

When Lincoln Came of Age

HE HAD NO TRADE, NO PROFESSION, NO SPOT OF LAND, NO PATRON, NO INFLUENCE, NOTHING IN THE WORLD, NOT EVEN A RESPECTABLE SUIT OF CLOTHES.

LINCOLN IN THE FIRST WHEN HE WAS A NATIONAL FIGURE



LINCOLN'S FIRST HOME IN ILLINOIS AND FROM WHICH HE STARTED OUT FOR HIMSELF

PICTURE TAKEN IN COAT LOANED HIM BY THE PHOTOGRAPHER, PICTURE SHOWS LINCOLN TRYING TO UNFROST HIS ARMS PROTRUDE FROM COAT SLEEVE

the tree. He then straddled the log himself, and gave the word to push out into the stream. When he dived into the tree, he threw the rope over the stump of a broken limb, and let it play until he broke the speed of the log, and gradually drew it back to the tree, holding it there until the three now nearly frozen men had climbed down and seated themselves astride. He then gave orders to the people on the shore to hold fast to the end of the rope which was tied to the log, and leaving his rope in the tree he turned the log adrift, and the force of the current acting against the taut rope swung the log around against the bank, and all "on board" were saved.

The excited people, who had watched the dangerous experiment with alternate hope and fear, now broke into cheers for Abe Lincoln and praise for his brave act. This adventure made quite a hero of him along the Sangamon.

Adventures With the Raft.

The flatboat built and loaded, the party started for New Orleans about the middle of April. They had gone but a few miles when they met with another adventure. At the village of New Salem there was a milldam. On it the boat stuck, and here for nearly 24 hours it hung, the bow in the air and the stern in the water, the cargo slowly setting backward—shipwreck almost certain.

The village of New Salem turned out in a body to see what the strangers would do in their predicament. They shouted, suggested and advised, but finally discovered that one big fellow in the crew was ignoring them and working out a plan of relief. Having unloaded the cargo into the neighboring boat, Lincoln had succeeded in tilting his craft. By boring a hole in the end extending over the dam the water was let out. This done, the boat was easily shoved over and reloaded.

The ingenuity which he had exercised in saving his boat made a deep impression on the crowd on the bank. It was talked over for many a day, and the general verdict was that the "bow-hand" was a "strapper." The proprietor of the boat and cargo was even more enthusiastic than the spectators, and vowed he would build a steamboat for the Sangamon and make Lincoln the captain. Lincoln himself was interested in what he had done, and nearly 20 years later he embodied his reflections on this adventure in a curious invention for getting boats over shoals.

The raft over the New Salem dam, the party went on to New Orleans without

trouble, reaching there in May, 1831, and remaining a month. It must have been a month of intense intellectual activity for Lincoln. New Orleans was entering then on her "flush times." Cosmopolitan in its make-up, the city was even more cosmopolitan in its life. Everything was to be seen in New Orleans in those days, from the idle luxury of the wealthy Creoles to the organization of filibustering juntas. The pirates still plied their trade in the Gulf, and the Mississippi River brought down hundreds of river boatmen—one of the wildest, wickedest sets of men that ever existed in any city.

Lincoln and his companions probably tied their boat up beside thousands of others. It was the custom then to tie up such craft along the river front where St. Mary's Market now stands, and one could walk a mile, it is said, over the tops of these boats without going ashore. No doubt Lincoln went, too, to live in the boatmen's rendezvous, called the "Swamp," a wild, rough quarter, where roulette, whiskey and the flint-lock pistol ruled.

Lincoln Settles in New Salem.

The month in New Orleans passed swiftly, and in June, 1831, Lincoln, and his companions took passage up the river. He did not return, however, in the usual way of the river boatman "out of a job." According to his own way of putting it, "during this boat-enterprise acquaintance with Orffutt, who was previously an entire stranger, he conceived a liking for Abraham, and believing he could turn him to account, he contracted with him to act as a clerk for him on his return from New Orleans, in charge of a store and mill at New Salem."

The store and mill were, however, so far only in Orffutt's imagination, and Lincoln had to drift about until his employer was ready for him. He made a short visit to his father and mother, and then, in July, 1831, he drifted over to New Salem, where, as he says, he "stopped indefinitely and for the first time, as it were, by himself."

"The village of New Salem, the scene of Lincoln's momentous career," writes one who has studied the history of the town and visited the spot where it once stood, "was one of the many little towns which, in the spring of 1831, were along the Sangamon River, a stream then looked upon as navigable and as destined to be counted among the highways of commerce."

Springfield, strung along the left bank of the Sangamon, parted by hollows and ravines, is a row of high hills. On one of these stood this frontier village. In 1825 by James Rutledge and John Cameron, and a dozen years later a deserted village, is rescued from oblivion only by the fact that Lincoln was one of its inhabitants. His first sight of the town had been in April, 1831, when the flatboat he had built and its little crew were detained in getting their boat over the shoals and landed on a mud-flat on which it lodged. When Lincoln walked into New Salem, three months later, he was not altogether a stranger, for the people remembered him as the ingenious flatboat man who, a little while before, had freed his boat from water and thus enabled it to get over the dam by boring a hole in the bottom. Orffutt's goods had not arrived when Mr. Lincoln reached New Salem, and he "hoofed about, good-naturedly, and hand in whatever he could find to do, and in his drill way making friends of everybody."

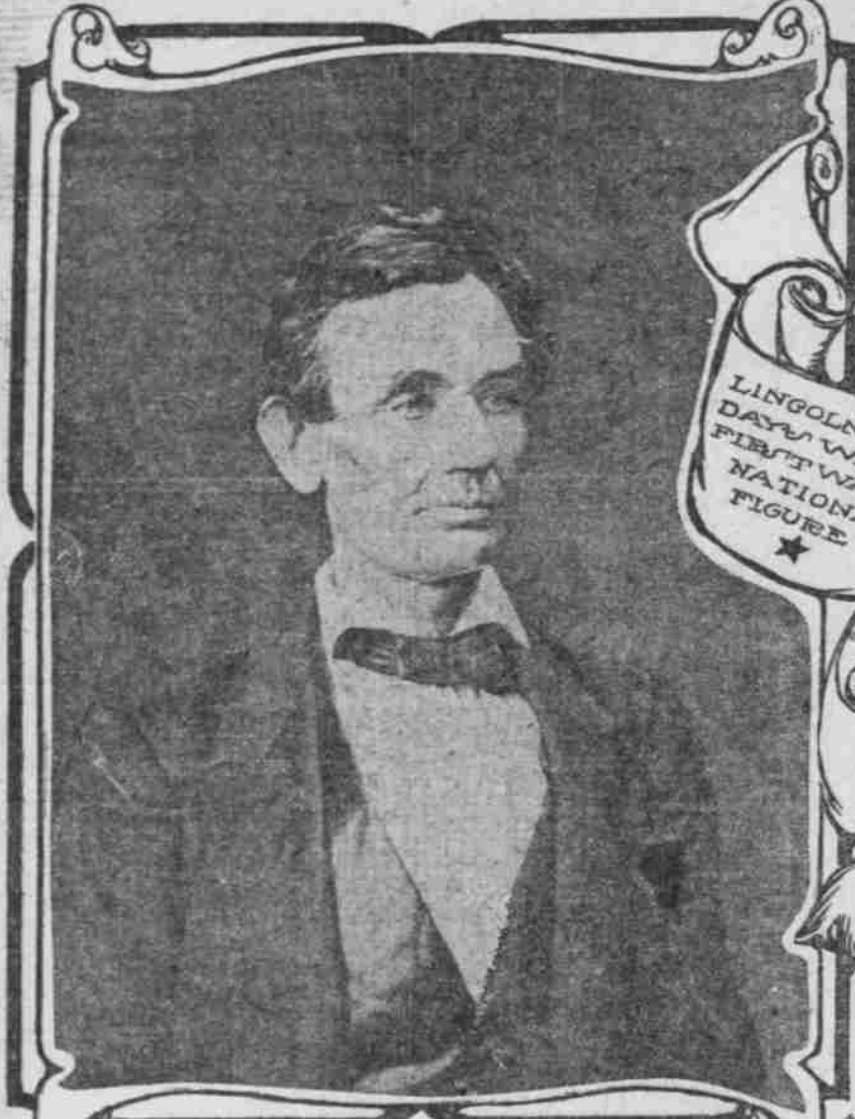
By chance, a bit of work fell to him almost at once which introduced him generally and gave him an opportunity to make a name in the neighborhood. It was election day. The village schoolmaster, Mentor Graham by name, was clerk, but the assistant was ill. Looking about for some one to help him, Mr. Graham saw a tall stranger loitering around the polling place, and called to him, "Can you write?" "Yes," said the stranger, "I can make a few rabbit tracks."

Mr. Graham evidently was satisfied with the answer, for he promptly initiated Lincoln into the place not only to the satisfaction of his employer, but also to the debatement of the loiterers about the polls, for whenever things dragged he immediately began "to stir out a stock of Indiana yarns." So droll were they that years afterward men who listened to Lincoln that day repeated them to their friends. He had made a hit in New Salem, to start with, and here, as in Sangamon town, it was by means of his storytelling.

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Modest Requirements.

Chicago Record-Herald.
A steady job that pays me well.
A pleasant home with a good fire.
A railroad when it's raining.
A liver that is always right.
A few dollars to spend on my friends.
The wit to say things that are bright.
And I will quit complaining.
A chance to travel now and then.
The friendship of my fellow-men.
The luck to never stumble.
Hair that will not turn gray or bald.
A nose that never may turn red.
Sweet dreams when I crawl into bed.
And I will never grumble.
A manner that the ladies like.
The strength to knock out when I strike.
A bright sun on my shining.
A little richer every day.
Tough that will never wear away.
Three times a year a raise of pay.
And I will cease repining.
To have that which I want without
The sorrow of delay or doubt.
A tongue that's never tarry.
To be from worldly cares so free
That other men will envy me.
To wake each morning filled with glee.
And I will never worry.



BY IDA M. TARELL.
ABRAHAM LINCOLN was 31 years old when Thomas Lincoln (his father) decided to leave Indiana in the Spring of 1830. The reason Dennis Hanks gives for this removal was a disease called the "milk-sick." Abraham Lincoln's mother, Nancy Hanks Lincoln, and several of their relatives who had followed them from Kentucky, had died of it. The cattle had been carried off by it. Neither brute nor human life seemed to be safe.

The place chosen for their new home was the Sangamon country in central Illinois. It was a country of great renown in the West, the name meaning "The land where there is plenty to eat." One of the family—John Hanks, cousin of Dennis—was already there, and sent them inviting reports.

The company which emigrated to Illinois included the families of Thomas Lincoln, Dennis Hanks—married to one of Lincoln's step-sisters—and Levi Hall, 12 persons in all. The party settled some ten miles west of Decatur, in Macon County. Here John Hanks had the logs already cut for their new home, and Lincoln, Dennis Hanks, and Hall soon had a cabin erected. Mr. Lincoln himself (though writing in the third person) says: "Here they built a log cabin, into which they moved, and made sufficient of rails to fence ten acres of ground, a crop of sown corn upon it the same year. These are, or are supposed to be, the rails about which so much is being said just now, though these are far from being the first or only rails ever made by Abraham."

If they were far from being his "first and only rails," they certainly were the most famous ones he or anybody else ever split. This was the last work he did for his father, for in the Summer of that year (1830) he exercised the right of majority and started out to shift for himself.

Lincoln Starts Out Empty-Handed.

When Lincoln left his home to start life for himself, he went empty-handed. He was already some months over 21 years of age, but he had nothing in the world, not even a suit of respectable clothes; and one of the first pieces of work he did was to split 400 rails for every yard of brown jeans dyed with white walnut bark that would be necessary to make him a pair of trousers.

He had no trade, no profession, no spot of land, no patron, no influence. Two things recommended him to his neighbors—he was strong, and he was a good fellow. His strength made him a valuable laborer. Not that he was fond of hard labor. "Abe" was no hand to pitch into "work like killing snakes," but when he did work, it was with an ease and effectiveness which compensated his employer for the time he spent in practical jokes and extemporaneous speeches. He would lift as much as three ordinary men, and "My, how he would chop!" says Dennis Hanks. "His axe would flash and bite into a sugartree or sycamore, and down it would come. If you heard him fellin' trees in a clearing, you would say there was three men at work by the way the trees fell." Standing six feet four, he could out-lift, out-work and out-wrestle any man he came in contact with. Friends and employers were proud of his strength and boasted of it, never failing to pit him against any hero whose strength they heard vaunted.

His strength won him popularity, but his good nature, his wit, his skill in debate, his stories, were still more efficient in gaining him good-will. People liked to have him around, and voted him a good fellow to work with. Yet such were the conditions of his life at this time that, in spite of his popularity, nothing was open to him but hard manual labor. To take the first "job" which he happened upon—rail-splitting, ploughing, lumbering, boat-making, storekeeping—and make the most of it, thankful if thereby he earned his bed and board and yearly a suit of jeans, was apparently all there was before Abraham Lincoln in 1830 when he started out for himself.

Through the Summer and Fall of

1830 and the early Winter of 1831, Mr. Lincoln worked in the vicinity of his father's new home, usually as a farm-hand and rail-splitter. Most of his work was done in company with John Hanks. Before the end of the Winter he secured employment which he has given an account of himself (writing again in the third person):

"During the Winter Abraham, together with step-mother's son, John D. Johnston, and John Hanks, yet residing in Macon County, hired themselves to Dennis Orffutt to take a flatboat from Beardstown, Illinois, to New Orleans, and for that purpose were to join him—Orffutt—at Springfield, Illinois, as soon as the snow should go off, which was about March 1, 1831. The country was so flooded as to make traveling by land impracticable; to obviate which difficulty they purchased a large canoe and came down the Sangamon River in it from where they were all living (near Decatur). They found Orffutt at Springfield, but learned from him that he had failed in getting a boat at Beardstown. This led to their hiring themselves to him for \$12 per month each, and getting the timber out of the trees, and building a boat at old Sangamon town on the Sangamon River, seven miles northwest of Springfield, which boat they took to New Orleans, substantially on the old contract."

Sangamon town, where Mr. Lincoln built the flatboat, had since his day, completely disappeared from the earth, but then it was one of the flourishing settlements on the river of that name. Lincoln and his friends on arriving there in March immediately began work. There was still living in Springfield, Ill., a few years ago, a man who helped Lincoln at the raft-building—John Roll, a well-known citizen. Mr. Roll remembers distinctly Lincoln's first appearance in Sangamon town. "He was a tall, gaunt young man, dressed in a suit of blue homespun jeans, consisting of a roundabout jacket, waistcoat, and breeches which came to within four inches of his feet. The latter were encased in rawhide boots, into the top of which, most of the time his pantaloons were stuffed. He wore a soft felt hat which had at one time been black, but now, as its owner dryly remarked, 'it had been sunburned until it was a combine of colors.'"

Mr. Roll's relation to the newcomer



LINCOLN ELEVEN DAYS BEFORE HIS FIRST INAUGURATION

soon became something more than that of a critical observer; he hired out to him, and says with pride, "I made every pin which went into the boat." It took some four weeks to build the raft, and in that period Lincoln succeeded in captivating the entire village by his story-telling. It was the custom in Sangamon for the "men-folks" to gather at noon and in the evening, when resting in a convenient lane near the mill. They had rolled out a long peeled log on which they lounged while they whittled and talked. After Mr. Lincoln came to town the men would start him to story-telling as soon as he appeared at the assembly ground. So irresistibly droll were his "yarns" that "whenever he'd end up in his unexpected way the boys on the log would whoop and roll off." The result of the rolling off was to polish the log like a mirror. Long after Lincoln had disappeared from Sangamon "Abe's log" remained, and until it had rotted away people pointed it out, and repeated the droll stories of the stranger.

Hero of an Exciting Adventure.

The flatboat was done in about a month, and Lincoln and his friends pre-

pared to leave Sangamon. Before he started, however, he was the hero of an adventure so thrilling that he won new laurels in the community. Mr. Roll, who was a witness of the whole exciting scene, tells the story as follows:

"It was the Spring following the Winter of the deep snow (1830-31). Walter Carman, John Seamon, myself, and at times others of the Carman boys, had helped Abe in building the boat, and when he had finished we went to work to make a dug-out, or canoe, to be used as a small boat with the flat. We found a suitable log about an eighth of a mile up the river, and with our axes went to work under Lincoln's direction."

"The river was very high, fairly 'booming.' After the dug-out was ready to launch we took it to the edge of the water, and made ready to let her go. When Walter Carman and John Seamon jumped in as the boat struck the water, each one anxious to be the first to get a ride. As they shot out from the shore they found they were unable to make any headway against the strong current. Carman had the paddle, and Seamon was in the stern of the boat. Lincoln shouted to them to 'head up stream' and 'work back to shore,' but they found themselves powerless against the stream."

"At last they began to pull for the wreck of an old flatboat, the first ever built on the Sangamon, which had sunk and gone to pieces, leaving one of the stanchions sticking above the water. Just as they reached it Seamon made a grab, when the canoe capsize, leaving Seamon clinging to the old timber, and throwing Carman into the stream. It carried him down with the speed of a mill-race."

"Lincoln raised his voice above the roar of the flood, and yelled to Carman to swim for an elm-tree which stood almost in the channel, which the action of the high water changed. Carman, being a good swimmer succeeded in catching a branch and pulled himself up out of the water, which had almost chilled him to death; and there he sat, shivering and chattering in the tree."

"Lincoln, seeing Carman safe, called out to Seamon to let go the stanchion and swim for the tree. With some hesitation he obeyed, and struck out, while Lincoln cheered and directed him from the bank. As Seamon neared the tree he made one grab for a branch, and missing it, went under the water. Another desperate lunge was successful, and he climbed up beside Carman. Things were pretty exciting now, for there were two men in the tree, and the boat was gone."

"It was a cold, raw April day, and there was great danger of the men becoming benumbed and falling back into the water. Lincoln called out to them to keep their spirits up and he would save them. The village had been alarmed by this time, and many people had come down to the bank. Lincoln procured a rope, and tied it to a log. He called all hands to come and help roll the log into the water, and after this had been done, he, with the assistance of several others towed it some distance up the stream."

"A daring young fellow by the name of 'Jim' Dorrell then took his seat on the end of the log, and it was pushed out into the current, with the expectation that it would be carried down stream against the tree where Seamon and Carman were. The log was well directed, and went straight to the tree, but Jim, in his impatience to help his friends, fell

MARY ANDERSON MAKES A VISIT TO HER OLD HOME.



MRS. A. F. DE NAVARRO.

NEW YORK, Jan. 9.—(Special).—Mrs. A. F. de Navarro, who was Mary Anderson, actress, arrived in New York recently for a brief visit, accompanied by her husband, her 13-year-old son, Jose, and her baby daughter, Maria Elena. She has abandoned the stage forever and will not appear in America even for charity.

GERMAN AMBASSADOR AND FAMILY ARRIVE IN UNITED STATES.



—Photo Copyright, 1908, by Geo. G. Bain.

COUNT VON BERNSTORFF, WIFE AND DAUGHTER. NEW YORK, Jan. 9.—(Special).—Count Johann von Bernstorff, the new German Ambassador to the United States, accompanied by his wife and daughter, arrived recently on the liner America. This is the Count's first visit to this country. The new Ambassador was born in London 46 years ago. He left for Washington immediately. The Countess Bernstorff was born in New York, but has not been in this country for over 25 years. Her daughter has just turned 20 years and is exceptionally beautiful.