



What They Are Saying - Exhibit Reviews *With Malice Toward None: The Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Exhibition* Presented by the Library of Congress

“The Library of Congress exhibition is certainly the most impressive in the current round of Lincoln displays mounted so far...” (Phillip Kennicott, “Words and Stone Summon the Intangible Abe,” *Washington Post*, February 12, 2009.)

“This is what Indiana Jones would feel like if he found the Holy Grail - this is the Holy Grail,” said historian Harold Holzer, co-chairman of the U.S. Lincoln Bicentennial Commission. He showed us the very copy Lincoln is believed to have held in his hand at that sublime moment, delivering what Holzer called ‘arguably the greatest, most stunning inaugural address in American history.’” (Martha Teichner, “Looking For Lincoln: The Man, The Symbol,” *CBS Sunday Morning*, February 8, 2009.)

“[The Gettysburg Address is] one of [Lincoln’s] two best writings, the other being the second Inaugural Address,’ said [historian James] McPherson. ‘And I wouldn’t necessarily want to choose between the two, but certainly **the Gettysburg Address is one of the two best things he ever did - and the two best things that any American ever did.**” (Martha Teichner, “Looking For Lincoln: The Man, The Symbol,” *CBS Sunday Morning*, February 8, 2009.)

“Fascination with the life and times of Abraham Lincoln is not new: Only Jesus Christ, after all, has had more books published about him. But in an angst-ridden era of terrorism, war and financial meltdown, the country has taken to the 16th president - born 200 years ago Thursday - like a depressive to a pint of ice cream.” (Deborah K. Dietsch and Scott Galupo, “Lincoln’s Legacy Looms Large on 200th Birthday,” *Washington Times*, February 12, 2009.)

“You’re going to get more of an appreciation, a definition of the man - an understanding of what was really important to him and the meaning of his life,’ [John] Sellers said.” (Brett Zongker, “Bible Used by Lincoln, Obama Goes on View in DC,” *Associated Press*, February 8, 2009.)

“It’s pretty impressive just to see the reproductions of Lincoln’s words, as they were written in longhand, and then reprinted and annotated. The allure of the real thing — whether it’s the Gettysburg Address, the second inaugural address or the farewell speech to Springfield — may be a shade mystical, but it sure is real, even for [curator John] Sellers.” (“Lincoln’s Manuscripts Reveal A Constant Reviser,” *National Public Radio*, February 12, 2009.)

“Maybe you saw the Lincoln Bible in pictures of Barack Obama’s inauguration. Now, **you can see that Bible for yourself** at a new exhibit celebrating what would be the 200th birthday of Abraham Lincoln.” (Beth Parker, “Bible Used By Lincoln, Obama On Display,” *MyFoxDC*, February 9, 2009.)

“It's refreshing to walk through the Library of Congress exhibition and feel no particular compulsion to get close to Lincoln on a personal level. This is not a[n] exhibition about emotions, or the flesh-and-blood Lincoln, or Lincoln the Family Man. **It is an exhibition about words.**” (Phillip Kennicott, “Words and Stone Summon the Intangible Abe,” *Washington Post*, February 12, 2009.)

“As the critic Adam Gopnik writes in a companion volume to the exhibition, **‘His hand and pen were the axis of his experience,’** and to see them emerge, ever so delicately on faded paper, is to see the first inklings of a mind taking form, a mind that constantly aspired for moral clarity even as it was steeped in earthy humor.” (Phillip Kennicott, “Words and Stone Summon the Intangible Abe,” *Washington Post*, February 12, 2009.)

“A deeper view of his intellectual life is presented at the Library of Congress ... ‘With Malice Toward None’ is a document-rich exhibition focused on Lincoln as a writer, editor and thinker. Its display of more than 200 treasures starts with the autobiographical phrase ‘he will be good but god knows When’ scribbled in a boyhood notebook and concludes with a condolence letter from Queen Victoria after the president's death. Among the artifacts is the small, velvet-covered Bible on which Lincoln (and Mr. Obama) took the oath of office, as well as the belongings found in the pockets of the president on the night he was assassinated. While his major addresses are on display at the Library of Congress, not all the documents here are weighty. Letters exchanged between Lincoln and 11-year-old Grace Bedell during the 1860 presidential campaign debate the benefits of growing a beard. Sold on the whiskered look, the candidate put away his razor.” (Deborah K. Dietsch and Scott Galupo, “Lincoln's Legacy Looms Large on 200th Birthday,” *Washington Times*, February 12, 2009.)

“In 1860, Grace Bedell, an 11-year-old living in Westfield, N.Y., wrote a letter to Abraham Lincoln, a lawyer from Illinois who was running for president. Grace had a little campaign advice: Lincoln should grow a beard. ‘All the ladies like whiskers, and they would tease their husbands to vote for you and then you would be President,’ she wrote. Grace's father was ‘a staunch Republican’ like Lincoln, she remembered later, and she was embarrassed for Lincoln when her classmates made fun of his personal appearance. In his reply, Lincoln questioned whether it would be dishonest to change his appearance, but a month later, he began growing a beard. On the train ride to his inauguration, he stopped for a rally in Grace's hometown and greeted the little girl with a prickly kiss on her cheek. **At the Library of Congress' ‘With Malice Toward None’ exhibit, visitors can see Grace's letter and Lincoln's response side by side.** The two letters were borrowed from separate collections for the exhibit ...” (Tricia Miller, “Ladies Like Whiskers, ‘A Girl Wrote to Lincoln; Library of Congress Shows President's Relics,” *Roll Call*, February 12, 2009.)

“Curator John Sellers knows more about Lincoln's documents than most. ‘They tell about the man, for example, his eyeglasses,’ he explained. **There's a piece of thread holding the earpiece to one pair of eyeglasses. That's the same thread he had when he was shot.**” (“Library of Congress Displays Lincoln Items,” *WUSA*, February 10, 2009.)

