



ABRAHAM LINCOLN PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY & MUSEUM

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Lincoln bites back

*Best-selling author to appear March 6 at Presidential Museum
to debut his new Lincoln-themed vampire book*

Springfield, IL — The Great Emancipator, Honest Abe, our 16th President, the Railsplitter...and Vampire Hunter.

Seth Grahame-Smith will appear at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum (ALPLM) in Springfield, Illinois on Saturday, March 6 at 7 p.m. as one of the first stops on the release tour for his new book, *Abraham Lincoln: Vampire Hunter*. The new book follows on the heels of Grahame-Smith's *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies*, which reached number three on the New York Times Bestseller List in 2009.

The March 6 presentation and book signing are free, but reservations are required and may be made by calling (217) 558-8934. Copies of Grahame-Smith's books may be purchased that evening and in advance at the Presidential Museum Gift Shop.

Abraham Lincoln: Vampire Hunter follows the formula Grahame-Smith used in *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies*, weaving accurate historical detail and classical literature with tales of the undead. The result is an entertaining and educational blend of history and fantasy that should bring the Lincoln story to an entirely new audience.

With more than one million copies sold to date, Grahame-Smith's Jane Austen-meets-the-undead mash-up *rejudice and Zombies* is the most widely known of his books, which also include *How to Survive a Horror Movie: All the Skills to Dodge the Kills*, with an introduction by horror film director Wes Craven. He is also a film and television writer and producer, co-creating and serving as executive producer for the MTV comedy series "The Hard Times of R.J. Berger."

Abraham Lincoln was a fan of macabre literature, particularly stories and poems written by Edgar Allan Poe, and had committed Poe's *The Raven* to memory. Lincoln dabbled in poetry himself, and his verse mimicked Poe's dark themes. In the 1846 Lincoln poem *My Childhood-Home I See Again*, published in 1846 in the *Quincy Whig*, the future President tells of a childhood friend gone insane:

Poor Matthew! Once of genius bright,-
A fortune-favored child -
Now locked for aye, in mental night,
A haggard mad-man wild.

Poor Matthew! I have ne'er forgot
When first with maddened will,
Yourself you maimed, your father fought,
And mother strove to kill;

And terror spread, and neighbors ran,
And dang'rous strength to bind;
And soon a howling crazy man,
Your limbs were fast confined.

Lincoln also wrote an anonymous narrative published in the *Whig* and the *Sangamo Journal* in 1846, "Remarkable Case of Arrest For Murder," about a real murder case where the alleged victim appeared with amnesia in the courtroom just before the defendants, the Traylor brothers, were to be sentenced to death for murder. In the narrative, Lincoln admitted "while it is readily conceived that a writer of novels could bring a story to a more perfect climax, it may well be doubted, whether a stranger affair ever really occurred. Much of the matter remains in mystery to this day." The ALPLM has the original letter that Lincoln wrote to Joshua Speed on June 19, 1841 describing the incident that he recounted five years later for the *Whig*.

Grahame-Smith's book is not the only Lincoln-vampire connection in recent literature. Actor David Selby, who had the lead role in the 1960s vampire-themed TV series "Dark Shadows," is the author of *Lincoln's Better Angel*, a novel centering on an imagined walk with President Lincoln and a Vietnam veteran through Washington DC on a Fourth of July evening. A book in the ALPLM collection by Barbara and Dwight Steward, *The Lincoln Diddle*, has Edgar Allan Poe solving the mystery of Lincoln's 1865 assassination. Poe died in 1847 so the story line has to have Poe fake his death for it to make sense.

For more information about exhibits, programs and special events at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum, visit www.presidentlincoln.org.

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