

Insanity File Collection

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INSANITY FILE COLLECTION

2 boxes; .75 cubic feet

Historical Note

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

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

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

Provenance and Processing Note

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Scope and Content

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

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

Correspondence

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

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

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

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

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

Conservatorship Records

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

Contemporary Newspaper Clippings

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

Cook County Court Documents

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

Cook County Court Documents – Photocopies

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

Death and Estate Documents

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

Envelopes

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

Mary Todd Lincoln's Will – Drafts

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

Miscellaneous

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

Container List

BOX 1

CORRESPONDENCE

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

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

Folder 1

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

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

Folder 2

MTL to JBB	10 October 1872
MTL to JBB	17 January 1874
MTL to JBB	18 January 1874
MTL to JBB	11 November 1875
MTL to JBB	1 December 1875
MTL to County Judge of Cook County	23 July 1873

Telegrams about Mary Todd Lincoln's return from Florida

Folder 3

MTL to Edward Isham	12 March 1875
MTL to Edward Isham	12 March 1875
J.J.S. Wilson to manager, Jacksonville, Florida	undated
John Coyne to J.S.S. Wilson	12 [March] 1875
MTL to Robert Todd Lincoln	13 March 1875
John Coyne to J.J.S. Wilson	13 [March] 1875
J.C. Wilson to Robert Todd Lincoln	16 [March] 1875

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

BOX 2

CORRESPONDENCE (continued)

Robert Todd Lincoln (RTL) Correspondence

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

Correspondence from Robert Todd Lincoln (originals)

Folder 1

RTL to Myra Bradwell	13 August 1875
RTL to Myra Bradwell	14 August 1875
RTL to Elizabeth Todd Edwards	17 January 1876
RTL to Ninian W. Edwards	17 January 1876
RTL to Edward S. Isham	17 January 1876
RTL to MTL	15 August 1875

Correspondence from Robert Todd Lincoln (letter book copies)

Folder 2

RTL to David Davis	16 November 1875
RTL to Ninian W. Edwards	15 November 1875
RTL to Ninian W. Edwards	16 December 1875
RTL to Ninian W. Edwards	21 December 1875
RTL to Ninian W. Edwards	21 December 1875
RTL to John M. Palmer	23 December 1875
RTL to John T. Stuart	15 November 1875

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

Folder 3

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

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

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

Folder 4

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

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

Folder 5

RTL to Sally B. Orne	1 June 1875
Sally B. Orne to RTL	8 August 1875

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

Folder 6

CSS to J.P. Baker	23 August 1882
Note: On same page as letter to Commercial National Bank	
CSS to Mrs. S.T. Brown	20 February 1883
CSS to Wistar P. Brown	20 February 1883

CSS to Commercial National Bank, Illinois	23 August 188
Note: On same page as letter to J.P. Baker	
CSS to T.W. Dresser, M.D.	15 November 1882
Note: On same page as RTL to Mrs. John P. Brown (box 2, folder 3)	
CSS to R.F. Herndon and Co.	26 July 1882
Note: On same page as telegram from Mary H. Lincoln to Mrs. M.A. Connelly (box 2, folder 34)	
CSS to R.F. Herndon and Co.	2 August 1882

Correspondence from Edward Lewis Baker, Jr.

Folder 7

Edward Lewis Baker, Jr. to RTL	11 December
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Correspondence from Henry T. Blow

Folder 8

Henry T. Blow to RTL	3 August 1875
Original and photocopy	

Correspondence from Myra Bradwell

Folder 9

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

Correspondence from Elizabeth Todd Grimsley Brown

Folder 10

Elizabeth Todd Grimsley Brown to RTL	16 March [1875]
Elizabeth Todd Grimsley Brown to RTL	19 May 1875

Correspondence from Jacob Bunn

Folder 11

Jacob Bunn to RTL	24 June 1876
Jacob Bunn to RTL	3 July 1876

Correspondence from Robert Boyd

Folder 12

Robert Boyd to RTL	21 July 1882
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Correspondence from M.A.P. Corcoran

Folder 13

M.A.P Corcoran to RTL 11 January 1876
M.A.P Corcoran to RTL 9 March 1876
M.A.P Corcoran to RTL 21 June 1879

Correspondence from Willis Danforth

Folder 14

Willis Danforth to RTL 25 May 1875

Correspondence from David Davis (DD)

Folder 15

DD to RTL 23 May [1875]
Original and photocopy DD to RTL 25 May [1875]
Original and photocopy
DD to RTL 4 June [1875]
DD to RTL 9 June [1875]
DD to RTL 20 November 1875
DD to RTL 30 November [1875]
DD to RTL 22 May 1876
DD to Leonard Swett 19 May 1875

Correspondence from Elizabeth Todd Edwards (ETE)

Folder 16

ETE to MTL 31 March
ETE to MTL 5 November
ETE to RTL 11 August
ETE to RTL 12 August
ETE to RTL 13 August
ETE to RTL 14 August
ETE to RTL 17 August
ETE to RTL 15 September
ETE to RTL 15 September

Note: An undated page labeled *Private* appears to be associated with this letter.

ETE to RTL 22 September
ETE to RTL 5 November
ETE to RTL 12 November 1875
ETE to RTL 1 December 1875
ETE to RTL 16 January 1876
ETE to RTL 9 February 1876
ETE to RTL 29 October 1876

ETE to RTL

9 November 1882

Correspondence from Ninian Wirt Edwards (NWE)

Folder 17

NWE to David Davis	23 May 1876
NWE to David Davis	8 June 1876
NWE to RTL	12 November 1875
NWE to RTL	17 November 1875
NWE to RTL	18 November 1875
NWE to RTL	1 December 1875
NWE to RTL	14 December 1875
NWE to RTL	18 December 1875
NWE to RTL	22 December 1875
NWE to RTL	28 December 1875
NWE to RTL	5 January 1876
NWE to RTL	14 January 1876
NWE to RTL	15 January 1876
NWE to RTL	6 April 1876
NWE to RTL	18 April 1876
NWE to RTL	21 April 1876
NWE to RTL	undated [early June 1876]

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

NWE to RTL	17 June 1876
NWE to RTL	17 June 1876
NWE to RTL	17 June 1876
NWE to RTL	19 June 1876
NWE to RTL	26 June 1876
NWE to Patterson, Richard J.	23 August 1875

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

NWE to Leonard Swett	22 June 1876
NWE to Leonard Swett	24 June 1876

Correspondence from J.M. Gibson

Folder 18

J.M. Gibson to RTL	21 May 1875
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Correspondence from A.S. McDill (ASM)

Folder 19

A.S. McDill to RTL	6 September 1875
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Correspondence from Andrew W. McFarland

Folder 20

Andrew W. McFarland to RTL	8 September 1875
Andrew W. McFarland to RTL	10 September 1875
Andrew W. McFarland to RTL	11 September 1875
Andrew W. McFarland to RTL	1 October 1875

Correspondence from L.M. McGinnis

Folder 21

L.M. McGinnis to RTL	22 May [1875]
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Correspondence from John M. Palmer

Folder 22

John M. Palmer to RTL	21 December 1875
John M. Palmer to RTL	19 April 1876
John M. Palmer to Leonard Swett	24 April 1876

Correspondence from Richard J. Patterson (RJP)

Folder 23

RJP to Ayer and Kales	18 May 1875
RJP to James B. Bradwell	18 August 1875
RJP to Myra Bradwell	9 August 1875
RJP to RTL	9 August 1875
RJP to RTL	12 August 1875
RJP to RTL	17 August 1875
RJP to RTL	20 August 1875
RJP to RTL	2 September 1875
RJP to RTL	7 September 1875

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

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

Folder 24

Nathan Smith Davis to A&K	18 May 1875
Ralph N. Isham to A&K	18 May 1875
James Stewart Jewell to A&K	18 May 1875
Hosmer Allen Johnson to A&K	18 May 1875
Charles Gilman Smith to A&K	18 May 1875

Correspondence from Mr. H.G.(?) Samuels

Folder 25

Mr. Samuels to RTL 25 April [187]6

Correspondence from John Todd Stuart

Folder 26

John Todd Stuart to RTL 10 May 1875
John Todd Stuart to RTL 21 May 1875
John Todd Stuart to Leonard Swett 21 May 1875

Correspondence from Leonard Swett

Folder 27

Leonard Swett to Ninian W. Edwards 20 June 1876.
Note: Letter book copy. Faded with some penciled transcriptions.

Folder 28

Leonard Swett to Ninian W. Edwards 28 June 1876
Leonard Swett to Ninian W. Edwards 1 July 1876

Correspondence from Abram Wakeman

Folder 29

Abram Wakeman to Myra Bradwell 17 August 1875
Note: See the Myra Bradwell to Abram Wakeman (box 2, folder 9) for her letter to him.

CONSERVATORSHIP RECORDS

Folder 30

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

CONTEMPORARY NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS

Items in this series are in envelopes housed in a single folder and are arranged by date, some of which are conjectures since most clippings do not have printed dates. In the list below, the headline or, if no headline, the first line of the article is quoted.

Folder 31

Envelope 1 May 1875	The proceedings in the County Court... It will pain our reader to learn that Mrs.... A Sad Revelation Mrs. Lincoln's Insanity The Case of Mrs. Lincoln President Lincoln's Widow
Envelope 2 20 May 1875	Clouded Reason
Envelope 3 21 May 1875	Insanity's Freaks
Envelope 4 22(?) May 1875	Attempt at Suicide
Envelope 5 23 August 1875 25 August 1875	Interview with Judge Bradwell Mrs. Lincoln
Envelope 6 August 1875	Correspondence of Dr. Patterson (August 15) and Judge Bradwell (August 19)
Note: Dates appear to be the dates on the letters. Both letters were published in the same article, which had no date.	
August 1875	Her physicians pronounce her sane...
28 August 1875	Letter from Dr. Patterson
28 August 1875	Fragment: part of Dr. Patterson's letter
Envelope 7 16 June 1876	A Happy Denouement

COOK COUNTY COURT DOCUMENTS

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

Folder 32

- Certified copy of proceedings and order declaring Mary Lincoln an insane person,
19 May 1875
- Certified copy of proceedings and order appointing Robert Lincoln conservator,
14 June 1875

COOK COUNTY COURT DOCUMENTS – PHOTOCOPIES

Items are arranged by date.

Folder 33

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

DEATH AND ESTATE DOCUMENTS

Most of these documents also appear in previous correspondence folders.

Folder 34

RTL to Heinrich Best	24 July 1871
RTL to C.C. Brown	10 Oct. 1884
Note: Not in RTL's hand	
RTL to Collector of Customs	27 July 1869
RTL to Ninian W. Edwards	17 Jan. 1876

RTL to Ninian W. Edwards	20 April 1876
RTL to Ninian W. Edwards	24 April 1876
RTL to Ninian W. Edwards	25 April 1876
RTL to Ninian W. Edwards	28 June 1876
RTL to North T. Gentry	12 June 1907
RTL to James Harlan	26 July 1882
Note: Not in RTL's hand	
RTL to William S. Huntington	18 June 1869
RTL to William S. Huntington	19 March 1869
RTL to William S. Huntington	29 March 1869
RTL to William S. Huntington	June 1869
RTL to William S. Huntington	21 March 1870
RTL to William S. Huntington	22 Nov. 1870
RTL to Kueiler	29 Nov. 1875
RTL to Maquay Hooker & Co.	8 June 1871
Note: 2 letters on this date with different content	
RTL to Moschanitz & Russell	13 June
RTL to Nelson & Bassen (?)	1 Dec. 1874
RTL to John M. Palmer	20 April 1876
RTL to Phillippe	8 Jan.
RTL to Mrs. W.W. Porter	6 July 1907
RTL to T.H. Quinan	10 Jan. 1873
RTL to William H. Reed	5 May 1884
Note: Not in RTL's hand.	
RTL to A. Schumacher & Co.	2 Jan.
RTL to A. Schumacher & Co.	8 Jan. 1879
RTL to Sir	27 June 1876
Note: 2 letters on this date	
RTL to Leonard Swett	25 May 1884
Note: Not in RTL's hand	
RTL to Leonard Swett	2 June 1884
Note: Not in RTL's hand	
Mary H. Lincoln to Mrs. M.A. Connelly	26 July 1882
"Mrs. Lincoln's estate"	
Note: Handwritten on ruled legal paper; no date	
CSS to J.P. Baker	23 Aug. 1882
Note: Written by CSS on behalf of RTL	
CSS to John P. Baker	26 Oct. 1882
Note: Written by CSS on behalf of RTL. On same page as CSS to Elizabeth Todd Edwards.	
CSS to Orrin Baldwin	21 July 1882
CSS to T.W. Dresser	15 Nov. 1882
Note: On same page as copy of letter from RTL to Mrs. John P. Brown.	
CSS to Elizabeth Todd Edwards	26 Oct. 1882
Note: Written by CSS on behalf of RTL. On same page as CSS to John P. Baker.	

ENVELOPES

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

Folder 35

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

MARY TODD LINCOLN'S WILL – DRAFTS

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

Folder 36

"My house 375 West Wash St..."

Note: This draft mentions "bonds of 81" indicating it was likely written sometime between early 1881 and MTL's death in July 1882.

"The house to be given..."

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

MISCELLANEOUS

Folder 37

- Unattributed receipt for unknown rental, 24 July 1874 – 24 July 1875
- RTL note instructing unknown recipient (MTL?) to "cut off absolutely all communication with improper persons"
- Pencil-written business card for Mason B. Loomis
- A typescript overview of MTL's situation at Bellevue Place

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

1870
1871
1872
1873
1874
1875
1876
1877
1878
1879
1880