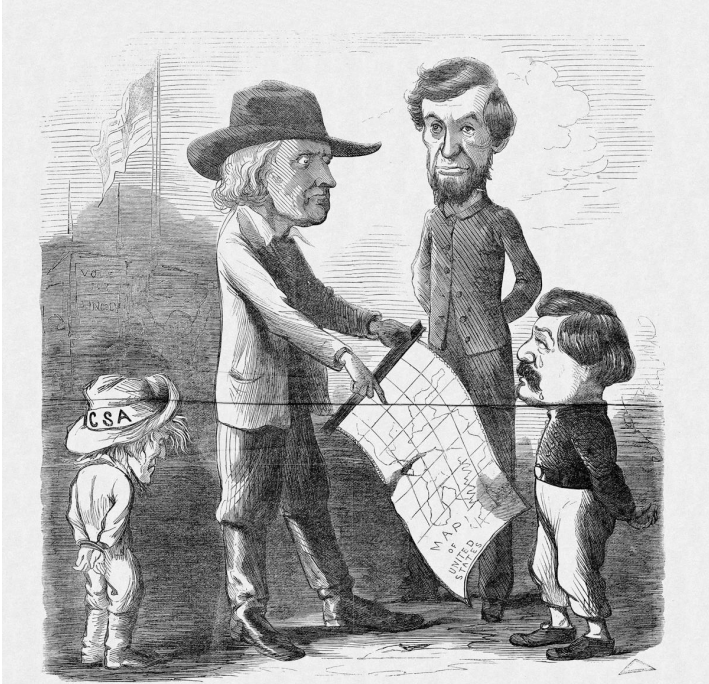


Charles Blondin (Jean François Gravelet, 1824-1897) was a French-born acrobat who became famous in the late 1850s for his daring tightrope walks over Niagara Falls. He repeated the feat several times while performing various stunts, such as drinking a bottle of wine, eating a meal, standing on his head, standing on one foot, walking blindfolded, hanging by his feet, pushing a wheelbarrow, laying down, and walking on stilts (the latter accomplished before an audience that included Edward, Prince of Wales).

Blondin earned a considerable amount of money for his acrobatic exploits: \$1500 for one Niagara Falls crossing and an estimated \$5-8,000 for one season. He was able to purchase a house in the town of Niagara Falls for \$4,000 cash. The daredevil made other challenging tightrope walks, including crossing the Montmorenci Fall in Quebec, which is wider and deeper than Niagara Falls, and the Genesee River at Rochester, New York. In 1861 the British Home Office prohibited him from pushing prizefighter Tom Sayers in a wheelbarrow across a tight rope suspended from the Crystal Palace.

The stunt that Lincoln—in the guise of Blondin—performs in this *Harper's Weekly* cartoon refers to the time when Blondin carried his 136-lb. agent, Henry Colcord, on his back while crossing Niagara Falls on a tightrope. The cartoon may also allude to a crossing in which Blondin appeared as an enchained Liberian slave. In the artist's view, the Republican party's stance on slavery is a burden on Lincoln's shoulders as he tries to win the presidential election. The U.S. Constitution, however, is Lincoln's balancing rod that keeps him steady and allows him to reach his goal.



THE GOOD UNCLE AND THE NAUGHTY BOY.

UNCLE SAM--I HEAR THAT SOMEBODY HAS BEEN OFFERING TO SELL THIS TO THAT DOT THERE, AND I'M BOUND TO FIND OUT WHO DID IT. ABRAHAM LINCOLN, WERE YOU THERE DURING THE ELECTION?
AB. LINCOLN--I WAS AT THE TOP OF THE POLL, SIR.
UNCLE SAM--GEORGE MCCLELLAN, WERE YOU SEE?
GEORGE MCCLELLAN--IF YOU PLEASE, SIR, I WASN'T ANYWHERE.
UNCLE SAM--HUM! WEREN'T ANYWHERE! THAT LOOKS SUSPICIOUS--VERY SUSPICIOUS!