

363. *James H. Matheny (WHH interview)*

[1865–66]

J h Matheny

J. J Hardin went to Congress first — Say about 1844 — after this district had been organized —: Baker was the next candidate — Hardin beat Baker first and by a Kind of agreement — understanding implied, Baker was to run — rather the Convention that nominated Hardin “said it”. Lincoln was the next caniddat: he was Elected in 1848 — Baker in 1846.¹ Baker resigned his seat & went to the war with Mxico. John Henry of Morgan was Elected to fill Bakers seat in Congress. Baker came back and wanted to run, but seeing Logan on the track he went to Galena. Originally there was a Kind of implied understanding that Hardin — Baker — Lincoln should rotate in Congress — Something broke it up — what it is or was I don’t Know.

LC: HW2563; HL: LN2408, 2:212–13

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Says he was present, he thinks in the Market house in 1840 and heard a debate between Douglas & Lincoln — the subject Martin Van Buren. Lincoln had asserted that Van had voted for Negro Suffrage under certain limitations. Douglas denied it. Lincoln then read from Hollands life of Van Buren.¹ Douglas said it was a forgery. Lincoln drew Fithians letter from Van Buren on Douglas.² Douglas got mad — Snatched up the book and Slung it into the crowd — saying d—n such a book.

Lincoln told me this Story too. (Herndon)³ Further — Lincoln told me that Douglas was always calling the Whigs Federalists — Tories — Aristocrats &c. That the whigs were opposed to freedom. Justice & progress. Lincoln told me that he said — “Douglas Says the Whigs are opposed to liberty — Justice & Progress. This is a loose assertion I suppose to Catch votes. I don’t like to *catch votes by* cheating men out of their judgment, but in reference to the whigs being opposed to Liberty &c let me Say that that remains to be seen & demonstrated in the future. The brave don’t boast. A barking dog don’t bite.

LC: HW2564; HL: LN2408, 2:213–14

1. AL was elected to Congress in 1846, Edward D. Baker in 1844, and John J. Hardin in 1843.

1. William M. Holland, *The Life and Political Opinions of Martin Van Buren, Vice President of the United States* (Hartford, 1835).

2. William Fithian was a Vermillion County Whig politician. Van Buren’s letter reportedly acknowledged that Holland’s book “contains as far as it goes a substantially correct history of my political course.” See *Sangamo Journal*, Sept. 18, 1840.

3. This interpolation by WHH probably refers to the story of Douglas slinging the book, rather than what follows.