

They said it was degrading for a President to come like a thief in the night and make the American people the laughing stock of the entire world. But the incident was soon lost in the swirl of ominous events that engulfed the new family in the White House.

(Laughter of children off)

MARY

Abe, it's just as I keep telling you. You've got to take a stand.

LINCOLN

What stand do you mean, Mary?

MARY

You must show the country you're determined to keep the states united. You'll have to do something about it. You'll have to — right away.

LINCOLN

I know it, Mary. I know I will. Please, but don't let's talk about it now. Here come the children. Well, Willie — what do you and Tad think of your new home?

TAD

We were just telling Robert we'd never seen such a big house. It's twice as big as Uncle Ninian's in Springfield. Look, Willie — look at the paintings.

WILLIE

John Adams — Thomas Jefferson —

TAD

And Andrew Jackson — and Zachary Taylor — and, Maw, look — look here!

MARY

Yes, I see it, Tad.

TAD

George Washington. That's the picture Dolly Madison ran off with so the British couldn't burn it. Hey, Paw —

LINCOLN

Yes, Tad — what is it, son?

TAD

D'you suppose they'll ever hang a picture of you here?

LINCOLN

Well, I'll tell you, son. After reading the papers lately — I doubt it.

WILLIE

Aw, don't believe 'em, Paw. Paw — now that you're President — can I have a pony?

LINCOLN

Tell you what, Willie — we'll have to ask Congress about that.

MARY

Robert!

ROBERT

Yes, Mother?

MARY

Take the children out on the lawn. They can play there.

ROBERT

Very well, Mother. Come on, you two.

WILLIE *(Fading)*

Will you ask Congress about the pony, Paw?

TAD *(Fading)*

Can't we go down to Congress right now?

LINCOLN

We'll see about it later. Don't play too hard, now, so you'll be all tuckered out. *(Door closes)* Well, Mary, I think that Willie is looking better. Maybe we should buy him that pony.

MARY

Abe! Abe — I tell you again — the situation is serious! What are you going to do about Fort Sumter?

LINCOLN

I don't know, Mary. It's hard to know what to do about it. I've got to try to figure it out.

(*Music*)

LINCOLN

Gentlemen — I've called this meeting of the Cabinet to discuss the serious situation in Charleston. As I have already indicated to you, it is proposed that this government send relief to Fort Sumter. Do you think we should do it, Mr. Seward?

SEWARD

No! I do not. Such an action would provoke instant secession of the South — and lead us directly into a civil war.

LINCOLN

What about you, Mr. Chase?

CHASE

If it means war, I agree with Mr. Seward.

LINCOLN

You, Mr. Cameron?

CAMERON

Let the people of South Carolina have Fort Sumter, and let us have peace.

LINCOLN

Mr. Blair, what is your opinion?

BLAIR

If we fail to come to the defense of Fort Sumter, we may as well shut up shop as a self-respecting government. We must send relief, even if it *does* mean war.

LINCOLN

Mr. Welles?

WELLES

I disagree heartily with Mr. Blair.

LINCOLN

Mr. Smith?

SMITH

I vote "no" on sending relief.

LINCOLN

Mr. Bates?

BATES

My vote is the same. Evacuate Fort Sumter! If the South wants to secede and form a new nation, let them do it! There's room on this continent for as many nations as there are in Europe.

SEWARD

Our course is clear, Mr. President. The sentiment of this Cabinet is virtually six to one in favor of evacuation of Fort Sumter.

LINCOLN

Thank you, gentlemen. Thank you for giving me the benefit of your opinions. But the final responsibility rests on me.

BATES

Yes, Mr. President. And your first duty is to preserve peace.

LINCOLN

My first duty is to preserve this Union. And my policy must be governed by the dictates of my own conscience as to what is right. I shall give orders at once to the Army and Navy to send relief to Fort Sumter.

(*Murmurs*)

SEWARD

Mr. President! It won't be easy for you to justify this dangerous action to the Congress and the people.

LINCOLN

I know that, Mr. Seward. I know it won't be easy.

(*Music*)

LINCOLN

Fellow citizens of the Senate and House of Representatives:

Fort Sumter has been attacked and bombarded and has fallen. This action has forced upon the country the distinct issue, "immediate dissolution — or blood." This issue embraces more than the fate of these United States. It presents to the whole family of man the question whether a constitutional republic or democracy — a government of the people — by the same people — can or cannot maintain its territorial integrity against its own domestic foes. It forces us to ask: "Is there, in all republics, this inherent and fatal weakness?" Must a government, of necessity, be too strong for the liberties of its own people, or too weak to maintain its own existence? Gentlemen, we cannot escape history. We of this Congress and this administration will be remembered in spite of ourselves. We shall nobly save or meanly lose the last, best hope of earth.

(Timpani roll)

(Voices ad lib)

(Into: "Oh We're Coming Father Abraham a Hundred Thousand Strong")

NARRATOR

Abraham Lincoln was confronted with a divided nation rent asunder in tragic, civil war. And as the months of fear and anxiety passed many mistrusted Abraham Lincoln — scorned him — hated him — refused to fight under his leadership. And as the clouds of war darkened a nation, a personal sorrow was deepening in the heart of the gaunt figure in the White House.

Paw —

WILLIE

Yes, Willie?

LINCOLN

I want to see my pony. When can I see him, Paw?

WILLIE

LINCOLN

You'll see him soon, Willie.

WILLIE

Soon, Paw?

LINCOLN

Yes, son — but first you've got to get well. That's the main thing. Just rest quietly, son —

WILLIE

Stay with me awhile, will you, Paw?

LINCOLN

Yes, I will. Close your eyes and go to sleep. . . . How is he, Doctor? I want the *truth!* How is he?

DOCTOR

Come over here, Mr. President. (*Ad libs*) We're doing all we can —

LINCOLN (*Low*)

You've got to save his life. Doctor, you've got to —

DOCTOR (*Low*)

We're trying. That's all we can do now — try —, Mr. President.

LINCOLN (*After a moment*)

I understand. Thank you, Doctor.

(Music up and down)

LINCOLN

You mustn't give way, Mary. I know — I know how hard it is. Sometimes — I feel I can never be glad again. But — we've got to keep our sorrow to ourselves. There are many thousands of mothers and fathers, North and South, who have had their own sons die on the field of battle. It's up to us to set them an example in courage.

MARY (*Bitterly*)

That's one thing to be thankful for. At least our little boy died — an innocent child.

LINCOLN

Mary —

MARY

I'd rather have him go that way than have him killed in this horrible war. It's so cruel. It's so senseless. Brother fighting against brother. My own brothers are fighting on the Southern side, against us.

LINCOLN (*In a low tone*)

Mary! I wish you would not speak of that.

MARY

Why not, Abe? My brothers are fighting for the South because that's the cause they believe in. Why shouldn't I speak of it? I'm proud of them — *Abe!* Do you believe what the gossips are saying — that I'm a traitor, because my family came from Kentucky — that I'm really against you and the Northern cause —?

LINCOLN

Mary — you don't have to ask me that.
(*Music*)

CHAIRMAN OF SENATE COMMITTEE

Gentlemen — this committee of the Senate has been assembled in strictest secrecy to investigate a certain very grave matter. The belief is spreading throughout the country that all our misfortunes can be traced to one person — a spy in the White House! That person is Mrs. Lincoln.

FIRST MEMBER

Gentlemen, I beg you not to be too hasty. This matter is of the gravest importance to the nation.

SECOND MEMBER

It certainly is. With what we all know I'm in favor of exposing the whole presidential scandal. And I'd go as far as impeachment.

THIRD MEMBER

Now wait a minute. We can't have any *public* scandal. Not at this time, anyway.

(*Door opens*)

ARMY OFFICER (*Off*)

Attention, gentlemen!

CHAIRMAN

What is it?

OFFICER (*Off*)

The President!

CHAIRMAN

The President! How did he know we were meeting?

OFFICER (*Off*)

Will you go in, Mr. President?

LINCOLN (*Off*)

Thank you.

(*Sound: Lincoln's footsteps*)

LINCOLN (*Very gravely — slowly*)

I wish to make a statement to you gentlemen. It is as follows: "I, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, appear of my own volition before this Committee of the Senate to say that I, of my own knowledge, know that it is untrue that any of my family hold treasonable communication with the enemy."

(*Lincoln's footsteps, retreating*)

(*Door closes*)

(*Music*)

NARRATOR

The Senate Committee was deeply moved — and the investigation was dropped. But Lincoln's sadness was not relieved. On a chill, grey November day in 1863, the President was sitting on a platform on Cemetery Hill, in Gettysburg, listening to an oration by Edward Everett. It *was* an oration. It lasted two hours. But the crowd there loved it.
(*Sound: Cheers, Music — "We'll Rally Round the Flag"*)

FIRST LISTENER

Wonderful speech, wasn't it?

SECOND LISTENER

That's the kind of speech I like. Big words and old Everett sure knows how to say 'em.

LINCOLN (*His voice from far off*)

Fourscore and seven years ago, etc.

(*He goes through the Gettysburg Address during the following scene*)

FIRST LISTENER

Like to eat an apple?

SECOND LISTENER

Thanks.

FIRST LISTENER

Crop this year ain't so good.

(*Noise of apple eating*)

FIRST LISTENER

Say — old Abe's talking now.

SECOND LISTENER

Can't understand him. Can you?

FIRST LISTENER

Don't make much difference if we do. Abe can't hold a candle to Edward Everett as an orator. But come on. Let's try to get closer.

SECOND LISTENER

Well, I tell you — old Abe ain't so bad, you know. But he certainly picked the wrong time to be president.

FIRST LISTENER

Say! Did you hear what he said just then?

SECOND LISTENER

No — what was it?

FIRST LISTENER

He said, — nobody'd remember what he's saying here.

SECOND LISTENER

Well — he hit the nail on the head that time.

(*They both laugh*)

LINCOLN (*Off*)

That the nation, shall, under God, have a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people, by the people, for the people shall not perish from the earth.

(*There is silence, then perfunctory applause*)

FIRST LISTENER

Well, I guess he's finished.

SECOND LISTENER

Yes, he's finished. Come on, let's go home.

(*Music*)

NARRATOR

There were many who did not understand and appreciate the meaning of Lincoln's words at Gettysburg that day. But their portent and message have outlived the tragedy and chaos of those four sorrowful years. But at last the superior strength and wealth of the Northern States asserted themselves and the tragic war came to an end. And on March 4th, 1865, Abraham Lincoln was inaugurated for the second time.

LINCOLN (*Coming in*)

With malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow and his orphan — to do all which may achieve a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations.

(*Music*)

NARRATOR

April 14th, 1865, was Good Friday. It was a lovely Spring day in Washington, and the President and Mrs. Lincoln went for a stroll.

(*Background*)

VOICES (*Off*)

Good-day, Mr. President — Good-day, sir! Good-day!

LINCOLN

Good-day, there, boys. What's your regiment, son?

FIRST SOLDIER

The 157th New York Volunteers, Mr. President.

LINCOLN

Oh yes. Colonel Brown's Regiment. And you, sonny — what's yours?

SECOND SOLDIER

The 5th Michigan Cavalry, Mr. President.

LINCOLN

That's fine. Well, it's all over now, boys. You'll be going home soon and there'll be a heap of work for all of us to do. (*Ad libs: "That's right, Mr. President"*) Good-bye, boys — good-bye.

SOLDIERS (*Fading*)

Good-bye, — Good-day, Mr. President.

LINCOLN

You know, Mary, it's been a hard time for the people.

MARY

It's been a hard time for us, Abe.

LINCOLN

And I tell you when my term of office is over, we'll go back to Illinois and pass the rest of our lives in quiet. I'll take up law practice again, just as if nothing had happened. It will be good to be among our own neighbors again.

MARY

Oh, Abe, do you think people will ever feel really happy again?

LINCOLN

Yes, Mary. People get over these things if they try — even when they haven't much heart for it.

MARY

Well, we can try — but I don't really feel like going to the theatre tonight.

LINCOLN

We mustn't feel like that, Mary. It'll do us good. It's been a long time since we've been able to sit back and enjoy a real good laugh.

(*Music*)

NARRATOR

The same night. The Presidential box in Ford's Opera House.

(*Laughter*)

MRS. MOUNTCHESSINGTON (*Off — echo*)

Mr. Trenchard, you will please recollect you are addressing my daughter, and in my presence. Augusta, dear — to your room.

AUGUSTA (*Off — echo*)

Yes, ma. The nasty beast.

MARY (*On*)

Gracious Abe — what's everybody going to think — my hanging on to you so.

LINCOLN (*On*)

They won't think anything about it. Listen, Mary.

MRS. MOUNTCHESSINGTON (*Off — echo*)

I am aware, Mr. Trenchard, you are not used to the manners of good society — and that, alone, will excuse the impertinence of which you have been guilty.

ASA TRENCHARD (*Aside — off — echo*)

Don't know the manners of good society, eh? Well, I guess I know enough to turn you inside out, old gal — you sock-dologizing old man-trap.

(*Lincoln and theatre crowd laughing again*)

(*Shot*)

(*Thud*)

BOOTH (*Off — echo*)

Sic semper tyrannis!

(*Horror Chord*)

(*Then dirge music beginning far off — together with accented slow chuffing of train at funeral pace the effect builds under following*)

NARRATOR

There was a funeral.

It took long to pass its many given points.

Many millions of people saw it. . . .

The line of march ran seventeen hundred miles.

(*Chorus*) . . .

Yes, there was a funeral.

From his White House in Washington — where it began — they carried his coffin, and followed it nights and days for twelve days. . . .

Bells tolling, bells sobbing the requiem, the salute guns, cannon rumbling their inarticulate thunder.

To Springfield, Illinois, the old home town, the Sangamon nearby, the New Salem hilltop nearby, for the final rest of the cherished dust.

And the night came with great quiet.

And there was rest.

The prairie years, the war years, were over.

(*Music and chorus up and finish*)

(*Pause*)

ANNOUNCER

Thus in the closing words of Carl Sandburg's immortal testament to the great Emancipator, the Cavalcade of America's dramatization of Abraham Lincoln comes to a close. (*Applause*) To Raymond Massey, to Robert E. Sherwood, and to Carl Sandburg, our thanks. Du Pont, knowing that all Americans have a deep and sincere affection for all

things that touch upon Lincoln, is preparing a souvenir copy of tonight's script as it came to you over the air. A copy may be obtained by writing to du Pont, Wilmington, Delaware. And with it will go du Pont's earnest wish that it may serve to remind those who receive it of the hope and courage inspired by this simple man who takes his secure place in the small company of the immortals.

(*Music simultaneous*)

ANNOUNCER

Here is what Dr. Monaghan of Yale University, our historical advisor, has to say about next week's program.

MONAGHAN

In my opinion, next week's Cavalcade is truly an exciting scoop in American history. The author, Bessie James, spent more than twelve years researching thousands of documents and manuscripts. From her story material Cavalcade makes live again one of the most unusual women in American history. The rôle of that extraordinary woman will be played by Miss Ethel Barrymore. Here is the question which her characterization will answer: "What important woman pioneer in the field of 19th-century American journalism was formally convicted of being a common scold and had her fine paid by the Secretary of War?"

NARRATOR

To Harcourt, Brace, the publishers of *Abraham Lincoln: The War Years*, the sponsors of Cavalcade of America extend their grateful thanks for the coöperation which made this broadcast possible. The orchestra and musical effects were under the direction of Don Voorhees. This is Basil Ruysdael saying: Good night and best wishes from du Pont, makers of "Better Things for Better Living through Chemistry."

(*Station Identification*)

LINCOLN'S GETTYSBURG ADDRESS

Fourscore and seven years ago, our fathers brought forth upon this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation — or any nation so conceived and dedicated — can long endure.

We are met on a great battle-field of that war. We are met to dedicate a portion of that field as a final resting place of those who have given their lives that that nation might live.

It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.

But in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate, we cannot consecrate, we cannot hallow, this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it far above our poor power to add or to detract.

The world will very little note nor long remember what we say here; but it can never forget what they did here.

It is for us, the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work that they who fought here have thus far so nobly carried on. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us; that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion; that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain; that the nation shall, under God, have a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people, by the people, and for the people shall not perish from the earth.

WHEN du Pont inaugurated the fifth series of Cavalcade in America broadcasts, President Emeritus Dr. James R. Angell of Yale said:

"We are living in a period when world-shattering events are following one another with unprecedented rapidity, and the importance of a knowledge of history and of the prodigious forces which are at work in it was never greater.

"The new Cavalcade program offered by the du Pont Company over the facilities of the National Broadcasting Company promises to set a brilliant new pattern for sponsored radio productions. Drawing upon distinguished writers and scholarly historians, supported by skilled and experienced producers, it presents on the air the most significant personalities and the most dramatic events in the centuries-old history of the western world, culminating in the creation and development of the United States."

* * *

Du Pont, in considering the type of radio program it might sponsor, in all the early discussions found itself returning to the Cavalcade theme, for having been founded in 1802 its own history parallels the history of the United States.

With many strange and bewildering doctrines being advanced for experiment throughout the world, it was the opinion of the sponsors that they could be of public service in recalling to American people the origins of our unique freedom through dramatic stories of the men and women who won it, and of those who fought to hold it.

From the outset the program was pitched at a high level, which has been maintained, and even increased, as radio technique has improved, and the listening public's taste has increased in perception and sensitivity. Du Pont has tried, with the aid of able historians, to base its radio dramas on sincere and honest research into American history.

With all this in mind, it is gratifying to du Pont as sponsors to find a large proportion of the radio-listening audience welcoming the Cavalcade broadcasts. And particularly gratifying to find its conscientious effort to do humble homage to Abraham Lincoln so warmly received by our friends, as evidenced by the many thousands of requests for the script of the broadcast played from Chicago, February 13, 1940.