

Script from Civil War Presentation

1:55 p.m. Announcement to invite audience to gather around podium and take their seats within the next five minutes for the start of the program

2:00 p.m. Introduction by Union Soldier

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: May I direct your attention to the front podium as we prepare for our speeches. As we sit here in **November of 1863**, we are part of a historic visit that we are sure you will remember for a long time and that you will be telling your grandchildren that you were here. We await the arrival of the President of the United States, Mr. Abraham Lincoln.

He is traveling by railroad and a delay has occurred. We are being informed that there is some destruction to the railroad tracks, but not to worry. The President is safe and well-guarded by our brave soldiers of Osage County.

While we are waiting, our Governor of Missouri, the Honorable Hamilton R. Gamble, has agreed to share some words. Governor Gamble has been the leader for our State through this difficult period of time during our country's history.

Governor Gamble, we invite you to come forward for your comments.

THANK YOU, gentleladies and gentlemen of this fine city of Westphalia. I appreciate your welcome. I realize that we all have come here together to see and honor our President, Mr. Abraham Lincoln. As this brave soldier of our Union Army announced, President Lincoln is experiencing some delay and I as your governor have been asked to say a few words. SO I respectfully seek your time while we are awaiting the arrival of the President.

I realize none of you here directly voted for me to be your Governor. We are here today in November of 1863 but at the beginning of this military conflict of the War of Rebellion, truly a civil war, we had a state government under the elected governor Clayborn Fox Jackson, who wanted our great state of Missouri to join the Southern States to abandon the principles of Union. Much controversy existed between Governor Jackson and the federal military authorities in months May and June of 1861.

However, when those state leaders literally ran away, our State Constitution required a Convention to replace those state office holders who abandoned their positions. I agreed to accept the office of provisional governor as elected by those delegates that you the people chose to be part of that Constitutional Convention of 1861. My role was intended to be temporary but here we are two and half years later in 1863 and it is my desire to see the end of this War. However, we cannot use violence and civil unrest to accomplish what we want. I am aware that some of us, even in this audience, want to take extreme measures.

My position has always been that the Constitution is the guiding principle on what we do. We cannot permit the passions, the emotions, of the day to dictate what we as a government, we as a people do.

I have fought to prevent a military takeover of our state government.

I opposed General Fremont's efforts to become a military governor. I opposed his Proclamation to free the slaves as not the correct time for such sudden change. We still have a constitution and the military cannot arbitrarily arrest our people even the free black person.

I first want our civil and criminal courts to be fully functional. Our citizens deserve to be judged under civil law not under martial law.

If I may be permitted to go back in time when I was a Judge upon the Missouri Supreme Court some ten years ago. The Court was called upon to determine whether a man of African descent should be declared a free man and no longer a slave as he was then treated. I wrote the dissenting opinion in which I ruled that the black gentleman named Dred Scott should be and was a free person. The law of Missouri as I read it was that once a free man always a free man. That is when Mr. Dred Scott was living in the State of Illinois and the territory of Wisconsin he become a free man under the laws of those jurisdictions. Missouri was required to respect that status of freedom. While my fellow judges on the Supreme Court overruled me, I strongly disagreed. If I may be permitted to share with you a part of my written dissenting opinion.

We cannot deviate.

As your governor, I still believe in those principles of the rule of law. However, we are now a divided country a divided State.

And the long festering issue of slavery has been foisted upon us.

Although I was born and educated in the state of Virginia, I have made this great state of Missouri my home and my life's work. I am familiar with its history. How the territory of Missouri was once under the rule of the countries of France and Spain prior to the Louisiana Purchase. That the laws of slavery were different from what the American settlers understood when they immigrated from the East to the frontiers of Missouri bringing their slaves with them.

That when the territory of Missouri in the year of 1820 applied to be a State and created such a loud fire alarm in the federal Congress that a Compromise had to be imposed allowing Missouri to be a slave state while at the same time the State of Maine entered the Union as free state along with setting a boundary line between North and South where slavery might or might not be permitted.

I am aware that Congress allowed its passions to change the law in 1850 with the Kansas Nebraska Act permitting the new territories to decide the issue of slavery by popular vote allowing strangers to flood into Kansas to vote on the issue of slavery. But the consequences were the fights at the border between Missouri and Kansas with bushwackers and abolitionists retaliating against each other responding to death and destruction with more death and destruction.

Then our federal Supreme Court has taken upon itself to rule that the gentleman from Missouri named Dred Scott is not even a citizen worthy of any rights to be recognized by the white man.

All this history has been brought to you here in Osage County. Your men and your families are in this fight. I am aware of your brave men that have fought gallantly on the battlefields of this War. I know some of the family names of Plassmeyer, Berhorst, Crede and may others. We want to honor their lives and hopefully in the far off future this community of Westphalia will continue to remember and honor their service to our country.

Today, as we sit here in November of 1863, Missouri and its citizens are a critical and strategic part of a successful war effort. We have the great waterways of the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers for transportation. We have valuable iron, lead and hemp and our crops to support the soldiers. But we have our internal fights. We have many citizens still sympathetic to the Southern confederate cause. And the forceful imposition of violence from the federal troops occupying our State, which as a

consequence, have convinced many of our citizens to side with the South in order to assert the rights of states to govern their local affairs rather than suffer federal occupation.

On the other extreme we have the radical Republicans who want immediate emancipation of the slaves and harsh retaliatory measures taken about any citizen siding with the South. I know many of my citizens here in Westphalia are reading the German newspapers from St. Louis. I as the governor receive many criticisms for not taking the desired extreme positions. I have been labelled a traitor and a secret secessionist.

Even, if you here in the audience, favor what is written in the German newspapers, I want to assure you that we must mediate a compromise so as to end this bloodshed. But it will take time and patience for all. Any extreme position on either side will only create more chaos and destruction. As your leader, I cannot tolerate allowing our state further damage.

We will soon be welcoming Mr. Lincoln our President.

I will be asking President Lincoln to assure us Missourians that we can have hope that this War will be ending soon and that his federal troops will show more discipline in the treatment of our citizens. I wrote a letter to the President over two years ago expressing my concerns about a military takeover. I will ask to read that letter out loud so you the people can learn whether or not we have the support of our President. Our communities in Osage County have suffered enough loss.

But our Union armies are starting to turn the tide into successful actions. We have had a victory earlier this summer in Vicksburg. Further east in Pennsylvania, the battle at Gettysburg has given the Union hope that the Southern armies are not able to invade the North. Although Gettysburg incurred great losses for both sides . . .

PRESIDENT LINCOLN walks down to the podium amid the cheers of the audience.

Gamble greets Lincoln at the podium on the front porch of the log cabin.



***A dialogue of the issues that Missouri faced during the American Civil War
as related by its provisional governor, Hamilton Rowan Gamble,
and by the President of the United States, Abraham Lincoln***

GAMBLE: Genteladies and Gentlemen. The President of the United States has arrived. Mr. President, welcome to the great State of Missouri and to our great people of Westphalia in Osage County. How was your trip?

LINCOLN: Honorable Governor, I appreciate your kind welcome. You know as trains and stagecoaches go, even the delays in schedules are behind the clock. I believe it important to respect a person's time, but I sure apologize for my tardiness. But Missouri sure has the prettiest country landscapes as it does a man's soul good to be away from the crowded cities.

GAMBLE: We sure do hope the good Missouri air will refresh you. The news we hear is that your job as our leader is full of unending fights and disappointments. And we do not mean to add more dry fodder to a burning haybarn, but I have explained to our Missouri citizens that you have addressed some of our concerns about the undisciplined behaviors of some of the Union soldiers who have occupied our State. You ably addressed General Fremont and his imposition of martial law and his premature emancipation proclamation. I know that you did read my letter to you but in order to reinforce the concerns of the common Missourian, I would invite a public reading - if Mr. President, I might invite your time in listening.

My letter addressed to the President of the United States, The White House, Washington D.C. dated August 26, 1861:

"The actions of federal troops in Missouri had done much to embarrass and cripple me in my attempts to restore peace and fidelity to the Union throughout the State. In fact, I have very little hope that peace can be restored while the friends of the Constitution are unable to defend the acts of the military officers of the federal government. Those friends are first silent and then lukewarm. I am not ignorant of the fact that in all wars there are violations of private rights, but it is seldom in modern times that such abuses have the express sanction of officers in high command. I leave this subject to your consideration merely remarking that I am continually embarrassed by the complaints of real Union men against the action of the military, whose conduct I can neither excuse nor control. While I have become hardened against complaints of secessionists, I have a deep interest in the protection of real Union men. If it were possible to subject the military in acting upon unarmed citizens to any control of a civil officer or a body of civilians, much of the cause of present complaint would be removed."

Mr. President, I appreciate you allowing me to have read my letter to you to my fellow citizens of Missouri, who now stand before you and with you. I know their well-being is your concern.

LINCOLN: Governor Gamble, well written and well read. Yes you are correct, the citizens are of great concern. I know that your untiring efforts have enabled Missouri to remain in the Union. Border states like Missouri must remain as a part of these United States of America if we are to succeed against this rebellion of the South. As you know, I agreed with your concerns and I did relieve General Fremont of his command in Missouri and I rescinded his emancipation proclamation as well as ease the controls of martial law.

In fact, if you will allow me to read my letter showing you my decision to agree with you regarding the prosecution of this war so that our citizens of Missouri will know that we can work together.

I wrote to Illinois Senator Orville H. Browning the following:

[Letter as read by Lincoln]

GAMBLE: Thank you, Mr. President. We both agree that it is the rule of law that should govern our society, not the whims of one man or one group of men. As you know, that standard is what I tried to express when I was a judge upon the Missouri Supreme Court over ten years ago. While I sought respect as a Judge and gave respect to other Judges, I am still having some problems with the current state of law expressed by our federal Supreme Court in the Dred Scott case. What were your thoughts after reading Judge Taney's opinion?

LINCOLN: Well governor I held my head down. I too know it is important to respect the rulings of our Judges, but Judge Taney clearly stated that Mr. Dred Scott could not participate in a court proceeding and that the Court had no jurisdiction, with which I disagreed. But for any judge, especially a Supreme Court Judge, who is entrusted with the last word on matters of law, to continue his opinion with explosive language about our fellow men whose skin color differs is beyond the pale. Judge Taney's ruling has contributed to our current situation of conducting a War.

GAMBLE: You are correct that we are in a delicate situation. Missouri, being a border state that permits slavery, makes the business of governing a balancing act. How can we as politicians protect the property rights of our citizens as required by the Constitution according to the Supreme Court but at the same time recognize the humanity of our fellow men and women and children of color.

LINCOLN: Governor I empathize with the hard work you have here in Missouri in keeping law and order. As a young man traveling by riverboat down the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers to New Orleans to deliver our farm products, I was appalled at what I saw at slave auctions. As President, I have walked the tightrope to have balance. I believe in our prior correspondences, and through my Attorney General, Edmund Bates, who I believe is your brother-in-law.

GAMBLE: Yes you are correct Mr. President. Edmund's wife is sister to my wife and also Edmund and I shared a law office in St. Louis in our younger days.

LINCOLN: Yes, Attorney General Bates does speak highly of your past work as a lawyer.

Part of my administration's balancing act was the issuance of the Emancipation Proclamation earlier this year. As an act of military justice, I signed this Proclamation to free any slaves held in any state deemed in rebellion against our country. I realize that this edict does not apply to this great State of Missouri, but our goal is to recognize the issue of slavery as the cause of our division and that gradually we will eradicate this peculiar institution of bondage of our fellow human beings.

GAMBLE: My administration too supports your policy of gradual emancipation. I think we both recognize that we cannot overcome slavery all at once. In fact, I remember a speech you gave, I believe in Chicago at the Republican National Convention.

LINCOLN: You are correct, Governor. Please permit me to repeat what I said then.

GAMBLE: Yes, please, our people of Osage County are all ears.

LINCOLN: If elected, Republicans may not root out the evils of slavery all at once, but may at least prevent its extension. If I find a venomous snake lying on the open prairie, I seize the first stick and kill it at once, immediately. But if that snake is in bed with my children, I must be more cautious or otherwise, I shall, in striking the snake, also strike the children, or possibly arouse the reptile to bite the children. Slavery is the venomous snake in bed with the children. But if the question is whether to kill the snake on the prairie or put it in bed with other children, I think we had better kill it !

GAMBLE: Well stated. Speaking of children, Mr. President, as you see, some of our young ones from this fair city of Westphalia have come to see you. As a lawyer before you became our President, you had a reputation as a winning advocate for your clients. May we invite you to share some of your favorite cases from the Courtroom.

LINCOLN: Why of course. The youth are our future and I compliment each of you in the audience for your interest.

I had the fortune of a diverse clientele. So I have many stories to tell but two cases come to mind:

[choice of cases such as:

Railroad Bridge v. Steamboat

And

Criminal case]

Interesting cases indeed and I would recommend to any young person willing to work hard and learn new things, that you find a mentor, who is a respected lawyer with integrity and spend time in his law office and learn and you too will be able to have interesting cases.

Why, Governor, I am sure you too had some success with interesting clients. What can you share.

GAMBLE: Thank you, Mr. President. In the frontiers of Missouri, you are correct that interesting clients abound. A couple cases with which I participated include:

- Spanish land title disputes
- Freedom lawsuits against former masters

I also want to repeat what our President advises to the youth. Study diligently and provide service to the public and you will be successful.

Mr. President as I walked among the citizens before you arrive, many expressed concern about this War. Osage County has had its fair share of the loss in human lives. One topic the people of Osage County have talked about is whether we are coming to an end of this War of Rebellion. Rumor has it that you favor General Ulysses Grant. In spite of his Union victory at Vicksburg earlier this year, many people have called General Grant a drunk. But there is talk that you as Commander-in-Chief might want to

promote General Grant for more responsibility. We in Missouri need better leadership, not drinking buddies to get us out of this War.

LINCOLN: As you know, General Grant has strong ties to Missouri. His wife, the lovely Miss Dent and her parents are respected citizens of St. Louis. General Grant was a commander in Central Missouri for a short period of time in the summer of 1861. He successfully executed in leading the battle at Belmont in southeast Missouri. He is willing to fight and that is better than many of our generals. If you can tell me the brand of whiskey he drinks, I will be sure that he and each of our generals have a barrel if that will cause them to fight more aggressively to end this War.

GAMBLE: Regarding another battle, we have heard that you recently visited a battlefield in Pennsylvania. We in Missouri have not yet heard of that recent speech you gave at Gettysburg. We hear it was short but we think important enough for us to hear it. Can you give it again for our citizens here today.

LINCOLN: [recites the Gettysburg Address]

GAMBLE: Thank you so much for those inspiring words Mr. President. We have enjoyed this historic visit of the President of the United States coming to our small town. Let us cheer our President.

[Lincoln and Gamble walk back to the back porch of the log cabin as William Morlock enters front stage for his presentation. Then when Mr. Morlock invites the students to read the names of the fallen soldiers of Osage County, Lincoln and Gamble can re-appear to participate in the ringing of the bell or as directed.]