



**LINCOLN LIBRARY**

Lincoln Financial Foundation Collection at Allen County Public Library

**INSANITY FILE COLLECTION**

**2 boxes; .75 cubic feet**

**Historical Note**

On May 19, 1875, Mary Todd Lincoln was arrested and tried for lunacy before a jury of twelve men in the Cook County Court in Chicago. The charge had been filed by her son, Robert Todd Lincoln, and the state of Illinois required a civil trial to rule on the issue. Robert's "Application to Try the Question of Insanity" requested that "Mary Lincoln be declared an insane person after due hearing and proof, and that a Conservator be appointed to manage and control her estate." In fact, Mary's increasingly bizarre behavior since 1873 had been both worrisome and embarrassing for Robert. In May 1875 he sought professional medical opinions on her sanity, and Robert's lawyers prepared for trial. The case was prosecuted by family friend Leonard Swett, who arrived unannounced at Mary's hotel and escorted her to court. There a series of medical and other witnesses testified to Mary's strange behavior, irrational spending, and seemingly self-endangering fears and actions during the previous months. Robert testified that he believed his mother to be insane. Mary did not testify. Her lawyer, Isaac N. Arnold, who had been chosen by Swett, offered little defense and called no witnesses. After ten minutes of deliberation, the jury reached its decision: "We the undersigned jurors in the case of Mary Lincoln are satisfied that Mary Lincoln is insane and is a fit person to be in a state hospital for the insane." Robert was appointed conservator of her estate.

On May 20, Mary was confined, not to the state hospital, but to Bellevue Place, a private sanitarium in Batavia, Illinois, run by Dr. Richard J. Patterson. There she occupied two rooms in the private residence part of the building and dined privately or with Patterson and his family. But Mary did not remain at Bellevue Place long. Almost immediately after her arrival there, she began a secretive campaign through the Chicago newspapers and with the assistance of Judge James B. and Myra Bradwell to prove her sanity and be released to live with her sister, Elizabeth Todd Edwards, in Springfield. On September 10, 1875, Mary was released from Bellevue Place, and the next day Robert escorted her to Springfield.

At a second hearing in the Cook County Court on June 15, 1876, a jury heard Mary's petition to end Robert's conservatorship and ruled that "Mary Lincoln is restored to reason and is capable to manage and control her estate."

**Provenance and Processing Note**

The Insanity File Collection comprises two sets of documents related to the events surrounding the two trials regarding Mary Todd Lincoln's sanity: the "MTL Insanity File" assembled by Robert Todd Lincoln and additional materials gathered from a variety of sources

by R. Gerald McMurtry and Mark E. Neely, Jr., while researching *The Insanity File: The Case of Mary Todd Lincoln* (Southern Illinois University Press, 1986).

The “MTL Insanity File” was a collection of letters, papers, and documents gathered by Robert Todd Lincoln in the course of the events described. The materials were bundled and tied with a pink ribbon and remained undisturbed, probably forgotten, at his Vermont home Hildene from Robert’s death in 1926 until the death of his granddaughter, Mary Lincoln Beckwith, in 1975. They then passed to his grandson, Robert Todd Lincoln Beckwith.

Specifically, the “MTL Insanity File” comprised: telegraphs regarding Mary Todd Lincoln’s return to Chicago from Florida in March 1875; pages and fragments from 18 or more documents in Mary Todd Lincoln’s hand; letters and letterbook copies of letters in Robert Todd Lincoln’s hand; letters written by Elizabeth Todd Edwards and Ninian Wirt Edwards; letters written by David Davis, John Todd Stuart, John M. Palmer, Jacob Bunn, Henry T. Blow, Myra Bradwell, Abram Wakeman, and Leonard Swett; letters from doctors regarding Mary Todd Lincoln; original Cook County Court documents establishing Mary Todd Lincoln’s insanity and Robert Todd Lincoln’s conservatorship of her estate; documents reporting on Robert Todd Lincoln’s conservatorship; newspaper clippings from contemporary newspapers; envelopes; and several miscellaneous letters and notes.

Exactly how the “MTL Insanity File” came to The Lincoln Museum in Fort Wayne, Indiana—now the Lincoln Financial Foundation Collection—is somewhat unclear. According to Beckwith’s foreword in the 1986 edition of McMurtry and Neely’s *The Insanity File*, he “decided to have the contents published” by McMurtry and Neely. In the mid-1980s, R. Gerald McMurtry and Mark E. Neely, Jr., were the past and present directors of The Lincoln Museum, and Beckwith’s statement implies he transferred the documents directly to them and to the museum’s keeping. That was apparently not the case, however. According to an inventory that accompanied the collection, Beckwith gave the “MTL Insanity File” to James T. Hickey in 1978, and in 1981 Hickey deposited the collection at The Lincoln Museum “for review and possible purchase.” Museum records indicate that the museum purchased the “MTL Insanity File” from Hickey, paying in installments beginning in 1982.

The additional documents gathered by McMurtry and Neely while researching their book were donated to The Lincoln Museum by the authors upon the book’s publication in 1986 and added to the “MTL Insanity File” document collection. Some of these additional documents were photocopies obtained by McMurtry and Neely of material held by the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library (at that time, the Illinois State Historical Library).

The arrangement of the “Insanity File” documents as they came from Beckwith is unknown. Additional research documents were likely merged with the “MTL Insanity File” documents. Before current processing, folders were labeled by type (e.g., originals, letter book copies, photocopies of letter book copies); correspondence tended to be arranged by date. Although it is likely that arrangement reflected McMurtry’s and Neely’s research needs, it is not known whether the folders were set up by them or by someone at The Lincoln Museum after the materials were received by the museum.

The current arrangement, therefore, does not conform to original order or even secondary arrangement.

## **Scope and Content**

The Insanity File Collection comprises letters, envelopes, letter book and ledger pages, court documents, newspaper clippings, and document photocopies. An additional folder of information regarding the acquisition and processing of the collection is housed with the collection in the Lincoln Financial Foundation Collection at Allen County Public Library, Fort Wayne, Indiana. Drafts and correspondence related to the writing of McMurtry's and Neely's *The Insanity File* are also housed at the library.

The Insanity File Collection is organized in nine series: Correspondence, Conservatorship Records, Contemporary Newspaper Clippings, Cook County Court Documents, Cook County Court Documents – Photocopies, Death and Estate, Envelopes, Mary Todd Lincoln's Will – Drafts, and Miscellaneous.

### ***Correspondence***

The Correspondence series, the largest series in the collection, consists of correspondence written by and to those involved in Mary Todd Lincoln's first trial, confinement, release, conservatorship, and second trial. The correspondence is arranged by type: originals, letter book copies, and photocopies of letter book copies. Items within those types have been arranged by recipient and then by date.

In an effort to keep the correspondence of the two principal individuals foremost, the correspondence of Mary Todd Lincoln and Robert Todd Lincoln make up the first, and most extensive, subseries.

The first two subseries consist of correspondence written by Mary Todd Lincoln (MTL) to Mary Harlan Lincoln and to Judge James B. Bradwell and the County Judge of Cook County. These are followed by telegrams related to Mary Todd Lincoln's return from Florida in March 1875.

Correspondence written by Robert Todd Lincoln (RTL) follows. Correspondence between Robert and Sally B. Orne form a separate subseries. These subseries are followed by a subseries of correspondence written and signed by Charles S. Sweet, Robert's private secretary, considered here to be part of the Robert Todd Lincoln correspondence.

Following the correspondence of Robert Todd Lincoln, the subseries consist of correspondence arranged by the writer's last name then by recipient and date. An exception is the grouping together of the letters from physicians to the law firm of Ayer and Kales, arranged under "Physicians."

### ***Conservatorship Records***

The Conservatorship Records series consists of original documents from the Cook County Court, ledger pages, and letter book copies, all related to the conservatorship of Mary Todd Lincoln's financial assets.

### ***Contemporary Newspaper Clippings***

The Contemporary Newspaper Clippings series comprises clippings, presumably collected by Robert Todd Lincoln, reporting on Mary Todd Lincoln's two trials. Many clippings do not include source or date; some have the newspaper's name and clipping date written in by hand.

### ***Cook County Court Documents***

The Cook County Court Documents series contains two original documents. The first declares Mary Todd Lincoln insane; the second appoints Robert Todd Lincoln conservator.

### ***Cook County Court Documents – Photocopies***

The Cook County Court Documents – Photocopies series consists of photocopies of court documents dated from May 1875 to June 1876 related to Mary Todd Lincoln's two trials and the matter of conservatorship of her financial assets.

### ***Death and Estate Documents***

The Death and Estate Documents series comprises photocopies of letters, letter book copies, and typescripts related to Mary Todd Lincoln's death in 1882 and the subsequent settlement of her estate and accounts.

### ***Envelopes***

The Envelopes series consists of envelopes, some of which were used to classify materials from the Lincoln family, some of which were from letters, and some of which have notes written on them and were likely retained as evidence of Mary Todd Lincoln's concerns about her possessions and gifts to the Robert Lincoln family.

### ***Mary Todd Lincoln's Will – Drafts***

The Mary Todd Lincoln's Will – Drafts series comprises two handwritten drafts of Mary Todd Lincoln's will in Mary's hand. One draft is a fragment; the other appears complete and is signed, though the text is crossed out with large Xs in purple ink.

### ***Miscellaneous***

The Miscellaneous series consists of items that do not relate directly to other series.

## Container List

### BOX 1

#### CORRESPONDENCE

##### *Correspondence from Mary Todd Lincoln (MTL) to Mary Harlan Lincoln (MHL)*

These letters and fragments follow the arrangement in the appendix to McMurtry and Neely's *The Insanity File*.

##### Folder 1

MTL to MHL	<a href="#">22 February 1869</a>
MTL to MHL	<a href="#">22 March [1869]</a>
MTL to MHL	<a href="#">"...I hope dear Mary..."</a>
MTL to MHL	<a href="#">20 August [1869]</a>
MTL to MHL	<a href="#">4 September 1869</a>
MTL to MHL	<a href="#">9 September 1869</a>
MTL to MHL	<a href="#">16 October 1869</a>
MTL to MHL	<a href="#">"...I hope to start..."</a>
MTL to MHL	<a href="#">"Dear Mary, in case..."</a>
MTL to MHL	<a href="#">"It is double—and well..."</a>
MTL to MHL	<a href="#">"...of my house. This..."</a>
MTL to MHL	<a href="#">[Nov./Dec. 1869] "although I wrote"</a>
MTL to MHL	<a href="#">21 November 1869</a>
MTL to MHL	<a href="#">25 November 1869</a>
MTL to MHL	<a href="#">"I received a card..."</a>
MTL to MHL	<a href="#">"...I wrote you a few..."</a>
MTL to MHL	<a href="#">19 May 1870</a>
MTL to MHL	<a href="#">"... I sent you..."</a>
MTL to MHL	<a href="#">16 September 1870</a>
MTL to MHL	<a href="#">November 1870</a>
MTL to MHL	<a href="#">22 November [1870]</a>
MTL to MHL	<a href="#">"...If Grant..."</a>
MTL to MHL	<a href="#">"I think it will be best..."</a>
MTL to MHL	<a href="#">26 January 1871</a>
MTL to MHL	<a href="#">31 January [1871]</a>
MTL to MHL	<a href="#">12 February 1870 [1871]</a>
MTL to MHL	<a href="#">"In a little black hat box..."</a>
MTL to MHL	<a href="#">"...I am troubled to hear..."</a>
MTL to MHL	<a href="#">"dear Mary, I am so miserable..."</a>

*Correspondence from Mary Todd Lincoln (MTL) to Judge James B. Bradwell (JBB) and the County Judge of Cook County*

**Folder 2**

MTL to JBB	<a href="#">10 October 1872</a>
MTL to JBB	<a href="#">17 January 1874</a>
MTL to JBB	<a href="#">18 January 1874</a>
MTL to JBB	<a href="#">11 November 1875</a>
MTL to JBB	<a href="#">1 December 1875</a>
MTL to County Judge of Cook County	<a href="#">23 July 1873</a>

*Telegrams about Mary Todd Lincoln's return from Florida*

**Folder 3**

MTL to Edward Isham	<a href="#">12 March 1875</a>
MTL to Edward Isham	<a href="#">12 March 1875</a>
J.J.S. Wilson to manager, Jacksonville, Florida	<a href="#">undated</a>
John Coyne to J.J.S. Wilson	<a href="#">12 [March] 1875</a>
MTL to Robert Todd Lincoln	<a href="#">13 March 1875</a>
John Coyne to J.J.S. Wilson	<a href="#">13 [March] 1875</a>
J.C. Wilson to Robert Todd Lincoln	<a href="#">16 [March] 1875</a>

**Note:** **Folder 4** in Box 1 contains printouts and copies of articles about the 2006 discovery of long-lost correspondence between Mary Todd Lincoln and Myra and James Bradwell. The correspondence took place during Mary's commitment at Bellevue Place and her visit to Europe following her release. This material is not part of the original Insanity File Collection.

**BOX 2**

**CORRESPONDENCE (continued)**

***Robert Todd Lincoln (RTL) Correspondence***

These items are arranged by type and then alphabetically by recipient.

***Correspondence from Robert Todd Lincoln (originals)***

**Folder 1**

RTL to Myra Bradwell	<a href="#">13 August 1875</a>
RTL to Myra Bradwell	<a href="#">14 August 1875</a>
RTL to Elizabeth Todd Edwards	<a href="#">17 January 1876</a>
RTL to Ninian W. Edwards	<a href="#">17 January 1876</a>
RTL to Edward S. Isham	<a href="#">17 January 1876</a>
RTL to MTL	<a href="#">15 August 1875</a>

*Correspondence from Robert Todd Lincoln (letter book copies)*

**Folder 2**

RTL to David Davis	<a href="#">16 November 1875</a>
RTL to Ninian W. Edwards	<a href="#">15 November 1875</a>
RTL to Ninian W. Edwards	<a href="#">16 December 1875</a>
RTL to Ninian W. Edwards	<a href="#">21 December 1875</a>
RTL to Ninian W. Edwards	<a href="#">21 December 1875</a>
RTL to John M. Palmer	<a href="#">23 December 1875</a>
RTL to John T. Stuart	<a href="#">15 November 1875</a>

*Correspondence from Robert Todd Lincoln (photocopies of letter book copies)*

**Folder 3**

RTL to Edward Lewis Baker, Jr.	14 December
RTL to Myra Bradwell	14 August 1875
RTL to Mrs. John P. Brown	15 November 1882
Note: Not in RTL's hand. On same page as Charles S. Sweet to T.W. Dresser (box 2, folder 6).	
RTL to Jacob Bunn	9 December
RTL to David Davis (2 copies, one has transcriptions)	16 November 1875
RTL to Elizabeth Todd Edwards	10 August 1875
RTL to Elizabeth Todd Edwards	17 January 1876
RTL to Elizabeth Todd Edwards	12 February 1876
RTL to Elizabeth Todd Edwards	16 February 1876
RTL to Elizabeth Todd Edwards	17 May 1876
RTL to Ninian W. Edwards	16 December 1875
RTL to Ninian W. Edwards	17 January 1876 (2 copies)
Note: These seem to be a different version of the letter sent to Isham for consideration. See Neely and McMurtry, p. 97.	
RTL to Ninian W. Edwards	20 April 1876
RTL to Ninian W. Edwards	24 April 1876
RTL to Ninian W. Edwards	25 April 1876
RTL to Ninian W. Edwards	24 May 1876
RTL to Kueiler	29 November 1875
RTL to MTL	18 December 1877
RTL to MTL	4 January 1878
RTL to MTL	7 Feb. 1876
RTL to A.S. McDill	9 Sept. 1875
RTL to Andrew McFarland	4 September [1875]
Note: Not in RTL's hand	
RTL to John M. Palmer	20 April 1876
RTL to Richard J. Patterson	1 July [1875] (2 copies)

RTL to Richard J. Patterson	2 Sept. 1875 (2 copies)
RTL to Richard J. Patterson	9 Sept. 1875
RTL to William H. Reed	5 May 1884
Note: Not in RTL's hand	
RTL to Leonard Swett	25 May 1884 (2 copies)
Note: Not in RTL's hand	
RTL to Leonard Swett	2 June 1884
Note: Not in RTL's hand; unsigned	
RTL to David Swing	27 November 1882
Note: Not in RTL's hand	
RTL to M.J. [illegible]	26 January 1870

***Correspondence from Robert Todd Lincoln (photocopies of letter book copies designated "unimportant" by Neely and McMurtry)***

**Folder 4**

RTL to W.H. Bowers	2 March
RTL to F.D. Clarke	7 June
RTL to Collector of Customs	27 July 1869
RTL to Commissioner of Pensions	18 June 1875
RTL to R.H. Ferguson	17 Jan. 1867
RTL to Mrs. E.R. Frost	5 Jan. 1866
RTL to George J. Hagar	3 June 1881
Note: not in RTL's hand	
RTL to Wm. S. Huntington	19 March
RTL to Benj. Richardson	3 June 1881
Note: Not in RTL's hand	
RTL to A. Schumacher	Jan. 8 (2 copies)
RTL to Sir	27 June 1876 (2 copies)
Note: Addressee illegible	
RTL to First Auditor of the Treasury	19 June 1875
RTL to [illegible] U.S. Express	18 May 1866

***Correspondence between Robert Todd Lincoln and Sally B. Orne (typed, not signed)***

**Folder 5**

RTL to Sally B. Orne	<a href="#">1 June 1875</a>
Sally B. Orne to RTL	<a href="#">8 August 1875</a>

***Correspondence from Charles S. Sweet (CSS), RTL's private secretary, written for Robert Todd Lincoln (photocopies)***

**Folder 6**

CSS to J.P. Baker	23 August 1882
Note: On same page as letter to Commercial National Bank	



CSS to Mrs. S.T. Brown	20 February 1883
CSS to Wistar P. Brown	20 February 1883
CSS to Commercial National Bank, Illinois	23 August 1882
Note: On same page as letter to J.P. Baker	
CSS to T.W. Dresser, M.D.	15 November 1882
Note: On same page as RTL to Mrs. John P. Brown (box 2, folder 3)	
CSS to R.F. Herndon and Co.	26 July 1882
Note: On same page as telegram from Mary H. Lincoln to Mrs. M.A. Connelly (box 2, folder 34)	
CSS to R.F. Herndon and Co.	2 August 1882

*Correspondence from Edward Lewis Baker, Jr.*

**Folder 7**

Edward Lewis Baker, Jr. to RTL	<a href="#">11 December [1875]</a>
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*Correspondence from Henry T. Blow*

**Folder 8**

Henry T. Blow to RTL	<a href="#">3 August 1875</a>
Original and photocopy	

*Correspondence from Myra Bradwell*

**Folder 9**

Myra Bradwell to Richard J. Patterson	<a href="#">11 August 1875</a>
Myra Bradwell to Abram Wakeman	<a href="#">12 August 1875</a>
Note: On the back of this letter is a list of items and things to do. See Abram Wakeman to Myra Bradwell (box 2, folder 29) for his response.	

*Correspondence from Elizabeth Todd Grimsley Brown*

**Folder 10**

Elizabeth Todd Grimsley Brown to RTL	<a href="#">16 March [1875]</a>
Elizabeth Todd Grimsley Brown to RTL	<a href="#">19 May 1875</a>

*Correspondence from Jacob Bunn*

**Folder 11**

Jacob Bunn to RTL	<a href="#">24 June 1876</a>
Jacob Bunn to RTL	<a href="#">3 July 1876</a>

*Correspondence from Robert Boyd*

**Folder 12**

Robert Boyd to RTL

[21 July 1882](#)

*Correspondence from M.A.P. (Mary Ann P.) Corcoran*

**Folder 13**

M.A.P. Corcoran to RTL

[11 January 1876](#)

M.A.P. Corcoran to RTL

[9 March 1876](#)

M.A.P. Corcoran to RTL

[21 June 1879](#)

*Correspondence from Willis Danforth*

**Folder 14**

Willis Danforth to RTL

[25 May 1875](#)

*Correspondence from David Davis (DD)*

**Folder 15**

DD to RTL

[23 May \[1875\]](#)

Original and photocopy

DD to RTL

[25 May \[1875\]](#)

Original and photocopy

DD to RTL

[4 June \[1875\]](#)

DD to RTL

[9 June \[1875\]](#)

DD to RTL

[20 November 1875](#)

DD to RTL

[30 November \[1875\]](#)

DD to RTL

[22 May 1876](#)

DD to Leonard Swett

[19 May 1875](#)

*Correspondence from Elizabeth Todd Edwards (ETE)*

**Folder 16**

ETE to MTL

[31 March](#)

ETE to MTL

[5 November \[1879\]](#)

ETE to RTL

[11 August \[1875\]](#)

ETE to RTL

[12 August \[1875\]](#)

ETE to RTL

[13 August \[1875\]](#)

ETE to RTL

[14 August \[1875\]](#)

ETE to RTL

[17 August \[1875\]](#)

ETE to RTL

[15 September \[1875\]](#)

ETE to RTL

[15 September \[1875\]](#)

ETE to RTL

[22 September \[1875\]](#)

ETE to RTL

[5 November \[1875\]](#)

ETE to RTL

[12 November 1875](#)

ETE to RTL	<a href="#">1 December 1875</a>
ETE to RTL	<a href="#">16 January 1876</a>
ETE to RTL	<a href="#">9 February 1876</a>
ETE to RTL	<a href="#">29 October 1876</a>
ETE to RTL	<a href="#">9 November 1882</a>
ETE to RTL (fragment)	<a href="#">unknown</a>

*Correspondence from Ninian Wirt Edwards (NWE)*

**Folder 17**

NWE to David Davis	<a href="#">23 May 1876</a>
NWE to David Davis	<a href="#">8 June 1876</a>
NWE to RTL	<a href="#">12 November 1875</a>
NWE to RTL	<a href="#">17 November 1875</a>
NWE to RTL	<a href="#">18 November 1875</a>
NWE to RTL	<a href="#">1 December 1875</a>
NWE to RTL	<a href="#">14 December 1875</a>
NWE to RTL	<a href="#">18 December 1875</a>
NWE to RTL	<a href="#">22 December 1875</a>
NWE to RTL	<a href="#">28 December 1875</a>
NWE to RTL	<a href="#">5 January 1876</a>
NWE to RTL	<a href="#">14 January 1876</a>
NWE to RTL	<a href="#">15 January 1876</a>
NWE to RTL	<a href="#">6 April 1876</a>
NWE to RTL	<a href="#">18 April 1876</a>
NWE to RTL	<a href="#">21 April 1876</a>
NWE to RTL	<a href="#">[early June 1876]</a>

Note: This is a fragment referring to the upcoming June 15, 1876, Cook County Court hearing of MTL's petition to end RTL's conservatorship.

NWE to RTL	<a href="#">17 June 1876</a>
NWE to RTL	<a href="#">17 June 1876</a>
NWE to RTL	<a href="#">17 June 1876</a>
NWE to RTL	<a href="#">19 June 1876</a>
NWE to RTL	<a href="#">26 June 1876</a>
NWE to Patterson, Richard J.	<a href="#">23 August 1875</a>

Note: This note was written on a telegram addressed to Mrs. N.W. Edwards from RTL about MTL.

NWE to Leonard Swett	<a href="#">22 June 1876</a>
NWE to Leonard Swett	<a href="#">24 June 1876</a>

*Correspondence from J.M. (John Monro) Gibson*

**Folder 18**

J.M. Gibson to RTL

[21 May 1875](#)

*Correspondence from A.S. (Alexander S.) McDill (ASM)*

**Folder 19**

A.S. McDill to RTL

[6 September 1875](#)

*Correspondence from Andrew W. McFarland*

**Folder 20**

Andrew W. McFarland to RTL

[8 September 1875](#)

Andrew W. McFarland to RTL

[10 September 1875](#)

Andrew W. McFarland to RTL

[11 September 1875](#)

Andrew W. McFarland to RTL

[1 October 1875](#)

*Correspondence from L.M. McGinnis*

**Folder 21**

L.M. McGinnis to RTL

[22 May \[1875\]](#)

*Correspondence from John M. Palmer*

**Folder 22**

John M. Palmer to RTL

[21 December 1875](#)

John M. Palmer to RTL

[19 April 1876](#)

John M. Palmer to Leonard Swett

[24 April 1876](#)

*Correspondence from Richard J. Patterson (RJP)*

**Folder 23**

RJP to Ayer and Kales

[18 May 1875](#)

RJP to James B. Bradwell

[18 August 1875](#)

RJP to Myra Bradwell

[9 August 1875](#)

RJP to RTL

[9 August 1875](#)

RJP to RTL

[12 August 1875](#)

RJP to RTL

[17 August 1875](#)

RJP to RTL

[20 August 1875](#)

RJP to RTL

[2 September 1875](#)

RJP to RTL

[7 September 1875](#)

***Correspondence from physicians to Ayer and Kales (A&K)***

Ayer and Kales was the Chicago law firm hired by Robert Todd Lincoln to represent him. This folder contains the letters regarding Mary Todd Lincoln's mental state prior to the first insanity trial from physicians consulted by Ayer and Kales. A letter from Dr. Richard J. Patterson to Ayer and Kales is in the Patterson folder (box 2, folder 23).

**Folder 24**

Nathan Smith Davis to A&K	<a href="#">18 May 1875</a>
Ralph N. Isham to A&K	<a href="#">18 May 1875</a>
James Stewart Jewell to A&K	<a href="#">18 May 1875</a>
Hosmer Allen Johnson to A&K	<a href="#">18 May 1875</a>
Charles Gilman Smith to A&K	<a href="#">18 May 1875</a>

***Correspondence from Henry F. Eames (Photocopy)***

**Folder 25**

Henry F. Eames to RTL	<a href="#">25 April 1876</a>
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***Correspondence from John Todd Stuart***

**Folder 26**

John Todd Stuart to RTL	<a href="#">10 May 1875</a>
John Todd Stuart to RTL	<a href="#">21 May 1875</a>
John Todd Stuart to Leonard Swett	<a href="#">21 May 1875</a>

***Correspondence from Leonard Swett***

**Folder 27**

Leonard Swett to Ninian W. Edwards	<a href="#">20 June 1876</a>
Note: Letter book copy. Faded with some penciled transcriptions.	

***Photocopies***

**Folder 28**

Leonard Swett to Ninian W. Edwards	<a href="#">28 June 1876</a>
Leonard Swett to Ninian W. Edwards	<a href="#">1 July 1876</a>

***Correspondence from Abram Wakeman***

**Folder 29**

Abram Wakeman to Myra Bradwell	<a href="#">17 August 1875</a>
Note: See the Myra Bradwell to Abram Wakeman (box 2, folder 9) for her letter to him.	

## CONSERVATORSHIP RECORDS

### Folder 30

Letters of Conservatorship (copy 1)	<a href="#">14 June 1875</a>
Letters of Conservatorship (copy 2)	<a href="#">14 June 1875</a>
6 manuscript leaves from a ledger book with heading "Robert T. Lincoln, Conservator of Mrs. Mary Lincoln"	<a href="#">7 June 1876</a>
4 leaves from a letter book copy of RTL's inventory of MTL's assets	<a href="#">15 June 1876</a>
Official accounting of MTL's assets for 19 May 1875 through 15 June 1876	<a href="#">15 June 1876</a>

## CONTEMPORARY NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS

Items in this series are in envelopes housed in a single folder and are arranged generally by date. In the list below, the headline or, if no headline, the first words of the article are quoted.

### Folder 31

Envelope 1	
The proceedings... ( <i>Chicago Times</i> )	<a href="#">20 May 1875</a>
A Sad Revelation ( <i>Chicago Times</i> )	<a href="#">20 May 1875</a>
Mrs. Lincoln's Insanity ( <i>Chicago Times</i> )	<a href="#">23 May 1875</a>
The Case of Mrs. Lincoln ( <i>Chicago Times</i> )	<a href="#">21 May 1875</a>
President Lincoln's Widow ( <i>NY Tribune</i> )	<a href="#">22 May 1875</a>
Envelope 2	
Clouded Reason ( <i>Chicago Tribune</i> )	<a href="#">20 May 1875</a>
Envelope 3	
Insanity's Freaks ( <i>Chicago Times</i> )	<a href="#">21 May 1875</a>
Envelope 4	
Attempt at Suicide ( <i>Chicago Tribune</i> )	<a href="#">21 May 1875</a>
Envelope 5	
Interview with Judge Bradwell and Response: Mrs. Lincoln ( <i>Chicago Post &amp; Mail</i> )	<a href="#">23 August 1875</a>
Mrs. Lincoln ( <i>Springfield Journal</i> )	<a href="#">25 August 1875</a>
Envelope 6	
Correspondence of Dr. Patterson and Judge Bradwell ( <i>Chicago Tribune</i> )	<a href="#">31 August 1875</a>
Mrs. Lincoln ( <i>Chicago Times</i> )	<a href="#">24 August 1875</a>
Letter from Dr. Patterson ( <i>Chicago Tribune</i> )	<a href="#">28 August 1875</a>
Fragment: part of Dr. Patterson's letter	<a href="#">28 August 1875</a>
Envelope 7	
A Happy Denouement ( <i>Chicago Times</i> )	<a href="#">16 June 1876</a>

## COOK COUNTY COURT DOCUMENTS

These are original court documents, presumably Robert Todd Lincoln's copies.

### Folder 32

Certified copy of proceedings and order declaring Mary Lincoln an insane person	<a href="#">19 May 1875</a>
Certified copy of proceedings and order appointing Robert Lincoln conservator	<a href="#">14 June 1875</a>

## COOK COUNTY COURT DOCUMENTS – PHOTOCOPIES

Items are arranged by date.

### Folder 33

Statement of Dr. Ralph N. Isham	18 May 1875
Petition signed by RTL to have MTL declared Insane [attached to statement of Dr. Ralph N. Isham, May 18, 1875]	19 May 1875
Order to arrest MTL	19 May 1875
Verdict of the Jury declaring MTL insane	19 May 1875
In the matter of the Estate of Mary Lincoln, an insane person	[June 1875]
Appointment of RTL as conservator	14 June 1875
Conservator's Docket, Probate Court of Cook County, June 14, 1875;	14 June 1875
verdict of June 15, 1876, restored to reason	15 June 1876
Inventory of the real and personal estate of MTL, dated May 19, 1875; affirmation attached, dated 10 August 1875; filed August 10, 1875	10 August 1875
RTL to Judge M.R.M Wallace	10 December 1875
RTL to Judge M.R.M. Wallace	15 December 1875
MTL's petition to Judge Wallace to discharge her conservator and restore her rights and property	June 1876
Ninian Edwards's testimony	15 June 1876
Jury's verdict: Mary Todd Lincoln is restored to reason	15 June 1876
In the matter of the petition of Mary Lincoln for the removal of her conservator	15 June 1876
"Mary Lincoln is restored to reason..."	15 June 1876
In the matter of the estate of Mary Lincoln	15 June 1876
RTL's waiver	15 June 1876
RTL's account of his receipts and disbursements as conservator, May 19, 1875, to June 15, 1876	15 June 1876
Receipt of bonds and stocks from RTL, signed by MTL	17 June 1876

## DEATH AND ESTATE DOCUMENTS - PHOTOCOPIES

Most of these documents also appear in previous correspondence folders.

### Folder 34

RTL to Heinrich Best	24 July 1871
RTL to C.C. Brown	10 Oct. 1884
Note: Not in RTL's hand	
RTL to Collector of Customs	27 July 1869
RTL to Ninian W. Edwards	17 Jan. 1876
RTL to Ninian W. Edwards	20 April 1876
RTL to Ninian W. Edwards	24 April 1876
RTL to Ninian W. Edwards	25 April 1876
RTL to Ninian W. Edwards	28 June 1876
RTL to North T. Gentry	12 June 1907
RTL to James Harlan	26 July 1882
Note: Not in RTL's hand	
RTL to William S. Huntington	18 June 1869
RTL to William S. Huntington	19 March 1869
RTL to William S. Huntington	29 March 1869
RTL to William S. Huntington	June 1869
RTL to William S. Huntington	21 March 1870
RTL to William S. Huntington	22 Nov. 1870
RTL to Kueiler	29 Nov. 1875
RTL to Maquay Hooker & Co.	8 June 1871
Note: 2 letters on this date with different content	
RTL to Moschanitz & Russell	13 June
RTL to Nelson & Bassen (?)	1 Dec. 1874
RTL to John M. Palmer	20 April 1876
RTL to Phillippe	8 Jan.
RTL to Mrs. W.W. Porter	6 July 1907
RTL to T.H. Quinan	10 Jan. 1873
RTL to William H. Reed	5 May 1884
Note: Not in RTL's hand.	
RTL to A. Schumacher & Co.	2 Jan.
RTL to A. Schumacher & Co.	8 Jan. 1879
RTL to Sir	27 June 1876
Note: 2 letters on this date	
RTL to Leonard Swett	25 May 1884
Note: Not in RTL's hand	
RTL to Leonard Swett	2 June 1884
Note: Not in RTL's hand	
Mary H. Lincoln to Mrs. M.A. Connelly "Mrs. Lincoln's estate"	26 July 1882



Note: Handwritten on ruled legal paper;  
no date

CSS to J.P. Baker	23 Aug. 1882
Note: Written by CSS on behalf of RTL	
CSS to John P. Baker	26 Oct. 1882
Note: Written by CSS on behalf of RTL. On same page as CSS to Elizabeth Todd Edwards.	
CSS to Orrin Baldwin	21 July 1882
CSS to T.W. Dresser	15 Nov. 1882
Note: On same page as copy of letter from RTL to Mrs. John P. Brown.	
CSS to Elizabeth Todd Edwards	26 Oct. 1882
Note: Written by CSS on behalf of RTL. On same page as CSS to John P. Baker.	

## **ENVELOPES**

These 39 empty envelopes likely once contained documents now foldered elsewhere in the collection.

### **Folder 35**

15 envelopes with handwritten notations regarding items sent by MTL to MHL and RTL  
 1 envelope with handwritten notation that it contained RTL's letter to Myra Bradwell  
 1 envelope with handwritten notation that it contained a letter from Leonard Swett  
 1 envelope with handwritten notation "Mrs. A. Lincoln—Newspapers"  
 2 envelopes addressed to "Mrs. MTL"  
 4 envelopes with various pencil notations  
 2 envelopes with handwritten instructions to be opened and delivered in the event of MTL's death  
 13 envelopes with typewritten numbers and notations of contents

## **MARY TODD LINCOLN'S WILL – DRAFTS**

Though Mary Todd Lincoln drafted more than one will, she voided them all and died intestate.

### **Folder 36**

["My house 375 West Wash St..."](#)

Note: No indication of date, large purple X crosses out each page

["The house to be given..."](#)

Note: This draft fragment is written on the back of an 1874 receipt from Howes & Seely, Jr., Livery and Boarding Stable, Chicago.

## MISCELLANEOUS

### **Folder 37**

[RTL note](#) instructing unknown recipient to “cut off absolutely all communication with improper persons”

[A typescript overview](#) of MTL’s situation at Bellevue Place (taken from *New York Tribune* article)

[Pencil-written business card for Mason B. Loomis](#), the judge who oversaw the search for MTL’s will

[Note about rental of deposit box](#) where MTL said she placed her will, 24 July 1874 – 24 July 1875

Drafted by Jaye Bausser, October 2006  
Revised by Jane E. Gastineau and Adriana Harmeyer, May 2013  
Revised and updated by Adriana Harmeyer, May 2016