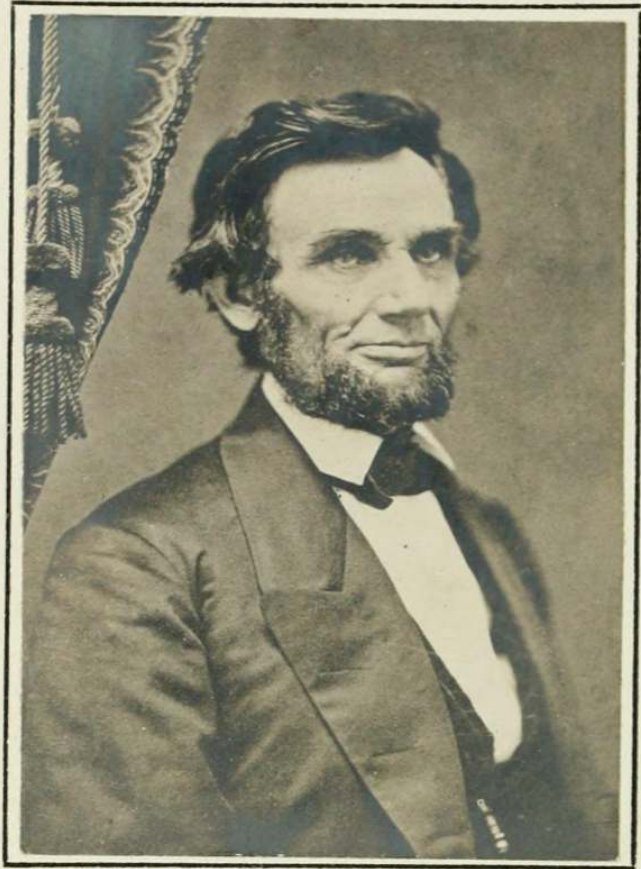




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ABRAHAM LINCOLN  
(Meserve No. 35)

LINCOLN'S  
Ellsworth Letter

AND ALSO THE LAST LETTER  
FROM COLONEL ELLSWORTH  
TO HIS FATHER AND MOTHER

Privately Printed  
NEW YORK  
1916



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## FOREWORD.

ON May 24th, 1861, a month and a half after Sumter surrendered and nearly two months before the first battle of Bull Run, President Lincoln's friend, Colonel Ephraim Elmer Ellsworth was shot in Alexandria, Virginia, by Jackson, the proprietor of the Marshall House, after the impetuous young man had torn down a confederate flag from the top of the building. His body was taken to the White House and lay in state in the East Room. He was the first officer killed in the War of the Rebellion. The President on the following day wrote a letter of sympathy to the sorrowing father and mother.

Ellsworth was a New York boy. At the age of twenty-two he was Adjutant-General of the State of Illinois. In 1859 he studied law in Lincoln's office in Springfield. He organized in Chicago the military company known as Ellsworth's Zouaves, and in 1860 toured the country holding competitive drills with various military organizations. When Lincoln came to Washington Ellsworth accompanied him, and in April in New York he organized and, although but twenty-four, became the Colonel of the 11th

9  
P. H. 13 D. 63

New York Infantry, known as the Fire Zouaves, as the regiment was recruited principally from the Fire Department of New York City.

This beautiful tribute is perhaps the most touching of all the letters written by Lincoln. He was writing of a man whom he knew and loved. The letter does not reach the lofty tone of that to Mrs. Bixby of Boston, or the Gettysburg address, but in the choice of fitting words to stricken parents regarding a son and personal friend, few letters have ever been written that may compare with it.

By the courtesy of Mr. Judd Stewart, in whose notable collection of Lincolniana is the original letter, a fac-simile is shown here.

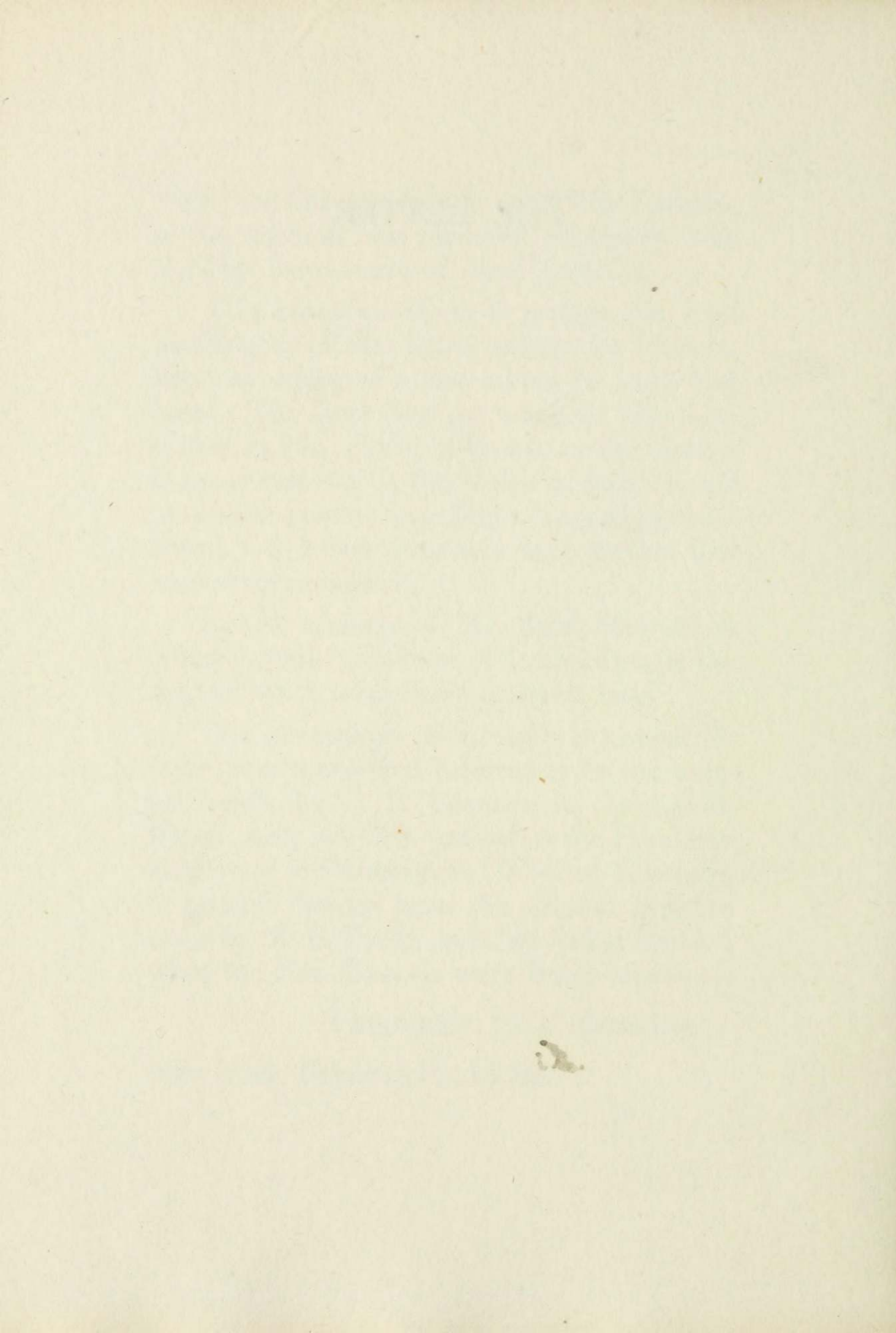
The photograph of Lincoln is printed directly from a negative, believed to be the original, made by C. S. German, in Springfield, Illinois, early in 1861, just before the President-elect went to Washington. That of Ellsworth is printed directly from the original negative made by M. B. Brady, probably during the time when the Fire Zouaves were being organized.

FREDERICK HILL MESERVE.

New York, February 15, 1916.



# THE LETTER



Washington D.C.

May, 25. 1861

To the Father and Mother of Col.  
Elmer E. Ellsworth:

My dear Sir and Madam,

In the untimely  
loss of your noble son, our affliction  
here, is scarcely less than your own.  
So much of promised usefulness  
to one's country, and of bright hopes  
for one's self and friends, have rare-  
ly been so suddenly dashed, as  
in his fall. In size, in years, and  
in youthful appearance, a boy  
only, his power to command men,  
was surpassingly great. This power,  
combined with a fine intellect, an  
indomitable energy, and a taste al-  
together military, constituted in him,  
as seemed to me, the best natural  
talent, in that department, I ever knew.

And yet he was singularly modest and deferential in social intercourse. My acquaintance with him began less than two years ago; yet through the latter half of the intervening period, it was as intimate as the disparity of our ages, and my engrossing engagements, would permit. To me, he appeared to have no indulgence or partialities; and I never heard him utter a profane, or an intemperate word. What was conclusive of his good heart, he never forgot his parents. The honors he labored for so laudably, and, in the end, so gallantly gave his life, he meant for them, no less than for himself.

In the hope that it may be no intrusion upon the sacredness of your sorrow, I have ventured

to address you this tribute to the  
memory of my young friends, and  
your loved and early fallen child.

May God give you that conso-  
lation which is beyond all earthly  
power.

Sincerely your friend  
in a common af-  
fection -

A. Lincoln





E. ELMER ELLSWORTH  
Colonel 11th N. Y. Infantry





THE LETTER FROM COLONEL  
ELLSWORTH TO HIS FATHER  
AND MOTHER WRITTEN ON THE  
NIGHT BEFORE HIS DEATH.



Head quarters 1<sup>st</sup> Louisiana  
Camp Lincoln

Washington D.C.

May 23<sup>rd</sup> 61

My dear Father and Mother

The Regt

is ordered to move across  
the river tonight - We have  
no means of knowing what  
reception we are to meet with.  
I am inclined to the opinion  
that our entrance to the city  
of Alexandria will be hotly  
contested & I am fi

formed a large force have  
arrived there to day - Should  
this happen my dear parents  
it may be my lot to  
be injured in some man-  
ner. Whatever may happen  
cherish the consolation



that I was engaged in the  
performance of a sacred  
duty - and tonight slipping  
over the probabilities of the  
future & the occurrences of the  
past I am perfectly content  
to accept whatever my for-  
-tune may be. Confident that  
he who noteth even the  
fall of a sparrow ~~will~~ will  
have some purpose in  
the fate of one like me -  
My darling & ever loved

parents, good bye. God bless  
protect & care for you.  
Elihu





Twenty-five copies are printed containing the fac-simile of the Lincoln letter, and also life photographs of Lincoln and Ellsworth, and in addition a photographic copy of the last letter of Ellsworth to his parents.

No. *Proof Copy*

*Frederick Hill Meserve*







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