



2024 LEGISLATIVE MOMENTS

KENTUCKY'S OLD STATE CAPITOL

Cassius Clay and the Republicans

Henry Clay delivered several notable speeches in the Old State Capitol, but in 1860, it was his cousin who spoke to a large crowd gathered around the steps of the building.

Cassius M. Clay led a fascinating life. After attending Yale, Clay entered politics, serving several terms in the Kentucky General Assembly. He then edited a newspaper, fought in the U.S.-Mexican War, and donated the land on which Berea College was built.

On January 10, 1860, Clay delivered a passionate oration, asking his audience to support the Republican Party in the upcoming presidential election. Cassius assured them if Henry Clay were living, he would proudly vote Republican.

Most Kentuckians did not vote for Abraham Lincoln in 1860, but Lincoln noticed Clay's efforts and appointed him Ambassador to Russia.



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