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Photographs / Images: Bryan launching his final campaign for the White House in Lincoln, August 12, 1908

Mr. Bryan's Day in the Sun



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AUGUST 12, 1908, DAWNED CLEAR IN LINCOLN, William Jennings Bryan's hometown. Flags and bunting draped the buildings, and crowds soon filled the streets. It was Notification Day, and Bryan would receive official confirmation that, for the third time, he was the Democratic Party's nominee for President of the United States. The event was a political formality. Well before the party's July convention in Denver, Bryan had enough pledged delegates to insure his nomination. The Lincoln ceremony would launch his final campaign for the White House.

The notification took place on the north side of the capitol building. As the August sun blazed

down, Bryan gave a two-hour acceptance speech, his balding dome partially shaded by Democratic Party Chairman Norman Mack's umbrella. Vice-presidential nominee John Kern of Indiana (seated behind Mack) appears to be wiping the sweat from his brow. Perhaps the most uncomfortable person on the platform, and not just because of the heat, was Nebraska Governor George L. Sheldon, seated at the far left. Although protocol required Sheldon's presence, the Lincoln *Nebraska State Journal* reported that the Republican governor "listened without a smile" to Bryan's arraignment of his party. ☐

JAMES E. POTTER