



THE LINCOLN MYTHOLOGY.

The Period of Character Formation and Doubtful Stories. Early in 1830 the Lincoln family moved to Illinois, and late in 1834 Abraham was chosen a member of the legislature. In the five years intervening are located nearly all the romantic scenes of Abraham Lincoln's early life. This was the mythical period, a period through which every hero must pass. It is the period around which cluster all the floating myths and legends, all the stories of personal prowess and strength, building boats, splitting rails, serving against the Indians, wrestling, fighting, trying first one business, and then another, falling to some extent in all, and most lamentably in many. In short, this was the period of Lincoln's life which may be called chaos.

It is a curious fact that a very large percentage of the men associated with Lincoln during this time, and especially during the latter part of it, have become eminent. Early in 1831, during the winter of deep snow, Lincoln became a clerk for one Denton Offut, at New Salem, on the Sangamon river. Offut failed and Lincoln was thrown out of employment. About the same time Lincoln conceived the idea of an improvement in boats. He whittled out a model with his own hand and secured a patent therefor in the patent office at Washington. No further use was ever made of it. He made a trip to New Orleans with his cousin John Hanks, and there for the first time he took close observations of slavery and conceived an intense dislike to it. He walked home from St. Louis and resumed the routine of trying to find his true vocation. At one time he served as clerk, at another as storekeeper, was active in the rude sports of the time and gradually came to be a sort of oracle in deciding neighborhood disputes. At one time he was put up to wrestle against the champion of another neighborhood, at another he conquered in single hand combat a bully who had come to the neighborhood to whip Lincoln. At another time he took a very active part in debates concerning the improvement of the Sangamon river, and at still another he was famous for months as a furious and talkative Whig. In 1832 he enlisted to fight the Sac Indians, commanded by the famous Black Hawk, and was chosen a captain of his company. He and his men made this campaign a sort of holiday. He was not engaged in actual battle with the Indians at any time; he mustered out as captain when the term of his company had expired and enlisted as a private in the volunteer spy battalion, served till the troops were all discharged and then walked home. Again he became storekeeper, then for a short time was postmaster of Salem, then a candidate for the legislature, and was beaten for the only time that he was defeated in a contest before the public, but it was noted as a remarkable fact that in his own precinct of New Salem he received 277 votes against 3 for the opposing candidate, and from that time the politicians looked on him as a coming power in the county. He bought a store, sold it, took a note for the value, expecting with it to pay the note he had given for the store. His debtor failed and absconded, and this left him poor and struggling with debt for many years. He became the deputy of John Calhoun, surveyor of Sangamon county, and served some months in that capacity; and here begins that series of remarkable coincidences in the life of Abraham Lincoln and the men he was associated with at that time. This Calhoun was afterwards the noted "Candle Box" Calhoun, secretary of the territory of Kansas, who gained an unsavory notoriety in supporting the bogus legislature. It is also alleged that Lincoln was mustered into the military service by Jefferson Davis, but this is not proven. It is certain, however, that he was mustered out of the service by Robert Anderson, afterwards commander of Fort Sumter, at the beginning of the war. About this time also he met Stephen A. Douglas, who was to be his life time rival; Col. Hardin, who was afterward to be noted in the Mexican war; likewise Messrs. Logan, Brown and Stuart, and others who attained national fame. He was also opposed in one legislative election to Peter Cartwright, the celebrated pioneer preacher, and defeated that gentleman for congress in 1846. At the August election of 1856 he was chosen to the legislature, receiving more votes than any other candidate of either party. In 1858 he was again elected to the legislature and took part in that remarkable campaign of inflation, speculation, collapse and temporary devices to ward off bankruptcy which all the western states passed through at that time, and in this session it was that Lincoln first appeared upon record as an anti-slavery man, joining with Mr. Daniel Davis in a protest against certain resolutions of the assembly, at the same time

expressing his belief that "the promulgation of abolition utterances tends rather to increase than to abate the evils of slavery." Lincoln remained a member of the legislature by successive re-elections from 1854 to 1858, the capital most of that time being in Vandalia. It may, perhaps, be said, parenthetically, that the peculiar mixture of the population of Illinois and the growing state of its civilization at that time are well illustrated by the names borne by many towns in the state—Fekin, Moscow, Havana, Springfield, Vandalia, Paradise and Naples, for instance. Of the selection of the name of Vandalia the following account is given, and whether true or false, it fairly illustrates the stage of mental progress. When the pioneers met to lay off the town and chop the timber from the principal streets, looking forward even then with the hope that it should be the permanent state capital, an animated discussion arose as to giving it a sufficiently high sounding name. Appealing to the only scholar who was present, the pioneers were informed that it would be most appropriate to name the future city after some tribe of Indians, and, added the scholar, "I have read of a very ancient tribe of savages named the Vandals, who moved south through this country and conquered Rome." Accordingly the name Vandal was accepted as locally appropriate, and the name of the town was thenceforth Vandalia.

Early in his Illinois career Mr. Lincoln developed that wonderful capacity for telling a story to illustrate. On one occasion, speaking of an inquisitive neighbor who troubled to keep the run of the candidates, and, teasing Mr. Lincoln for some opinions, he said: "Job reminds me of Pidge Risley, down at Wild Branch. The widow had a fine growth of girls—olive Branches, they used to call them—five bright ones, and one son. People said the old folks set out to have ten daughters—preferred girls; but concluded, after the fifth, to put all the womanishness of five more into one son. Any way, young Phil Branch didn't seem to be of much use as a man. The girls were all grown up and marriageable for ever so long; but when any one of them began to be courted, Phil would step in and do some ridiculous thing to upset the whole business. Pidge Risley was a stranger, and when he moved into Calhoun county he gave out to be in search of a wife, so he was taken to Wild Branch in a friendly way, and passed a merry first evening. When he took leave, that useful brother hung on to him, and tried to find out what he thought of the girls. Pidge wouldn't say much except that he liked the youngest one's way of fixing her curls, and the very next time he called there, what do you think? three out of the five had their hair put up just the same way—all in curls. The youngest didn't seem well pleased, but Pidge enjoyed himself, and when Phil came around investigating again he let on that he was a good deal taken by the tasty cap the oldest daughter wore. Presently Pidge looked in once more of an evening, and the first thing he saw was that four of the girls had the same identical sort of cap on their heads. That night he gave a little the most attention to the one who wore no cap, just for contrariness, I suppose; and when Phil Branch came prowling a few days after Pidge couldn't help saying, although he was a bit shy of Phil by that time, that he never saw a nicer picture than the middle sister of the five, so plump, and fresh, and sparkling, with her low necked frock and short sleeves. Sunday evening he dropped in after tea, having mentioned to the widow, at afternoon meeting, that he intended to do so, and there were the whole five in a row, all in low necks and short sleeves. That seemed to set Pidge to reflecting hard, and the upshot of it was he never went near the Widow Branch's again. He was talked to a good deal about it, but you could get nothing out of him except that there was altogether too much want of dissimilarity in the Branch family, and he couldn't see the utility of a lot of sisters being so unanimous. You see, Job," concluded Mr. Lincoln, "the more he saw of 'em the more he couldn't tell one from another."

A BLOODY PROLOGUE.

How the Lincoln Stock Was Planted on the "Dark and Bloody Ground." Turn back your imagination, courteous reader, one hundred and nine years and look upon a picture of the wilderness. A small train of the canoe shaped and white topped Virginia wagons of that time were leaving Rockingham county, Va., for the wilderness of Kentucky. The war for independence was not yet closed, and all the vast region west of the Alleghanies was the home of the wild beast and the savage. The French were at



LINCOLN'S GRANDFATHERS ENTERING KENTUCKY. New Orleans, St. Louis, Kaskaskia and Vandalia, the Spaniards had flourishing missions in Texas, New Mexico and California, and along the northern lakes a few Jesuit priests and French traders skirted the wilderness. With these exceptions all was waste

and wild. At such a time the Virginia pioneers started to join Daniel Boone, and at the head of the expedition was Abraham Lincoln, grandfather of the Liberator. The first Lincolns came from Norfolk, England, they furnished some prominent men in the colonial and revolutionary days; one branch located in Virginia, and thence its offshoots have spread continuously to the south and west. A thousand biographies have given us thrilling views of the region to which they went. For fourteen years, said Felix Grundy, the Indians killed an average of three persons a month within seven miles of Nashville. When we went into Kentucky to attend court, said Andrew Jackson, we scouted the woods as if marching to battle, and if a lot of men stood together to talk, even in a town, they stood back to back by habit, as they had always done in the woods on the watch for Indians. In an environment of this nature Abraham Lincoln lived six years, acquired a large tract of land and opened a farm in Jefferson county, Ky. One morning in 1786 he fell dead in his clearing, pierced by an Indian's bullet. One son shot another ran to the fort for help, and the family was saved.



LINCOLN'S BIRTHPLACE. The Lincoln stock was well planted in Kentucky, but it was fertilized with blood.

Of the sons of Abraham Lincoln, the Kentucky pioneer, Mordecai, who killed the slayer of his father, became a noted Indian fighter; Josiah remained an average obscure citizen, and Thomas became a poor carpenter and a miserably poor man, only to be saved from utter wreck by marrying two good women, and redeemed from utter oblivion by the fame of his great son. It is almost impossible to speak with respect of Thomas Lincoln. One acquaintance, after ransacking his memory for something good to repeat, said: "Well, he always stood by his friends in a rough and tumble fight." Another said he completely "filled the bill" of that noted settler in the "Arkansas Traveler" dialogue: "Why don't you cover your house?" "It's a rainin' now, so I can't." "Why don't you cover it when it dries?" "Huh-uh (in yawn) Hilt don't need it then." On the 12th of June, 1830, this big, good natured never do well married Nancy Hanks, and on the 12th of February, 1830, in a log cabin of the poorest kind, on the south fork of Nolin creek, three miles from Hodgenville, and in what was then Hardin and is now Laramie county, Ky., was born Abraham Lincoln. Only eight months before, June 3, 1829, and not far away, was born another Kentuckian, destined some fifty years later to confront the liberator on the stage of the grandest and bloodiest drama of modern times. That was Jefferson Davis, who still lives, though a generation has grown to manhood since Lincoln died, and the vast majority of their active contemporaries in the strife have passed away.

LINCOLN AT THE BAR.

Personal Recollections of Hon. Leonard Sweet.

During the eleven years I was with him at the bar of this state I never knew him to ask the advice of a friend about anything. During the four years of his administration I never knew and never heard of his doing this. I never knew him in the preparation of a trial, or the perplexity of it in court, to turn to his associate and ask his advice. The nearest I ever knew him to do this was once at Bloomington, in 1838, and about ten days before his joint debates with Douglas at Charleston. He sent for a half dozen lawyers to meet him at Judge Davis' house before he was to speak in Bloomington on the same day, and when they were assembled he said: "Gentlemen, I am going to put to Douglas the following questions, and the object of this meeting is to have each of you assume you are Douglas, and answer them from his standpoint."

And yet he was the best listener I have ever known. He would hear any one on any subject, and generally would say nothing in reply. He kept his own counsels or his bottom thoughts well. He weighed thoroughly his own positions, and the positions of his adversary. He put himself in his adversary's position or on the opposite side of a question, and argued the question from that standpoint. I rode the Eighth judicial circuit with him for eleven years, and in the allotments between him and the large Judge Davis, in the scanty provision of those times, as a rule, I slept with him. Beds were always too short, coffee in the morning burned or otherwise bad, food often indifferent, roads simply trails, streams without bridges and often swollen and had to be swam, sloughs often muddy and almost impassable, and we had to help the horses when the wagon mired down with fence rails for piers, and yet I never heard Mr. Lincoln complain of anything. His character was that of great directness and extreme simplicity. Clothing to him was made for covering and warmth to the body, and not for ornament. He never in his life once got the better of his fellow man in a trade and never loaned money for interest. I never knew him but once to borrow money or give his note. He never tasted liquor, never chewed tobacco or smoked, but labored diligently in his profession, charging small fees, and was contented with small accumulations. He was, however, very generous in his expenditures for his family. In this manner he accumulated less than \$10,000 before his election to the presidency, and when he left Springfield he had to borrow, and then, so far as I know, gave his note, for the first time, for



LEONARD SWEET.

enough to pay his expenses and tide him over until he could draw from the government the first quarter of his salary. He, in his life, lived in all circles, moved in every grade of society, and enjoyed it all equally well. To his present companions in every station he was equally entertaining and equally happy.

He was the most inquisitive man I have ever known. Traveling the circuit, he would perhaps sit with the driver and before we got to our journey's end he would know all the driver knew. If we stopped at a crossroad blacksmith shop he would sit by the blacksmith over his forge and learn how to make nails. Walking along the sidewalk of a country town he would see a new agricultural implement set out on the walk, he would stop and, before leaving, learn what it would do, how it would do it, and what it was an improvement upon. He is the only man I have ever known who bridged back from middle age to youth and learned to spell well. Mr. Lincoln's manuscripts are as free from mistakes as any college graduate's. I have seen him upon the circuit with a geometry or astronomy and other elementary books, learning in middle age what men ordinarily learn in youth.

I remember a scene I once witnessed at Barnett's Tavern, at Clinton, at a session of the circuit court. Lincoln had a geometry which he was carrying and studying in leisure moments. One time he was sitting on the sidewalk near the building and had just got the point of a nice demonstration of a proposition in his geometry, and, wanting some one to enjoy the point of the demonstration; he seized upon a hostler and explained to him the demonstration until the hostler said he understood it.

A LAWYER'S MANEUVER.

How Mr. Lincoln Was Squeezed Out of a Case.

Col. J. H. Wickizer, now of Chicago, but for many years manager of the United States mails for Utah, Montana and Idaho, was long quoted as the only lawyer of the Springfield circuit who outgeneraled Abraham Lincoln in the management of a case.

"It was," says Col. Wickizer, "decidedly the worst case I ever handled, and my client was rather the meanest specimen of alleged manhood in the circuit. He was the son of a man who had grown rich by the accident of getting to the central section of Illinois at an early day and locating a large tract of land; the population centered about him and his land became very valuable. The son grew up with the idea that his money could do anything, and so it was not necessary for him to make an effort—not even to be a gentleman."

"He paid his addresses to a young woman of high character and some beauty, who had to work for a living. She rejected him and he circulated slanderous reports about her. It was simply atrocious; there wasn't a word to be said for him; but when suit was brought against him her parents made the mistake of employing, because they wanted to help him, a young fellow who was set on practicing law, but had not a qualification for the business. Seeing, however, that they had made a mistake, they employed Lincoln



LINCOLN OUTWITTED.

as associate counsel. The rule of the court then was that the plaintiff had the opening and closing speech; and Mr. Lincoln, finding that his colleague was determined to have half the time, of course gave the young fellow the first speech.

"It was plain as a pike staff that if Abe Lincoln addressed that jury of level headed old farmers for one hour, or even half an hour, before they went out, my client, the slanderer, was a ruined man. The picture Abe would have drawn of the 'poor and virtuous working girl' and the rich, conceited vulgar liberator would have been simply terrific. That jury would have 'sized his pile' and left him barely enough to pay costs. But with all his astuteness Abe had overlooked the rule of pleading, that if the defense waived its right to reply, there could be no second speech, and I knew too well that nothing I could say would help my client.

"Well, the young lawyer opened for the plaintiff. He mumbled, and mumbled, backed out and repeated himself. Dangling and dry decisions and botched his case generally till everybody was tired out and disgusted. The jury was yawning and all the court attendants were wishing for him to stop—they wanted to hear Abe. Well, when he sat down and everybody drew a breath of relief, I rose, and in the fewest possible words waived my right to reply and asked that the case be taken to the jury.

"And it was done. There was nothing else for the court to do under the rule. Lincoln looked sour for awhile, but the humor of the thing soon brought him round. The jury gave the girl fair damages, but it was nothing to what people expected. And then, as a proper wind up, my mean spirited client kicked because I didn't make a speech and try to do something for him. He didn't know, hadn't sense enough to know, that this was a case where silence was golden—and the gold into his pocket."

A SOUTHERN TRIBUTE.

From Henry W. Grady's Address to the New England Society.

"Great types, like valuable plants, are slow to flower and fruit. But from the union of these colonists, from the straightening of their purposes and the crossing of their blood, slowly perfecting through a century, came he who stands as the first typical American, the first who comprehended within himself all the strength and gentleness, all the majesty and grace of this republic—Abraham Lincoln. He was the sum of Puritan and Cavalier, for in his ardent nature were fused the virtues of both, and in the depth of his great soul the faults of both were lost. He was greater than Puritan, greater than Cavalier, in that he was American, and that in his homely form were first gathered the vast and thrilling forces of this ideal government, charging it with such tremendous meaning and so elevating it above human suffering that martyrdom, though infamously aimed, came as a fitting crown to a life consecrated from its cradle to human liberty. Let us, each cherishing his traditions and honoring his fathers, build with reverent hands to the type of this simple but sublime life, in which all types are honored, and in the common glory we shall win as Americans there will be plenty and to spare for your forefathers and for mine."

Wouldn't Bargain for Omens. While the convention that nominated Mr. Lincoln in session he was somewhat nervous, but cool. "I haven't a chance in five hundred," he would say to me. I was always figuring out his chances, and this day I handed the figures to him. He replied, "Johnny, you are too liberal—far too liberal." In a few minutes a telegram came from Chicago asking him to agree to certain pledges and he would be nominated. He sat right down and wrote this telegram: "I will not be a party to any bargain."

—J. H. Littlefield.



SEE THE New Garland, —AT— RUDGE & MORRIS 1122 N STREET.

DON'T FAIL

To Call and Examine the Large and Elegant Stock of IMPORTED and DOMESTIC WOOLENS

Just Received by the

AMERICAN TAILORS, OMAHA, NEB.

1411 Farnam St., Faxon Hotel Bldg.

They are Leaders. STYLE, FIT AND FINISH surpassed by none. Do not fail to give them a trial.



ONLY \$3.25 FOR - The Capital City Courier, AND Demorest's Monthly Magazine.

A WONDERFUL PUBLICATION.

Many suppose DEMOREST'S MONTHLY to be a fashion magazine. This is a great mistake. It undoubtedly contains the finest FASHION DEPARTMENT of any magazine published, but this is the case for the fact that great enterprise and experience are shown, so that each department is equal to a magazine in itself. In Demorest's you get a dozen magazines in one, and secure amusement and instruction for the whole family. It contains Stories, Poems, and other literary attractions, including Artistic, Scientific, and Household matters, and is illustrated with original Steel Engravings, Photographures, Water-Colors, and fine Woodcuts, making it the MODEL MAGAZINE OF AMERICA. Each copy contains a PATTERNS, Orders entitling you to the selection of ANY PATTERN illustrated in any number of the magazine, and in ANY OF THE SIZES manufactured, each valued at from 20 cents to 30 cents, or over \$3.00 worth of patterns per year, free. Yearly subscription, \$2.00. A trial will convince you that you can get ten times the value of the money paid. Single copies, each containing Pattern Order, 20 cents.

Published by W. JENNINGS DEMOREST, NEW YORK.

The above combination is a splendid chance to get our paper and DEMOREST'S MONTHLY at a reduced rate. Send your subscriptions to this office.

NEW FALL and WINTER GOODS

—ARE NOW IN AT—

JOHN McWHINNIE'S The Old Reliable Tailor.

First Class Workmanship, Fine Trimming, and Satisfaction Guaranteed.

305 S. ELEVENTH STREET.

Advertisement for Scribner's Magazine, featuring 'AN IMPORTANT CLUB OFFER' and 'PRICE 25 CENTS A NUMBER, \$3.00 A YEAR'.

CAPITAL CITY COURIER,

Both for \$4.25. This makes the price of the COURIER when taken this way only \$1.25.

Advertisement for THE CENTRAL NEBRASKA LIFE-LOCK INSURANCE COMPANY, featuring a large logo and text.