

1. SPRINGFIELD TO MONTICELLO

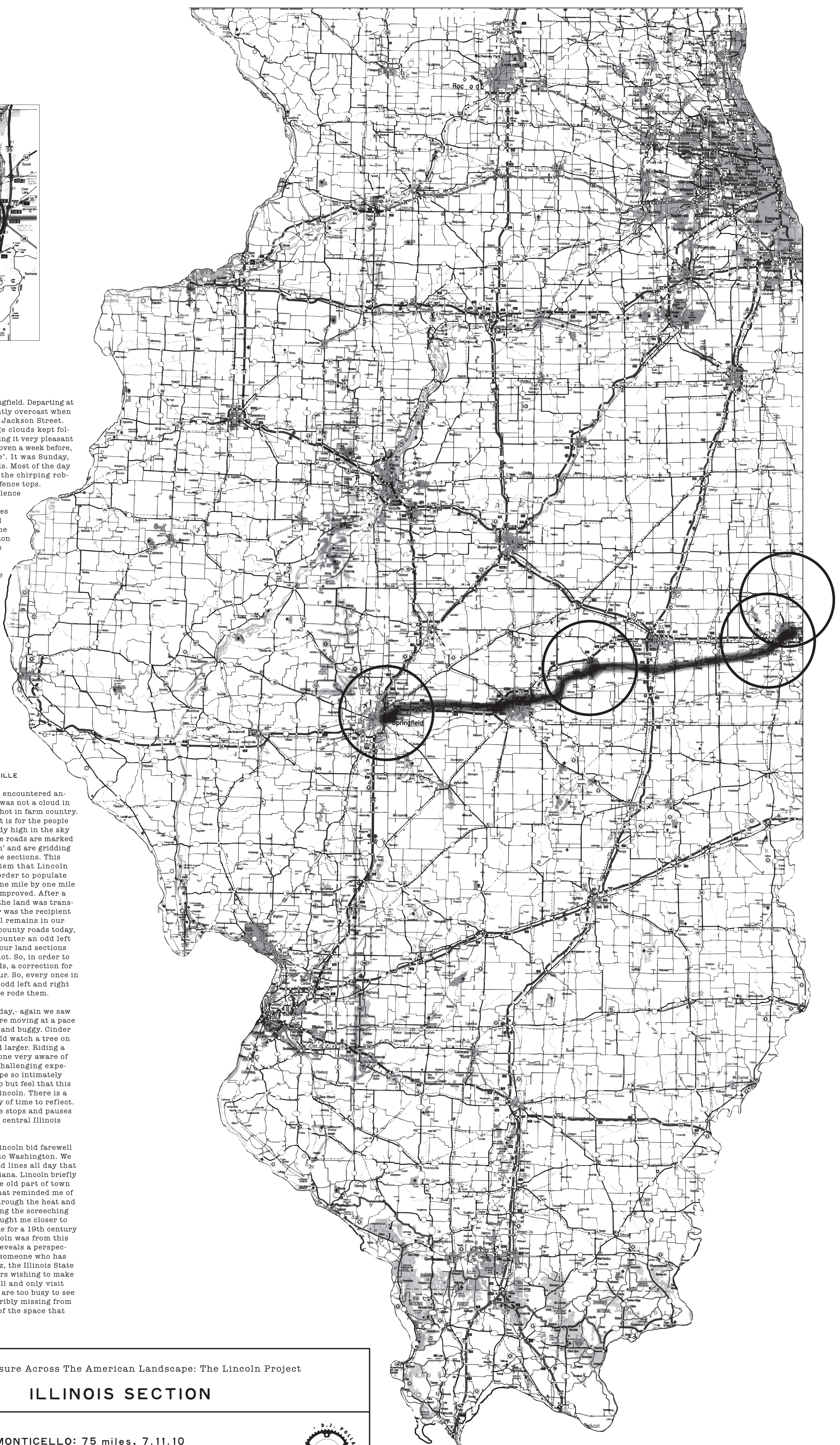
Today we had a great start from Springfield. Departing at about 7:30am, it was cool and slightly overcast when we left Lincoln's house on 8th and Jackson Street. While Anders and I rode east, huge clouds kept following us and blocking the sun keeping it very pleasant and cool. This landscape was like an oven a week before, but we were granted 'safe passage'. It was Sunday, and nobody was driving on the roads. Most of the day we never heard any sounds except the chirping robins and red wing blackbirds on the fence tops. This whole day was spent in near silence from noise and distractions of the modern world. Thomas Merton comes to mind. There are vast spaces and rows of corn and soy beans lining the single lane roads throughout Sangamon County. It is not difficult to imagine this place 150 years ago. The train line that Lincoln rode east for his inauguration follows the same route today in central Illinois. At times, it seemed like we were traveling across an Ocean of grass and farmland with huge skies overhead. We never got rained on but kept passing wet roads. Day 1 had a Zen quality. After 75 miles, now it was time for some Dairy Queen!

2. MONTICELLO TO TOLONO TO DANVILLE

Leaving Monticello this morning, we encountered another beautiful day. This time there was not a cloud in the sky. That means it is going to be hot in farm country. Riding by 7am almost felt late, and it is for the people who work the land. The sun is already high in the sky and distances have to be traveled. The roads are marked by signs listing '800 East, 1250 North' and are gridding the landscape in one mile by one mile sections. This is the legacy of the homestead system that Lincoln established over a century ago. In order to populate the 'west', land was parceled up in one mile by one mile sections that had to be worked and improved. After a given amount of time, ownership of the land was transferred to the farmer. My grandfather was the recipient of property in this manner that still remains in our family. When we were cycling along county roads today, every once in a while we would encounter an odd left and then right hand turn. Again, as our land sections are square in Illinois, the Earth is not. So, in order to map the county by dividing-line roads, a correction for the curvature of the Earth must occur. So, every once in a while engineers would make these odd left and right hand turns on the pike. And today we rode them.

The fields truly appeared endless today, again we saw Oceans of corn and soy beans. We were moving at a pace today that probably equaled a horse and buggy. Cinder roads dotted the farm country. I could watch a tree on the horizon slowly appear larger and larger. Riding a bicycle like a riding a horse, makes one very aware of where the water is located! It is a challenging experience to travel through the landscape so intimately tied to the natural space. I can't help but feel that this expanse had a profound impact on Lincoln. There is a sublime sense of open sky and plenty of time to reflect. Lincoln's prose seems to have unique stops and pauses in the wording, - it is my theory that central Illinois must have had a part in this.

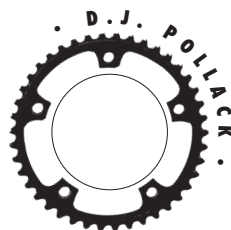
We traveled through Tolono where Lincoln bid farewell to the people of Illinois on his way to Washington. We ended up criss-crossing the rail road lines all day that moved east towards Danville and Indiana. Lincoln briefly stopped in Danville at a depot in the old part of town that still has an industrial quality that reminded me of the nineteenth century. Traveling through the heat and dust of the farmland and encountering the screeching steel of the railroad locomotives brought me closer to the idea of what it must have been like for a 19th century traveler to traverse this space. Lincoln was from this part of the country and crossing it reveals a perspective that can only be understood by someone who has traveled it's space. Thomas Schwartz, the Illinois State Historian has told me that filmmakers wishing to make Lincoln biographies occasionally call and only visit these spaces 'over the phone', - they are too busy to see the actual country. Something is terribly missing from these films when direct knowledge of the space that informed Lincoln is absent.



Taking Measure Across The American Landscape: The Lincoln Project

ILLINOIS SECTION

- 1. SPRINGFIELD TO MONTICELLO: 75 miles, 7.11.10
- 2. MONTICELLO TO DANVILLE: 75 miles, 7.12.10
- 3. DANVILLE, STATE LINE CITY TO CRAWFORDSVILLE, IN: 50 miles, 7.13.10





3. DANVILLE TO STATE LINE CITY TO CRAWFORDSVILLE
 State Line City is a small rural town that sits on the border of Illinois. The train line that carried Lincoln east passes through here. There are still old buildings by the railroad that appear to have been around for over 150 years. It still has a bit of a 19th century frontier feel. Tracks traverse the small farm town and a village green lies just yards from the crossing. A small inscription and a US flag fly in a rather plain setting. I am reminded of the casual qualities of the President and how he liked to play on the floor with his children. This small town has that quiet quality and I can picture Lincoln being there. As we made our way south through the dirt country roads, we were again slowed down (on our bicycles) to the pace of a horse and buggy or less. We saw an owl and several hawks and got

drenched in a Midwestern downpour! Someone asked what do you do when it rains and you're on a bike? "I put on my raincoat and move on." Nothing about that seemed extraordinary but moments later we met a man walking on the road who quipped, "it's not raining too hard." I think Abe would have agreed and continued walking his dog too.

4. CRAWFORDSVILLE TO ZIONSVILLE & INDIANAPOLIS
 Leaving Crawfordsville along the train lines, we got off to a slower start today. The heat of the day came early and the farmland seemed very humid. The landscape at times appeared very differently from Illinois with rolling hills and wooded Oak groves. But then it would open up and once again reveal a 'Great Plains' quality. A hawk flew overhead and a red deer jumped the hedge

and bound over the soybean field in a gallop. It seemed a bit strange of a site for the middle of the day when deer usually lie in the brushy transition areas along the fence lines.

Moving south by southeast, the area landscape was quiet, humid and hot. Approaching Zionsville, north of Indianapolis, a quaint small town atmosphere meets up with the 21st century. Picturesque old Victorian buildings are situated on narrow streets designed for carts. People coming and going at a modern pace appeared contrary to the setting. The town layout almost looked New England like in the historic neighborhood indicating we are moving east and the sentiments are beginning to change. The pace is quicker and this prepared us for our ride into the big city of Indianapolis. Lincoln spoke briefly at his stops and acknowledged a Midwestern sympathy and support from the local people. With important business ahead, he was forced to be brief in his comments and had a schedule to stick to. In the town green by the site of the depot in Zionsville, there was a small gazebo that had been prepared for a gathering. Someone had lined up several chairs in front of the structure. It's formal setting suggested something important was about to occur and perhaps a visitor was going to speak. The setting instantly reminded me of a scene not too unlike what might have occurred on the same spot some 150 years earlier.

5. INDIANAPOLIS TO CONNERSVILLE

Leaving Indianapolis, we were greatly appreciative of the generosity of Jenny and Paul Burger. We then began moving south west and kept crossing the rail lines once again. The heat index was high today but the shade

of the huge oaks that frequently lined our path cast shadows that made it feel 10 degrees cooler. We noticed farm houses usually planted tall trees lining their western exposure to take advantage of this natural cooling effect. Frequently, we have come across friendly and pleasant people in Indiana offering us water or directions. Lincoln had the generous support of the state and in Indianapolis at the corner of Washington and Missouri Streets, he felt confident to ask the citizenry to "rise up and preserve the Union". This was an appeal that would be answered shortly by the people of Indiana when over 100 infantry and cavalry regiments would enlist and be 'called to arms'.

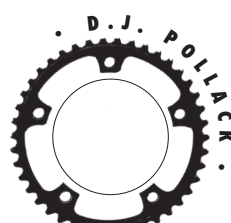
6. CONNERSVILLE TO LAWRENCEBURG

Leaving Connersville by way of the old depot, the landscape distinctively shifts into rolling hills. This country side foreshadows the beginnings of the Ohio Valley. Passing through Dunlapville, an old Quaker community site is visible from the road. I notice all the farms in this part of the country have white painted barns. The familiar red siding of the sheds and barns of Illinois are nowhere in site. The landscape is beginning to feel far different from the inland seas of corn in central Illinois. Entering Lawrenceburg through Glendale, a modern suburban neighborhood is woven into and up against 19th century housing and buildings. The Ohio River town has a bit of a southern feel to it and for a moment I am reminded of New Orleans. Lincoln must have sensed this when he gave a brief speech not far from the levee and feeling confident perhaps, or just wanting to secure the support of northern citizenry, he announced to the crowd, "I suppose you are in favor of doing full justice to all whether on that side of the river or on your own." "The Cincinnati Daily Commercial" on that day reported that the crowd responded with, "loud cheering" and cries of, "We are!".

Taking Measure Across The American Landscape: The Lincoln Project

INDIANA SECTION

- 3. DANVILLE TO STATE LINE CITY TO CRAWFORDSVILLE: 50 miles, 7.13.10
- 4. CRAWFORDSVILLE TO INDIANAPOLIS: 70 miles, 7.14.10
- 5. INDIANAPOLIS TO CONNERSVILLE: 72 miles, 7.15.10
- 6. CONNERSVILLE TO LAWRENCEBURG: 64 miles, 7.16.10





7. LAWRENCEBURG TO CINCINNATI

Moving east out of Lawrenceburg towards Cincinnati, we ran up against the modern world of casinos along the Ohio River and the bucolic rolling hills of the Ohio River valley. The landscape has a way of hiding the views of the countryside and affords glimpses more intimate and old world in flavor. Cycling over the state line and then crossing the river on a country bridge, we stopped in the middle to take in the view. This unobstructed scene had a very nostalgic sentimental quality looking westward down the Ohio. It was not hard to imagine 1820 and the flatboats of early German settlers floating down the river. The current meanders and sandbars rise up along the bends. It doesn't appear treacherous at this point and almost begs for a canoe to explore the wandering shoreline. Water birds fly overhead and though I am aware of an industrial city not far away, this location looks like a resting spot for Huck Finn. In his youth, Lincoln took a raft trip down the Mississippi and looking out at the Ohio River one can easily imagine a 19th century river culture and what it must have been like to pole out of the shoals and unlodge a plank from the shallows.

However, the schedule Lincoln kept when he left Indianapolis with his son, Robert Todd, found himself arriving in Cincinnati the next day. Traveling along this route must have been an impressive tour as well as a true initiation into the world of national politics when approximately 100,000 people showed up to see his father, the President elect.

The relatively quiet picturesque Ohio landscape and our sepia toned memories of a horse based economy are truly false windows to a mid 19th century America. This was a highly contentious time for Lincoln and public affairs were politically complex and dangerous.

8. CINCINNATI TO XENIA TO CEDARVILLE

Cycling from Cincinnati east following a ridge line gave us relief from climbing hills. East of the city, the Little Miami Scenic Bicycle Trail begins. The trail runs all the way to Xenia and follows the Little Miami Railroad route of 1836 that Lincoln rode on his inaugural route to Washington. Later, this railroad helped supply troops and material to Fort Dennison, Ohio during the Civil

War and the line became part of the Pennsylvania Railroad in 1870. Trains ceased to run the line in 1962. In 1861, Lincoln stopped at the brick depot in Xenia and today it still exists with all of its charm as a favorite watering spot for riders.

Today, I think this route is one of Ohio's best kept secrets for outdoor enthusiasts. The trail follows the Little Miami River and canoe rentals and campgrounds dot the roughly 70 mile path. Passing through historic towns along the way, cafes and shops cater to cyclists en route. Inns and Bed & Breakfast stops display restored facades of an antebellum era.

An old fashioned charm is mixed with modernity when passing through the towns along the way. The trail is paved and flat and for the most part it is shaded by dense foliage and forest. No cars pass by so silence is the norm except for the occasional splash and laughter of people diving into the river and swamping each others boats in summer play. In the woods on the trail, some of the old trestles for the railroad can still be seen with vines crawling over them like some ancient ruins of a past empire.

9. CEDARVILLE TO COLUMBUS

Moving north from Cedarville to London, our route was also a paved path paralleling another existing train line approaching Columbus. To the side, old decaying electric poles stand as relics to a bygone era. The old depot in South Charleston still exists and right next to it sits an early 19th century log cabin. The scale of dwellings seem oddly proportioned compared to today's standards. The second floor on houses built in the early 1800's seem to be only one and a half stories high. (At tight fit for anyone over 6' tall.)

We followed the route Lincoln's train took through West Jefferson and on to Columbus. The approach, like many midsize cities today can be a bit busy as the landscape transitions from rural to suburban to urban. Once inside Columbus, the city was very friendly to cyclists with paved paths running all along the Olentangy River. We visited the Ohio Statehouse in the downtown area where Lincoln stopped on his way to Washington DC. He visited Ohio three times and it was in Columbus where he presented anti slavery proposals. Today, a marker exists inside the

10. COLUMBUS TO NEWARK TO FRAZEYSBURG

This morning we moved east out of Columbus through Worthington and rode over the Hoover Dam. Leaving on the north side of the city, we cycled through horse country and the picturesque and immaculate city of New Albany. A bike path begins near the town and once again runs alongside the rail lines, only this time there are working lines next to the trail. A stop in Granville and Denison University proved to be a perfect place for lunch in the historic downtown. The path continues all the way through Newark and affords a view of a town hard hit by the current economy. Shells of abandoned factories inhabit spaces along the train line and we are separated by wire fences on both sides. The route of the bicycle path reveals all sides of boom and bust in local history, both past and present.

Lincoln made several stops in Newark on February 14, 1861 and due to his fast paced schedule, was forced to greet well wishers at the spur of the moment. At one stop he was brief and almost Mark Twain like when he carried on about having nothing to say and remarked, "I understand that arrangements were made for something of a speech from me here, when the train moved down, but it has gone so far that it has deprived me of addressing the many fair ladies assembled, while it has deprived them of observing my very interesting countenance. It is impossible for me to make you a speech: there is not time, so I bid you farewell."

11. FRAZEYSBURG TO NEW PHILADELPHIA

Leaving Frazeysburg we encountered the steep rolling hills of eastern Ohio. On a bicycle, they seemed more than hills, they actually are a foreshadowing of the Appalachian Mountains that officially begin not too far from here in West Virginia. When settlers moving westward passed through this area, they dumped all of their furniture and heavy belongings upon hearing that the Rockies were twice as high! I can understand the sentiment as we encounter slow hard climbs up and quick descents down to the base of the valley and repeat this process frequently. There is no plateau that flattens out at a high elevation. It feels like an old part of the state but I sense a new economy pushing out the past as horse stables and wineries dot the landscape. Rural poverty is apparent in the back country.

Lincoln passed through Frazeysburg on his way to Washington in addition to Dresden, Coshocton, Newcomerstown, and Urichsville. I could understand his exhaustion after passing through scores of small towns, especially when all he could muster at Cadiz Junction, Ohio after a quick bite to eat was, "too full for utterance".

Our route also took us past Conesville and the coal burning power plant. This huge monumental facility continuously shovels coal into the furnaces to generate electricity in our never ending need for power. The railroad line sits right next to the plant and I see reminders of the old steam locomotive era though on a much smaller scale, endlessly loading coal. Because these engines constantly needed to be serviced with fuel and water, it would force the inaugural train to

make frequent stops, this in turn would result in frequent comments by Lincoln that at times amounted to no more than the modern day equivalent of 'tweets'. The journey from here took him to Pittsburgh where he reassured a crowd of people at the Monongahela House nervous about an impending civil war that "there is no crisis but an artificial one". Ironically, Lincoln's train ride was previously delayed outside the city for several hours in a small town called Freedom, Pennsylvania.

12. NEW PHILADELPHIA TO WOOSTER

Cycling early morning when leaving New Philadelphia put me behind an Amish horse and buggy. The pace registered about 8mph down the street. I can't believe this was how we traveled only a hundred years ago. The semi trucks carrying logs and produce were forced to move just as slow as the horse until an opening in traffic occurred. The slower pace was the sympathetic part in my journey, it situated me in a relationship to the landscape that forced me to take time. While cycling through the countryside, focus is on a more present tense, and the process of travel and observation. Perhaps this is a luxury in the modern world but I think I might begin to understand why the Amish are so persistent in clinging to their 'plain' ways. Not simple ways, however, because we saw some very large scale farms and perfectly constructed white houses albeit without power lines running to the main dwellings. Though this is an old order community, it speaks of some of the attributes common and necessary for survival in 19th century America. Venturing off the larger county roads situated us into the heart of the Amish farm country. It is amazing to see the amount of work that can get done with a horse drawn plow. It was very enlightening to consider this in the present tense as I usually think of these 'historic' modalities as remnants of primitive and naive people. Far from it. The eloquence and profundity of Lincoln's ideas and prose came from this sort of environment. Seeing the Amish first hand made me consider the physical landscape with different eyes. Following Lincoln's inaugural train route via bicycle has its own limitations as well. The urge to just get in car and drive somewhere seems almost reflexive. The modern world with all of its choices and options has simply rendered it unsafe for us to travel into Pittsburgh via bicycle, as the present day route over the Ohio River is just not passable by bicycles or horse drawn vehicles.

13. WOOSTER TO CLEVELAND

Entering Cleveland is very easy by bicycle travel from the south. On the outer reaches of the city, a metropolitan park system begins with some 50 miles of paved trails. We could ride these trails all the way into the city. The landscape is a canopy of tall trees punctuated by wetlands and marshes. It has a wilderness feel within the city limits! We are descending towards the lake so the ground is nicely leveling out.

When Lincoln visited Cleveland, he seemed to address the crowd with a more serious and pressing tone. Reading his speech, I am impressed with his oratory skills and techniques of reasoning with the audience and demonstrating how he arrived at his logical conclusions. Knowing that self interest was not a complete structure to build civil society, he addressed the 19th century 'political noise machine' by reporting, "If I do not join now to save the good old ship of the Union this voyage, nobody will have a chance to pilot her to another voyage."

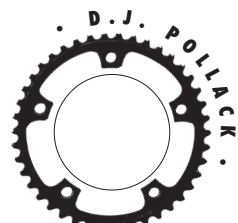
14. CLEVELAND TO NORTH SPRINGFIELD, PA

It was almost cold leaving Cleveland this morning! It is a surprisingly easy city to bicycle into and to find my way around. The bridges over the river are pedestrian accessible and the downtown area was easy to ride through. Moving east by Lake Erie I encountered a great bike lane courtesy of the Ohio 'Circle the Lake' tour. In Ashtabula, I discovered the Hubbard House, a stop on the route of the Underground Railroad. Built in the 1840's by William and Catharine Hubbard, it was known as 'Mother Hubbard's Cupboard'. Once slaves crossed the Ohio River, they moved north to Ashtabula where they made their way to this house. They were then taken to the Hubbard Company warehouse on the Ashtabula River and then ferried to Canada and freedom. It is amazing to look out over the lake at this point from the high bluff. It is equally amazing to imagine that the Underground Railroad was a reality. Lincoln must have had some sense of this as his train passed through the area on it's way to Buffalo. Ashtabula still has some unassuming 19th century houses and brick streets that suggests this time was not too long ago. Making my way across the state line into Pennsylvania the countryside is very beautiful and nothing like the plains of Illinois. Being this far from the contemplative spaces of the Illinois 8th Judicial Circuit (where Lincoln practiced law and intended to retire), I wonder if the distance provoked his melancholy. This is an old part of the country. The sign that welcomed me to Pennsylvania said that William Penn established this as a colony in 1681. That is a time line and deep history difficult to imagine, especially for a native person from the Midwest.

Taking Measure Across The American Landscape:
The Lincoln Project

OHIO - N. PENNSYLVANIA SECTION

- 7. LAWRENCEBURG TO CINCINNATI: 22 miles, 7.18.10
- 8. CINCINNATI TO XENIA TO CEDARVILLE: 80 miles, 7.19.10
- 9. CEDARVILLE TO COLUMBUS: 70 miles, 7.20.10
- 10. COLUMBUS, NEWARK TO FRAZEYSBURG: 70 miles, 7.21.10
- 11. FRAZEYSBURG TO NEW PHILADELPHIA: 67 miles, 7.22.10
- 12. NEW PHILADELPHIA TO WOOSTER: 60 miles, 7.23.10
- 13. WOOSTER TO CLEVELAND: 68 miles, 7.25.10
- 14. CLEVELAND TO NORTH SPRINGFIELD, PA: 108 miles, 7.26.10





25. PORT JERVIS TO DINGMAN'S FERRY

Today is my rest day, so I'm only going a short distance to stay at Dingman's Ferry, Pennsylvania by the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area on the Delaware River. It so happens that Dingman's Ferry also has the only privately owned toll bridge left (bicycles are free to cross). In 1735 Andrew Dingman built a flatboat to transport people across the Delaware River and in 1839 the family built the first of many toll bridges. Eventually, private engineers took over the project and in 1900 constructed the bridge that remains today.

Lincoln's inaugural train moved across the Delaware River after leaving Trenton, New Jersey. He stopped in Harrisburg then moved on to arrive in Philadelphia on Washington's birthday. In the interest of cycling a safe path, I adjusted my route towards Philadelphia.

26. DINGMAN'S FERRY TO MILFORD, NJ

While I researched the route Lincoln's inaugural train took, I thought at first, I must visit every city exactly on the path. Well, I was surprised when I discovered a list of every

marker that every town along the way has displayed, there are literally hundreds of plaques in small towns across the country. Some were on the inauguration route and some were on the funeral train route and some were on both. At times the trains just stopped briefly to service the locomotive and a town's claim was to have had Lincoln merely pass through. I decided my journey would be the inauguration route to focus on the rise of Lincoln. Also, there was something that seemed a bit contrary, geographically speaking. Let me explain. From the time of Daniel Boone forward, as Americans, we saw ourselves moving westward. This symbolically stood for opportunity in the American psyche and to the Hudson River painters as well, the horizon line in their landscapes metaphorically pointed west. Lincoln however, was a person from the west who moved eastward as he rose to national importance. He challenged slavery proponents by logically demonstrating that it was labor that generated wealth, not status and inheritance. He can be identified with having defined a contemporary notion of the 'American Dream' and yet his geographic path runs counter to the direction mythic and historic journeys of Manifest Destiny (the 18th & 19th century vision of a country between two Oceans). As I myself have been moving east and now south,

I am struck by the notion of how the mythic 'west' might also appear somewhere east. The landscape in the east can be just as wild, dangerous and beautiful as the 'wild west'. Moving along my path I have seen an abundance of wildlife and natural beauty along a thin narrow corridor (Delaware Water Gap) between New Jersey and Pennsylvania. Today I was in an approach through a mountain gap that I could have sworn was the Big Thompson River valley of Colorado. Traveling by bicycle has slowed me down not only academically (in order to study a 19th century person) but also emotionally. I am not so fast to judge the merit of a regional location. I have moved along historic paths and natural byways and yet I am always humbled by an exhausting climb, an empty water bottle or a low food supply. These are items I know I have taken for granted when I'm in my normal day to day routines. They seem to be in an inexhaustible supply to my modern eyes. I saw a letter in a museum case not too long ago that appeared to be 150 years old and had been written and then turned ninety degrees and written on in the perpendicular direction in order to save paper. To me this frugality seemed amazing and equally so that Lincoln came from a time not too long ago that did this sort of thing. Being able to identify my own limitations and make do with what I have at the moment has been the gift and lesson of my journey so far, especially when climbing a ridge today that felt like Pike's Peak in the Rocky Mountains.

27. MILFORD, NJ TO PHILADELPHIA

Leaving Milford this morning to a cool breeze was a great welcome! The Delaware River was still as glass and reflected the shoreline in perfect symmetry. Not too far from my location Washington crossed this river and plaques remind me of the mileage to Valley Forge. A different century for my project and I have to keep focused on my mission as I could easily spend time at all of these sites. Heading south along the New Jersey side of the river, I find myself riding alongside a road that looks like it was cut out of the side of a mountain. Signs remind me to watch out for falling rocks and I see brick size debris that would not be a welcome event for bicycle or car. The area feels remote in the early morning and I have to remind myself I am not far from Trenton and New York city. These spaces defy my previously conceived notions of what this area of the country should look like. Stone houses from the 18th century hug the sides of the rock walls and they seem rather unassuming. These are not fancy

rehab or historical registry houses but they appear to be ordinary residences that were perhaps passed down to family members. The towns that pop up by the river crossings all have a bridge street and the roadway narrows to suggest their original design for carts and horses. I eventually cross into Pennsylvania on the west side of the river and come up on stone ruins of an old barn. This whole area has remnants from previous centuries and all of this seems quite foreign to a midwesterner.

The approach into Philadelphia is very easy. This is a bicycle friendly city, even in the downtown area. Bike paths lead into the city proper and bike lanes traverse the heart of the downtown streets. William Penn's 17th century design for the Center Square creates a dramatic view. The European roots of his thinking are obvious as I ride around a huge circle by the art museum to traverse the route. The 'Second Empire' style of architectural design for City Hall commands the center space and though it was completed in the early 20th century, it still speaks of history. As I move towards Independence Hall, the several block area becomes part of the National Park Service grounds. These are highly guarded spaces of national importance. Armed guards are outside the site where Lincoln stood by the Hall as well as across the street by the Liberty Bell. On February 22, Washington's birthday, Lincoln responded to death threats on his life by raising an American flag at Independence Hall. His gesture was intended to demonstrate that the Union and the principles that it was founded upon, would be preserved. Having to go through security checks and not being allowed to bring my bicycle and equipment through, I thought that I would miss getting close to this site. The guards brought over the head ranger and I explained my project of retracing the inaugural train route. I also showed him my gallery card of the Lincoln portrait I painted for the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum in Springfield, Illinois. He was generous in his understanding and gave me a special escort to the Lincoln site so I could photograph the space. I wish to thank him and the National Park Service for their generosity! Across the street on the east side of Independence Hall is ironically the Gilbert Stuart house. Having painted Lincoln and I have to remind myself I am not far from Trenton and New York city. These spaces defy my previously conceived notions of what this area of the country should look like. Stone houses from the 18th century hug the sides of the rock walls and they seem rather unassuming. These are not fancy

28. PHILADELPHIA TO REAMSTOWN

This morning at 7am the air was thick and very humid. I could tell this was going to be a challenge from the start. Leaving Philadelphia from the Conshohocken bike path along the Schuylkill River however, was very easy and quick. The still waters followed me along a parkway void of car traffic. Leaving the path, I followed another path into Valley Forge National Historic Park. The rolling hills and stone barns and houses stand as stoic reminders of the battle for independence. Washington's headquarters is just off the main road. Though the path is separate from car traffic, it is odd to see commuter traffic run through the park. This still does not disturb the quiet beauty of the fields and it is difficult to imagine cannon fire in what looks like prime farm country. As I left the area, my route took me further into the forest. As the day went on the fields seemed more remote and the wooded areas thicker. I thought I should keep my eye out for black bear. Deer were abundant in the area and I had to carefully ride around one as he just stood in his tracks and gazed straight at me.

This is Lancaster county, Pennsylvania and the elevation will not let a cyclist forget it! Combining this with 95 degree heat, I carefully monitored my water intake! Pennsylvania is an old state. Continental Armies waged war with the British Empire, the Confederacy launched attacks into it's homeland, and the battle with Native Americans began here as well. The landscape holds these memories and knows that struggle is part of it's heritage. Stopping in Reamstown for the day, I am made aware of it's 250 year old history. Just southwest of here, Lincoln commemorated another space in Pennsylvania. Speaking for what amounted to all of two minutes, his speech at Gettysburg eloquently framed and outlined what would become a new vision for a modern America.

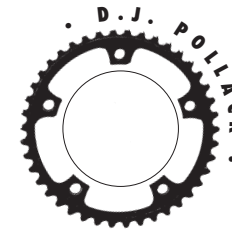
29. REAMSTOWN TO DELTA

The mist over the fields was so thick this morning that my handlebars felt wet to grab. The farms had laundry hanging on the line that I didn't think would ever dry. Next to a field being plowed by a man using four horses and a gas cutter, I saw a young boy wearing plain work clothes and a straw hat rollerblading towards me. The Mennonite people in this part of Pennsylvania appear to be a liberal lifestyle version of the Old Order Amish I saw in Ohio. Neat homes and stone buildings seem to be the norm. Cycling along a ridge I was a little concerned with it's name being 'Furnace Hills'. I didn't want them to live up to their moniker. Moving west and then south I rode for a while along the Susquehanna River. Boats and docks lined the water's edge and it's size in places seemed more like a lake. Riding here was beautiful on the 'Long Flat' road. But, that only lasted briefly as my southern path had to climb another ridge. It was nice to be in the trees and the houses on this stretch of the road were perched close together with streams flowing nearby. It reminded me of old places I had seen in West Virginia with the only difference being the use of stone to build foundations and retaining walls. I passed a place called Donegal and the stonework made sense. The scale of these buildings were 18th century and the people who built them must have been early Irish immigrants. My day's ride took me to the southern edge of the state line. Tomorrow I enter Maryland and will skirt around Baltimore's western edge. Lincoln had to do the same but for different reasons. He wanted to change trains here quietly and avoid confrontation with antagonistic people from this northern but slave holding state. His task would be to prevent insurrection and keep Maryland solidly in the Union.

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PENNSYLVANIA-NEW JERSEY SECTION

- 25. PORT JERVIS TO DINGMAN'S FERRY: 20 miles, 8.7.10
- 26. DINGMAN'S FERRY TO MILFORD, NJ: 75 miles, 8.8.10
- 27. MILFORD, NJ TO PHILADELPHIA: 87 miles, 8.9.10
- 28. PHILADELPHIA TO REAMSTOWN: 63 miles, 8.10.10
- 29. REAMSTOWN TO DELTA: 67 miles, 8.11.10



15. NORTH SPRINGFIELD TO DUNKIRK

Entering New York today, I was accompanied by endless rows of grape orchards on both sides of the road. Lake Erie must provide a good climate for this as I see wineries throughout the area. The 'tropic tour' bikeways continues and it is a great view and ride. I passed by the Erie County Court House on my way east and stopped just outside the nearby town of Westfield for breakfast. Here I met a proud resident. He informed me that there was a statue in town depicting Lincoln and a little girl. The statue is of Grace Bedell and the President. She was only 11 years old when she sent a letter a few weeks before Lincoln was elected suggesting he would look better if he grew a beard. Responding with a 'we shall see' attitude, within the month he had a full beard. Later on, he met Grace sporting his iconic look, just in time for the inauguration in Washington.

16. DUNKIRK TO BUFFALO TO LOCKPORT

As I type my letters, I can't help but feel as though I am afforded a view across 2 centuries. First, I can send this letter being composed in my iPhone, but hitting keys one at a time is a bit nerve racking and reminds me of a telegraph. Second, I have noticed that because of our modern technology, mainly cell phone and internet access, I don't usually see dimensional space. I can call my friends in Ireland at any time and distances seem irrelevant. Well, on a bicycle that is not the case. Time and distance are related. I know firsthand. I am afforded views in my immediate vicinity and maybe a short distance away, but I must consider my movement and gauge it accordingly. I make plans but must also account for how long it will take me to get there.

Moving out of Dunkirk was relatively easy this morning and traveling along the route with a wide shoulder was very nice indeed. Moving up through Orchard Park, I came upon an old depot and steam locomotive. The depot was actually turned into a model train shop and I stopped in to talk to the owner. He told me the lines right outside his door run into Buffalo. In 1860, the route would have ended at the Exchange Street Depot but today I believe it is a Amtrak stop. The massive locomotive sits dormant next to the small house and strangely enough, it was built in Russia during the early days of the Soviet revolution. The Pennsylvania Railroad bought a surplus of these and this one remains. I was reminded of Lincoln's critical comment about despotism and czarist Russia. It was rather strange as I first thought this sort of engine might have pulled the inaugural train, only to find out it was made in Russia.

I did happen to also see the site in downtown Buffalo of the First Unitarian Church where Lincoln visited as a guest of Millard Fillmore before he left for Washington. This historic location sits in the middle of a busy intersection and oddly enough seems to fit in. Getting around the city was not too difficult via bicycle but leaving the urban center heading north got busy. Like all good size cities, the transition areas

to the countryside are becoming our new 'urban/sub-urban' cities. I can see from my travels, a clash of two cultures trying to work out their boundaries of Nature preserves and bike lanes and wider canal lanes and more entrance ramps. A clash of two cultures striving to simultaneously inhabit the same civic space.

17. LOCKPORT TO ROCHESTER TO PALMYRA

Leaving the Buffalo area and seeing the waterway that narrows to flow into Lake Erie reminded me of the 'tropic tour' Saint Lawrence seaway. Canada is on the other side and Niagara Falls is not far from here. The Erie Canal, like the song says, goes from Albany to Buffalo. I am going from Buffalo to Albany but I only know 'every inch of the way' to about Rochester at this point. The canal, believe it or not was thought up in 1809 and built by 1826 to connect the Hudson River with Buffalo and the Great Lakes. The result was a population expansion into the west. Instead of hauling materials overland, flatboats could now be pulled down the waterway. This had a net result of increasing the capacity of transporting goods by 98%. says the information plaques alongside the canal. I spent most of the day riding along the towpath that runs adjacent to the water. Looking at historic photos along the way, I still can't believe that early 19th century technology was able to dig this thing and displace all that water, quite a civil engineering feat! I entered the path by the locks at Lockport by the cascading water. Originally this canal was only a few feet deep and 40 feet across but over the years many expansions have been made to the system. On the sides of the canal are farms with fields of corn and it reminds me of the Midwest countryside but with fishing boats and houseboats floating by. A bit of a surreal scene to a midwesterner. The calm water and the mirror reflections remind me of Eugene Ionesco's photos of the 'Ancient Regime' around Paris in the 1900's. It is very otherworldly, still, and visually symmetrical in the early morning hours.

Lincoln's inaugural train passed from Buffalo to Albany in a day and it made brief stops in Rochester, Syracuse, Utica, and Schenectady, as well as Clyde, a small port town on the Erie Canal. Many of these stops were again very quick in order to service the locomotive and again Lincoln would say a few words at each location. Reading his comments, he appears as a cross between a Victorian gentleman and a Mark Twain humorist. When caught on the spur of the moment at a short stop, rather than saying 'no comment' as today's politicians might say, he gives brief soliloquies about not having anything to say. At Rochester 8000 people showed up to see the President elect and his family. However, he can also be humble in his comments telling the crowds that they did not come to see him but a "representative of the American people". Lincoln lived at a time when language mattered and

reading his comments I can see his talents and mastery as the consummate politician. He knew how essential this was for developing intellect and personal clarity and I also sensed he knew that this was his obligation as a leader.

18. PALMYRA TO SYRACUSE

Leaving Palmyra this morning it was 63 degrees. Perfect weather for cycling. The small town has a skyline with 5 historic church steeples in a 3 block area. Not far from the Erie Canal, the towpath starts just north of the downtown area. The canal system is over 500 miles long in upstate New York and because it brought commerce back and forth from the Great Lakes to the Atlantic, New York became known as the "Empire State". Leading the population of the country in the 19th century, it also had the largest city in the country, New York. Over 25% of Lincoln's inaugural train ride was spent in New York and he had garnered key support from this state.

I can tell I am in the east by the old farm house architecture sometimes varying from Victorian to Italianate to Federalist in style. The buildings are older and each small town I pass through also have signposts with 18th century commemorations. I also occasionally run into historic houses that list them as key stops on the Underground Railroad. I must admit, I am jealous of the New York bikeways. If I am not on a 'towpath', I usually end up riding on a road that has a huge 'horse and buggy' lane and a wide shoulder.

Entering Syracuse was very easy on bicycle and the approach did not have the miles of suburban exchanges that usually plague midsize cities. The countryside comes very close to town and I kept checking my map to make sure I was going in the right direction. Nature seems close by when I moved into Syracuse and here Lincoln met a crowd of 10,000 people to greet him though snowstorms awaited him. Nothing to stop the people here. Lincoln's remarks at the time were openly directed at not wanting to ascend a constructed platform. Fearing all of this formality would require an hour or so speech a common practice of the day, Lincoln declined the invitation. Instead, he was brief and focused his words on the destiny of the country. Meanwhile, his wife was concerned that he needed to sharpen up his clothing style to get ready for a New York City visit. My stay at Armory Square in Syracuse also suggests changing my attire and I switch out my bike jersey for a button down sleeve shirt before dinner. Syracuse taken neatly.



23. HUDSON TO PINE BUSH

Leaving Hudson this morning I experienced very high humidity and dense air. Keeping myself hydrated was the primary goal in the morning. The Hudson River Valley can hold this weather in what seems to be an immovable front. However, I was almost ignoring all of this because everywhere I looked in the farmland the scenery appeared to be taken verbatim from a Frederick Church painting. Melodramatic sun rays would shine down on golden pastures with horses eating hay and the distant fields would appear a softer green in color as they receded into the background. This place is a landscape painter's dream for lesson on atmospheric perspective. I can see why Church, and for that matter, John Kensett (another Hudson River painter) became so interested in light and atmosphere. This was their workshop!

Approaching Poughkeepsie, the same holds here for the weather conditions. Lincoln spoke more at length in this city and seemed more serious in tone. The dramatic perspectives and monumental views of the Hudson River at this location perhaps suggested this timely reflection. Pointing out in his speech that it wasn't the country that needed saving, Lincoln emphasized that it was the Nation's institutions and what they were based on, that needed saving. This would become one of the President's prime objectives of his career.

But this would not be an easy task, as the US needed money. Right before I entered Poughkeepsie, I rode into Hyde Park and onto the grounds of the Cornelius Vanderbilt estate. One of the richest men in the world (in the 19th century), Vanderbilt held what amounted to 1/3 of the US currency in his hand. (Bill Gates is estimated to hold 1/138). Mr. Lincoln would eventually ask for Vanderbilt's help and he donated one million dollars to outfit a warship to bottle up the Confederate ship, 'Virginia' at Hampton Roads. The first 'ironclad' fought changed Naval warfare forever and launched an industrial 'north' into the business of building iron battle ships. Vanderbilt came to exemplify what a post Civil War economy would look like in the US as the medieval lifetimes of southern plantations collapsed. A new kind of society was born in America and it would move into the next century and it was based on an industrialized economy. The 20th century so happens to appear very quickly and it is just down the street from the Vanderbilt estate. My next stop was the home and library of President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

24. PINE BUSH TO PORT JERVIS

Pine Bush to Port Jervis was a short ride but a very hilly challenge. This area is right in the middle of the Shawangunk Ridge that follows the Delaware River south. On the east side of the river is New Jersey and Pennsylvania is on the west side. Port Jervis is where New York, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey meet. Passing small towns along the hilly ravines, I am constantly encountering historic signs marking the Dutch presence in the area going back to the early 17th century. The Delaware and Hudson Canal Company operated a shipping business in this area that was responsible for bringing coal into New York City. The river was one again turned what would have been an arduous overland journey into a more practical affair. I am not far from New York City at my present location but the geography would never reveal it. My journey by bicycle is moving south and due to logistics, I am able to avoid going into New York City. From my location, the only direct way into the city would be to bus my equipment east and then ferry afterwards to New Jersey.

Lincoln's long inaugural train route made one last stop after Poughkeepsie (in Peekskill) before going on to New York City. When he arrived, the "New York Herald" journalist, Henry Villiard reported that Mr. Lincoln appeared fatigued and not interested in engaging in political conversation. He always appears measured in his comments and tries to say nothing that is 'inconsistent with the Constitution'. The New Yorkers were rather curious to see the president-elect and they themselves seemed measured in their reactions as well. The locals were a little suspect of this rustic man from Illinois and Mrs. Lincoln tried to see to it that her husband was dressed correctly and carrying himself well. Walt Whitmann made it a point to see Mr. Lincoln and George Templeton Strong wrote in his diary, "the great rail splitter's face was visible to me for an instant, a keen, clear, honest face, not so ugly as his portraits..."

After delivering his speeches, visiting the Astor House and dealing with all of his political obligations including the emerging infighting within his party, Lincoln's train journey took him south to Trenton and Philadelphia. I move south as well and make my way over the Delaware River tomorrow and on to approach Pennsylvania.

19. SYRACUSE TO ROME

Outside of Syracuse I pick up the Erie Canal towpath once again. The weather was cool and I can tell I am further north. The forests are filled with aspen and birch trees with white pines intermingling. Just outside of town I came upon two horses hitched to a small wagon pulling a flat boat down the canal. The trail I came down prior to this was very narrow and seeing this sort of engine made me think if I might have just dodged a Shawnee raiding party.

As I move towards Rome, little did I know that I was heading into the Mohawk Valley and the Oneida Carrying Place. Across the street from my stay is a National monument, Fort Stanwix. This area was of tactical importance during the French and Indian War and the Revolution. What amounted to a four way battle for the same real estate and access to the west, ended up dividing the 6 Nations Iroquois and broke their centuries old confederation and peace treaty. Forced to choose alliances, the Oneida sided with the Colonialists and the Mohawk and Seneca sided with the British. To the north,

the Huron, who were enemies of the Iroquois, were allied with the French. Once the British drove the French out of North America, the seeds of the Revolution were set. After the defeat of the British, the treaty with the 6 Nations and the Americans cast the first concept of native sovereignty and established the reservation system. The land deal opened up the canal area but created further unforeseen problems for US and Native American relations. As if he had enough to do in dealing with secession, Lincoln was also forced to handle violent conflicts on the High Plains with the Lakota Sioux during his tenure.

20. ROME TO FORT PLAIN, MOHAWK VALLEY

Getting up at 5:30 and breaking camp got me back into Rome for breakfast before a torrential rainstorm. I am glad I didn't have to pack up wet things! The rest of the morning made for a constant soft drizzle not too unlike Ireland. Passing through Utica with soggy streets added a harsh feel to a town that had seen better days. Industrial buildings

along the trainline were closed and the manufacturing sites looked vacant. Some of the farm houses along the way had huge piles of firewood stacked in proportions suggesting a hardscrabble existence to heating a home throughout the northern winter. I suppose Lincoln knew all about this. When he passed through Utica, though he had a humorous quip joking about his arrival. Mentioning that everyone came to 'see him' and 'he saw them', Lincoln remarked, "but as far as the ladies were concerned", he had the "better bargain".

The rain followed me into Little Falls, a town that looks like it was cut into the side of a mountain. Oh yes, I am in the foothills of the Adirondack Mountains and I thank God I am following a level path. The sun broke here and revealed an historic town view from the bridge that crosses the Mohawk River and Canal. Just outside town right off the tow path appears the historic home of General Herkimer. Riding my bicycle down the path at this slight turn felt truly 18th century. No cars were in site and the trail width could easily support a carriage. It turns out the General was a colonial leader engaging the British in order to save Ft. Stanwix (in Rome). Following the river down through the Mohawk Valley to Albany means I am also following history. It tracks me on my route. The key to movement I have discovered firsthand is water, water it is filling a locomotive, horse, or me, we all share the same needs. It is also infinitely easier to follow the flat water path especially under human leg power, and to be spared the gruelling climbs over the highlands!

21. FORT PLAIN TO ALBANY

Off to an early start this morning and I am once again on the canal path. Rolling through the woods along the Mohawk River with cool weather and cloud cover makes for perfect riding conditions. Passing through Rotterdam Junction I discovered the Mabee farm site. It is the oldest series of buildings in the valley and dates back to 1690. The home was headed by the King of England and had been in the same family for three centuries before it was recently turned into a historic site. I have also seen some of the historic locks along the way that a local resident informed me were 200 years old. The canal numbering system goes as far as I'm heading east and getting closer to the origin point and lock #1. Technically the system started in Watervliet and only the local traffic went to Albany. I moved south off the canal to proceed down to Albany so I could more closely follow

Lincoln's path, I can now safely say that I "know every inch of the way from Albany to Buffalo".

In order to get into downtown Albany I had to take route 5 and get on the sidewalks part of the time. A busy road with historic signs commemorating the march of the Continental Army seemed rather odd and out of place. Arriving by the current Capitol building is quite a site with its mix of Romanesque and Renaissance styles of architecture. All of this grandeur however was built after Lincoln's presidency but the immediate sense of seeing the structure is that I am looking at a Parliament building. In the lawn just adjacent to Eagle Street is a small marker noting Lincoln's stop at what was then the Old State Capitol building. In Albany for the first time he admitted his weariness. Having read his comments all along the way, I can see him repeating himself a bit. This is over 1400 miles away from home and the quiet bicycle down the path at this slight turn felt truly 18th century. I can relate to the fatigue, but their can be "no rest for the weary" as it is time tomorrow to move south along the Hudson and make my appointments at Poughkeepsie.

22. ALBANY TO HUDSON (TO OLANA)

As I leave Albany heading down the east side of the Hudson, I am met with an enormous bike lane. This route, a local told resident told me, is popular with Canadian cyclists who make the trek from Toronto to New York city. It is a countryside of rolling hills and 18th century homes in various states of repair and rehab. When Lincoln came through Albany, the bucolic countryside must have taken a backseat to his concerns when the wire service reported that Jefferson Davis had just taken the oath of office in Montgomery, Alabama. The Confederate States of America were born. Stopping in Hudson, Lincoln was prudent in his remarks and found other topics besides policy to talk about. The "New York Illustrated" at the time reported that "all people turned out to welcome Mr. Lincoln" and to do "honor to the brave rail splitter".

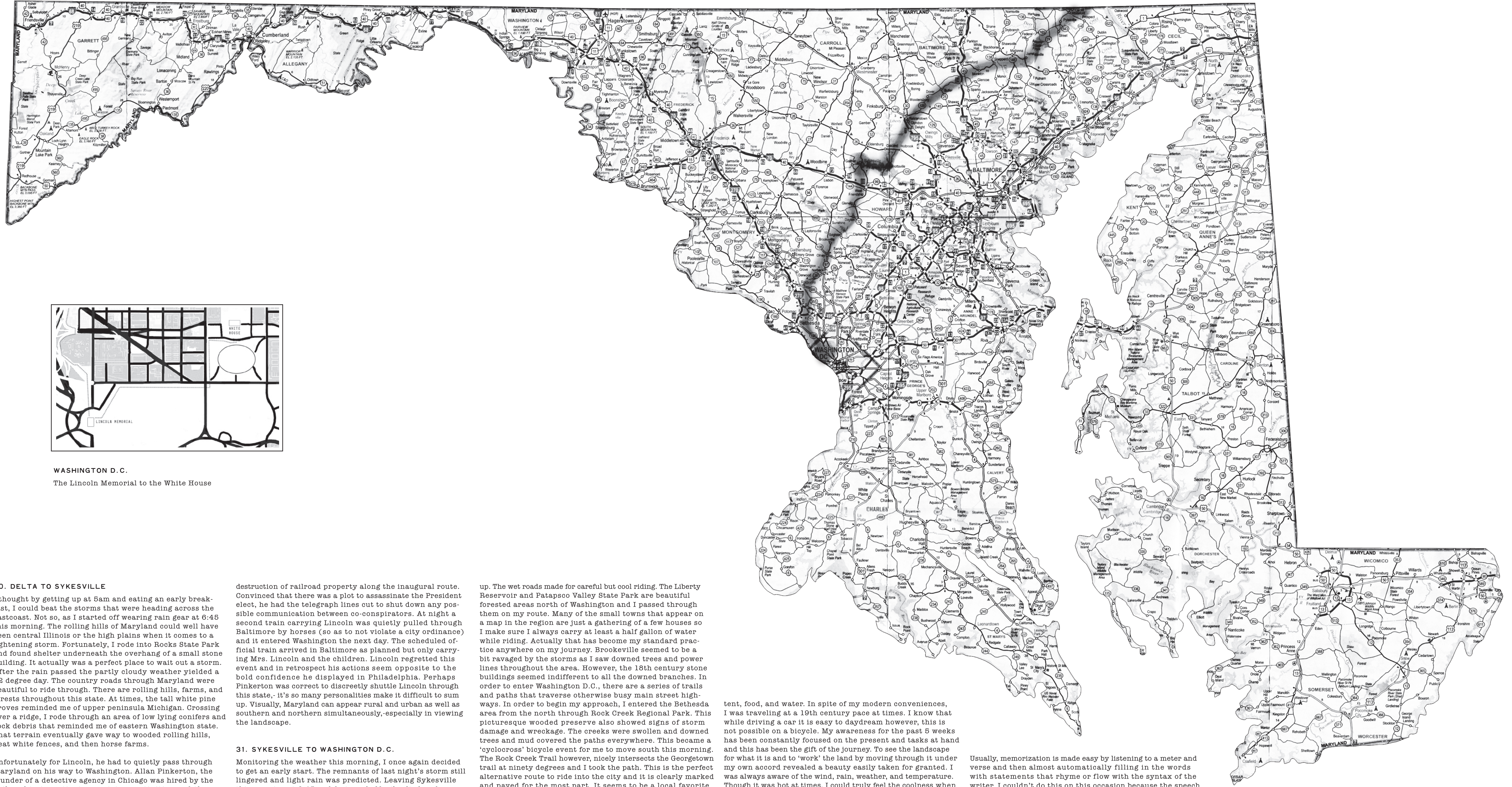
Just beyond Hudson is Olana, Frederick Church's home. He was one of the leading landscape painters in 19th century America with an international reputation. As a key member of the Hudson River School of Art, Church was instrumental in authoring the vision of grandeur in the American landscape that we still subscribe to today. Mark Twain commented that to understand the US, one had to understand it's landmass,

and Church was going to see to it that you would. Painting 7 and 8 foot canvases that were monumental in scope, he could easily be likened to an IMAX production. His home and studio overlook the Hudson River and his 250-acre estate was a constructed model for his paintings. Careful landscape planning ensured that his vision of the grounds were based on the tenants of 19th century Romanticism, neatly arranged trees surrounding a lake and a clear view of a river receding into the background. The humidity that the Great Lakes brings in is held in place by the Catskills and this in turn renders the beautiful atmospheric effects that became a signature of his work. Seeing Olana made me understand Church's paintings on another level. Adding 14 miles to my day was well worth the effort.

Taking Measure Across The American Landscape: The Lincoln Project

NEW YORK SECTION

15. NORTH SPRINGFIELD, PA TO DUNKIRK: 70 miles, 7.27.10
16. DUNKIRK TO BUFFALO TO LOCKPORT: 87 miles, 7.28.10
17. LOCKPORT TO ROCHESTER TO PALMYRA: 97 miles, 7.29.10
18. PALMYRA TO SYRACUSE: 75 miles, 7.30.10
19. SYRACUSE TO ROME: 50 miles, 7.31.10
20. ROME TO FORT PLAIN, MOHAWK VALLEY: 72 miles, 8.2.10
21. FORT PLAIN TO ALBANY: 67 miles, 8.3.10
22. ALBANY TO HUDSON TO OLANA: 42 miles, 8.4.10
23. HUDSON TO PINE BUSH: 75 miles, 8.5.10
24. PINE BUSH TO PORT JERVIS: 30 miles, 8.6.10



WASHINGTON D.C.
The Lincoln Memorial to the White House

30. DELTA TO SYKESVILLE

I thought by getting up at 5am and eating an early breakfast, I could beat the storms that were heading across the eastcoast. Not so, as I started off wearing rain gear at 6:45 this morning. The rolling hills of Maryland could well have been central Illinois or the high plains when it comes to a lightning storm. Fortunately, I rode into Rocks State Park and found shelter underneath the overhang of a small stone building. It actually was a perfect place to wait out a storm. After the rain passed the partly cloudy weather yielded a 72 degree day. The country roads through Maryland were beautiful to ride through. There are rolling hills, farms, and forests throughout this state. At times, the tall white pine groves reminded me of upper peninsula Michigan. Crossing over a ridge, I rode through an area of low lying conifers and rock debris that reminded me of eastern Washington state. That terrain eventually gave way to wooded rolling hills, neat white fences, and then horse farms.

Unfortunately for Lincoln, he had to quietly pass through Maryland on his way to Washington. Allan Pinkerton, the founder of a detective agency in Chicago was hired by the railroad to investigate suspicious activities and the

destruction of railroad property along the inaugural route. Convinced that there was a plot to assassinate the President elect, he had the telegraph lines cut to shut down any possible communication between co-conspirators. At night a second train carrying Lincoln was quietly pulled through Baltimore by horses (so as to not violate a city ordinance) and it entered Washington the next day. The scheduled official train arrived in Baltimore as planned but only carrying Mrs. Lincoln and the children. Lincoln regretted this event and in retrospect his actions seem opposite to the bold confidence he displayed in Philadelphia. Perhaps Pinkerton was correct to discreetly shuttle Lincoln through this state, it's so many personalities make it difficult to sum up. Visually, Maryland can appear rural and urban as well as southern and northern simultaneously, especially in viewing the landscape.

31. SYKESVILLE TO WASHINGTON D.C.

Monitoring the weather this morning, I once again decided to get an early start. The remnants of last night's storm still lingered and light rain was predicted. Leaving Sykesville this morning at 6:45 and facing a half mile climb woke me

up. The wet roads made for careful but cool riding. The Liberty Reservoir and Patapsco Valley State Park are beautiful forested areas north of Washington and I passed through them on my route. Many of the small towns that appear on a map in the region are just a gathering of a few houses so I make sure I always carry at least a half gallon of water while riding. Actually that has become my standard practice anywhere on my journey. Brookeville seemed to be a bit ravaged by the storms as I saw downed trees and power lines throughout the area. However, the 18th century stone buildings seemed indifferent to all the downed branches. In order to enter Washington D.C., there are a series of trails and paths that traverse otherwise busy main street highways. In order to begin my approach, I entered the Bethesda area from the north through Rock Creek Regional Park. This picturesque wooded preserve also showed signs of storm damage and wreckage. The creeks were swollen and downed trees and mud covered the paths everywhere. This became a 'cyclocross' bicycle event for me to move south this morning. The Rock Creek Trail however, nicely intersects the Georgetown trail at ninety degrees and I took the path. This is the perfect alternative route to ride into the city and it is clearly marked and paved for the most part. It seems to be a local favorite. The old railroad bed that was converted to a bike path reminded me of the nice trail from Cincinnati to Xenia, Ohio. This route moved along the Potomac River and is a great way to get into the Washington Mall. I met a local cyclist who rode the length of the trail with me which ended just behind the Lincoln Memorial. I truly appreciated his help in navigating me downtown. The cloud covered cool day was a perfect day to enter the city. After changing a flat at the Memorial, I rode towards the White House on Pennsylvania Avenue. My journey that left Springfield, Illinois at the front door of Abraham Lincoln's home on July 11th took 34 days and covered 2046 miles. I reached the front gate of the White House at 2pm eastern time today!

This has been truly an epic experience that I now have to let settle and reflect upon. The last 3 weeks of the trip have been a solo journey which required me to be extra vigilant in keeping track of my navigation, equipment and personal well being. I used an iPhone and GPS to navigate and carried 50 lbs of equipment including tools, stove, fuel, sleeping bag,

tent, food, and water. In spite of my modern conveniences, I was traveling at a 19th century pace at times. I know that while driving a car it is easy to daydream however, this is not possible on a bicycle. My awareness for the past 5 weeks has been constantly focused on the present and tasks at hand and this has been the gift of the journey. To see the landscape for what it is and to 'work' the land by moving through it under my own accord revealed a beauty easily taken for granted. I was always aware of the wind, rain, weather, and temperature. Though it was hot at times, I could truly feel the coolness when taking a break behind the shade of a silo or an oak tree in a simple experience of what I think has changed the most dramatically in our modern daily lives from the past 150 years. Considering the time it took me to get to Washington and how much the landscape has shifted from Springfield, Illinois, I couldn't help but feel a bit nostalgic for the early morning mist rising from the inland seas of corn in Sangamon County. This kind of distance and longing must have contributed to Lincoln's melancholy. (Travel was slow and difficult in the 19th century and most people never left the county they were born in.)

In Washington D.C. on March 4, 1861, Abraham Lincoln was inaugurated the 16th President of the United States. The address he gave to the people was one of the most profound and eloquent statements a President has made to the nation (and world) at a time of extreme uncertainty and civil violence. I take heed of this today in our post 9/11 time. I memorized the last paragraph of Lincoln's First Inaugural address and discovered it was difficult to put the few lines to memory.

Usually, memorization is made easy by listening to a meter and verse and then almost automatically filling in the words with statements that rhyme or flow with the syntax of the writer. I couldn't do this on this occasion because the speech was not about meter but about carefully chosen words with profound meaning. Lincoln's writing was influenced by Shakespeare as well as the Bible but also I believe that there was a direct influence from the pauses and shifts of the central Illinois landscape. A tree appears as an island, and then it is not and it reveals that it is actually part of a grove. Maybe a slight turn in the road shifts for no apparent reason other than to mark a county line. This landscape causes a traveler to pause and change direction in a contemplative manner. It is a text in learning, reading, and listening. In a digital age it seems as though we don't see dimensional space anymore but have given way to a cinematic time. This loss though apparently convenient was I believe, an essential element to understanding the roots of Lincoln's philosophy. A direct experience of the landscape across this 'broad land' emphasizes what I believe is a connection between 'every living heart (and hearthstone)'. 'Swell'(ing) out the (need for a new civic course perhaps-) a 'chorus of union' (in nature and in human nature)? At a time of greater distrust and divisiveness than I can remember, I am advised by an admonition from

over a century ago to listen to 'the better angels of our (my) nature'.

7.11.10 to 8.13.10
Springfield, Illinois To Washington D.C.

*inspired from Abraham Lincoln, First Inaugural Address, 3.4.61

Taking Measure Across The American Landscape: The Lincoln Project

MARYLAND – WASHINGTON D.C.

SECTION

30. DELTA TO SYKESVILLE: 58 miles, 8.12.10

31. SYKESVILLE TO WASHINGTON D.C.: 60 miles, 8.13.10

SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS TO WASHINGTON D. C.: 2034 miles