

Lincoln Lore

Bulletin of the
LINCOLN HISTORICAL RESEARCH
FOUNDATION

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VOCATIONS

Lincoln's diversified occupations had much to do with his popularity in later years when it was of advantage to be on common ground with many types and classes of people. Upon the announcement of his nomination, in 1860, a correspondent from the Indiana community near the Ohio River, where he had lived during his youth, voiced the sentiment of one group as follows: "Old flat-boat men claim him as one of their number and, as he was a safe pilot in guiding hundreds of boats through the torturous windings of the Father of Waters, so they are quite willing to trust him with the helm of the ship of state, being assured that old Abe is all right."

While one is not tempted to call Lincoln a jack-of-all-trades, there was a time when he apparently was holding down about as many public offices as the law allowed. For a period after the August election, in 1834, he served, at the same time, as a member of the Legislature of Illinois; Postmaster of New Salem, Illinois; and Deputy Surveyor of Sangamon County, Illinois.

In Washington County, Kentucky, on March 7, 1804, the grand jury found a true bill against Jesse Head—who later married Lincoln's parents—on the following charge: "For holding two offices to wit; that of Postmaster, under the authority of the United States, and that of Justice of the Peace, under the authority of the State of Kentucky."

I have asked our own legal department to submit an exhibit or two which might touch upon the right of Lincoln to serve in three civil capacities at the same time. They offer Section 19 of the Illinois Constitution of 1818 as bearing on this question.

"No senator or representative shall, during the time for which he shall have been elected, be appointed to any civil office in this state which shall have been created or the emolument of which shall have been increased during such time."

They find this section is conditioned by two parenthetical clauses that immediately follow, which designate that the civil office in question must have been created, or the emolument of same increased, during the term of the then said senator or representative, to make the holding of it illegal.

WORKMAN AND STATES-MAN

When Lincoln returned from the Black Hawk War in 1832, we learn from one of his autobiographies that: "He studied what he should do—thought of learning the blacksmith trade—thought of trying to study law." This was the transitional hour in Lincoln's life, when he allowed the exercise of his mind to overshadow the exercise of his great muscular frame. From the autobiographical sketches he prepared, we may learn the evolution of his vocations.

FARMER—"I was raised to farm work which I continued until I was twenty-two."

WOODMAN—"Abraham, though very young, was large for his age (8 yrs.) and had an ax put in his hand at once, and from that until his twenty-third year he was almost constantly handling that most useful instrument."

BOATMAN—"When he was nineteen, still residing in Indiana, he made his first flatboat trip to New Orleans. He was a hired hand merely and he and a son of the owner without other assistance made the trip."

CARPENTER—"This led to their (Lincoln, Johnston and Hanks) hiring themselves to him (Offutt) for twelve dollars per month, each, and getting the timber out of the trees and building a boat at Old Sangamon town."

CLERK—"He (Lincoln) contracted with him (Offutt) to act as clerk for him, upon his return from New Orleans, in charge of a store and mill at New Salem."

SOLDIER—"Abraham joined a volunteer company and to his own surprise was elected captain of it. He went to the campaign and served three months."

MERCHANT—"A man offered to sell and did sell to Abraham and another as poor as himself an old stock of goods upon credit. They opened as merchants. . . The store winked out."

POSTMASTER—"He was appointed postmaster at New Salem—the office being too insignificant to make his politics an objection."

SURVEYOR—"The surveyor of Sangamon offered to depute to Abraham that portion of his work which was within this part of the county."

LAWYER—"In a private conversation he (John T. Stuart) encouraged Lincoln to study law. . . In the autumn of 1836 he obtained a law license, and on April 15, 1837, removed to Springfield."

REPRESENTATIVE—"The election of 1834 came, he was elected to the legislature. . . He was re-elected in 1836, 1838, and 1840."

CONGRESSMAN—"In 1846, he was elected to the lower house of Congress and served one term only."

PRESIDENT—No affirmation from his own hand is needed to advise us that he became the sixteenth president of the United States and the savior of the Union.

LINCOLNIANA

(Magazine articles continued from last week.)

Warren, Louis A. Ben Ogden, First Western Cavalier, Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society, April.

Warren, Louis A. Hananiah Lincoln in Revolutionary and Pioneer History. Indiana Magazine of History, March.

Warren, Louis A. The Lincoln and LaFollette Families in Pioneer Drama. Wisconsin Magazine of History, June.

AUTHOR NOT NAMED

Abraham Lincoln. The Railway Clerk, February.

Abraham Lincoln's Homes. The Modern Woodman Magazine, February.

Abraham Lincoln the Man, How He Looked. Golden Book, February.

Carnegie's Pencil; Did Lincoln Use It in Writing the Gettysburg Address? Mentor, March.

How Lincoln Reared a Son. Literary Digest, February 23.

Lincoln Enconium. Wilson Bulletin, February.

Lincoln Letters Published in the Atlantic Monthly. Outlook, February.

New York Press on Lincoln. National Republic, January.

Photographs of Abraham Lincoln with Tad. American Child, February.

Rare Portrait. Current History, February.

The Chivalry of Abraham Lincoln. Garard Review, May.

Trees the Rail-Splitter Did Not Split. Literary Digest, June 22.

ADDENDA

Barton, William E. Lincoln Among the Aristocrats. Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society, April.

Cannon, Mrs. Jouett Taylor. Abraham Lincoln Senior and His Land on Green River. Register of the Kentucky State Historical Society, January.

Croy, Homer. Lincoln Almost Fought a Duel. Rotarian, February.

Hodder, F. H. Some Phases of the Dred Scott Case. Mississippi Valley Historical Review, June.*

James, Marquis. Story of Lincoln's Assassination, Pursuit, Trial, and Execution of the Conspirators. American Legion Magazine, February, March, April.

Martin, Lorene. The Lincoln Statue in Rosemond Cemetery. Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society, April.

Quaife, M. M. The Atlantic Lincoln Discovery. Mississippi Valley Historical Society Review, March.*

Roll, Charles. Nomination of Abraham Lincoln in 1860. Indiana Magazine of History, March.

Ross, Earl D. Lincoln and Agricultural History, April.*

* These articles will appear as reprints and should be included among Books and Pamphlets.