

Harvey Hogg (1833-1862)

Harvey Hogg, a lawyer from Bloomington and a Civil War cavalry commander, led an interesting life. Born in Tennessee on September 14, 1833, he was the youngest of three children. His mother passed away when he was just 3 years old, and his father died when he was 7. After his father's death, Harvey and his siblings were taken care of by his stepmother and uncle. Hogg was raised in a family that supported slavery, but as he grew older, he strongly believed that slavery was wrong. He attended Cumberland University in Tennessee and later Emory and Henry College in Virginia, where he became known for his strong speeches against slavery. He even freed the enslaved Black people his father had left him.

Hogg married Prudence Alcorn in 1855 and got involved in politics, supporting the anti-slavery Republican Party. In the mid-1850s, he moved with his wife to Bloomington, Illinois, where he continued to fight against slavery and became an important figure in the community. He also worked as a lawyer and supported Abraham Lincoln's political career.

In Bloomington, Hogg's first home burned down in 1856, but he received help from the local community, which made him feel connected to the town. He later became close friends with his neighbors and even planted a row of maple trees along the street.

Although Hogg's political views sometimes led to rumors and accusations, such as the claim that he kept an enslaved person, he was a strong advocate for freedom and worked hard to improve his community. In 1857, he partnered with Ward Lamon, who would later become Abraham Lincoln's bodyguard. Hogg was also involved in several important legal cases, including a famous murder trial in which Isaac Wyant was accused of murdering William "Anson" Rusk in Clinton Illinois in 1855.

Laden with two pistols, Wyant entered the office where Rusk was located and fatally shot him four times: once each in the head, shoulder blade, side, and arm. Wyant said he had killed the man that "murdered" his arm. The issue stemmed from a land dispute, whereupon Rusk and Wyant traded insults, with Rusk ultimately shooting Wyant (who had pulled out a knife), in the arm. The arm had to be amputated as a result. Rusk reportedly had been acting strange, speaking irrationally, and even dug up his amputated arm as a means to cope with phantom limb pains.

One of Wyant's lawyers, Leonard Swett, argued that the chloroform used to put Wyant to sleep before his surgery made him act strangely and affected his usual clear thinking. Swett used testimonies from several doctors to show that chloroform could make someone act insane. The jury agreed with Swett's argument and declared Wyant not guilty by reason of insanity on April 5, 1857 at 1:30 a.m. Wyant was sent to the Illinois State Hospital for the Insane in Jacksonville, Illinois.

It's not clear when Hogg became friends with Lincoln, but they probably met because they worked together as lawyers and both supported the Republican candidate Fremont in the 1856 presidential election. Hogg strongly backed Lincoln when he ran for U.S. Senate against the Democrat Stephen A. Douglas in 1858. Hogg, a member of the Young Men's Association and the Republican Club, gave a powerful speech supporting Lincoln. In it, he criticized the Dred Scott decision, saying that it wasn't valid because previous Missouri court decisions said slaves who moved to Illinois were free. He also spoke out against Squatter Sovereignty, which he said favored pro-slavery ideas over anti-slavery ones.

Hogg was an active member of the Republican Party, supporting Lincoln and attending Republican conventions. He took part in the Bloomington and McLean County Republican Conventions, where he spoke out against the expansion of slavery into new territories. At a key

convention in 1856, Hogg's speech received loud applause because he was from a slave state and supported anti-slavery views.

The important Bloomington convention in 1856 came out of opposition to the Kansas-Nebraska Act, which allowed slavery to spread into areas where it had previously been banned. In the next few years, political parties in the U.S. started to divide into pro-slavery and anti-slavery groups. In 1856, Republican conventions were held to organize opposition to slavery, and a major convention took place in Bloomington on May 29, 1856. The meeting supported the Union, Kansas' admission as a free state, and opposed the Pierce administration and Southern Democrats.

At this event, Lincoln gave a famous speech that wowed the audience at Major's Hall in downtown Bloomington. The press called it powerful and passionate, and people cheered for him after his talk. Hogg, though, found himself in an intense and challenging environment.

In 1858, Hogg was named Secretary of the Township Convention in Bloomington and was elected as a delegate to the McLean County Republican Convention. At this convention, Leonard Swett was nominated for a local representative position, and Swett agreed to run, hoping to help Lincoln defeat Douglas in the Senate race. A few days earlier, Lincoln had given a two-hour speech in Bloomington, defending his views on slavery, race equality, and popular sovereignty.

On April 25, 1859, the Bloomington City Council met for elections, and Hogg was elected City Clerk and Attorney. He quickly became involved in a legal issue regarding a faulty fire hose that had been purchased for the fire department. At the same time, Hogg faced personal tragedy when his infant daughter, Mattie Lou, passed away in March 1860.

As tensions between the North and South grew in 1860, Hogg continued his legal career. In March 1860, he formed a new law partnership with Owen T. Reeves. He kept supporting the Republican Party and was chosen as a delegate for the Republican State Convention in Decatur, Illinois. This convention, along with other Republican meetings, helped Abraham Lincoln's political career. Lincoln became the party's nominee for president, supported by his supporters who viewed him as the "Rail-Splitter," a man of the people who stood for free labor. At the Republican meeting on April 2, the people of McLean County declared their strong support for Lincoln as the Republican candidate for president, praising his character and abilities to lead the country back to the founding principles of freedom and equality.

At the second national Republican Convention, held in Chicago from May 16-18, 1860, Abraham Lincoln was nominated as the Republican candidate for President. He was relatively unknown compared to other candidates like William H. Seward, Salmon P. Chase, and Horace Greeley. Lincoln's well-written speeches, such as the Lincoln-Douglas debates and his Cooper Union Address, helped him win. He also had strong support from people like Judge David Davis, who was skilled at persuading others to back Lincoln.

In local politics, Hogg was chosen to represent McLean County in the State Legislature. He campaigned for both himself and Lincoln, giving speeches in various towns like Hudson and Arrowsmith. Hogg was passionate about Lincoln's anti-slavery message, which he shared with others, especially those from the South. He worked alongside other local politicians, like Richard J. Oglesby and Leonard Swett, to spread support for the Republican Party.

One of the most exciting political groups at the time was the Wide Awakes, a young, energetic Republican club that marched and organized events. They helped with rallies, spread the party's message, and kept order at political events. Another group, the Lincoln Rangers, was

formed and included men on horseback, much like the Wide Awakes. There were also clubs for older men, like the Lincoln Continentals in Bloomington.

Hogg was active in the Lincoln Club, which was first organized in 1856. He gave a strong speech in September 1860 that defended Lincoln against accusations about the Kansas-Nebraska Act. However, as the election grew closer, Hogg faced criticism, particularly from a Democrat named William O. Pepper, who mocked Hogg for switching sides from supporting slavery to joining the Republican Party. Despite this attack, Hogg's efforts and speeches helped him gain strong support.

In November 1860, Lincoln was elected President, and Hogg was chosen to represent McLean County in the Illinois General Assembly. However, as the country faced a growing divide over slavery, the Southern states began to secede from the Union. This led to the start of the Civil War in 1861. Hogg joined the Union Army as a Lieutenant Colonel in the Second Illinois Cavalry, giving up his political career and law practice. He was stationed in Kentucky and Tennessee, participating in important military operations.

Sadly, Hogg faced personal tragedy when his wife, Prudie, fell ill and passed away in 1862. He returned to Tennessee for her funeral and had her remains returned to Bloomington for burial next to their infant daughter, Mattie. Though full of grief, he quickly returned to his regiment and resumed his duties. Later that year, during a battle in Tennessee, Hogg was killed while leading a charge against Confederate forces. His bravery was praised by his fellow soldiers and friends.

Hogg's death was a great loss to his community. He was remembered as a courageous and honorable man. His funeral was one of the largest in Bloomington, and he was buried alongside his wife and daughter in Evergreen Memorial Cemetery. People continued to honor his memory in the years after his death. A monument was built in his honor, and his legacy lived on through speeches and ceremonies held in his remembrance for decades after his death.