

# Lincoln's Love Affairs

By Ward Hill Lamon, Lincoln's Friend and Biographer

## And His Early Experiences as a Lawmaker

After Miss Owens' return to New Salem, in the fall of 1836, Mr. Lincoln was unremitting in his attentions, and wherever she went he was at her side. She had many relatives in the neighborhood—the Bales, the Greenes, the Gramhams—and if she went to spend an afternoon or an evening with any of these Abe was very likely to be on hand to conduct her home. He asked her to marry him, but she prudently evaded a positive answer until she could make up her mind about questionable points of his character. She did not think him coarse or cruel, but she did think him thoughtless, careless, not altogether as polite as he might be—in short, "deficient," as she expresses it, "in those little links which make up the great chain of woman's happiness." His heart was good, his principles were high, his honor sensitive, but still in the eyes of this refined young lady he did not seem to be quite the gentleman. "He was lacking in the smaller attentions," and, in fact, the whole affair is explained when she tells us that "his education was different from" hers.

**Abe Was Ungallant.**  
One day Miss Owens and Mrs. Bowlin Greene were making their way slowly and tediously up the hill to Abe's house, when they were joined by Lincoln. Mrs. Bowlin Greene was carrying "a great big fat child, heavy and crossly disposed." Although the woman bent pitifully under her burden, Lincoln offered her no assistance, but, dropping behind with Miss Owens, beguiled the way according to his wishes. When they reached the summit, "Miss Owens said to Lincoln laughingly, 'You would not make a good husband, Abe.' They sat on the fence, and one word brought on another till a split or breach ensued."

Immediately after this misunderstanding Lincoln went off toward Havana on a surveying expedition and was absent about three weeks. On the first day of his return one of Abe's boys was sent up "to town" for the mail. Lincoln saw him at the postoffice and "asked if Miss Owens was at Mr. Abe's." The boy said, "Yes." "Tell her," said Lincoln, "that I'll be down to see her in a few minutes." Now, Miss Owens had determined to spend that evening at Minter Gramham's, and when the boy gave in the report "she thought a moment and said to herself 'If I can draw Lincoln up there to Gramham's it will be all right.'" This scheme was to operate as a test of Abe's love, but it shared the fate of some of "the best laid schemes of mice and men" and went "all agley."

Lincoln, according to promise, went down to Abe's and asked if Miss Owens was in. Mrs. Abe replied that she had gone to Gramham's, about one and a half miles from Abe's, due southwest. Lincoln said, "Didn't she know I was coming?" Mrs. Abe answered, "No," but one of the children said, "Yes, ma, she did, for I heard Sam tell her so." Lincoln sat awhile and then went about his business. "The fat was now in the fire," Lincoln thought, as he was extremely poor and Miss Owens very rich, it was a fling on him on that account. Abe was mistaken in his guesses, for wealth cut no figure in Miss Owens' eyes. Miss Owens regretted her course. Abe would not bend, and Miss Owens wouldn't. She said if she had it to do over again she would play the cards differently. . . . She had two sons in the southern army. She said that if either of them had got into difficulties she would willingly have gone to old Abe for relief.

In Miss Owens' letter of July 22, 1836, it will be observed that she tacitly admitted to Mr. Gaines Greene "the circumstances in connection with Mrs. Greene and child." Although she here denies the precise words alleged to have been used by her in the little quarrel at the top of the hill, she does not deny the impression his conduct left upon her mind, but presents additional evidence of it by the relation of another incident of similar character, from which her inferences were the same.

Fortunately we are not compelled to rely upon tradition, however authentic, for the facts concerning this interesting episode in Mr. Lincoln's life. Miss Owens was still alive to tell her own tale at the time this narrative was written, and we have besides his letters to the lady herself. Mr. Lincoln wrote his account of it as early as 1838. As in duty bound, we shall permit the lady to speak first:

**Mr. W. H. Herndon:**  
My dear Sir—Really you catch me in true lawyer style, but I feel you will have the goodness to excuse me if I decline answering all your questions in detail, being well assured that few women would have ceded as much as I have under all the circumstances.

You say you have heard why our acquaintance terminated as it did. I too have heard the same bit of gossip. But I never used the remark which, Madam Rumor says I did to Mr. Lincoln. I think I did on one occasion say to my sister, who was very anxious for us to be married, that I thought Mr. Lincoln was deficient in those little links which make up the chain of woman's happiness—at least it was so in my case. Not that I believed it proceeded from a lack of goodness of heart, but his training had been different from mine; hence there was not that congeniality which would otherwise have existed.

From his own showing, you perceive that his heart and hand were at my disposal, and suppose that my feelings were not sufficiently enlisted to have the matter consummated. About the beginning of the year 1833 I left Illinois, at which time our acquaintance and correspondence ceased without ever again being renewed.

My father, who resided in Green county, Ky., was a gentleman of considerable means, and I am persuaded that few persons placed a higher estimate on education than he did. Respectfully yours,  
MARY S.

July 22, 1836.

**Mr. W. H. Herndon:**  
Dear Sir—I do not think that you are pertinacious in asking the question relative to Mrs. Bowlin Greene, because I wish to set you right on that question. Your information no doubt came through my cousin, Mr. Gaines Greene, who visited us last winter. Whilst here he was laughing at me about Mr. Lincoln and, among other things, spoke about the circumstance in connection with Mrs. Greene and child. My impression is now that I tacitly admitted it, for it was a season of trouble with me, and I gave but little heed to the matter. We never had any hard feelings toward each other that I know of. On no occasion did I say to Mr. Lincoln that I did not believe he would make a kind husband because he did not tender his services to Mrs. Greene in helping of her carry her babe. As I said to you in a former letter, I thought him lacking in smaller attentions. One circumstance presents itself just now to my mind's eye. There was a company of us going to Uncle Billy Greene's. Mr. Lincoln was riding with me, and we had a very bad branch to cross. The other gentlemen were very officious in seeing that their partners got over safely. We were behind, he riding in, never looking back to see how I got along. When I rode up beside him I remarked: "You are a nice fellow! I suppose you did not care whether my neck was broken or not?" He laughingly replied, I suppose by way of compliment, that he knew I was plenty smart to take care of myself.

In many things he was sensitive almost to a fault. He told me of an incident—that he was crossing a prairie one day and saw before him "a hog mired down." To use his own language, he was rather "fixed up," and he resolved that he would pass on without looking toward the shoat. After he had gone by, he said, the feeling was irresistible, and he had to look back, and the poor thing seemed to say wistfully, "There, now, my last hope is gone;" that he deliberately got down and relieved it from its difficulty.

In many things we were congenial spirits. In politics we saw eye to eye, though since then we differed as widely as the south is from the north. But methinks I hear you say, "Save me from a political woman!" So say I.

The last message I ever received from him was about a year after we parted in



"THE POOR THING SEEMED TO SAY WISTFULLY, 'MY LAST HOPE IS GONE.'"

Illinois. Mrs. Abe visited Kentucky, and he said to her in Springfield, "Tell your sister that I think she was a great fool, because she did not stay here and marry me." Characteristic of the man. Respectfully yours,  
MARY S.

**Lincoln to Mary Owens.**  
Vandalia, Dec. 13, 1836.

Mary—I have been sick ever since my arrival or I should have written sooner. It is but little difference, however, as I have very little even yet to write. And more, the longer I can avoid the mortification of looking in the postoffice for your letter and not finding it the better. You see, I am mad about that old letter yet. I don't like very well to risk you again. I'll try you once more anyhow.

The new State House is not yet finished, and consequently the legislature is doing little or nothing. The governor delivered an inflammatory political message, and it is expected there will be some sparring between the parties about it as soon as the two houses get to business. Taylor delivered up his petitions for the new

legislation of one of the members this morning. I am told his design is to propose candidates of all the members from Morgan county opposing it. There are names enough on the petition, I think, to justify the members from our county in going for it, but if the members from Morgan oppose it, which they say they will, the chance will be back.

Our chance to take the seat of government to Springfield is better than I expected. An internal improvement convention was held here since we met, which recommended a loan of several million of dollars on the faith of the state, to construct railroads. Some of the legislature are for it and some against it. Which has the majority I cannot tell. There is great strife and struggling for the office of the United States senator here at this time. It is probable we shall ease their pains in a few days. The opposition men have no candidate of their own, and consequently they will smile as complacently at the angry snarl of the contending Van Buren candidates and their respective friends as the Christian does at Satan's rage. You recollect that I mentioned at the outset of this letter that I had been unwell. That is the fact, though I believe I am about well now. But that with other "chills" cannot account for my having spirited and have gotten my spirits so low that I feel that I would rather be any place in the world than here. I really cannot endure the thought of staying here ten weeks. I wish to get back as soon as you can, and, if possible, say something that will please me, for really I have not been pleased since I left you. This letter is so dry and stupid that I am ashamed to send it, but with my present feelings I cannot do any better.

Give my best respects to Mr. and Mrs. Able and family. Your friend,  
LINCOLN.

Springfield, May 7, 1837.

**Miss Mary S. Owens:**  
Friend Mary—I have commenced two letters to send you before this, both of which displeased me before I got half done, and so I tore them up. The first one thought was not serious enough, and the second was on the other way. I shall send this, turn out as it may.

This thing of living in Springfield is rather a dull business after all—at least it is so to me. I am quite as lonesome here as I ever was anywhere in my life. I have been expected to make her happy since I've been here and should not have been by her if she could have avoided it. I've never been to church yet nor probably shall not be soon. I stay away because I am conscious I should not know how to go to it.

I am often thinking about what we said of your coming to live at Springfield. I am afraid you would not be satisfied. There is a great deal of flourishing about in carriages here, which it would be your interest to see without making her happy would have to be poor, without the means of hiding your poverty. Do you believe you could bear that patiently? Whatever woman may cast her lot with mine, should any ever do so, it is my intention to do all in my power to make her happy and contented, and there is nothing I can imagine that would make me more unhappy than to fall in the effort. I know I should be much happier with you than the way I am, provided I saw no signs of discontent in you. What you have written to me may have been in the way of jest or I may have misunderstood it. If so, then let it be forgotten; if otherwise, I much wish you would think seriously before you decide. For my part, I have always been ready to do as you wish, and most positively abide by, provided you wish it. My opinion is that you had better not do it. You have not been accustomed to hardship, and it may be more severe than you now imagine. I know you are capable of thinking correctly on the subject, and if you deliberate maturely upon this before you decide, then I am willing to abide your decision.

You must write me a good long letter after you get this. You have nothing else to do, and though it might not seem interesting to you after you have written it to do a good deal of company to me in this "busy wilderness." Tell your sister I don't want to hear any more about selling out and moving. That gives me the hypo whenever I think of it. Yours, etc.,  
LINCOLN.

Springfield, Aug. 16, 1837.

**Friend Mary—**You will no doubt think it rather strange that I should write you a letter on the same day on which we parted, and I can only account for it by supposing that seeing you lately makes me think of you more than usual, while at our late meeting we had but few expressions of thoughts. You must know that I cannot see you or think of you with entire indifference, and yet it may be that you are mistaken in regard to what my real feelings toward you are. If I knew you were not, I should not trouble you with this letter. Perhaps any other man would know enough without further information, but I consider it my peculiar right to plead ignorance and your bounden duty to allow me to take advantage in all cases to do right, and most particularly so in all cases with women. I want at this particular time more than anything else to do right with you, and if I knew it would be doing right, as I do not suspect it, I would do it. And, for the purpose of making the matter as plain as possible, I now say that you can now drop the subject, dismiss your thoughts (if you ever had any) from me forever and leave this letter unanswered, without calling forth one accusing murmur from me. And if I will add anything to your comfort or peace of mind to do so, it is my sincere wish that you should. Do not understand by this that I wish to cut you account, as I mean no such thing. What I do wish is that our further acquaintance shall depend upon yourself. If such further acquaintance would constitute nothing to your happiness, I am sure it would not to mine. If you feel yourself in any degree bound to me, I am now ready to release you, provided you wish it, while, on the other hand, I am willing and even anxious to bind you faster if I can be convinced that it will in any considerable degree add to your happiness. This, indeed, is the whole question with me. Nothing would make me more miserable than to believe you miserable, nothing more happy than to know you were so.

In what I have now said I think I cannot be misunderstood, and to make myself understood is the only object of this letter.

If it suits you best to not answer this, farewell. A long life and a merry one attend you. But if you conclude to write back, speak as plainly as I do. There can be neither harm nor danger in saying to me anything you think just, in the manner you think it.

My respects to your sister. Your friend,  
LINCOLN.

**CHAPTER V.**

**Curious Confession From Lincoln on Mary Owens' Affair.**

**A**FTER his second meeting with Mary Mr. Lincoln had little time to prosecute his addresses in person, for early in December he was called away to his seat in the legislature; but, if his tongue was silent in the cause, his pen was busy. During the session of the legislature

of 1837 Mr. Lincoln made the acquaintance of Mrs. O. H. Browning, whose husband was also a member. The acquaintance ripened into friendship, and that winter and the next Mr. Lincoln spent a great deal of time in social intercourse with the Brownings. Mrs. Browning knew nothing as yet of the affair with Miss Owens, but as the latter progressed and Lincoln became more and more involved she noticed the ebb of his spirits and often rallied him as the victim of some secret but consuming passion. With this for his excuse, Lincoln wrote her after the adjournment of the legislature a full and connected account of the manner in which he had latterly been making "a fool of" himself. For many reasons the publication of this letter is an extremely painful duty. If it could be withheld and the act decently reconciled to the conscience of a biographer professing to be honest and candid it should never see the light in these pages. Its grotesque humor, its coarse exaggerations in describing the person of a lady whom the writer was willing to marry, its imputation of toothless and weather beaten old age to a woman really young and handsome, its utter lack of that delicacy of tone and sentiment which one naturally expects a gentleman to adopt when he thinks proper to discuss the merits of his late

mistress—all these and its defective orthography it would certainly be more agreeable to suppress than to publish. But if we begin by omitting or mutilating a document which sheds so broad a light upon one part of his life and one phase of his character why may we not do the like as fast and as often as the temptations arise? And where shall the process cease? A biography worth writing at all is worth writing fully and honestly, and the writer who suppresses or mangles the truth is no better than he who bears false witness in any other capacity.

In April, 1838, Miss Owens finally departed from Illinois, and in that same month Mr. Lincoln wrote Mrs. Browning:

Springfield, April 1, 1838.  
Dear Madam—Without apologizing for being egotistical, I shall make the history of so much of my life as has elapsed since I was the subject of this letter. And, by the way, I now discover that in order to give a full and intelligible account of the things I have done and suffered since I saw you, I shall necessarily have to relate some that happened before. It was, then, in the autumn of 1836 that a married lady of my acquaintance, and who was a great friend of mine, being about to pay a visit to her father & other relatives residing in Kentucky, proposed to me that on her return she would bring a letter of hers with her on condition that I would engage to become her brother-in-law with all convenient dispatch. I, of course, accepted the proposal, for you know I could not have done otherwise had I really been averse to it, but privately, between you and me, I was most confoundedly well pleased with the project. I had seen the said sister some three years before, thought her intelligent and agreeable and saw no good objection to plodding life through hand in hand with her. Time passed on, the lady took her journey and for due time returned, sister in company, sure enough. This astonished me a little, for it appeared to me that her coming so readily showed that she was a trifle too willing; but on reflection I was continually reminded that she might have been prevailed upon by her married sister to come without anything concerning me ever having been mentioned to her, and so I concluded that, if no other objection presented itself, I would consent to waive this. All this occurred to me on hearing of her arrival in the neighborhood, for, be it remembered, I had not yet seen her except about three years previous, as above mentioned. In a few days we had an interview, and, although I had seen her before, she did not seem to me to be the same. I had heard her. I knew she was oversize, but she now appeared a fair match for Falstaff. I knew she was called an "old maid," and I felt no doubt of the truth of at least half of the appellation, but now, when I beheld her, I could not for my life avoid thinking of my mother, and this not from withered features, for her skin was too full of fat to permit of its contracting into wrinkles, but from her want of teeth, weather beaten appearance in general and from the notion that she had been married. I felt no doubt that she was a fair match for Falstaff. I knew she was called an "old maid," and I felt no doubt of the truth of at least half of the appellation, but now, when I beheld her, I could not for my life avoid thinking of my mother, and this not from withered features, for her skin was too full of fat to permit of its contracting into wrinkles, but from her want of teeth, weather beaten appearance in general and from the notion that she had been married. I felt no doubt that she was a fair match for Falstaff. I knew she was called an "old maid," and I felt no doubt of the truth of at least half of the appellation, but now, when I beheld her, I could not for my life avoid thinking of my mother, and this not from withered features, for her skin was too full of fat to permit of its contracting into wrinkles, but from her want of teeth, weather beaten appearance in general and from the notion that she had been married.

Shortly after this, without attempting to come to any positive understanding with her, I sat out for Vandalia, when and where you first saw me. During my stay there I had letters from her which did not change my opinion of either her intellect or intention, but, on the contrary, confirmed it in both.

All this while, although I was fixed, firm as the surge repelling rock, in my resolution, I found I was continually repenting the rashness which had led me to make it. Through life I have been in no bondage, either real or imaginary, from the thraldom of which I so much desired to be free. After my return home I saw nothing to change my opinion of her in any particular. She was the same, and so was I. I now spent my time in planning how I might get along through life after my contemplated change of circumstances should have taken place and how I might prosecute the evil day for a time, which I really dreaded as much, perhaps more, than an Irishman does the halter.

After all my suffering upon this deeply interesting subject here I am, wholly, unexpectedly, completely out of the "scrape," and I now want to know if you can guess how I got out of it—out clear in every sense of the term, no violation of word, honor or conscience. I don't believe you can guess, and so I might as well tell you, and the lawyer says, it was done in the manner following—to wit: After I had delayed the matter as long

as I thought I could in honor so remain, by the way, had brought me round into the last fall I concluded I might as well bring it to a consummation without further delay, and so I mustered my resolution and made the proposal to her direct. But, shocking to relate, she answered, "No." At first I supposed she did it through an affectation of modesty, which I thought but ill became her under the peculiar circumstances of her case, but on my renewal of the charge I found she replied it with greater firmness than before. I tried it again and again, but with the same success, or, rather, with the same want of success.

I finally was forced to give it up, at which I very unexpectedly found myself mortified almost beyond endurance. I was mortified, it seemed to me, in a hundred different ways. My vanity was deeply wounded by the reflection that I had so long been too stupid to discover her intentions, and at the same time never doubting that I understood them perfectly, and also that she, whom I had taught myself to believe nobody else would have, had actually rejected me with all my fancied greatness. And to cap the whole, I then for the first time began to suspect that I was really a little in love with her. But let it all go. I'll try and outlive it, but this can never with truth be said of me. I most emphatically in this instance made a fool of myself. I have now come to the conclusion never again to think of marrying, and for this reason: I can never be satisfied with any one who would be blockhead enough to have me. When you receive this, write me a long yarn about something to amuse me. Give my respects to Mr. Browning. Your staunch friend,  
A. LINCOLN.

**CHAPTER VI.**

**Lincoln Leaves Love Affairs For Legislative Work.**

**T**HE majority of Mr. Lincoln's biographers, and they are many and credulous, tell us that he walked from New Salem to Vandalia, a distance of 100 miles, to take his seat for the first time in the legislature of the state. But that is an innocent mistake, for he was resolved to appear with as much of the dignity of the senator as his circumstances would permit. For this very purpose he had borrowed \$200 from Coleman Smoot, and when the choice between riding and walking presented itself he sensibly enough got into the stage, with his new clothes on, and rode to the scene of his labors.

When he arrived there, he found a singular state of affairs. Duncan had been chosen governor at the recent

New Salem, June 13, 1836.

To the Editor of the Journal:  
In your paper of last Saturday I see a communication over the signature of "Many Voters," in which the candidates who are announced in the Journal are called upon to "show their hands." Agreed. Here's mine.

I go for all sharing the privileges of the government who assist in bearing its burdens. Consequently I go for admitting all whites to the right of suffrage who pay taxes or bear arms (by no means excluding females).

If elected I shall consider the whole people of Sangamon my constituents, as well those that oppose as those that support me.

While acting as their representative I shall be governed by their will on all subjects upon which I have the means of knowing what their will is, and upon all others I shall do what my own judgment teaches me will best advance their interests. Whether elected or not, I go for distributing the proceeds of the sales of the public lands to the several states to enable our state, in common with others, to dig canals and construct railroads without borrowing money and paying the interest on it.

If alive on the first Monday in November I shall vote for Hugh L. White for president. Very respectfully,  
A. LINCOLN.

The elections were held on the first Monday in August, and the campaign began about six weeks or two months before. Popular meetings were advertised in the Sangamon Journal and the State Register, organs of the respective parties. Not infrequently the meetings were joint—composed of both parties—when, as Lincoln would say, the candidates "put in their best licks," while the audience "rose to the height of the great argument" with cheers, taunts, catcalls, fights and other exercises appropriate to the free and untrammelled enjoyment of the freeman's boon.

The candidates traveled from one grove to another on horseback, and when the "Long Nine" (all over six feet in height) took the road it must have been a goodly sight to see.

"I heard Lincoln make a speech," says James Gourly, "in Mechanicsburg, Sangamon county, in 1836. John Neal had a fight at the time. The roughs got on him, and Lincoln jumped in and saw fair play. We stayed for dinner at Green's, close to Mechanicsburg; drank whisky sweetened with honey. There the questions discussed were intellectual improvements, Whig principles. (Continued.)"

**Poultry Smart Cuts.**  
"Farmer" Vincent in Farm Journal (Philadelphia) wisely says:

When the combs of the fowls begin to droop and look pale and limp, better sort them out and get hens with nice, bright combs.

It is the singing hen that does a good day's work. Same way with men fowls.

The beef trust is leading us to trust more and more in hens.

Change the diet of the hens often. None of us likes to live all the time on pudding and milk, good as they are.

About the surest way to fail is to crowd too many hens into one pen. It never paid. It never will.

Kind of hard work to wash eggs, but they look so much better when you offer them for sale!

It was at a special session of this legislature that Lincoln first saw Stephen A. Douglas, and, viewing his active little person with immense amusement, pronounced him "the least man he ever saw." Douglas had come into the state (from Vermont) only the previous year, but, having studied law for several months, considered himself eminently qualified to be state's attorney for the district in which he lived and was now come to Vandalia for that purpose. The place was already filled by a man of considerable distinction, but the incumbent, remaining at home, possibly in blissful ignorance of his neighbor's design, was easily supplanted by the supple Vermont.

It is the misfortune of legislatures in general, as it was in those days the peculiar misfortune of the legislature of Illinois, to be beset by a multitude of gentlemen engaged in the exclusive business of "log rolling." Chief among the "rollers" were some of the most "distinguished" members, each assisted by an influential delegation from the district, bank or "institution" to be benefited by the legislation proposed. An expert "log roller," an especially witty and persuasive person who could depict the merits of his scheme with rosette but delusive eloquence, was said to carry "a gourd of possum fat," and the unhappy victim of his art was said to be "greased and swallowed."

It is not to be supposed that anybody ever succeeded in appointing a single square inch of Mr. Lincoln's person with the "fat" that deluded, but historians aver that "the Long Nine," of whom he was the longest and cleverest, possessed "gourds" of extraordinary dimensions and distributed "grease" of marvelous virtues. But of that at another place.

In 1836 Mr. Lincoln was again a candidate for the legislature, his colleagues on the Whig ticket in Sangamon being for representatives John Dawson, William F. Elkin, N. W. Edwards, Andrew McCormick, Dan Stone and R. L. Wilson and for senators A. G. Herndon and Job Fletcher. They were all elected but one, and he was beaten by John Calhoun.

**Lincoln For Woman Suffrage.**  
Mr. Lincoln opened the campaign by the following manifesto:

New Salem, June 13, 1836.

To the Editor of the Journal:  
In your paper of last Saturday I see a communication over the signature of "Many Voters," in which the candidates who are announced in the Journal are called upon to "show their hands." Agreed. Here's mine.

I go for all sharing the privileges of the government who assist in bearing its burdens. Consequently I go for admitting all whites to the right of suffrage who pay taxes or bear arms (by no means excluding females).

If elected I shall consider the whole people of Sangamon my constituents, as well those that oppose as those that support me.

While acting as their representative I shall be governed by their will on all subjects upon which I have the means of knowing what their will is, and upon all others I shall do what my own judgment teaches me will best advance their interests. Whether elected or not, I go for distributing the proceeds of the sales of the public lands to the several states to enable our state, in common with others, to dig canals and construct railroads without borrowing money and paying the interest on it.

If alive on the first Monday in November I shall vote for Hugh L. White for president. Very respectfully,  
A. LINCOLN.

The elections were held on the first Monday in August, and the campaign began about six weeks or two months before. Popular meetings were advertised in the Sangamon Journal and the State Register, organs of the respective parties. Not infrequently the meetings were joint—composed of both parties—when, as Lincoln would say, the candidates "put in their best licks," while the audience "rose to the height of the great argument" with cheers, taunts, catcalls, fights and other exercises appropriate to the free and untrammelled enjoyment of the freeman's boon.

The candidates traveled from one grove to another on horseback, and when the "Long Nine" (all over six feet in height) took the road it must have been a goodly sight to see.

"I heard Lincoln make a speech," says James Gourly, "in Mechanicsburg, Sangamon county, in 1836. John Neal had a fight at the time. The roughs got on him, and Lincoln jumped in and saw fair play. We stayed for dinner at Green's, close to Mechanicsburg; drank whisky sweetened with honey. There the questions discussed were intellectual improvements, Whig principles. (Continued.)"

**Poultry Smart Cuts.**  
"Farmer" Vincent in Farm Journal (Philadelphia) wisely says:

When the combs of the fowls begin to droop and look pale and limp, better sort them out and get hens with nice, bright combs.

It is the singing hen that does a good day's work. Same way with men fowls.

The beef trust is leading us to trust more and more in hens.

Change the diet of the hens often. None of us likes to live all the time on pudding and milk, good as they are.

About the surest way to fail is to crowd too many hens into one pen. It never paid. It never will.