

PRESENTED BY

**KentuckyHistoricalSociety**

CIVIL WAR TO CIVIL RIGHTS:  
GOVERNOR BRAMLETTE'S EULOGY TO LINCOLN



*Kentucky Historical Society collections*

LOUISVILLE — Kentucky's Union governor, Thomas E. Bramlette, did not always agree with President Abraham Lincoln, especially over slavery issues. Bramlette's eulogy to Lincoln showed the conflicted nature of his governorship and Kentucky's role in the Union.

Speaking to citizens in Louisville, Bramlette reflected on his state — a place where liberty for some still meant slavery for others, a place where "standing as we did in local positions, surrounded as we were by local prejudices," we failed to live up to the title of Commonwealth."

Finally, recognizing how such a Kentucky would fare "when the judgment of future events has come," Bramlette challenged himself and the state to climb to Lincoln's "elevated stand-point," to strive to fulfill Lincoln's

vision of a government of all the people, by all the people and for all the people.

Put more simply, Bramlette told the audience, "We find we were differing blindly; that he was right and we were wrong."

*The Kentucky Historical Society (KHS) links Kentuckians with their past via archival collections that document people from every walk of life, reaching back to 1509. The KHS's "Civil War Governors of Kentucky" is a multiyear project dedicated to publishing documents associated with all five of the state's Civil War governors: the three Union governors, Beriah Magoffin (1859 – 1862), James F. Robinson (1862 – 1863) and Thomas E. Bramlette (1863 – 1867); and the two provisional Confederate governors, George W. Johnson (1861 – 1862) and Richard Hawes (1862 – 1865).*

**KentuckyHistoricalSociety**

100 W. Broadway | Frankfort, KY 40601  
502-564-1792 | [www.history.ky.gov](http://www.history.ky.gov)



The Kentucky Historical Society is an agency of the  
Tourism, Arts and Heritage Cabinet.