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## LINCOLN'S BIRTHDAY 1896.



### ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

A Soldier's Story of the War.

BY COL. GILBERT A. PIERCE.

TALL, gaunt man with grizzled beard and hair, and something of the soldier in his air. He told us, in simple phrase, this story about himself, the army, and "Old Glory."

"They're talkin' nowadays," said he, "right smart. About the great Napoleon Bonaparte, an' 'tother day the boys says, 'Uncle Den. You tell us who you think the greatest man.' 'I don't know, boys,' I says; 'there's an Alexander, an' Napoleon, an' lots of others, but my way o' thinkin' there's none of 'em come up to Old Abe Lincoln—"

"For greatness isn't jest a bein' stern, an' solemn-like, an' carin' not a dera. For anybody on the top of earth except yourself, an' thinkin' no one worth. The powder 'n lead to blow him out o' sight. 'Unless he bets on us jes' 'bout right."

"Now, Uncle Abraham could hoe his corn with any of 'em argin' you know, and then, some way, he kind o' had the swing of them old prophets, when he come to sillin' His English; an' I guess, take him all round, He was the biggest man on top o' ground."

"You see, at first, I bein' a reglar 'crat, was thinkin' that the savage little spat betwix the North an' South was all a ewin. To what them Abolitionists was doin'. But kosh! I soon got crazy as the rest. An' 'carried coal oil lamps, an' yelled my best. An' 'pretty quick I got to howlin' round 'bout John Brown's body moldering in the ground. So when Steve Douglas said, right fair and square, That this was treason lurkin' in the air, I run my flag up, an' I says, says I, 'B' jinks! like old man Adams, 'Live or die. Survive or perish,' you can count on me As for the Union an' for liberty."

"An' so is Billy? says my wife—our Bill. 'Barely turned fifteen, but who could fill The place of any feller of his size That ever walked beneath Ohio's skies."

"Of course," I says, "but Billy he must stay an' plow an' sow an' make the corn an' hay. I'm still the fightin' member o' this firm. Though some 'ay lately I ain't worth a dern. But anyhow, there ain't no use of prayin'. I go and you and Billy do the stayin'."

"An' then, although somehow the tears would start, I marched away to try and do my part, With little Billy cryin' after me: 'T want a chance to strike for liberty."

"Just then I never thought the time would come When Billy couldn't fairly stay at home. But thinning ranks require new bone an' muscle. An' so recruiting officers must hustle; An' when two years had passed I heard one night That Billy had enlisted for the fight."

"God! how I watched that boy! Some-times with pride, then fearful as he kept step by my side Into the battle—up the mountain height. Trying to keep his boyish form in sight, Praying and sometimes swearing too, maybe, When he exposed himself too carelessly. For boys, somehow, with twice the cause to live, Seem twice as reckless when a life's to give."

"I didn't like his looks; he turned from me An' kind o' grasped his musket carelessly. Walking away upon his dangerous 'beat' With dreamy look an' kind o' dragging feet."

"I rolled up in my blanket, but somehow I couldn't sleep; before me, plain as day, Was that boy, marching up an' down—his face With that queer look of gazing into space. An' not the first idea of danger near. Or shadow of anxiety or fear. But just as if his thoughts were far away To where his mother bowed her head to pray."

"I couldn't stand it, so I took my gun, An' stepping over comrades, one by one, I hurried to the outposts silently. Anxious to find him once again an' see If all went well, an' if it did, way, then I'd jest turn in an' try to sleep again."

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And dashed myself against the fort once more.

"He rallied from that wound an' he Walked side by side on that fourth day o' July. When Pemberton begged Grant the siege to lift. An' we marched in with arms 'right shoulder shift."

"So time went on, an' we had stood together In lots o' battles an' in wildest weather. But, some way, he had never seemed so sound. After the day he got that ugly wound, I used to take the little fellow's place On picket, 'specially when there was a trace Of wandering in his manner or a kind of strangeness, like he didn't know his mind."

"One night—'twas in the midst of that campaign When skirmishes were daily, an' the aim Of Sherman an' of Hood was, day and night, To get a chance to start a winning fight— Billy was placed on picket duty, where The danger seemed to hover in the air. He had relieved me, strange enough to say, An' I had charged him, as I came away, To keep his wits about him an' his eyes Wide open, or he'd meet with a surprise."

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Between me an' the twinkling stars' dim light, That jest outlined their figures on the height.

"It wa'n't no time to think! I raised my arm! The good old musket rung out the alarm! A dozen answering shots the rebels sent, Then turned an' run, a yelling as they went."

"I scrambled up the hill, an' awful dread Choking my breath! the boy! he must be dead! An' others came, an' soon we found his form Stretched out upon the ground, but most an' warm; A blow upon the head that sturged, that's all, His gun all right, with powder, cap, an' ball, An' when I saw it—wall! I felt a smart That hurt more'n if the wound was in his heart."

"Asleep upon his post! He turned to me An' put his arm around me lovingly; 'I couldn't help it, dad,' he said, an' then He smiled that boyish smile of his again. Jest saying, as he turned once more, 'You see I've had my chance to strike for libber!' Don't tell the folks at home, I beg an' pray. An' then between the guards he marched away."

"It wa'n't no use! I begged, I plead; I swore That Billy wa'n't like himself no more. But there he was before us, well as ever! He'd never been so bright, I reckon, never. Maybe it was the shock; but, anyhow, He stood before the court, his boyish half hid by curls, an' less affected when The sentence came than all the rest the men. No matter, when I heard the verdict read, I wished with all my heart that I was dead."

"How could I ever nerve my heart to go And tell his mother, who had loved him so?"

"I didn't know jest what to say or do, They gave me leave of absence, an' I drew My reeanty pay, an' started, whither bent I didn't try to realize—jest intent On getting aid somewhere; letters I bore To the commanding general of the corps. To senators and governors, an' one Addressed to 'Abram Lincoln, Washington.'"

"With fainting heart I sought each man whose name Was said to make or mar a hero's fame; They kindly spoke—told me to wait; they sent My papers to those near the President, But one by one they all came back, no sign Of hope to me in any cruel line; Only the words that showed no heart was moved— 'The sentence of the court has been approved.'"

"I wrote his mother, an' I said, 'My dear, God has forsaken us' our, I fear. Weary an' sick an' growing gray an' bent, I'm going to try to see the President, An' then I give it up, an' you an' I Had better lay our old bones down an' die.'"

"They wouldn't let me in, although I told My story to them; men are mighty cold When griefs are common, as they were jest then. An' 'all sought favors of the tongue or pen; But I was watching, an' one pleasant day I saw the Lincoln carriage drive away. An' in an hour return at rapid rate. An' turn in quickly at the White House gate."

"It rolled up swiftly to the entrance door, An' stepped out, his eyes upon the floor. His lips were moving as if in his mind Some question he debated, but his kind An' gentle face—wall! It invited me, An' I was starting forward eagerly, When jest as I had almost reached his side, He charged him, as I came away, To keep his wits about him an' his eyes Wide open, or he'd meet with a surprise."

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"I told him, with the sob half choking me, The story of my grief and misery. His face was sad an' furrowed with a care That I had never seen a mortal wear; But still he listened, an' he bowed his head Sometimes at what I felt or what I said."

"He looked my papers over carefully, Then turned an', smiling, gently said to me: 'They say we must be stern if we would win; That pardons are the death of discipline; But still I think the country would survive With that boy loose an' running round alive. So far's our men's concerned, why, heaven willing, We'll let the other fellows do the killing. You tell him, though, I count on him to stand. An' prove that they were wrong and I was right: To bravely serve, to die, too, if need be, For God's great boon of human liberty. An' then he wrote: 'This sentence disapproved.' While I sat there an' hardly breathed or moved; An' then I saw him add, my old eyes blinkin', 'Restored to his company. A. Lincoln.'"

"Jest there was where I lost my grip! my, my! I couldn't say the first derned thing—jest cry An' wring his hand an' tremble like the nation, Instead of making, so to speak, a brief oration, An' thanking him an' promising to stand. Both me an' Billy, till the blessed land Was saved. No, sir; I lost my head, Till, finally, I mustered up an' said I thought that God would take good care o' him, Whatever might become of discipline. An' wall! I had to go without a sayin' Half the things that filled my heart, but prayin' Heaven to treat him kind an' tenderly. An' with the mercy he had shown to me."

"In six months Billy stood upon the roll Promoted up to second corporal."

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### "COMIC" VALENTINES.

THEY MAKE ONE MAN LAUGH AND ANOTHER SWEAR.

About the Man Who Makes 'Em—Mr. Howard includes in Them When He Feels Bad, and Causes 100,000,000 Cuss Words Per Year.

I HAVE discovered the man who makes all the comic valentines. Yes, gentle reader, it is true that one conscience has to carry the entire burden. Perhaps you do not know how heavy that burden is. Learn, then, that the person to whom I have referred draws about 500 valentine pictures every year, and each of them is printed in editions of 15,000. Most of them are sold in this country, but there is also quite an export trade with Europe. The most popular of them run through many editions. But let us suppose that each of them has two editions. That will give a total of 27,000,000 a year. Now, reflect, further, that everyone of them is designed to make somebody swear, and you begin to get an idea of the terrible business in which this artist is engaged. Let us suppose that 20,000,000 of them reach their destinations, and that each individual recipient swears only five times. We have a total of 100,000,000 cuss-words, for which my friend, the artist, is directly respon-



### THE BAROON VALENTINE.

albe, every year. Suppose, further, that the artist holds his job thirty-six and a half years, and afterwards suffers in purgatory one day for every piece of violent language caused by him, as computed above, he will be there 10,000,000 years, and I do not call it enough, writes Howard Fielding in a New York paper of recent date.

These mathematical operations are founded upon exact facts. In this letter I am simply trying to state a matter of news in plain words.

I have known the valentine artist for a long time, but never suspected him of doing anything of the kind. It was only yesterday that I learned about it. I went into his work shop just as he finished a drawing. I looked over his shoulder expecting to see a pretty picture designed for one of the magazines, or in throwing a fellow creature down stairs Howard simply draws valentines. It relieves his feelings perfectly. I was glad to know this, for I had been at a loss to account for the exemplary mildness of his disposition. It would be unjust, of course, to compare so favored a person with ourselves. We do not have the opportunity of insulting 27,000,000 strangers every year. We must do the best we can with only our families and friends.

It appears that comic valentines are all offensive. They are divided broadly into two classes, which are known technically as the "Hit-'em-Hard" and the "Long Jokers." By the rules of ordinary social courtesy a person may reply to a Long Joker with a club; but if he gets a Hit-'em-Hard he takes down the old musket from the wall.

The enormous sale of these things proves that they must fill a longing in the human heart. The two sexes feel this want about equally. Just as many are painted for men as for women. I

"Redeemed at last! The General came and said: 'Place his name first among the gallant dead.' Then wrapped the Stars and Stripes around the one They all did honor to—my son, my son!"

"When loving hands arrayed the boy that night In his new uniform, with buttons bright, They found his treasures, an' among the rest A picture of Old Abe upon his breast. An' written on the back, like prophecy, 'I've fought, great friend, and died for liberty!'"

Abraham Lincoln's Son. Robert T. Lincoln, son of the martyred president, is a resident of Chicago. He is the attorney for the Chicago Gas company. His salary is variously estimated at \$25,000 a year. He served as minister to England while Blaine was secretary of state. He married one of the Honore sisters and resides in a marble-faced mansion on the Lake Shore Drive. His sister-in-law is Mrs. Bertha Honore Palmer, president of the board of woman managers of the World's Fair. Mrs. Palmer's father was at one time a client of Abraham Lincoln.

THE OLD MAID ALWAYS SEEMS WELL. regard that as an interesting fact which might easily escape the notice of a less acute student of human nature than myself. Just how badly you have to hate a person before you feel impelled to insult him pictorially on the 14th of February I am unable to state. But there must be a good many million people in this country who could tell from their personal experience. This practice shows the general recognition of the artistic value of contrast. An added charm must cling to the pic-

ture of a jackass labelled "This is You" when it is received on the day sacred to lovers' tokens.

Mr. Howard tells me that these valentines are all directed to the pictorial exhibition of some human fault or folly. If they were confined to any other field he might find it difficult to draw as many as 500 in a single year.

A considerable number of the valentines intended for women satirize eccentricities of fashion. This winter there is a great field for that sort of work in the prevailing style of capes. The preposterously broad and stiff shoulders with their convoluted edges turned up, make a woman look like the head of John the Baptist on a charger.

Mr. Howard tells me that he has tried to exaggerate the absurdities of this kind of cape and has failed.

"I really does when I see it on the street," he said, "and so I have to make up for it by drawing a cross-eyed woman inside the cape. The worse the face looks the better the valentine sells. I should think that a young man of Mr. Howard's acquaintance got three valentines that year from three different cities, and every one of his unknown admirers picked out this identical valentine. What could a man think under such exceptional circumstances except that there was a distinct resemblance between himself and the fellow in the picture? It must have been deeply depressing. I learn from Mr. Howard that this gentleman did not commit suicide, but he would have committed murder under favorable conditions.

One of the most successful valentines ever sent out was entitled "The Sluggard." It represented a man in bed. A pair of naked and gigantic feet hung over the footboard, which was in the foreground; and the sun, with a smile of derision on his countenance, was seen looking in through an open window. Mr. Howard gave this to me in a philosophical spirit as a sample of what is considered a rare joke by many thousands of persons. Perhaps the richest thing—if popular applause be the criterion—in the line of comic valentines for women was a picture entitled "Going to Seed." It represented a particularly ill-conditioned plant in a large red flower-pot, and the flower was the typical head of an old maid. Thousands upon thousands of these were sold, and they served, doubtless, to enter the thoughts of a corresponding number of women who ought rather to have been congratulated. While many of these valentines are used in malice, the real reason why they sell is that the people think that they are funny. There's a very deep theme. I have

made a special duty of the problem. What do people laugh at. And I have partly solved it. I have learned what I myself laugh at—but the remaining persons mentioned in Mr. Porter's census have thus far eluded me. And even in my own case the result is not constant. One day, perhaps, I can laugh at one of my own jokes, and a few days later, when I run across it in a copy of an old magazine which died before I was born, it don't seem funny at all. But Mr. Howard has gone farther. He has not only discovered the secret of what is humor to a great class of our people, but he has learned what will make one man laugh and another man swear. I call that a considerable triumph.

A Prudent Mother. Clara Winterbloom—I don't know whether to send Mr. Silverpoon a valentine or not. Mrs. Winterbloom—He is coming to-night, isn't he? Clara—Yes, he said he would be here on important business. Mrs. Winterbloom (hopefully)—Perhaps you would better wait. It may not be necessary.

Easy Enough. Mrs. Von Blumer—Mamie wants to give the little boy across the way a valentine, but she wants to put it on the doorstep early in the morning. Von Blumer—See. How can it be done? Mrs. Von Blumer—I thought you might do it on your way from the club.

Pleased Him. Dashaway—Miss Penstock says she is going to send me this year a valentine made with her own hands. Cleverton—You seem overjoyed with the idea. Dashaway—I am, old man. It isn't anything I shall have to wear.

Some See. Featherstone—Willie, I don't see that valentine that I gave your sister in this pile. Willie—No; she gave it to the baby to play with.

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