The Jacob Strader was built in Cincinnati in 1853 for the Cincinnati and Louisville Mail Line.

Cover Photo: The Queen City, built in Cincinnati for the Pittsburgh and Cincinnati Packet Line, circa 1900.
The *Upper Ohio Valley Historical Review* is published by the Wheeling Area Historical Society. The *Review* is printed for the Society by West Liberty State College and is distributed free to Society members. The single issue cost to non-members is $2.00.

The *Review* publishes articles, documents, book reviews, and notes on the economics, political, social, and cultural history of the Ohio Valley area.

Authors should submit two, double-spaced copies of their manuscripts. Footnotes should be placed at the end of the manuscript. Materials should be addressed to Editor, *Upper Ohio Valley Historical Review*, West Liberty State College, West Liberty, West Virginia 26074. Neither the college nor the *Review* assumes responsibility for the facts and opinions expressed by contributors.

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Music On The River
by Edward C. Wolf

From the 1870s until the 1920s a wide variety of showboats regularly plied the Ohio River and its navigable tributaries, bringing theatrical and musical entertainment of all types to landings in both cities and villages. Entertainment ranged the full spectrum from small medicine shows to elaborate productions on floating palaces which seated more than a thousand persons and featured standard Broadway plays and musicals. After 1900 the tendency for showboats to become bigger and more grandly fashioned their demise. Smaller boats were profitable playing to rural audiences and in villages which lacked regular theaters, but the large boats had to dock in metropolitan areas where they were in direct competition with regular theaters. Moreover, the combination of motion pictures (to which sound tracks were added in the 1920s) plus the increasing mobility of even rural residents because of the automobile and better roads eventually signaled the doom of the old showboat as an economically viable means of entertainment.

Unlike the Hollywood version as found in the popular movie musical Showboat, very few actual showboats were steamboats. The typical showboat theater was constructed on a large barge, and its power source was a towboat which pushed the showboat to the various landings. Many of the boats were family affairs, and everyone from grandparents to grandchildren was involved in operating the boat. This family orientation was not unique to showboats, but was characteristic of nineteenth-century theatrical troupes in general, as was the practice of expecting actors and actresses to double not only in theatrical roles, but as musicians who sang, played, and often danced in addition to acting. The head of the family often was the boat captain and actor who managed the company and ran the box office.

THE EARLY YEARS

While some theatrical troupes such as that led by Noah Ludlow toured the Ohio Valley by boat as early as 1817, it remained for William Chapman, Sr., to launch the first deliberately planned showboat at Pittsburgh in 1831. Before coming to America, Chapman had been an actor at Covent Garden Theatre in London, and from 1827-1831 he and his theatrical family had worked in theaters in New York and Philadelphia. Chapman's boat essentially was a barge 100 feet long by 16 feet wide with a barnlike structure on it. The theater could seat about 200 persons on board benches without cushions or backs. It had a shallow stage with muslin draw curtains and candle footlights across the stern, while a small gallery for blacks and the family's living quarters occupied the bow. The Chapman troupe consisted of William and his wife Sarah, sons William Jr. and George, daughters Caroline and Therese Sarah, William Jr.'s wife Phoebe (a gifted musician), Grandmother Chapman, and grandson Harry. They called their boat the Floating Palace. After his death in 1840 his wife operated it as Chapman's Floating Palace until she sold it to Mr. Smith in 1847, and in the same year it collided with a steamboat and sank. The success of the Chapman showboats brought various imitators to the Ohio River, but none lived up to the quality of the Chapman shows. In many cases the performers were persons who were not good enough to be successful in regular theatrical circles, and unfortunately some boats were operated by gamblers and mountebanks. One medicine boat's entire show was built around a wistful heroine who was seeking a cure for her poor health and who was wandering hither and yon in search of a remedy. A villain sought to keep her away from the real cure, hoping that he could more easily have his way in her run-down condition. But a hero arrived and gave her a magic potion which restored her to health and beauty. At this point the curtains would close and a "professor" would offer this very same remedy to the audience at five cents per bottle or only three for a dollar. It is not surprising that during the 1850s sometimes an angry posse of townspeople who had recently been fleeced by a quack performance would keep a boat from landing.

Circuses were one of the favorite amusements for residents of the midwestern states during the two decades before the Civil War. For larger circuses the boat was the most convenient means of transportation, but since the procedure of unloading the troupe at each stop and erecting a large tent on land for the performance was both cumbersome and time consuming, several circuses constructed large boats and exhibited in an arena on these boats. Since these large boats required considerable amounts of money for both capital and operation, they visited only the larger towns where generous patronage was possible. Spaulding and Rogers' Floating Circus Palace was both the largest and most completely chronicled of these boats. She was built at Cincinnati by Gilbert R. Spaulding and Charles J. Rogers in 1851. This floating amphitheater was a huge box almost two hundred feet long by thirty-five feet wide. The main deck was called the dress circle and featured one thousand cane-seat armchairs, the first gallery or family circle had fifteen
hundred cushioned settees, while the second gallery seated another nine
hundred persons with a section designated for Negroes. This gave the main
arena a total seating capacity of thirty-four hundred, not counting standing
room outside the windows, which sold for half price after all available seats
were taken.9
Wheeling was one of the regular stops on the Floating Circus Palace’s
itinerary as it toured the Ohio and Mississippi rivers. Since the size of
the boat required deeper water, the tours normally were in the upper Ohio in
the spring and went downriver as water levels dropped during the summer.
In addition to the main arena, the large towboat for the circus was the James
Raymond, which featured an elegant concert saloon called the Ridotto for
presenting minstrel and vaudeville performances following the main show.
There were some hazards in transporting such an elaborate show by boat,
however. The Wheeling Intelligencer for 26 May 1855 carries an ad for a
performance on the Floating Palace and the subsequent show on the James
Raymond at the Wheeling wharf on 28 May. However, the big boat ran
aground on the Captina Creek sand bar, and did not make it to Wheeling.
The boat was still aground on 4 June, so the Reed and Davis Minstrels from
the show came to Wheeling by land and gave performances in Washington
Hall on 4, 5, and 6 June.
The Floating Circus Palace had better luck on its visit to Wheeling in May
1856. On 8 May the circus performed in Pittsburgh, and it gave exhibitions
at the principal towns as it came downriver. Printer John McCreary, formerly
of Wheeling, served as the “active and energetic agent of the Palace”7 and
was responsible for printing handbills and posters advertising the show and
overseeing their distribution. The circus visited Wheeling on 20 and 21 May
1856, and the Intelligencer carried detailed advertisements describing the
show. Under the heading “Novelty; Instruction; Amusement: Floating Palace;
Museum and Concert,” this ad gives us a good idea of what attracted a
Wheeling audience in 1856. The museum claimed to have “100,000
curiosities” and featured stuffed animals and wax figures described as “a
complete ZOOLOGICAL EXHIBITION of every wild and rare Animal existing
in Europe, Asia, Africa, and America, including a full grown ELEPHANT and
magnificent GIRAFFE; innumerable specimens of BIRDS, from the gigantic
Ostrich to upwards of 100 specimens of the fairy Humming Bird.” Other
museum attractions included “A STATUE GALLERY OF FIGURES, THE
SIZE OF LIFE, AMONG WHICH ARE Christ Preaching in the Temple; The
Shakespearean Gallery; Siamese Twins; The Family of Napoleon;
Washington and Lafayette; William Wallace and Helen Mar; Tam O’Shanter;
Souter John; The Landlord and Landlady; The Chief Ute—-in the dress
he Wore when living;—hundreds of Ancient and Indian War Weapons; A
PANORAMIC VIEW OF THE WORLD: Mineral and Vegetable Curiosities
without number; Ancient Relics from Egypt and Greece, Rome, Pompeii and
Herculaneum. ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY PAINTINGS.”8
Two of the featured performers in the 1856 season were the Polish acrobat
Madame Olinza and Mr. K.G. Nellis, who was born without arms. Madame
Olinza presented “thrilling, terrific, and at the same time graceful feats upon
the TIGHT ROPE, extended in mid-air from the floor to the roof, and at the
dizzy height, on a small cord, walking backwards and forward, ascending,
blindfold, dancing Polkas, Waltzses and Piruettes, playing exquisitely the
Cornet-a-Piston ...” Mr. Nellis “has appeared with great eclat before all the
principal Crowned Heads and nobility of Europe ... with his Feet alone, cuts
Profiles and Valentines, opens and wins up watches, writes and folds letters,
Shoots with a Bow and arrow at a Quarter of a Dollar, at ten paces, and
tseldom misses; Loads and Discharges Pistols, Plays on the Accordeon [sic]
and Violin-callo [sic] ...” The circus also included clowns and various equestrian
acts, and admission was twenty-five cents. A pipe organ added musical
color and excitement for Madame Olinza as well as for the other acts. “AN
ENTERTAINMENT & CONCERT Will be given in a beautiful concert Room,
on the James Raymond, immediately after the exhibition on the Palace,
consisting of Ethiopian Melodies; Fancy and Comic Dancing; Characteristic
Delineations, &c. By a talented troupe of Male and Female Artists.” Admission
for the concert was also twenty-five cents.
The two boats were well provided with music. In addition to the pipe organ
for the circus performance, a chime of bells across the hurricane deck pro-
vided free concerts for crowds on the river bank. A twelve-piece brass band
gave concerts and played during interludes of the shows on the James
Raymond, and after 1858 a callophone on the Texas (top deck)—the first to be
installed on a showboat—announced the coming of the circus. The boats
were brilliantly lighted with gas and were visible at great distances along the
river at night.9 The editor of the Wheeling Intelligencer attended the perfor-
ances on 20 May 1856 and reported:
The Floating Palace is attracting considerable attention at the
landing. We visited it yesterday, and found it really a good collec-
tion of curiosities, embracing many very rare specimens of the
animal kingdom, and of manufacture by far-off and strange people.
One can spend an hour and a “quarter” with pleasure and profit in
the Palace. On the Raymond, is fitted up a commodious concert
room, where a band of Negro Minstrels give performances im-
mediately on the close of the exhibition in the Palace. When we
state that Johnny Booker, the very best delineator of Ethiopian
character in the country, is a member of the band, it is not necessary
to write more. Performances at 2 o’clock in the afternoon, and at
6-1 2 in the evening.
Spaulding and Rogers changed their performances each season so that they
could visit the same cities every year. When the big circus boat visited
Wheeling on 21 and 22 May 1857 the advertisements emphasized that the
owners had combined their three circuses into one “Monster concern” for
the Floating Circus Palace. These three circuses were the North American
Circus which had toured in New England, the former floating circus, and the
New Railroad Circus “which excited so great a sensation in the Middle states,
last Summer.” As was customary, “Immediately after each performance of the
Circuses on the Palace, DAN REED’S Celebrated Minstrels, Will give a
Grand Melange of [agro] Minstrelsy, Plantation Melodies, Burlesques,
Terschicoran Exercises, and characteristic Ethiopian Peculiarities, in the
beautiful and spacious RIDOTT’S CONCERT SALOON ON THE RAYMOND,
adjourning the Palace.” Admission prices for the circus and the concert were
still twenty-five cents each, except for the dress circle in the arena, which
was thirty cents. This circus boat plied the waters of the Allegheny, Wabash,
Ohio, and Mississippi rivers, and even went into the Gulf of Mexico to visit
Mobile. It operated until the Civil War, when it was confiscated by the Con-
fedrates in 1862 for use as a hospital boat at New Orleans.10 River cities
had to wait many years after the war before any comparable showboats
made their appearance.
SHOWBOATS COME OF AGE

It was not until the latter 1870s that showboats reappeared on the Ohio-Mississippi River system. In 1878, Augustus Byron French (whose actual surname was Dolen) built his first boat on a small barge 85 feet by 16 feet at Cincinnati. French called his boat The New Sensation, and he floated it downriver to New Orleans during the winter of 1878-79, whereupon he had it towed back up the river to repeat the trip. French’s boat was sufficiently successful that he was later able to purchase his own towboat, and The New Sensation became quite profitable. French made his first visit to the Wheeling area in 1882, for in that year he opened his season 15 April at Rice’s Landing on the Monongahela River, whereupon he started downriver, stopping primarily at smaller towns and landings. It appears probable that French’s boat did not play at Wheeling, since a perusal of the intelligence from mid-April through early July does not contain any indication that he stopped in Wheeling. It is likely that French did not consider Wheeling to be a good market for a boat such as his. Showboats were most successful and profitable in smaller towns where there was no other theatrical entertainment for competition. In 1882 Wheeling had two very active theaters—the Grand Opera House in the rebuilt Washington Hall and the Opera House on Market Street at the site of today’s Wheeling Dollar Bank. Both these theaters provided top-flight musical, dramatic, and vaudeville offerings from the best New York companies. This explains why many showboats—and especially smaller ones—would not play at Wheeling.

In 1887 French replaced The New Sensation with a larger boat of the same name measuring 110 feet by 20 feet and seating 200 persons. This boat, also, was very successful, and in 1894 he expanded his operations further when he purchased a large showboat originally built by Eugene Robinson called The Floating Palace. French renamed it French’s New Sensation No. 2. The Floating Palace was built in 1893 and was one of two large boats which traveled together. The other boat was a freak museum and menagerie, and these two boats apparently aimed to duplicate the successes of Spaulding and Rogers’ Floating Circus Palace of the 1850s. The museum had a variety of stuffed animals, including a whale hanging by chains from the roof. Its hide had been cured and its belly was painted white. However, Robinson’s boats were not financially successful and survived only one season. During this period French’s main competitor was Edwin A. Price, a popular and competent pianist who was associated with French until 1885, when he decided to begin operation of his own boat, the Floating Opera.

It was during this time that we find the rather interesting story of a showboat that belonged specifically to the Wheeling area and was built in Bellaire by Ned Hughes. Hughes married Margaret Jane McCormick, a second cousin of the noted Irish tenor John McCormick, and they emigrated to America from Ireland after the Civil War. Both he and his wife were violinists and clog dancers. After coming to America they worked for a while at Tony Pastor’s Theater in New York. Eventually Ned and Margaret moved to McKeesport, near Pittsburgh, and from there to Wheeling and eventually to Bellaire. While his primary employment was in a Wheeling steel mill, he always wanted to return to the theater, and for this reason he made plans with his family to construct a showboat.

Therefore, in 1889 Hughes bought a second-hand barge measuring 150 feet by 30 feet, and with the assistance of his sons and friends set about to convert it into a showboat. Building the superstructure took about ten months.

It was a one-deck affair with the pilothouse on top of the auditorium. The exterior was white, trimmed in green, and proudly carried the name Hughes’ Floating Enterprise. When the boat was complete, he advertised in the New York Clipper to obtain a few actors to supplement his family troupe, and they were ready to set sail down the Ohio.

In her first few weeks on the river the Enterprise played Moundsville, Clarington, Proctor, Sistersville, New Martinsville, Bens Run, Raven Rock, Belmont, Waverly, Powhatan Point, and Marietta—all just south of Wheeling. Hughes employed an advance man to post bills announcing that the boat was coming. When the Hughes showboat neared a landing the piano player would climb on the roof and lead the crowd in a song of welcome. At one landing Hughes dangled and slicked hat and a heavy pair of either leather or canvas gloves to protect his hands from the steam spouts, and begin to play songs like “Comrades” or “Little Annie Rooney.” Wherever the Enterprise stopped Hughes himself distributed handbills. After that he visited the mayor, town marshal, and the councilmen and buttered them up with free tickets for the evening’s performance. Licenses to play a town would cost him from two to four dollars. At first when the Hughes troupe reached a town they would put on a simple show and become a small band that would parade through the streets. Later Ned Hughes decided that the parade wasn’t worth the effort, so the band gave its performance from the showboat’s roof just before the evening presentation.

The plays included standards such as East Lynne, Uncle Tom’s Cabin, Frag to Riches, Dora Thorne, and an abbreviated Ten Nights in a Barroom. The complete show lasted two and one-half hours and opened with a minstrel show which occupied about an hour, after which came the short play or an olio or both. A double-violin act by Ned and Margaret Hughes was a part of every show. Margaret would finger a violin while Ned stood with his arms around her and handled the bow, and then they would change places. During the olio Margaret would don kilts and do a Highland fling. Other acts in addition to the minstrel show and songs included such things as a trained bear, and a troupe of Indians who would go through the motions of burning a woman at the stake until she was rescued by a cowboy, after which the Indians would sell herbs and Indian remedies to members of the audience.

One of the more exciting escapes on the Hughes’ Floating Enterprise occurred after a show on Christmas Eve in Kentucky, when twelve men from the Hatfield clan pulled guns and ordered Ned and his wife to play for a square dance. The men all wore cowhide boots, blue jeans, plaid shirts, and red handkerchiefs knotted around their necks, and each carried a jug of moonshine stoppered with a corn cob. Ned played violin and his wife hummed dulcimer for the dance. Some of the men tied bandanas around their arms to indicate that they were “women.” Despite a rather scary atmosphere, the Hatfields did not bother any of the actual women on board the boat and it all ended peacefully.

While tied up at Cairo, Illinois during the winter of 1891-92, the showboat snapped its masts, crashed into a pier of the railroad bridge at Cairo, and sank. Fortunately those persons on the boat (including daughter Katie) were rescued by some men in a skiff before it struck the pier, and no one was injured. Since Ned Hughes didn’t trust banks and had hidden all his profits in canvas bags aboard the boat, all his money was lost. Thereafter the Hughes family came back to land for their entertaining, and another Enterprise was never built. While this was one of the smallest boats which operated on the river, it was typical of the family theatrical troupes, and Katie Hughes’ memoirs as serialized in the Saturday Evening Post for August 1947 make delightful reading.
FLOATING PALACES

After Eugene Robinson's Floating Palace suffered financial losses, Capt. Augustine Byron French was able to purchase it in 1894 for a fraction of its original cost (see above), and from this time forward the saga of showboating tended to cluster around only a few principal men. French renamed the old Robinson boat as French's New Sensation No. 2. Philip Graham gives the following description of this boat:

Its hull, one hundred and fifty by thirty feet, carried two lofty decks, with a texas and pilot house above. Its double-decked auditorium, with twelve plush-boxed lines and two balconies, seated seven hundred and fifty-nine patrons, with the double aisles free. Both inside and out it was well covered with wooden lace and other decorative designs, and the dressing rooms were paneled with mirrors... The footlights, the last touch of modernity, were fueled with acetylene gas pumped from under the stage. The first wing and back scenes were ample for settings in any street, in the city, and indoors.\(^14\)

The French boats achieved a reputation for good entertainment, and by operating two boats he was able to offer an unusual number of different acts by having an interchange of performers between the two boats. It even became possible for specialists to have their own acts, rather than having all performers double in two or more roles. Thus the quality of the shows was greatly improved. A typical show included a skit or short play, sentimental songs, at least three musical numbers, an acrobatic act, several novelty acts, a blackface minstrel section, a dance number, a magic act, and a grand ensemble for the finale.\(^15\) During his career French had five boats which carried the "New Sensation" name. The biggest and grandest of all was his last boat, constructed in 1901. It seated 960 persons in cushioned opera chairs, and the entire boat featured an innovation in being illuminated by incandescent electric lights. Unfortunately Captain French suffered a fatal heart attack just as the boat was opening its maiden season in 1902, but his wife then took over and managed it for several years.

Immediately after 1900 the Pope Dock Company of Parkersburg became the chief builder of the big boats, most of which were designed for W.R. Markle of Steubenville. Markle's boats included the New Grand Floating Palace, Sunny South, and his famous Goldrod. Pope Dock also built a famous boat for Eugene Eisenbarth which later was named Cotton Blossom, becoming the first boat to carry that name. While W.R. Markle deserves credit for building three of the best known big boats, and while he enjoyed several prosperous seasons a combination of storms and accidents in the years 1910-1913 created heavy financial losses for him. He turned to gambling in the hope of recouping his fortunes, but soon found himself in bankruptcy, and the Goldrod was sold for a fourth of its cost. "Markle's dream had been realized, it had grown like an immense bubble, and then it had disappeared, leaving him with nothing except the misty memory of a brilliant success."\(^16\) Thus it was that Markle, the man who had achieved new standards for the showboat world, had to take a job as a night watchman on the riverfront in Pittsburgh, and when he wasn't working he went back to Steubenville, where his sister lived.

However, Markle's Goldrod operated for many more years. Eventually—like most of the big boats after 1920—the Goldrod was owned by one of the Menke brothers. These four brothers were John William, Harry, Ben, and Charley Menke, and they learned showboating by being advance agents for the big boats and pasting posters and distributing handbills from Pittsburgh to New Orleans. After World War II the Goldrod was permanently moored at St. Louis and continued in operation as a showboat until she burned in 1962.\(^17\)

While the big boats certainly were the most glamorous of all the showboats, their very size and the expense of their operation precluded their stopping at smaller towns and landings. Consequently, the big boats had to stop at the cities, where they were in direct competition with the regular theaters. Moreover, the combination of motion pictures and the automobile completely changed the way Americans found entertainment during the 1920s and 1930s, and showboats were soon struggling for their financial survival. Edna Ferber's best selling novel and Jerome Kern's musical Showboat actually gave a few boats like the Goldrod a temporary new lease on life. In 1927 for example, Captain Bill Menke displayed the following telegram (dated 1925) in his box office: "Give me your route very anxious to visit your theater—Edna Ferber." Menke's response to anyone asking about this telegram was, "I never heard of her so I never sent no answer."\(^18\) Of course, by 1927 Menke had heard of her, and he admitted that thanks partly to Ferber his business was excellent. Even in large cities Menke was able to steam in and have a standing-room-only audience. However, they were able to play only short stands, because the novelty wore off very quickly.

Captain Billy Bryant was one of the last successful showboat operators on the Ohio. Billy's parents came to America from England in 1884. His father, Sam, was a mixture of huckster, gardener, and carpenter, while his mother, Violet, was a singer and actress who had played in Gilbert and Sullivan roles in England. Since they wanted to get back into show business after coming to America, they answered an ad from Captain E.A. Price and joined the troupe on Price's Water Queen. Their experiences caused the Bryant family to yearn for a boat of their own, and finally in 1907 C.C. Bowyer of P.R. Pleasant, who was a banker as well as a riverman, provided the capital for the Bryant's wish to come true. They billed themselves as the "Four Bryants"—Sam, Violet, Billy, and Florence, and the first season they had a successful run up the Kanawha River. In 1918 Bowyer again provided the capital, and this time the Bryants built a fine boat that would seat 700 persons. With this boat they had several good years, but by 1929 business was bad. However, by accident a party boat happened to dock next to the Bryant showboat in Cincinnati one night in 1929. The party boat had some type of mechanical trouble, so to keep his passengers happy the captain asked the Bryants to do Ten Nights in a Bar Room. Actually it was a very "comy" production—but the audience loved it for that very fact. The managing editor of the Cincinnati Times Star happened to be in the audience, he loved the show, and he gave it a big story in the paper. The next evening it seemed that everyone in Cincinnati was curious about the show and wanted to see it. Consequently, the Bryant boat stayed in Cincinnati for several years and became a regular riverfront attraction. During the 1930s Billy Bryant and his troupe were invited to play in both Chicago and New York theaters. The theater critics generally panned the acting but found the show great entertainment and favorably compared Billy Bryant's monologues to those of Will Rogers. The Bryant successes were great from a financial standpoint, but they tended to stereotype showboat entertainment in many persons' minds as being "low class" theater from an artistic viewpoint. However, the audiences delighted to hiss the villain and cheer the hero.\(^19\) Sam Bryant retired to his home in Point Pleasant, West Virginia, where he lived to the age of 92. Violet Bryant died in 1949 in Gallipolis, Ohio.\(^20\)
THE CALL OF CALLIOPEs AND BANDs

Perhaps it is the almost surrealistic atmosphere painted by music emanating from clouds of steam, or perhaps it is the sheer volume of an instrument which can be heard for several miles, but whatever the reason, the steam calliope has become the most romantic symbol of the showboat. Often it was the calliope which seasoned showboat owners chose to keep in their retirement as a sentimental reminder of their years on the river.

The calliope was invented by Joshua C. Stoddard of Worcester, Massachusetts in 1845 and first introduced to the public in 1853. Spalding and Rogers of the Circus Palace had installed one as early as 1858, and French's second New Sensation (built in 1887) was the first showboat to use a calliope after the Civil War.22 Stoddard named the calliope after the Greek muse of the same name. His instrument consisted of a series of graduated whistles with double balanced poppet valves pitched to produce a musical scale. When the player pressed a given key, a lever released steam into the appropriate whistle. Players needed to protect themselves with heavy gloves and rainwear to avoid either being burned by hot steam or being drenched by the condensation. By 1900 the calliope was a regular part of almost every river boat, and in our own day the Delta Queen continues to carry one. When persons in town and country heard the sound of the calliope, they knew that the boat had indeed arrived. The calliope's music thus became the most effective advertising that a showboat could muster. Posters and flyers could call attention to a forthcoming show, but the calliope's call was more definite and immediate. Calliope players were placed on the towboat as this was most convenient to the source of steam. Like everyone else on a showboat, the calliope doubled; when it was quiet its pipes distilled drinking water for the boat personnel.

Calliope varied in size from as few as 13 to 15 notes to anywhere from 50 to 60 notes. Under good conditions with high humidity they could be heard up to ten miles away. A colorful description of a calliope and its player is found in a book by Jan and Cora J. Gordon, two English travel writers who toured the United States during the 1920s. During their travels they spent some time on the River Maid, operated by a Captain Hi on the Kanawha River near Charleston. Their description of life on the boat bear's repetition.

Life on the Show Boat hardly moved as rapidly as did the slow, muddy river coiling by the stern wheel. It was a serene, Southern, domestic life, untinged within by the actors' traditional passions, though we did see two of the engineer's lads trying to date up with two smirking village girls who lingered at the water's edge...

At one end of the great hollow theatre in the boat was the box office and over it the captain's cabins; at the other end were the stage and green room, over which lived the married actors. They carried no waste material aboard. Little Captain Hi was owner, manager, impresario, stage director, box office clerk, accountant; he was housekeeper, storekeeper and general factotum; the married actors played counter to their wives. The bachelors, engine room staff, musicians and pilot lived on the tug, cabin round the dining room under the calliope...

At five o'clock the calliope sounded its warning call. The musician was an old, old German, small in frame to command so boisterous an instrument, blasting out his melody with forty pounds of steam pressure. Yet the instrument was older than the player. It was fixed to the upper deck of the tug just abaft of the wheel house and in its silent moments was by no means idle since its long connecting pipes distilled drinking water for the boat. Two rows of steam whistle were ranged in size, like the photographs of French Canadian families, whose women breed twenty-five apiece, not counting twins. The keyboard of this musical engine was housed in a box of oak like a church harmonium, with small slats, a perch, perhaps symbolical, capable of at least reaching to God's high seat if any music could. Heavens, what a riot! At the first shrill shriek the ship's dog leapt out of its summer sluimer, howled in agony and sprang into the lap of the nearest friend, imploring with goggling eyes that its ears be covered tight till this horrid noise ceased.

Whistling and wailing the whistles shocked the air waves into a shudder which rolled ten miles across the country. The little man stood, his ears packed tight with cotton wool, evoking all this din from dim pencil scripts which had served him for many years; when he pressed a chord the steam swallowed him wholly from view and made music smell like washing day. Odd music it was too. The calliope had been built before the Civil War; it had called crinolined ladies to the play. The scale had been made to suit a simpler age; no flats or sharps interrupted its progressions, it was modal. But when modern tunes had to be fitted as best they might, the result was more interesting than satisfactory, so that such tried old favorites as "Old Black Joe" or the "Swanee River," came out almost like new inventions.23

The Gordons also report that this showboat carried a fiddler who "was as long as the calliope player was short." He figured in the advertising and offered to anyone who could outplay him in old country tunes.24 Challenges such as this were fairly common on showboats which featured vaudeville and similar variety shows, and obviously it added a lot of interest when a local fiddler would challenge the boat's performer. For example, in 1897 French's New Sensation No. 1 had "an old fiddlers' contest as the finale on the program, when "Randy Bill"—no other name has survived—would defend the musical reputation of the Sensation against all challengers.25

As if calliope and fiddle contests were not enough to whet the public's musical interest, some boats also carried bands and the actors were expected to double as bandleaders. Some of these bands were more to create noise than music. Billy Bryan's Children of Ol' Man River reports that after he and his parents had joined Captain E.A. Price's Water Queen, he and his father were expected to play in a brass band, but neither could really play much. Consequently, his father was given a plugged alto horn so he could make believe that he was playing, while Billy performed on the bass drum. Bryan described it as "the most suspicious-looking eight-piece brass band (six musicians, a plugged alto horn, and a bass drum) I ever saw.26 This band would parade around the town at a lively clip, stop in front of the post office, and then play a free concert. For their final number they played at the "William Tell Overture," and, as he writes, "What we really did was to engage in a weird battle with its elusive notes." Bryan continues to report that most of the towns had their own local bands, and often some of these musicians would get out their instruments and join them by standing behind them and reinforcing the little group. "With their help the din we could make was something terrible and grand."27

Not all showboat bands were as haphazard as Billy Bryan implies. The second New Sensation carried a ten-piece band which alternated with the calliope in a concert before the picture. The band would back the boat well before curtain time so the players could double either as
members of the orchestra or as actors. Eugene Eisenbarth's 'Floating Theatre'
carried an especially good band. Eisenbarth insisted that his band play what
he called 'cultural music,' and by 1908 it had developed into one of the best
bands in the Middle West under the direction of Harry High, a gifted cornetist.
At each landing the band gave a free open-air concert lasting over an hour
and immediately preceding the evening performance. Programs included
many standard band pieces from the era and introduced such European art
music as Meyerbeer's 'Fackeltanz Overture,' selections from Verdi's 'Il Trovatore,'
and Rossini's 'William Tell Overture.' The remainder of the program
included marches, novelties, and cornet, trombone, and euphonium solos.
Eisenbarth's showboat used a standard procedure when approaching a land-
ning. About five miles away the calliope would strike up lively tunes and
continue playing until just before the boat actually docked. At a signal the
calliope lifted in the middle of a tune and the band took up the same air.
By this time a crowd had gathered along the river bank and the boat already
had part of their audience for the evening.29

AFTER WORLD WAR II

Around 1930 the combination of motion pictures and social mobility brought
about by the automobile plus the financial problems of the Great Depression
effectively sounded the death knell of traditional showboating. A few boats
(such as Billy Bryant's) continued to operate through the 1930s, but the total
mobilization of the United States during World War II ended even these
operations. When the war ended in 1945 America found itself in a different
world, and the same was true of music and theater on the river. By 1950 any
and all forms of entertainment that existed had become a nostalgia lyric or
operated primarily either to bring tourists to an area or to serve as theatrical
training for college or university students.

The association of colleges and universities with showboating goes back
as far as 1931 when Pittsburgh's Carnegie Institute of Technology had a
class of students aboard the Goldenrod to tour the rivers with their own
musical comedy and variety numbers. While the program was an excellent
one, the economic depression and inadequate advertising so limited audiences
that the project was dropped after a few weeks.

Ohio's Hiram College was more successful in operating Tom Reynolds'
'Majestic' during the 1950s. It was operated by the college's drama department
as a floating classroom for college credit courses starting in 1949. The
'Majestic' had a seating capacity of 425 and was built in 1923 when at least
fourteen other showboats were still in operation. In 1953 the boat played to
some fifty towns along the upper Ohio and tributary rivers and had a season
running from 12 June to 1 October. The course aboard the Majestic was
strictly practical--no formal classes or theatrical theater training. Instead,
operations were completely around-the-clock experiences in the daily
school routine of a traveling showboat. During the summer of 1953 the repertoire included the melodrama 'Lust, Lucre and Liquor or Ten Nights in a Barroom' and Brad Field's newer melodrama 'Inno-
cents Imperiled.' Performances also included six or so vaudeville acts. Audiences
were encouraged to hush the villain and cheer the hero.31 Thanks to
good publicity and several feature articles in national magazines (e.g. 'Mademoiselle' for July 1953 and 'Reader's Digest' for August 1954) Hiram
College and the Majestic were able to enjoy several successful years both
financially and artistically. Today (1991) the Majestic is owned by the City
of Cincinnati and is moored on the Ohio River near Central Bridge in downtown
Cincinnati, where a regular schedule of entertainment is presented. In

1990 the National Park Service placed the Majestic on the official National
Historic Landmark list, so its preservation seems to be reasonably assured.

One of the most unique and successful attempts for bringing music to the river to the
Ohio Valley has occurred in more recent years. In 1957 an energetic, young conductor
named Robert Austin Boudreaux organized the American Wind
Symphony in Pittsburgh. His aim was to develop a concert barge which
would bring high quality musical performances to cities and towns along the
Ohio River. He called the group a wind symphony because its instrumentation
was double that of the wind section of a typical symphony orchestra plus
percussion. Boudreaux earned both the B.S. and M.S. degrees in music from
Juillard. From 1955-1958 he served as an associate professor of music at
Duquesne University, which is how he became connected with the Pittsburgh
cultural community.32 During the next quarter century Boudreaux and the
American Wind Symphony commissioned over two hundred original composi-
tions, including works by the late twentieth century's most prominent com-
posers. While programming included some standard works for band such as
Sousa marches, Boudreaux emphasized contemporary music, and probably
many persons in the audiences along the banks of the Ohio left wondering
what they had just heard. However, the American Wind Symphony also
had a flair for the theatrical, and one of their standard works was Handel's
'Music for the Royal Fireworks' complete with fireworks. Thanks to strong
support from Pittsburgh-area corporations, philanthropists, and universities,
the American Wind Symphony was able to operate for the next quarter
century. During the 1960s H.J. Heinz, II was an avid promoter of the ensemble,
and his leadership served to bring much additional financial backing.
Wind Symphony concerts were free, and communities raised money to spon-
or programs via local groups such as service organizations. Symphony
members tended to be younger professional musicians recruited by interna-
tional auditions, although many of the group were graduate students from
Pittsburgh-area universities. To reduce expenses orchestra members stayed
with families in each community, traveling to concert sites by chartered bus,
while Boudreaux negotiated with various riverboat captains to obtain a free tow
to the next landing. In 1964 the American Wind Symphony carried 57
woodwind, brass, and percussion players plus piano and harp. Obviously
the smooth operation of such a complex group was quite complicated even
after the financial backing had been secured. As one writer stated, 'It's not
always business men's help that's needed, though. Sometimes the riverside
sites have to be cleared, and last year at Huntington, W.Va. prisoners from
the jail had to do that.'33

While Boudreaux and the American Wind Symphony were in the Upper
Ohio Valley several times, their visit to Wheeling on 7 July 1964 was typical.34
The Wheeling Jaycees and the Wheeling Junior Women's Club sponsored
the concerts, which were presented on a barge anchored at the Ohio Valley
Yacht Club. Concert times were 4 p.m. for a children's program and 8:30 p.m.
for the regular concert. The barge was christened the Point Counterpoint
and was constructed by Boudreaux himself. It was 122 feet long by 30
feet wide. The stage was 60 feet wide at the proscenium and 44 feet in
width at the rear, thus providing a somewhat conical shape for projecting
the sound. During the children's concerts it was common practice to allow
the children to come onto Point Counterpoint to sit among the musicians
and examine the instruments at close range, since one of Boudreaux's aims
was to create interest in music among school-age children. The concert
barge was to be at the Magnolia Yacht Club in New Martinsville on 8 July,
and the children's concert there was scheduled for 10 a.m. and was to
include a commissioned work by the contemporary French composer Eugene
Bozza entitled "A Children's Overture." The evening program was held at the usual 8:30 starting time.

Later in the summer of 1964 the American Wind Symphony toured cities along the Great Lakes, while in 1961 a British version of Point Counterpoint roamed England's Thames River with the symphony's musicians. Thus, Boudreau and his musicians traveled far from the Ohio Valley, although they always considered the Pittsburgh area as home. In 1969 Boudreau was director of the office of cultural affairs at Pittsburgh's Point Park College, and the American Wind Symphony became a part of the Pittsburgh Festival of the Arts from 29 June through 9 August 1969. Boudreau and the Wind Symphony maintained their connection with Point Park College for several years and participated in the festival which later became the Three Rivers Arts Festival. It was during this period that Boudreau commissioned one of the group's more unusual works--the "Pickle Suite" in honor of the 100th anniversary of the H.J. Heinz Company.

In 1981 the American Wind Symphony went international and was renamed the "Wind Orchestra of the Americas," embarking upon a Caribbean tour in November 1981. At that time the musicians averaged 25 years of age and many were still from the greater Pittsburgh area. They developed a new concert base, Point Counterpoint II, designed by Louis I. Kahn. It was a steel vessel with a 75-foot stage and a retractable acoustic shell that raised on hydraulic lifts. The musicians sat on pedestals of varying heights. A gallery was below the stage area of exhibits of contemporary art from all over the world, and the deck level included a 125-seat theater for plays, one-person shows, and recitals. Captain Boudreau and his family and crew lived on board, while the musicians continued to travel by land or air and stay in the homes of local hosts. At this time the symphony lost its close connection with the Ohio River, and another chapter in the history of music on the river came to an end.

While the era of the grand showboats is forever closed, recent years have seen renewed interest in the river as a great resource not only for commerce, but for entertainment and even a site for culture. Wheeling's new riverfront amphitheater and the various concerts scheduled there are an excellent example of this awakening to the value of the Ohio River as a great community asset. It is unfortunate that the amphitheater was not available a few years ago when Boudreau and the Point Counterpoint were making their regular tours of the Ohio; it would have been a perfect setting for his concerts--even with the background hum of I-70 traffic as it crossed the Fort Henry Bridge. However, thanks to this renewed interest in the river, music on the river will not only be a part of history; it will also be a part of Wheeling's cultural future.

NOTES
2 ibid., p. 18.
3 ibid., p. 14.
4 ibid., p. 197.
5 ibid., p. 27.
6 ibid., pp. 28-32 provides a good description of the Floating Circus Palace.
7 Wheeling Intelligencer, 8 May 1856.
8 These quotations are from the advertisement which ran in the Intelligencer for several days before the performance.
9 Graham, Showboats, p. 30.
10 ibid., p. 197.
11 ibid., pp. 42 and 63.
12 ibid., pp. 67-68.
13 This account of Hughes and his boat is from memoirs told by Katie Hughes Preble in 1947 to Pete Martin. See Pete Martin, "River Singer," Saturday Evening Post, CXXX, Nos. 7-9 for 16, 23, and 30 August 1947. Katie Hughes was Ned's daughter and was born in McKeesport, Pennsylvania, 19 February 1877.
14 Graham, Showboats, p. 68.
15 ibid., p. 70.
16 ibid., p. 102.
18 Thoda Cocroft, "The Floating Theater Thrives," The Bookman, LXVI, No. 4 (December 1927), 396.
19 This account is from Billy Bryant, Children of the Man River (New York: Lee Furman, 1938).
20 Graham, Showboats, p. 184.
22 Graham, Showboats, p. 80.
24 ibid., p. 205.
25 Graham, Showboats, p. 71.
26 Bryant, Children, p. 50.
27 ibid., p. 51.
28 Graham, Showboats, p. 65.
29 ibid., p. 109.
30 ibid., p. 189.
31 Aimee Schell, "Theater on a Traveling Showboat," Theatre Arts, XCVII (September 1953), 82-83.
32 "People of Note," The Instrumentalist, XVIII, No. 11 (June 1964), 81.
34 This account is a compilation from stories in the Wheeling Intelligencer for 1 July 1964, p. 7 and 7 July 1964, p. 8; Wheeling-News Register for 5 July 1964, part IV, pp. 6 and 7; 5 July 1964, p. 16; and 7 July 1964, p. 13.
35 "Music on the River," The Instrumentalist, XVIII, No. 11 (June 1964), 42-43.
36 "American Wind Symphony Joins Pittsburgh Arts Festival," The Instrumentalist, XXIII, No. 11 (June 1969), 32.
39 As of the summer of 1991 Point Counterpoint II was docked in Pittsburgh, where it serves as a floating concert stage for events at Point State Park. The original Point Counterpoint was sold to Huntington, West Virginia, and is used by Huntington as a floating concert shell for riverbank events. However, neither concert barge tours to other river cities.
President Lincoln and Congressman Bingham
by Erving E. Bearegard

Close relationships have molded history. One joined President Abraham Lincoln and Congressman John A. Bingham. Their connection shone memorably in saving the Union.

Bingham was born in 1815 in Mercer, Pennsylvania. Both his grandparents fought on the American side in the Revolution. His father, Hugh III, carpenter and veteran of the War of 1812, served as a prothonotary and commissioner of Mercer County. Hugh III and his wife, Esther Bailey, were ardent abolitionists and members of the Associate Presbyterian Church. Baptized as an infant, John regularly attended that body's Mercer congregation, thereby developing an interest in the Bible. He received six years of elementary education at Mercer. When his wife died in 1827, Hugh III obtained his brother Thomas's permission to rear John in Cadiz, Ohio. There John attended the local school and joined Thomas's family in attending the Associate Reformed congregation.

Upon his remarriage in 1831, thinking his new wife would be a helpful stepmother to John, Hugh III summoned the boy home to Mercer. To aid the family's finances, the youth became an apprentice in the printing office of the Mercer Luminary. That newspaper stood as a staunchly Calvinistic mouthpiece favoring temperance and the construction of canals while emphatically opposed to the Democratic Party and slavery. During this apprenticeship John caught the attention of a local dignitary, John Kelly, principal of Mercer Academy. Kelly gratuitously rendered his services as tutor, supervising John's independent studies and hearing his recitations, including Latin, early in the morning. In 1833 John ended his printing apprenticeship, and, having no inclination toward the printing trade, entered Mercer Academy. Latin and Greek much appealed to him. Oratory and composition emerged as his chief accomplishments. Furthermore, he became a leader in a local debating society which embraced present and future area dignitaries, ecclesiastical, legal and political. One of these, Attorney John J. Pearson, advised Bingham to attend college to prepare for law.

In 1835 John left his father's household. A factor therein involved the young man's stepmother, Ellen Junkin Galloway Bingham, who did not share her husband's and stepson's denunciation of slavery. She preferred the apologists' stand on slavery enunciated by her cousin, the Reverend George Junkin, president successively of Lafayette College 1832-1841, Miami University 1841-1844, Lafayette College 1844-1848, and Washington College (Virginia) 1848-1861. Of import also was John's nostalgia for his uncle Thomas's home in Cadiz. John now returned to that happy dwelling. This proved crucial because of the imminent decision on John's future. Thomas would aid in financing his nephew's education at Franklin College at nearby New Athens. There John studied the classics and became quite active in the Philosphic Literacy Society. He fell under the influence of the Reverend John Phillips, associate Presbyterian minister who served the college as trustee, vice-president, and professor. Walker's denunciation of slavery enthralled his student. In March 1837, one term before graduation, Bingham left Franklin because of typhoid fever. Then, 1838-1840, he studied law in the firm of Pearson and Stewart at Mercer. In May 1840, Bingham returned to Cadiz, completing his law studies under Chauncey Dewey and gaining admittance to the bar in October 1841. Like Lincoln, Bingham became a successful lawyer. He served two terms as the prosecuting attorney of Tuscarawas County, Ohio. In private practice he excelled in several cases. In 1846 before the Ohio Supreme Court he won the case of his defendant, a "colored," against the plaintiff, a white. In 1853 Bingham obtained damages for clients against the Steubenville and Indiana Railroad. In a murder trial in Steubenville he faced Edwin M. Stanton, his future colleague in the Union cause; Stanton prevailed through a clever move.

Also like Lincoln, Bingham entered politics as a Whig. In eastern Ohio in 1840 Bingham and Stanton, a Democrat, engaged in two dramatic debates in the colorful Harrison-Van Buren presidential campaign. In 1848 Bingham at the national Whig convention vainly introduced the motion: Resolved, that the Whig party, through its representatives here, agrees to abide by the [presidential] nomination of Zachary Taylor (cheers) on condition that he will accept as the candidate of the Whig party, (great cheers) and adhere to its great fundamental principles—no extension of slave territory, (great sensation), no acquisition of foreign territory by conquest, (hisses and cheers, order, order, sit down, hear him), protection to American industry, (tremendous cheers, order, rap, tap, knock, sit down, go on), and opposition to Executive patronage, (cheers and hisses). Mr. Chairman, I (rap, tap, rap, order, rap, order, whack, bang, order). The President [of the Convention]—the Chair rules the motion to be out of order. The question now is on the order of the day [nominations for Vice-President of the United States]. A Member—I move that the order be suspended so as to allow the gentleman from Ohio [Bingham] to proceed with his remarks. Mr. Fowler of New York—I move an adjournment. Somebody—Will the gentleman withdraw his resolution? Mr. Fowler—I withdraw it. Mr. Johnson of Pennsylvania ... I would move that the order of the day be suspended so that the gentleman from Ohio [Bingham] be heard. For several years Bingham figured prominently in the Ohio Whig party: a number of persons favored running him for governor. Disillusionment with the slaveowners' power in the Whig Party led to Bingham's abandonment of it in 1854. He joined the Anti-Nebraska Party and then became a founder of the Republican Party. An eastern Ohio district elected him, a resident of Cadiz, to the United States House of Representatives in 1854, 1856, 1858, and 1860.

Bingham became a notable Congressman. He sparked as an opponent of the slavery and of Presidents Pierce and Buchanan. He served capably on the Committee on Elections and figured prominently in the 1855-1856 Speakership contest, the longest in the history of Congress. He impressed observers with his gifted oratory in attacks on Kansas-Nebraska Constitution, the Kansas-Nebraska Bill, and the Dred Scott decision. He valiantly defended non-whites against discrimination in the Oregon constitution. Thus Bingham's Congressional career eclipsed Lincoln's single term of 1847-1849.

For the Republican presidential nomination in 1860 Bingham supported Salmon P. Chase. They had been allies for some time in Ohio politics. Joseph Medill of the Chicago Tribune, who knew Bingham since they were lawyers in New Philadelphia, Ohio, tried to persuade him to support Abraham Lincoln, but Bingham would not because of loyalty to Chase and also because of Lincoln's strong opposition to the 1859 Ohio State Republican Convention's condemnation of the Fugitive Slave Act and its refusal to renominate Chief Justice Swan due to his favoring that law. When Lincoln received the
nomination, Bingham campaigned for him, having concluded that Lincoln would not be a lackey for the slavery.14

On February 23, 1861, Bingham and Lincoln met for the first time. When the latter appeared in the House of Representative with Senator William H. Seward, Bingham walked over to introduce himself. A few day later Bingham visited the President-elect at Willard’s Hotel in Washington, D.C., to add his "recommendation...for the appointment of Salmon P. Chase as Secretary of Treasury..."15 The appointment soon came, leaving an Ohio vacancy in the United States Senate. Now The New York Times Cincinnati correspondent singled out Bingham as “the ablest man yet mentioned [for the Senate both] as a jurist and statesman.”16 However, John Sherman took "appropriate action to see to it that the Bingham balloon never got off the ground."17 With Chase’s support Sherman won the Senate seat.

Bingham’s fate now began to intertwine with Lincoln's. At the latter’s inauguration on March 4, 1861, they sat near one another. The conciliatory nature of the Inaugural Address did not appeal to the Cadizian, but he confided to a friend, “The Republican Party controls the administration and there is hope the President will listen to good counsel.”18 Later in a conservation with Lincoln in the President’s office Bingham indicated to Lincoln his great surprise that the President’s Inaugural Address raised no objection to the Corwin proposed constitutional amendment, the measure forbidding Congress to interfere with the establishment and maintenance of chattel slavery in any state. Bingham told Lincoln:

that it appeared strange to me that the President had declared in his inaugural: ‘which amendment I have not seen.’ The President immediately replied: ‘Is it possible that I said that in my address?’ ‘You certainly did,’ said I, ‘for I heard you.’ He immediately went to his desk and took out a printed copy of his address. He laid it on his table and began searching carefully through it. I grew anxious and ventured to look over it with him, but he said, ‘Never mind I will find the place,’ and finding it he read: ‘which amendment I have not seen.’ Manifestly some one had falsely reported the character of the amendment to Mr. Lincoln, and had misled him. A shadow passed over his face as he folded up the copy and he was silent. I am satisfied that he felt a wrong had been done him but he did not intimate by whom, nor did he utter a word of complaint of any one, all of which signified that it was a rule of his life rather to suffer wrong than to do wrong.19

This presented an intriguing episode. The New York Tribune had noted that Lincoln had “advised the Republicans of his state” to support the amendment.20 In 1860 Henry Adams later wrote that it “looked as if the amendments the new President [Lincoln]” before the measure obtained Congressional approval.21 Thus, in his conversation with Bingham did Lincoln have a lapse of memory and, moreover, in his Inaugural Address was he guilty of lying? The Corwin amendment passed Congress and secured ratification by two states (Ohio and Maryland) but the outbreak of the Civil War prevented further action.

Lincoln’s door always remained open for Bingham.22 On April 11, 1861, they met at the White House. There they discussed supplying food to Fort Sumter. Lincoln said, “I will supply Sumter at all hazards.”23 A day later Brigadier General P.G.T. Beauregard attacked Fort Sumter. The Civil War had begun.

Congressman Bingham energetically and superbly supported Lincoln’s prosecution of the Civil War. This particularly appeared in Bingham’s prestigious position as acting chairman of the House’s Judiciary Committee. On July 10, 1861, he piloted the passage of the bill authorizing the collection of revenue duties at places other than the customs houses; it authorized the blockade of the South, thus supporting Lincoln’s proclamation of the previous April. Bingham displayed jubilance because this bill embodied the features of his Force Bill of December 31, 1860, which had been rejected.24 On July 15, 1861, he secured the passage of an act authorizing the President to call out the militia to serve at presidential or congressional pleasure. Bingham also labored successfully for the passage of an arm bill authorizing the President to summon the militia and to call volunteers. In July 1861, Bingham succeeded in referring Attorney General Edward Bates’s opinion on Lincoln’s suspension of habeas corpus to the Judiciary Committee, but the ambiguous outlook of the Republicans led to its dying in the Committee.25 Bingham had a low opinion of Bates.26 A noted scholar has concurred.27

Bingham’s Judiciary Committee shepherded a series of security measures through the House. One increased the power of the Department of War to deal with disloyalty. Another imposed a loyalty oath on governmental clerks. On behalf of the House the Judiciary Committee investigated the loyalty of Congressman Henry May, Democrat of Baltimore, whom the Committee exonered.28 Bingham voted for that section of the Crittenden resolution affirming that the “civil war has been forced upon the country by the disunionists of the southern States,” but he abstained on the section declaring that the Union waged the war “not in any spirit of oppression” or to interfere “with the rights or established institutions of those States...” He wrote that his abstention stemmed from his inability to fathom his constituents’ views.29

Bingham proved a stalwart in defending the Lincoln administration’s suspension of habeas corpus. He battled George Pendleton’s resolution that “Congress alone has the power...to suspend the writ of habeas corpus...” Bingham criticized Pendleton for forwarding “a general jail delivery” and supporting Baltimore rebels. The Cadizian’s oratory led the House to table the motion.30 Then for almost four months Bingham battled up in the Judiciary Committee Henry May’s bill treating court prisoners in the absence of a judge. On July 3, 1861, Bingham reported the bill, including his amendment: “that it is and shall be lawful for the President to suspend habeas corpus. Bingham skillfully sloughed over questions concerning the bill’s conferring on the President the sole power to suspend habeas corpus. Bingham quickly piloted the bill through the House, but it failed in the Senate.31

Meanwhile, in early 1862, Bingham played a significant role in a momentous change in the Cabinet. Simon Cameron had mishandled the War Department. Indeed, modern authorities have asserted, his "shortcomings, evident from the first, had now become intolerable."32 In January 1862, Lincoln met with Bingham at the White House. Lincoln asked: “Now I want to know Mr. Bingham, what you know of the man [Edwin M. Stanton] and what you think of him for Sec. of War.” Bingham answered that he knew Stanton from “his early manhood,” recalled Stanton’s residence at Cadiz, Ohio, and their having tried cases together in Harrison and Jefferson Counties, Ohio. Bingham affirmed: I consider him eminently qualified for the position of Sec. of War, and doubt whether you could find a man better fitted for the place.” Following that occasion Bingham feared that Stanton would refuse the position so the former wrote to Stanton: “You owe to yourself and your country to accept it.”33

Bingham often had confidential meetings with Lincoln. In one Bingham complained that Major General George B. McClellan disgracefully was allowing Rebel forces to plant their “flag daily in full sight of the White House and Capitol.” Lincoln asked the enemy’s size. Bingham did not know, but when
Lincoln speculated that a “two-fold number” was necessary to take an entrenched army. “Bingham retorted … we have five-fold their number.” Soon thereafter Lincoln ordered McCellan to move and the Confederates were driven from Washington’s immediate vicinity. 34 In February 1862, Bingham stood forth in the discussion of the legal tender bill authorizing the issuance of $150,000,000 of treasury notes. Drawing upon words of Alexander Hamilton and Daniel Webster, he defended the Federal government’s right to issue paper money as convertible currency. According to him, the bill’s opponents consisted of mere speculating bankers and brokers doomed by the adoption of a uniform currency. Roscoe Conkling argued that the bill would benefit notorious debtors but Bingham denied this. Bingham aided substantially in the bill’s passage. However, two weeks later he could not persuade the House to reject Senate amendments calling for payment of interest on governmental bonds and notes in coin and the redemption of the bonds at market value. 35

Representative Albert Gallatin Riddle, Republican of Ohio, appraised Bingham at this time: “Bingham was one of our most effective speakers, and was usually put forward as the Republican champion … He usually stirred up his opponents, and was subjected to interruptions. His temper was good, his retorts and replies always happy and effective.” Riddle mentioned Bingham’s voice: “At fullest tide it was like a steady, strong, on sweeping wind, roaring through and over a great old forest, a powerful, steady, pealing blast.” 36

Bingham steadfastly advanced Lincoln’s war efforts. The following actions had his advocacy: raising Kentucky volunteers; authorization of governmental seizure of railroads and telegraph lines; unlimited area service of state troops; appointment of more assistant secretaries of war; centralization of the military appointive power in the President; and army foraging in the Confederacy. Bingham voted against the resolution attacking the army’s so-called depredations in Missouri and against the acceptance of the investigating committee’s report on the Hall Carbine episode. 37 In July 1862, Bingham figured prominently in the House’s appropriating $500,000 to finance the removal of the District of Columbia’s freed slaves and “those to be made free by the possible passage of a confiscation bill.” 38 The bill met Lincoln’s approval who, within a few months, also signed legislation establishing diplomatic relations with Haiti and Liberia, and abolishing slavery in the territories. A scholar has rightfully concluded: “The Dred Scott decision was dead.” 39

In October 1862, Bingham lost his bid for reelection to the House of Representatives. In the campaign he had pledged he continued to support his friend, President Lincoln, and had denounced Lincoln’s bête noire, Congressman Clement L. Vallandigham of Ohio’s Third District, as a tool of the Confederacy. Several factors contributed to Bingham’s defeat—no provision allowing absentee voting by the armed forces, the severe federal setback at Second Bull Run, the bloody and indecisive Battle of Antietam, and the voters, lack of enthusiasm for Lincoln’s preliminary emancipation proclamation of September 22, 1862. 40 Also the opposition press had mounted a barrage against Bingham. Demagogically taking advantage of a large Negro influx into Ohio, Democratic newspapers sniped at Bingham’s abolitionism. Sam Medary’s The Crisis demanded: “Send him [Bingham] round! Let the finger of scorn be pointed at him! Let him labor among his kind! Let every white, laboring man in the State avoid him as they would a viper!” 41 Bingham’s defeat led a Cincinnati newspaper to exult: “We are glad the abolitionist was beaten. The fanatics in the next House will greatly miss and deplore the defeat of their Father Bingham.” 42

As a lame duck Bingham sat in the Thirty-seventh Congress’s last session. There were two great confrontations involved him and the handsome, voluble Clement L. Vallandigham of Dayton, Ohio. On January 14, 1863, the latter proclaimed the war a failure and, in the name of the Northwest, hurled defiance at the Republican Party. The latter’s leaders finally persuaded Bingham, its most eloquent orator, to reply. The full House and the packed galleries fixed their attention on the man from little Cadiz. Bingham faced Vallandigham as the mouthpiece of the insurrectionists and castigated the Daytonian’s armistice proposal. Acknowledged as “The Cicero of the House,” Bingham brilliantly defended the prosecution of the war. The galleries resounded with applause. An expert on forensics has judged his speech a significant forerunner to Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address. 43 Then on February 23, 1863, “Copperhead” Vallandigham spoke convincingly against the provisions of the conscription bill authorizing provost marshals to arrest and confine persons allegedly interfering with the draft. Bingham rushed to support the draft as necessary for the war’s success. The House passed the conscription bill. 44

Upon Congress’s adjournment on March 4, 1863, Bingham surveyed his wartime career. He had been a leading actor in the passage of the Conspiracies Act, Habeas Corpus Act, Legal Tender Act, National Banking Act, and War Tax Acts. With his solid assistance “the Thirty-seventh congress had done more to centralize political power in the national government than any other body in the nation’s history.” 45 Moreover, Bingham played a role in getting Lincoln to issue the Emancipation Proclamation. “The Cicero of the House” claimed in private conversations he had convinced the President that such actions would doubly spur the war effort: it would inspire the slaves to rise up in the Confederacy and it would show international opinion that the Union was on the side of the Deity in delivering a mortal blow to a satanic institution. In this Bingham had the alliance of a former Cadizian, Bishop Matthew Simpson, a great favorite of Lincoln. 46

As Bingham now had no office, a number of friends urged him to seek appointment as a Union colonel or even brigadier general. He would not listen for he had no use for “political soldiers.” He pointed out that one of his few differences with his friend, President Lincoln, concerned the latter’s appointment and support of Major General Nathaniel P. Banks, the person whom Bingham had done so much to make Speaker of the United States House of Representatives in 1856. 47 Thanks to Lincoln, only Winfield Scott, John C. Frémont, and George B. McClellan outranked Banks at the outbreak of the Civil War and the first three dropped out early in the war. Furthermore, Banks outranked U.S. Grant until 1864 and throughout the Civil War out-ranked William T. Sherman, Philip H. Sheridan, George H. Thomas, and George G. Meade. 48 Yet Banks proved a disaster in the eastern theater against “Stonewall” Jackson and in the western sector against Kirby Smith and Richard Taylor. 49 In this regard it is interesting to recall a scholar’s commentary about the decisive Battle of Vicksburg:

By the time he [Banks] got to Port Hudson, Grant was knocking at the doors of Vicksburg, and it was too late to combine the armies [Banks’s and Grant’s]. The government was fortunate that Banks did not join Grant. He ranked Grant and would have commanded the operations against Vicksburg unless Lincoln had arbitrarily placed Grant in control. Banks’s magnificent incompetency would have nullified the abilities of even Grant. 50

Bingham gave Lincoln fine advice concerning twenty-three-year-old George Armstrong Custer. In 1863 Lincoln said to Bingham: "Phil Kearny was my [sic] brigadier. Now that he’s gone, I look for someone to fill his
boots. [Keamy was killed at Chantilly]. Bingham replied: "That someone is Captain Custer, Mr. President." Lincoln assented: "Then he's my brigadier."51 Brigadier General Custer of the Michigan Brigade fought superbly at Gettysburg, repelling Wade Hampton's charge at the crucial time of Pickett's attack. However, Congressional confirmation of Custer's commission was held up by Senators Zachariah Chandler and Jacob M. Howard of Michigan who questioned the boy General's citizenship of the Wolverine State. Bingham argued that Custer represented the Union, not any one state. Lincoln prevailed: "He's my Brigadier. He's a fighter, and we can ill-afford to hold our fighters back."52 Custer would go on to brilliance against Jubal Early and Robert E. Lee.

In June 1863, at the Ohio Union Republican Convention Bingham's friends failed to gain for him the gubernatorial nomination and then that for Ohio Supreme Court associate justice.53 Nevertheless, he characteristically painstakingly canvassed for his party's ticket. On August 29, 1863, he lashed the demagoguery and defeatism of Clement L. Vallandingham, the Democratic absentee gubernatorial candidate. (Vallandigham was in exile in Canada.) Bingham labeled George H. Pugh, the Democrats' principal spokesman and nominee for lieutenant governor, a "pitiful pettifogger." In early September Bingham labored in northwestern Ohio for the Congressional candidacy of James M. Ashley. Here he teamed with the veteran abolitionist orator, Congressman George W. Julian of Indiana, who praised Bingham's singularly charming" rhetoric and called him "an artist in his work."54 Bingham also occupied the podium in Cleveland, Marion (a rally "from twenty to thirty thousand" persons), and Columbus; at the latter Bingham overshadowed orators like gubernatorial candidate John Brough, sometime Congressman Samuel Shellabarger, United States Senator Benjamin F. Wade of Ohio, and United States Senator Zachariah Chandler of Michigan. Bingham's stumping contributed to the great Ohio Union Republican victory in October 1863: its taking all six statewide positions and overwhelmingly carrying both houses of the legislature. "Glory to God in the highest," Lincoln exclaimed, "Ohio has saved the nation." Now the indefatigable Cadizian spent two weeks campaigning for his party in New York State.55

A writer has observed astutely: "The victories in the 1863 elections saved the Union Party and were a vote of confidence in the national administration. For Bingham, the tide had turned. Even though he remained without an office, he had rendered valuable service for the administration."56 Bingham showed interest in a judicial position. On June 3, 1863, Lincoln decided to appoint Bingham United States district judge for southern Florida. Taken by surprise and not relishing a position so far away from his beloved Cadiz at a mere salary of $3,000, Bingham delayed acceptance, saying he was "constitutionally averse to living in a Slave-holding State." On August 4, 1863, Lincoln telegraphed Bingham at Cadiz for a definite answer. Bingham replied that he could not immediately accept and enter upon the duties of the office. "Pleasing ill health and seeking a leave of absence, he delayed for another month, much to the anger of Attorney General Bates.57 Finally, Bingham declined the post, saying it would mean too great a separation from his family.58

On January 6, 1864, Lincoln appointed Bingham judge advocate in the newly-created military Department of Susquehanna, the position carrying the rank of major in the United States Volunteers. Bingham wrote to his wife: "I did not want it nor seek it."59 Moreover, Bingham protested: "I went to Mr. Lincoln and I thanked him for his confidence in me, but added that I had no knowledge of military law. Well, he said, 'no common lawyer has, but you will learn as soon as anybody I know of.'"60 The appointment grew from the administration's desire to use the Cadizian's very considerable forensic skills in the prosecution of Surgeon General William A. Hammond. Secretary of War Stanton had developed a high respect for Bingham's courtroom demeanor going back to their political confrontations in the 1840 presidential campaign and their being opposing counsel in the Steubenville murder trial; Stanton also recalled Bingham's excellent handling of the case of Judge West H. Humphreys.61

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meanor going back to their political confrontations in the 1840 presidential campaign and their being opposing counsel in the Glebeville murder trial; Stanton also extolled Bingham's excellent handling of the case of Judge West H. Humphreys.

Stanton had been forced to appoint Hammond by Congressman favorable to the United States Sanitary Commission, a civilian organization seeking to modernize the United States Medical Bureau. The leaders of the Commission along with the Blair family and the New York World sought Stanton's downfall. According to the latter's biographers, "This confirmed Stanton in his dislike of the pompous, bumptious Hammond, who, like most Commission officials, was a friend of McClellan [Stanton's enemy]."52 Stanton had appointed a committee of investigators whose evidence convinced Lincoln that Hammond should be court-martialed. Bingham presented a lengthy, well-documented brief against Hammond based on charges of bypassing the purveyors in buying supplies, illegally ordering medical inspectors to report directly to him, purchasing inferior beef (40,000 cans), blankets and drugs, and wrongfully discharging a subordinate. Lincoln upheld the verdict: guilt of improper conduct and dismissed from the service. Later Hammond accused Bingham of "false assertions" and misrepresentation of the court record. Bingham believed his own actions were correct.53 In 1878 by action of President Hayes and the Congress the court-martial was reviewed, resulting in Hammond being restored to service and placed on the retired list as a brigadier general.54

Judge Advocate and Major Bingham kept his hand in politics. In May 1864, he fully participated in the Ohio State Republican Convention at Columbus, being veritably, next to the presiding officer, ex-Governor William Dennison, the dominant figure.55 Bingham served on the Resolutions Committee. In the balloting for presidential electors he led the two victors. His address concluded the Convention which urged the national convention to renominate Lincoln.56

The year 1864 marked Bingham's political comeback. In August the Union Republican Party in the Ohio Sixteenth Congressional District chose Bingham to face the Democratic incumbent, Joseph W. White. Bingham's partisans looked optimistically at his prospects because on April 13, 1863, the Ohio legislature passed a bill permitting soldiers to vote in the field.57 With his usual zeal Bingham campaigned. In the October civilian election White polled 10,872 votes to Bingham's 10,580. However, the soldiers' votes then added: Bingham 1,797, White 247. Thus Bingham's total tally reached 12,377 (52.68%) versus White's 11,119 (47.32%). Bingham now withdrew as presidential elector. Nevertheless, Bingham worked hard for Lincoln's reelection in November 1864.58

In the meantime, July 27, 1864, Lincoln had appointed Bingham Solicitor of the United States Court of Claims. Bingham resigned as judge advocate on August 3, 1864, but his candidacy for Congress led him to decline the solicitorship, saying otherwise "demagogues" would accuse him of being in the pay of the Treasury.59 Thereupon Lincoln waited until January 16, 1865, to submit his name for senatorial confirmation which came on February 14, 1865.60 On March 4, 1865, Bingham resigned the solicitorship in order to serve in Congress.

On March 4, 1865, Bingham attended the inauguration of Lincoln whose address "greatly impressed me" and "it seemed to me that there was a strange emotion about him at that time I never observed before, and which impressed me very deeply."61 Bingham also attended the President's reception on the evening of March 4 at the White House where, he informed the Reverend

Titus Basfield, his black college classmate, he applauded Lincoln's cordial greeting to Frederick Douglas.62 An excellent biographer of Lincoln has noted: "It was the first inaugural reception in the history of the Republic in which an American President had greeted a free black man and solicited his opinion."63

On March 31, 1865, Bingham visited Lincoln. The latter "talked about the condition of things in general as to the war and government ... we talked about [the Emancipation Proclamation]."64 On April 14, 1865, John Wilkes Booth mortally wounded President Lincoln. Five days later Harrison County assembled at the Cadiz Methodist Episcopal Church to render homage to the martyred Emancipator. Bingham spoke briefly and impressively, concluding with the words:

Our patriotic President, though dead by the hand of a traitor will live again, and be honored in the hereafter--

"For humanity sweeps onward where today the martyr sleeps
"On the morrow, crouches Judas, with the silver in his hands.
"While the hooting mob of yesterday, with silent awe returns,
"To glean up the scattered ashes, into history's golden urn.

Aye, on tomorrow, the hooting mob who but yesterday laid in wait for our President's life and with suppressed breath cried, crucify him, crucify him, will, consumed by remorse, in silent awe return, to pay that homage to his perished dust which they denied to his pure gentle spirit."

Bingham and his constituents took pride in the ex-Cadizian, Bishop Matthew Simpson, for his eloquent sermon at Lincoln's burial at Springfield, Illinois. This was fitting, indeed, for Lincoln regarded Simpson as the greatest orator he ever heard. (However, the President had never been present at a Bingham oration.)

In late April 1865, Congressman-elect Bingham agonized over a major decision both in his life and in that of the reunited United States. Would he accept appointment from Secretary of War Stanton as an investigator of the murder of President Lincoln? Stanton had highly regarded his fellow eastern Ohioan since their popular debates in the Harrison-Van Buren campaign of 1840. Bingham's successful prosecution of Judge West H. Humphreys and of Surgeon General William A. Hammond had won Stanton's admiration. Moreover, the Congressman-elect and the Secretary of War had grown close because of their similar outlook regarding the destruction of the Confederacy. Bingham felt self-assured that his performance as investigator would repay the astute Cabinet member's confidence in him.65

Yet, the introspective Cadizian wondered whether he should accept the appointment. How objective could he be? Had he not come full-square to accept Lincoln as the Commander-in-Chief? Had he not become an intimate advisor, indeed dear friend, of the tragic President? How fair could he be in dealing with depraved wretches involved in the diabolic slaying of the esteemed friend?66

The Bingham-Lincoln relationship requires further discussion. As already noted, Bingham's original coolness had warmed and on various occasions, e.g., the Stanton appointment, Lincoln had taken Bingham's advice. In fact, Bingham affirmed: "I frequently met and conversed with him during the whole period of his presidential service."67 In the crucial situation involving the Confederate advance on Washington in 1864, Bingham and Lincoln agreed
that the President, unlike President James Madison, should not abandon the capital. On another occasion Lincoln asked the knowledgeable Cadizian to verify Salmon P. Chase's signature on the following note to the President: "If you still decline to make the appointment I ask of you, will you please consider this letter as a tender of my resignation of the Office of Secretary of the Treasury." Then Lincoln showed Bingham his answer accepting the resignation. In still another matter Lincoln consulted Bingham, viz., the organization of the House of Representative. During all of their conversations Lincoln had heard him [Lincoln] utter a vulgar word or make a vulgar suggestion. Unlike such persons as the old Ohio politician Thomas Ewing and Thomas Corwin, the Cadizian did not badger the wartime President for favors. Rightly, Lincoln had pointedly written: "Mr. Bingham has not been much obliged by appointment; so that I think the first Pay Master [sic] hereafter appointed in Ohio should be his man, named within."

Once a distraught widow went to see Bingham about securing the release from the Union Army of her sixteen-year-old son, Benjamin, who, along with his two older brothers, had volunteered for service and had become battle-scarred. Bingham contacted Lincoln who said to him: "Tell that poor woman she shall have her little Benjamin, that I have ordered his transportation home; tell her to return home, and her boy will be there as soon as she will." In another situation the entire Kentucky delegation in the United States Congress, after being rebuffed by Lincoln on the advice of his Cabinet, brought to Bingham's attention the case of a Georgetown, Kentucky woman who desired a pass to visit her mortally wounded Confederate officer husband in a Richmond, Virginia hospital. Bingham talked to Lincoln who then issued the pass. In the instance when Bingham recommended a corporal of Ohio Volunteers for entrance to the United States Military Academy, Lincoln wrote on his endorsement: "West Point—a good case." The person proved very worthy.

Bingham's closeness to Lincoln led the sensitive Cadizian, he believed, to have a phenomenal experience. As Bingham's own life was ebbing away, he summoned his excellent physician, Dr. John S. Campbell, and told him a story that the retired Congressman had kept secret. Bingham asserted that at the very moment of Lincoln's assassination, he, Bingham, had a vision of that horrible event.

After soul-searching, talking to wife Amanda, and consulting with his confidant, John N. Haverfield, Bingham decided to ferret out Lincoln's assassins. Duty had beckoned. The thoughtful Cadizian had speculated on how his old Franklin College mentor, the Reverend Dr. John Walker, would have responded. Certainly he would not have shirked the call. No, that good man of God would have plunged unflinchingly into legal inquiry. So, emulating Walker in imploring divine aid, Bingham shouldered the assignment that would lead to his becoming Special Judge Advocate in the trial of the Lincoln murder conspirators.

Once more living in Washington, D.C., without his loyal spouse, Bingham worked assiduously with Judge Advocate General Joseph Holt and Brigadier General Lafayette C. Baker, Chief Detective of the War Department's National Detective Police, in unraveling the intricate circumstances of Lincoln's murder. In a Virginia barn Federal troops surrounded the President's killer, John Wilkes Booth, and his companion, David Herold, the former being slain and the latter captured. Rounded up elsewhere were George A. Atzerodt, the drunkard who had failed to carry out his assignment to kill Vice-President Andrew Johnson, and Lewis Payne who had manically assaulted Secretary of State Seward, his two sons, and nurse; others apprehended included Edward Spangler, Booth's assistant at Ford's Theater, Samuel Arnold and Michael O'Laughlin, implicated in an earlier plot to kidnap Lincoln, Mrs. Mary E. Surratt, widowed proprietress of the boardinghouse where the conspirators met, and Dr. Samuel A. Mudd who repaired Booth's injured leg during the latter's flight from Washington. Upon Holt's recommendation, President Johnson appointed Bingham as Special Judge Advocate in the trial of the conspirators. Along with the other Special Judge Advocate, Brevet Colonel Henry B. Burnett, he served under Judge Advocate General, Brigadier General Holt, in the trial lasting from May 9 to June 20, 1865. As his wont in everything, the hyperactive Cadizian took this assignment seriously. He poured countless hours into preparing questions, anticipating possible objections, and surmising objections of his own to opposing counsel. Always an avid student of jurisprudence, he read voraciously in the history of American and British precedents for this "trial of the century." In their estimation, Bingham and his fellow counsel confidently presented a crystal-clear prosecution. Their forces roundly defeated in battle, the Rebel leadership unseated by the archtraitor, Jefferson Davis, deliberately set out to destroy the Union by mercilessly striking down its very nucleus—President Lincoln, Vice-President Johnson, Secretary of State Seward, and General-in-Chief Grant. Davis had been joined by Confederate agents in Canada—Jacob Thompson, Clement C. Clay, W.C. Cleary, George N. Sanders, Beverly Tucker, and others. These super conspirators hatched most heinous plots to exterminate the Republic, including using the accused. Thus the military court, legally constituted by the articles of war to suppress the Rebellion by which still continued, according to Bingham, must mete out the certain verdict: guilty of capital crimes. To support their claims the prosecution presented hundreds of witnesses, the key one being Louis J. Wadsworth, a boarder at Mrs. Surratt's dwelling. Reminiscent of his spectacular performances in the courtrooms of Harrison, Jefferson, and Tuscarawas Counties, Ohio, Bingham carefully guided the testimony of the witnesses.

Special Judge Advocate Bingham labored heroically in jousting with opposing counsel. His efforts bore ample fruit. The court sustained him on twenty-three of his objections and overrode him only twice. Moreover, in thirteen of his objections he forced the defense counsel to waive and in five others the opposing counsel had to vary the question. Furthermore, Bingham gave the final argument for the prosecution. Attired in his long, black robe, "the Cicero of the House" became "the Edmund Burke of the Courtroom."

Bingham's summation enthralled the spectators. A soldier present noted that when the lawyer from proud Cadiz arraigned the Rebel leaders his words "burned and seared like hot iron, but when he touched upon the great and lovable qualities of the martyred Lincoln his lips would quiver with emotion and his voice became as tender and reverent as if he were repeating the Lord's prayer." An outstanding authority has commented: "He [Bingham] was a formidable, even a fearsome prosecutor, and his closing argument, delivered on June 28 and 29, determined the outcome of the trial." Unquestionably Bingham contributed to the conviction of all the defendants. Hinging emerged as the penalty for four: Atzerodt, Herold, Payne, and Mrs. Surratt. Three drew imprisonment at hard labor for life: Arnold, Dr. Mudd, and O'Laughlin. One, Spangler, received six years at hard labor. President Andrew Johnson approved the sentences.

Bingham retired on March 31 by thirty-five years. The Cadizian won further reelection to Congress in 1866, 1868, and 1870. There he was a titan in Reconstruction, playing a leading role in much important legislation. He became "the James Madison of the Fourteenth Amendment." As chairman of the House's Board of Managers he conducted the prosecution of President
Andrew Johnson. In 1872 a Machiavellian scheme deprived Bingham of renomination for Congress.\footnote{97} Then in 1873 President Grant appointed him the first United States Minister Plenipotentiary and Envoy Extraordinary to Japan. There he ably served four presidents--Grant, Hayes, Garfield, and Arthur.\footnote{98} President Cleveland dropped him ungracefully in 1888.\footnote{99} Bingham retired to Cadiz, Ohio where he died March 19, 1930.

**NOTES**


2. John A. Bingham, conversation with Mr. John N. Haverfield, in John N. Haverfield, "Reminiscences" (manuscript, n.d.), p. 110, John S. Campbell Collection, Cadiz, Ohio, a farmer of Harrison County, Ohio, was a lifetime friend of Bingham.


4. Bingham, letter to Basfield, Cadiz, Ohio, November 22, 1858.

5. John A. Bingham, letter to Rev. Robert Wogan Campbell, Washington, D.C., July 15, 1867, Campbell Collection. Robert Wogan Campbell was president of Franklin College (Ohio) 1867-1871 and also one of its trustees 1867-1876.


11. *Cadiz Republican* (Cadiz, Ohio), February 2, 10, 1853.


13. *Congressional Globe*, 34 Congress, 1 Session, part 1, p. 222. Appendix, p. 124; ibid., 2 Session, pp. 2, 16, 81, 83; ibid., 3 Session, Appendix, pp. 135-140; ibid., 35 Congress, 1 Session, pp. 384-385, 399-402, 1171-1174, 1864-1865; ibid., 2 Session, pp. 946-947, 969-970, 981-985, 1010-1011; Ashland Sentinel (Jefferson, Ohio), February 4, May 13, 1858, *Cadiz Republican*, May 19, 1858, February 23, 1859; *Carroll Free Press* (Carrollton, Ohio), May 19, 1858; *Daily National Intelligencer* (Washington, D.C.), March 6, 1856; *Mercer Dispatch* (Mercer, Pennsylvania), May 19, 1858; *National Era* (Washington, D.C.), March 6, 1856, January 28, May 20, 1858; *New York Daily Tribune*, January 16, 1857; *Ohio State Journal* (Columbus, Ohio), August 12, 13, 1857, May 14, 1858; *Salem Republican* (Salem, Ohio), February 3, 1858; *Steubenville Herald* (Steubenville, Ohio), May 20, 1858.


18. John A. Bingham, conversation with Mr. John N. Haverfield, Cadiz, Ohio, August 18, 1861, in Haverfield, "Reminiscences," p. 191.


24. John A. Bingham, letter to Professor Andrew F. Ross, Washington, D.C., July 14, 1861, Campbell Collection.


29. Bingham, letter to Basfield, August 12, 1861.
31. Ibid., pp. 3105, 3184.
34. Ibid., pp. 3-5.
41. The Crisis (Columbus, Ohio), June 18, 1862.
42. Cincinnati Enquirer, November 16, 1862.
46. John A. Bingham, letter to Professor Andrew F. Ross, Washington, D.C., March 2, 1862, Campbell Collection.
47. John A. Bingham, conversation with Dr. John W. Comly, Cadiz, Ohio, April 9, 1865, in Dr. John W. Comly, “Talks with Honorable John A. Bingham” (manuscript, 1890), p. 122, Campbell Collection. A medical practitioner, Comly was a lifetime friend of Bingham.
49. Richard Taylor was President Zachary Taylor’s son, a matter galloping to Bingham who had lookked up to the father because of the President’s willingness to admit California as a free state and his threat to hang anyone who would dare oppose a law that had admitted her. Bingham, conversation with Comly, in Comly, “Talks with Honorable John A. Bingham,” p. 123.
52. Ibid., p. 184. For Custer’s greatness at Gettysburg see Gregory I.W. Unwin, Custer Victorious: The Civil War Battles of General George Armstrong Custer (Rutherford: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1983), pp. 73-82.
61. John A. Bingham, letter to Basfield, Cadiz, Ohio, January 12, 1864. In the House of Representatives on March 4, 1862, Bingham introduced the Judiciary Committee’s report calling for the impeachment of Judge West H. Humphreys of the United States District Court for the State of Tennessee. The report charged Humphreys “with advocating Secession, aiding the Rebellion, refusing to hold [Federal] court, acting as a Confederate Judge, banishing and imprisoning Union men [including Andrew Johnson] and confiscating their property.” On May 6, 1862, the House approved Bingham’s call for impeaching the Judge. Speaker Grew appointed Bingham as chairman of the House managers who then ably presented the case to the Senate. By a vote of 36 to 0, the Senate found Humphreys guilty on each of the seven charges, dismissed him from his post, and disqualified him for future federal office. Congressional Globe, 37 Congress, 2 Session, pp. 1562, 1856-1867, 2101, 2134, 2205-2206, 2247-2248, 2262, 2277-2278, 2617, 2942-2953; Shotwell, Driftwood, p. 223.
adduced before the Court (New York: by the author, 1864), pp. 1-73.
71. Ibid.
75. John A. Bingham, conversation with Mr. John N. Haverfield, Cadiz, Ohio, April 16, 1865, in Haverfield, "Reminiscences," p. 225.
76. Ibid.
79. Ibid., pp. 5-6.
87. Dr. Campbell told the story to his son, John S. Campbell, Jr., who related it to the author at Cadiz, Ohio, May 22, 1978.
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The Paragon, built in 1819 in Cincinnati.