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### THE RUTLEDGE FAMILY

Lincoln's and St. Valentine's anniversaries occurring as they do with so brief an interval separating them invite one to recall again the story of America's best known romance. The courting of Ann Rutledge by Abraham Lincoln with its tragic ending has lost none of its human interest through the years although some of the more dramatic episodes in the drama have proved to be nothing other than fiction.

William Herndon as far as we have been able to learn was the first one to attempt a public recital of Abraham Lincoln's early romance. It was the main theme of what he called a lecture on "Abraham Lincoln, Miss Ann Rutledge, New Salem, Pioneering and the Poem Called 'Immortality'." It was delivered in Springfield, Illinois, in 1866.

Mr. Herndon, in the introduction of this address, said, "I am willing that my character among you may stand or fall by the substantial truthfulness of this lecture in every particular."

It is not the purpose of this monograph to question the authenticity of a certain statement in the first paragraph of the lecture in order to contribute further evidence against this address, which often has been successfully challenged. The purpose of this paper is to raise the question of the origin of the New Salem Rutledges. Mr. Herndon in referring to Ann Rutledge says:

"She was a grand-child of the liberty-loving, patriotic Rutledges of South Carolina. Her father was born in South Carolina amid the echo of the cannon's revolutionary roar."

The inference here is plain that Ann was a descendant of the aristocratic Rutledge family which contained three illustrious brothers, John, Hugh, and Edward, the latter a signer of the Declaration of Independence. Practically every historian has accepted this story of Ann Rutledge's ancestry, one of the best informed writers in the history of New Salem claiming that Ann's father was a descendant of "The Rutledge who signed the Declaration of Independence."

Edward Rutledge, the signer, was

born in Charleston, November 23, 1749, and, about 1773, married Harriet daughter of Henry Middleton. In May, 1780, when serving under Gen. Benjamin Lincoln, he fell into the hands of the enemy and remained in prison for a whole year. James Rutledge, the father of Ann Rutledge, was born May 11, 1781, so that it is not likely that he was the son of the signer.

There was a colony of Rutledges in Augusta County, Virginia, which may prove to have been the same family from which Ann Rutledge descended. As early as 1752 a George Rutledge disposed of his land stating that he was removing to the "colony of Carolina." This it will be observed, however, was three years after Edward Rutledge the signer was born in Charleston.

In the same deed book appears the will of John Rutledge which mentions his "aged father", brothers, William and Thomas, sisters Katherine and Jean, and a nephew George. This will was witnessed by William Armstrong whose family name we find constantly associated with the Rutledges in Virginia, Kentucky, and Illinois.

In 1776, the same year that Thomas Lincoln, the father of the President, was born in Augusta County, Thomas Armstrong made his will; beside his wife, Ann, he names two daughters, Sarah and Jean, both of whom were married to men by the name of Rutledge.

The husband of Sarah was named Edward Rutledge and Jean's husband was Thomas Rutledge; both of these men made their wills in Augusta County in 1785 but the will of Thomas was not probated until 1791.

The names of Edward's and Sarah's children were James, George, Rebecca, Rosannah and Lucy—the latter having married John Allison. Thomas' and Jean's children are named as follows: James, John, Thomas, Edward, Katherine Riddle, Elizabeth Armstrong, Ann Henderson, Mary Young and Jean Brooks. The marriage register for Augusta County for 1786 records the names of James Rutledge and Jane Finley, and two years later James Rutledge and Eleanor Ralston were united in marriage.

One of the earliest records of an arrival of the Rutledge family in Kentucky is found in Green County, where Isaac Rutledge married Anne Armstrong in December, 1799. The Herndons lived in Green County and Abraham Lincoln was born ten years later in Hardin County, adjacent to Green.

It is Henderson County, however, where the larger colony of the Rutledges settled; as they did not arrive until about 1809, there is plenty of

time for this new generation of Rutledges to have been born in Carolina and to have lived for some time in Tennessee before coming to Kentucky; in fact, many of the Virginia immigrants moved to Kentucky by easy stages. The family names and the names associated with the Rutledge family is strong evidence that the Henderson County, Kentucky, family originated in Augusta County, Virginia.

From Kentucky on the history of Ann Rutledge is easily traced. Her father, James, entered land for taxes on Canoe Creek in Henderson County in 1809, and a Thomas Rutledge is listed also on the same stream of water. James had 130 acres of land and Thomas 100. At this time in LaRue County, Thomas Lincoln, father of the newly born Abraham Lincoln, was in possession of at least 500 acres of land and other real estate.

Three other members of the Rutledge family over 21 years of age, appear on the tax list for Henderson County in 1811, Robert, John, and William. Each year up until 1815 the names of James, Thomas, Robert, and William appear with regularity but no additional land holdings are recorded. It was during this period on January 7, 1813, that Anne Mayes Rutledge was born.

On October 18, 1813, Thomas Rutledge and Sally, his wife, sold their land located next to James McCreedy's place which started a new migration of the Rutledges and their neighbors to the west.

The family of James Rutledge, when Ann was a babe in arms, settled in White County, Illinois, at a point where the town of Enfield is now located. By the year 1828 the Rutledges and their relatives, the Camerons, were acquiring land at a point where New Salem later grew up.

The following children were born to James and Ann Miller Rutledge as recorded in the family Bible. Jane, John M., Anna Mayes, Robert B., Nancy C., Margaret A., Mary A., and Sally F. The name of another child born in 1815 is not legible on the photographic copy of the Bible record.

It is hoped that the information gathered here may stir up enough interest in the lineage of Anna Mayes Rutledge to make it possible to trace her ancestry. Until some duly authorized records connect her with the family of famous Rutledges in South Carolina, it might be best to think of her as a daughter of a humble pioneer, moving in about the same social circle as Abraham Lincoln, who said just a century ago this year:

"I was born and have ever remained, in the most humble walks of life. I have no wealthy or popular relations or friends to recommend me."