courtesy Amon Carter Museum, Fort Worth, Texas

ington as President-elect. Lincoln was trying to cool the atmosphere of crisis by saying that there was as yet, despite secession, no armed conflict or physical violence:

It is a good thing that there is no more than anxiety, for there is nothing going wrong. It is a consoling circumstance that when we look out there is nothing that really hurts anybody. We entertain different views upon political questions, but nobody is suffering anything. This is a most consoling circumstance, and from it we may conclude that all we want is time, patience and a reliance on that God who has never forsaken this people.

Two drawings from the Lilly Library at Indiana University in Bloomington are one-of-a-kind views of Lincoln. The Confederate cartoon drawn in Richmond on January 14, 1863 (Figure 6), shows Lincoln as a monkey who issues the Emancipation Proclamation. The other sketch (Figure 7) associates Lincoln with Butler again; this time Lincoln prepares to carve Butler up in order to send him several places at once. From the knowing smile on Lincoln's face, one may surmise that the cartoonist sees Lincoln as a shrewd politician who destroys the controversial Butler by flattering him that he is too valuable to remain in one place.

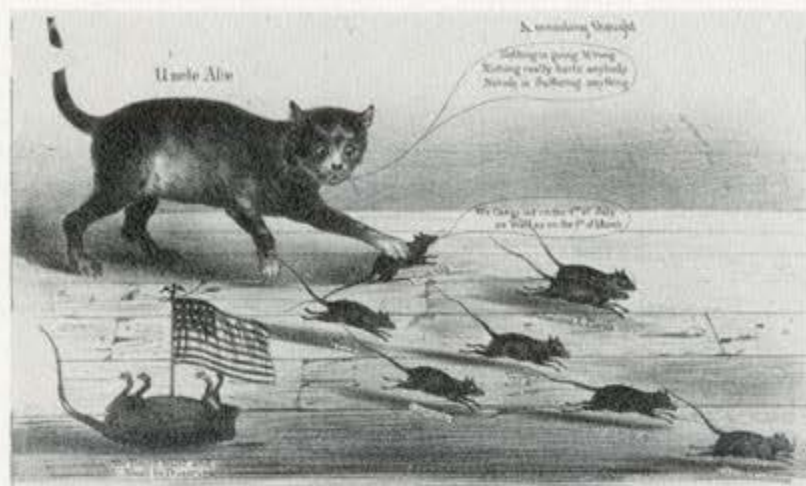
In Figure 8, a Philadelphia lithographer draws John Wilkes Booth as he looked in a widely circulated photograph but adds a Deringer and a tempting devil to the pose. One wonders who would have wished to buy such a picture to hang in his home.

The statuette of Lincoln on the cover (Figure 1) is an anonymous wood sculpture from the collection of the Missouri Historical Society. It is more folk art than caricature, and the sculptor was careful to place a Bible at Lincoln's hand. The barrel-chested Douglas (Figure 1) comes from the Smithsonian's fabulous National Portrait Gallery in Washington, D.C.

There is nothing like seeing these objects first hand, but, for those who cannot attend the exhibition, a 192-page hard-bound catalogue illustrating all 263 cartoons and caricatures is available for eight dollars from:

Ann Sanderson  
LNSC Sales Supply  
Lincoln National Corporation  
1301 South Harrison Street  
Fort Wayne, Indiana 46801.

Checks should be made payable to Lincoln National Corporation.



▲ Courtesy Amon Carter Museum, Fort Worth, Texas

FIGURE 5. *Virginia Paw-sing*, an anonymous 1861 lithograph, 8 1/2 x 14 inches, bearing the inscription "Crehen Richmond Va.," is from the collection of The Chicago Historical Society.

FIGURE 6. This pencil sketch on paper is attributed to David H. Strother. Dated January 14, 1863, it is 8 13/16 x 5 1/4 inches and can be found at The Lilly Library, Indiana University, Bloomington.

Courtesy Amon Carter Museum, Fort Worth, Texas



▲ FIGURE 7. *Lincoln, You'll excuse me Gen. Butler, but as I cant send you everywhere at once, I'll have to take you to pieces.* This pencil sketch on paper is attributed by the Amon Carter Museum to Thomas Nast on the basis of comparison of style. The 5 7/8 x 6 11/16-inch drawing is at The Lilly Library, Indiana University, Bloomington.

FIGURE 8. *Satan Tempting Booth to the Murder of the President* is a lithograph by J. L. Magee of Philadelphia. Done in 1865, it is 10 1/2 x 8 3/4 inches and is supplied from the Collections of The Library Company of Philadelphia.



Courtesy Amon Carter Museum, Fort Worth, Texas

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