Collection Summary
Title: Herndon-Weik Collection of Lincolnniana
Span Dates: circa 1824-1933
ID No.: MSS25791
Collector: Herndon, William Henry, 1818-1891
Creator: Lincoln, Abraham, 1809-1865
Collector: Weik, Jesse William, 1857-1930
Extent: 4,600 items
Extent: 36 containers
Extent: 10 linear feet
Extent: 15 microfilm reels
Language: Collection material in English
Location: Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
LC Catalog record: https://lccn.loc.gov/mm74025791
Summary: Collection composed of the papers of Abraham Lincoln, United States president, United States representative from Illinois, and lawyer; William Henry Herndon, Lincoln's law partner, collector, and biographer from Springfield, Illinois; and Jesse William Weik, lawyer of Greencastle, Indiana, and coauthor of Herndon's Lincoln. Includes records (1933) of the Weik Manuscript Corporation and miscellaneous material collected chiefly by Herndon and Weik for use in writing Herndon's Lincoln: The True Story of a Great Life (1889).
Online Content: The Herndon-Weik Collection of Lincolnniana is available on the Library of Congress Web site at http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/collmss.ms000093. To promote preservation of the originals, researchers are required to consult the online edition.

Selected Search Terms
The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the LC Catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically.

People
Bell, John, 1796-1869--Correspondence.
Beveridge, Albert Jeremiah, 1862-1927--Correspondence.
Conkling, James Cook, 1816-1899--Correspondence.
Dana, Richard Henry, 1816-1899--Correspondence.
Delahay, Mark W. (Mark William), 1818?-1879--Correspondence.
Douglas, Stephen A. (Stephen Arnold), 1813-1861.
Edwards, Ninian Wirt.
Friend, Charles.
Gentry, Kate Roby.
Giddings, Joshua R. (Joshua Reed), 1795-1864--Correspondence.
Graham, Mentor, 1800-1886.
Hanks, Dennis.
Hay, John, 1838-1905--Correspondence.
Hay, John, 1838-1905.
Haycraft, Samuel, 1795-1878--Correspondence.
Helm, John B.
Johnston, John D., 1815- --Correspondence.
Judd, Norman B. (Norman Buel), 1815-1878--Correspondence.
Lincoln family.
Lincoln, Abraham, 1809-1865. Abraham Lincoln papers. 1824-1865.
Lincolní, Mary Todd, 1818-1882.
Logan, Stephen T. (Stephen Trigg), 1800-1880.
McCallen, Andrew--Correspondence.
Nicolay, John G. (John George), 1832-1901--Correspondence.
Pierce, Edward Lillie, 1829-1897--Correspondence.
Speed, Joshua F. (Joshua Fry), 1814-1882--Correspondence.
Stevens, Thaddeus, 1792-1868--Correspondence.
Swett, Leonard, 1825-1889--Correspondence.
Swett, Leonard, 1825-1889.
Thomas, Richard S. (Richard Symmes)--Correspondence.
Trumbull, Lyman, 1813-1896--Correspondence.
Wallace, Frances, 1817-
Wentworth, John, 1815-1888--Correspondence.
White, Horace, 1834-1916--Correspondence.
Whitney, Henry Clay, 1831-1905--Correspondence.
Williams, Archibald, 1801-1863--Correspondence.
Wilson, R. L. (Robert L.)
Yates, Richard, 1815-1873--Correspondence.

Organizations
Illinois. General Assembly.
Republican Party (U.S. : 1854- )
Weik Manuscript Corporation.
Whig Party (U.S.)
White House (Washington, D.C.)

Subjects
Lincoln-Douglas Debates, Ill., 1858.
Practice of law--Illinois--Springfield.
Presidents--United States--Biography.
Presidents--United States--Election--1856.
Presidents--United States--Election--1860.

Places
Illinois--Politics and government--To 1865.
Springfield (Ill.)--History.
United States--Politics and government--1861-1865.
United States--Politics and government--19th century.

Titles
*Herndon-Weik Collection of Lincolnniana at the Library of Congress*

Occupations
Biographers.
Collectors.
Lawyers.

Provenance
The Herndon-Weik Collection of Lincolnniana was purchased by the Library of Congress from G. A. Baker and Co. in 1941. Material relating to Abraham Lincoln acquired by the Library from other sources between 1929 and 1982 is also included in the collection.
Processing History
The Herndon-Weik Collection of Lincolniana was first processed in 1974; additional material received was incorporated into the collection in 1984. This register was revised in 1997.

Additional Guides
An annotated inventory describing each item in the collection, but in an order different from the current arrangement, and a negative photostatic copy of the inventory with fewer annotations may be found in the Manuscript Division Reading Room reference collection. Special card file indexes for the collection exist but are housed separately from the items themselves. A microfilm version of these indexes may be found on reel 15 of the Miscellany series. To use the original indexes consult the reference staff in the Manuscript Division Reading Room.

Transfers
Items have been transferred from the Manuscript Division to other custodial divisions of the Library. Photographs and etchings have been transferred to the Prints and Photographs Division. A broadside has been transferred to the Rare Book and Special Collections Division. All transfers are identified in these divisions as part of the Herndon-Weik Collection of Lincolniana.

Copyright Status
The status of copyright in the unpublished writings of Abraham Lincoln, William Henry Herndon, and Jesse William Weik in these papers and in other collections of papers in the custody of the Library of Congress is governed by the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.).

Access and Restrictions
The Herndon-Weik Collection of Lincolniana is open to research. Researchers are advised to contact the Manuscript Reading Room prior to visiting. Many collections are stored off-site and advance notice is needed to retrieve these items for research use.

Microfilm
A microfilm edition of these papers is available on fifteen reels. Consult reference staff in the Manuscript Division concerning availability for purchase or interlibrary loan. To promote preservation of the originals, researchers are required to consult the microfilm edition.

Online Content
The Herndon-Weik Collection of Lincolniana is available on the Library of Congress Web site at http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/collmss.ms000093. To promote preservation of the originals, researchers are required to consult the online edition.

Preferred Citation
Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container or reel number, Herndon-Weik Collection of Lincolniana, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
## Biographical Notes

### William Henry Herndon

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1818 December 25</td>
<td>Born, Greensburg, Ky.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1820</td>
<td>Moved to Illinois</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1821</td>
<td>Moved to Sangamon County, Ill.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1825</td>
<td>Moved to Springfield, Ill.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1836-1837</td>
<td>Student, preparatory department, Illinois College, Jacksonville, Ill.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1840</td>
<td>Married Mary Maxcy (died 1861)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1844</td>
<td>Admitted to bar and formed law partnership with Abraham Lincoln</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1854</td>
<td>Elected mayor of Springfield, Ill.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1862</td>
<td>Married Anna Miles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1889</td>
<td>Coauthored with Jesse W. Weik <em>Herndon's Lincoln: The True Story of a Great Life</em> (Chicago: Belford, Clarke. 3 vols.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1891 March 18</td>
<td>Died, Springfield, Ill.</td>
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### Jesse William Weik

<table>
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<tr>
<td>1857 August 23</td>
<td>Born, Greencastle, Ind.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1875</td>
<td>A.B., Indiana Asbury (now DePauw) University, Greencastle, Ind.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1883</td>
<td>A.M., Indiana Asbury University, Greencastle, Ind.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1880</td>
<td>Admitted to bar but never practiced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1889</td>
<td>Coauthored with William H. Herndon <em>Herndon's Lincoln: The True Story of a Great Life</em> (Chicago: Belford, Clarke. 3 vols.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930 August 18</td>
<td>Died, Springfield, Ill.</td>
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</table>

### Abraham Lincoln

<table>
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<tr>
<td>1809 February 12</td>
<td>Born, Hardin County, Ky.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1816</td>
<td>Moving to Indiana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1830</td>
<td>Moving to Macon County, Ill.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1831</td>
<td>Moving to New Salem, Ill.; employed as storekeeper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1832</td>
<td>Served in Black Hawk War; became partner in Lincoln &amp; Berry, a general store</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1833-1836</td>
<td>Postmaster, New Salem, Ill.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1834-1836</td>
<td>Deputy county surveyor, Sangamon County, Ill.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1834-1841</td>
<td>Member, Illinois state legislature (Whig)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1836</td>
<td>Licensed as attorney</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1837</td>
<td>Moved to Springfield and practiced law in partnership with John T. Stuart and later Stephen T. Logan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1842</td>
<td>Married Mary Todd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1844</td>
<td>Formed law partnership with William H. Herndon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1847-1849</td>
<td>Member, U.S. House of Representatives (Whig) from Illinois, Thirtieth Congress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1849</td>
<td>Resumed law practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1856</td>
<td>Joined Republican party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1858</td>
<td>Unsuccessful Republican candidate for U.S. Senate in opposition to Stephen A. Douglas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1860</td>
<td>Elected president</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Scope and Content Note

Shortly after the death of Abraham Lincoln, William Henry Herndon began gathering material for a biography of his former law partner. In 1885, Jesse William Weik brought new inspiration and assistance to the endeavor, and in 1888 Herndon's biography was completed through their joint effort. This collection of Lincolniana is the product of their research. The material covers the time period circa 1824-1933 and is divided into six groups: I: *Arithmetic Book and Scrapbooks*; II: *Correspondence of Lincoln*; III: *Legal Documents*; IV: *Papers of William Henry Herndon*; V: *Papers of Jesse William Weik*; and VI: *Miscellany*.

Group I consists of one leaf (two pages) of an *arithmetic book*, into which Lincoln, as a young man, entered tables and exercises in linear measure, and two scrapbooks of newspaper clippings. One scrapbook contains editorials, news items, letters, and a number of statistical tables dealing with such subjects as demographics, slavery, geography, religion, railroads, agriculture, immigration, and monetary matters. Lincoln is alleged to have gathered the material for his debates with Stephen Arnold Douglas during their race for the United States Senate in 1858. The other scrapbook contains similar clippings and also includes material on the presidential election of 1860.

Group II, comprised largely of *correspondence*, is divided into three sections. Section A consists of twelve letters and a certificate of survey in Lincoln's hand. These items are listed as Nos. 3-14 and 770 in the inventory and include six letters from Lincoln to Mark William Delahay. Section B consists chiefly of reproductions of letters and papers written by Lincoln. Several letters from Lincoln to Joshua Speed document the friendship between the two men and their close communication on personal and public affairs. Other recipients include Joshua R. Giddings, Samuel Haycraft, John D. Johnston, Andrew McCallen, Leonard Swett, Richard S. Thomas, Henry Clay Whitney, and Archibald Williams. Letters to Lincoln from 1848 through 1861 and listed as Nos. 774-806 in the inventory constitute Section C of Group II. The campaign of 1856 is the subject of much of the correspondence. The candidates, Millard Fillmore, John C. Fremont, and James Buchanan; campaign strategy; and the strength of the Democratic, Republican, and Know-Nothing parties are among the topics discussed. The correspondents include John Bell, Joshua R. Giddings, Norman B. Judd, Thaddeus Stevens, John Wentworth, Richard Yates, and others. This section also contains newspaper clippings and miscellaneous printed material.

Group III comprises documents related to *Lincoln's legal cases*. It contains certificates, petitions, affidavits, notices, abstracts, writs, briefs, depositions, and other papers dealing with such subjects as divorce, slander, assault and battery, and usury. Most of this material is described as Nos. 15-773 and 2000-78 in the inventory.

The largest series in the collection, Group IV, consists of correspondence, interviews, recollections, notes, newspaper clippings, and other material of *William Henry Herndon*. Included are an interview with Mary Todd Lincoln in 1866, two long interviews with Dennis Hanks, letters from Hanks to Herndon written in 1865 and 1866 mainly on family history, letters to Herndon from Charles Friend on the Enlow story, and letters and notes from Herndon to Weik between 1881 October 1 and 1891 February 27 containing reminiscences of Lincoln's life.

Prominent in this series are Lincoln's family members, schoolmates, neighbors in New Salem and Springfield, Illinois, law partners, colleagues at the bar and in the Illinois legislature, political party allies, and White House associates. Representative names include Ninian Wirt Edwards (brother-in-law), Kate Roby Gentry (schoolmate), Mentor Graham (teacher), John Hay, whose letter of 1866 September 5 discusses Lincoln's daily life in the White House and ends with the statement that he was "the greatest character since Christ," John B. Helm (store clerk), Sarah Bush Johnston Lincoln (stepmother), Stephen T. Logan (law partner), Leonard Swett (lawyer), Frances Wallace (sister-in-law), and Robert L. Wilson (one of the "Long Nine," a group of tall Whigs, including Lincoln, who served together in the Illinois legislature). Also in Group IV are manuscripts by Herndon bearing such titles as "Lincoln's Development," "Lincoln's Courtship with Miss Owens," "The Lincoln-Douglas Debates," "Miss Rutledge and Lincoln," and "Lincoln's Ways."

Group V, the papers of Jesse William Weik, consists of correspondence, notes, extracts, interviews, typed and handwritten copies of documents, and other items. Correspondents include Albert Jeremiah Beveridge, James Cook Conkling, Richard Henry Dana, John Hay, John G. Nicolay, Edward Lillie Pierce, Lyman Trumbull, and Horace White.

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Herndon-Weik Collection of Lincolniana
Group VI is an assortment of unbound material which includes photostatic copies and facsimiles of documents mostly by Lincoln, a printed sermon and speech by Theodore Parker, newspaper clippings, magazine articles, pamphlets, one chapter of Albert Jeremiah Beveridge's *Abraham Lincoln (1928)*, Charles M. Thompson's report on the "Lincoln Way" investigation, records of the Weik Manuscript Corporation, and negative photographs of documents collected by Herndon and Weik.

**Organization of the Papers**

The collection is arranged in six series:

- **Group I: Arithmetic Book and Scrapbooks, circa 1824-1860**
- **Group II: Correspondence of Abraham Lincoln, 1833-1865**
- **Group III: Legal Documents, 1834-1860**
- **Group IV: Papers of William Henry Herndon, 1849-1891**
- **Group V: Papers of Jesse William Weik, 1830-1927**
- **Group VI: Miscellany, circa 1824-1933**
Description of Series

**Container**

**Series**

**BOX 1 REEL 1**

**Group I: Arithmetic Book and Scrapbooks, circa 1824-1860**

One leaf from Lincoln's arithmetic book and two scrapbooks with clippings of statistical tables, articles, editorials, and extracts from speeches.

Arranged by type of material.

**BOX 2 REEL 1**

**Group II: Correspondence of Abraham Lincoln, 1833-1865**

Original correspondence, copies of documents, and other miscellaneous items.

Arranged chronologically in three sections.

See original index in Manuscript Division Reading Room or microfilm copy in Group VI, reel no. 15.

**BOX 3-13 REEL 2-6**

**Group III: Legal Documents, 1834-1860**

Briefs, complaints, petitions, and other legal documents relating to Lincoln's law cases.

Arranged alphabetically by name of plaintiff with separate papers for each case file by the date entered with the clerk of court.

See original index in Manuscript Division Reading Room or microfilm copy in Group VI, reel no. 15.

**BOX 14-27 REEL 7-11**

**Group IV: Papers of William Henry Herndon, 1849-1891**

Correspondence, notes, interviews, collections, copies of documents, and miscellaneous material.

Arranged chronologically.

See original index in Manuscript Division Reading Room or microfilm copy in Group VI, reel no. 15.

**BOX 28-35 REEL 12-14**

**Group V: Papers of Jesse William Weik, 1830-1927**

Correspondence, notes, interviews, copies of documents, and miscellaneous material.

Arranged chronologically.

See original index in Manuscript Division Reading Room or microfilm copy in Group VI, reel no. 15.

**Group VI: Miscellany, circa 1824-1933**

**REEL 15**

**Microfilmed material.**

Microfilm of indexes not physically housed with collection; to use original indexes, consult reference staff in Manuscript Division Reading Room.

**BOX 36 not filmed**

**Unfilmed material.**

Photocopies and facsimiles, newspaper clippings, pamphlets, magazine articles, report, sermon, speech, Weik Manuscript Corp. records, and other items.

See original index in Manuscript Division Reading Room or microfilm copy in Group VI, reel no. 15.
## Container List

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<tr>
<th>Container</th>
<th>Contents</th>
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<td>BOX 1 REEL 1</td>
<td><strong>Group I: Arithmetic Book and Scrapbooks, circa 1824-1860</strong>&lt;br&gt;One leaf from Lincoln's arithmetic book and two scrapbooks with clippings of statistical tables, articles, editorials, and extracts from speeches. Arranged by type of material.</td>
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<td>Lincoln's arithmetic book, one leaf (two pages), circa 1824-1826&lt;br&gt;[Digital content available]&lt;br&gt;Scrapbooks&lt;br&gt;Newspaper clippings allegedly used by Lincoln in his debates with Stephen A. Douglas in 1858, circa 1850-1858, undated&lt;br&gt;[Digital content available]&lt;br&gt;Newspaper clippings, circa 1854-1860, undated&lt;br&gt;[Digital content available]</td>
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<td><strong>Group II: Correspondence of Abraham Lincoln, 1833-1865</strong>&lt;br&gt;Original correspondence, copies of documents, and other miscellaneous items. Arranged chronologically in three sections. See original index in Manuscript Division Reading Room or microfilm copy in Group VI, reel no. 15.</td>
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<td>BOX 3-13 REEL 2-6</td>
<td><strong>Group III: Legal Documents, 1834-1860</strong>&lt;br&gt;Briefs, complaints, petitions, and other legal documents relating to Lincoln's law cases. Arranged alphabetically by name of plaintiff with separate papers for each case file by the date entered with the clerk of court. See original index in Manuscript Division Reading Room or microfilm copy in Group VI, reel no. 15.</td>
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Group III: Legal Documents, 1834-1860

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<td>Tal-Van [Digital content available]</td>
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<tr>
<td>BOX 13 REEL 6</td>
<td>Vau-You, miscellaneous [Digital content available]</td>
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Miscellany [Digital content available]

Group IV: Papers of William Henry Herndon, 1849-1891

Correspondence, notes, interviews, collections, copies of documents, and miscellaneous material.
Arranged chronologically.
See original index in Manuscript Division Reading Room or microfilm copy in Group VI, reel no. 15.

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<td>BOX 14 REEL 7</td>
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<td>1865, July 30-1865, Dec. 31 [Digital content available]</td>
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<td>1866, Jan. 13-1866, Aug. 10 [Digital content available]</td>
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<td>1866, Aug. 11-1866, Nov. 16 [Digital content available]</td>
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<td>1866, Nov. 18-1866, Dec. 30 [Digital content available]</td>
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<td>1867, Jan. 5-1874, Jan. 10 [Digital content available]</td>
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### Group IV: Papers of William Henry Herndon, 1849-1891

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| BOX 21 REEL 10 | 1887, Jan. 6-1889, Jan. 4  
[Digital content available](#) |
| BOX 22 REEL 10 | 1889, Jan. 5-1891, Feb. 27  
[Digital content available](#) |
| BOX 23 REEL 11 | Undated  
[Digital content available](#) |
| BOX 24 REEL 11 | Undated  
[Digital content available](#) |
| BOX 25-27 REEL 11 | Drafts of portions of *Herndon's Lincoln*  
[Digital content available](#) |

### Group V: Papers of Jesse William Weik, 1830-1927

Correspondence, notes, interviews, copies of documents, and miscellaneous material. Arranged chronologically. See original index in Manuscript Division Reading Room or microfilm copy in Group VI, reel no. 15.

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| BOX 28 REEL 12 | 1830, Feb. 20-1886, Feb. 4  
[Digital content available](#) |
| BOX 29 REEL 12 | 1886, Mar. 15-1889, Jan. 3  
[Digital content available](#) |
| BOX 30 REEL 12 | 1889, Jan. 11-1890?  
[Digital content available](#) |
| BOX 30 REEL 13 | 1890, Jan. 28-1898, Dec. 15  
[Digital content available](#) |
| BOX 31 REEL 13 | 1898, Dec. 27-1913, Nov. 20  
[Digital content available](#) |
| BOX 32 REEL 13 | 1913, Nov. 25-1915, June 9  
[Digital content available](#) |
| BOX 33-35 REEL 14 | 1915, July 11-1927 Nov.; undated  
[Digital content available](#) |

### Group VI: Miscellany, circa 1824-1933

Microfilmed material. Microfilm of indexes not physically housed with collection; to use original indexes, consult reference staff in Manuscript Division Reading Room.

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| REEL 15 | Special indexes (Card index of the Herndon-Weik Collection in the Library of Congress) Not physically housed with collection; to use original indexes, consult reference staff in Manuscript Division Reading Room.  
[Digital content available](#) |

Unfilmed material. Photocopies and facsimiles, newspaper clippings, pamphlets, magazine articles, report, sermon, speech, Weik Manuscript Corp. records, and other items. See original index in Manuscript Division Reading Room or microfilm copy in Group VI, reel no. 15.

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**Herndon-Weik Collection of Lincolniana**
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<th>Container</th>
<th>Contents</th>
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| BOX 36 not filmed | Herndon family genealogy, undated  
Herndon v. Smith praecipe, 1837, June 9  
Lincoln, Abraham, duplicate holograph transcription of letter to Abraham Jonas, 1860, Feb. 4  
Newspaper and magazine clippings, 1856-1921, undated  
Photocopies and facsimiles, circa 1824-1888  
Proceedings of the first annual meeting and dinner of the Lincoln Fellowship, 1908, Feb. 12  
Weik, Jesse William, photocopy of pages from diary, 1876, July 4-5  
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