

LINCOLN LORE

Bulletin of the Lincoln National Life Foundation - - - - - Dr. Louis A. Warren, Editor,
Published each week by The Lincoln National Life Insurance Company, Fort Wayne, Indiana

Number 558

FORT WAYNE, INDIANA

December 18, 1939

LINCOLN — DAY BY DAY

Among all the excellent publications issued by the Abraham Lincoln Association, the series of books tracing Lincoln's day-by-day activities are the most important contributions to a comprehensive source library of Lincolniana.

The current edition is the third one in the series and covers the seven year period of Lincoln's life from 1840 to 1846 inclusive. It is edited by Harry E. Pratt, the secretary of the association. In 1936 a volume of similar arrangement was edited by Benjamin P. Thomas, compiling incidents from 1847 to 1853, and in 1933 Paul M. Angle brought out the first volume in the group which presented episodes from 1854 to March 4, 1861, inclusive.

Highlights of Seven Years

Lincoln's advances as both a lawyer and political leader were marked during this period. From a junior partner in two different law firms, he becomes the senior partner in one of his own founding, and he advances politically from the Illinois Legislature to the United States Congress.

1840

Presidential year so Lincoln is absorbed in politics. Campaigns for Harrison, going as far as Kentucky for his first political speech in his native state. Elected to the legislature for the fourth time.

1841

Breaks his engagement to Mary Todd. Enters law partnership with Logan. Tries case involving freedom of slave girl. Starts for Louisville, Kentucky, for a visit with Joshua Speed and remains away for over a month.

1842

Does not run as a candidate for legislature. Challenged to a duel by Shields. Marries Mary Todd.

1843

First child, Robert Todd Lincoln, born. Lincoln chosen as a Presidential elector.

1844

Purchases a home in Springfield. Law partnership with Herndon formed. Visits boyhood home in Indiana. Campaigns as Presidential elector for Henry Clay.

1845

Delivers address at Fourth of July celebration at Springfield.

1846

Second son, Edward Baker Lincoln, born. Elected a representative to Congress.

The Eighth Judicial Circuit

The inclusion of maps showing the extent of the eighth judicial circuit from the time it was established on February 23, 1839, until February 11, 1857, was a timely forethought, as the book covers the early years of the circuit which paved the way for Lincoln's fame as a lawyer.

Most of the entries appearing in the book have been compiled from the court records in the various counties where Lincoln practiced, and they constitute the most dependable documentary source which one might discover. It may also be observed by reading these court entries that Lincoln was extremely busy even in the early days of his practice.

Periods Lacking Biographical Data

Mr. Pratt has done a remarkably fine piece of work in discovering so many citations which definitely locate Lincoln on some day during nearly every week. There are a few long intervals which may be filled in as time goes on. Periods of approximately two weeks duration or more, when Lincoln cannot be located, follow:

1840, Oct. 1-Oct. 19—Circuit courts of McLean, Livingston, DeWitt and Macon convened during this period.

1841, April 17-May 16—Circuit courts of McLean, Livingston, DeWitt, and Champaign were in session at intervals.

1842, Oct. 11-Oct. 24—Courts were in session in Macon and Shelby Counties.

1843, May 23-June 4—Logan circuit convened at this time.

1844, May 7-May 20—The counties of Moultrie, Shelby, and Coles held courts.

1844, June 21-July 4—Lincoln may have been in Chicago at some time during this period.

1844, Aug. 8-Sept. 4—Court in Tazewell County was in session.

1844, Sept. 14-Sept. 25—McLean and Livingston Counties held court.

1845, April 19-April 30—Counties of McLean and Livingston held court sessions.

1845, May 13-June 1—Courts were held in Edgar, Moultrie, and Macon.

1845, July 13-July 27—No clue.

1845, Aug. 12-Sept. 2—No clue.

1845, Oct. 4-Oct. 23—Courts convened in Vermillion, Edgar, Coles, and Macon.

1846, June 11-July 17—No clue.

1846, Aug. 5-Sept. 5—No clue.

1846, Sept. 27-Oct. 11—Circuit courts were held in Livingston, DeWitt, Piatt, and Champaign Counties.

Lincoln's Sundays

Possibly the most noticeable omission in the book is the lack of any information about Lincoln's behavior on Sunday. There were 364 Sundays during the seven years covered by the book, but there is no single instance recorded where Lincoln is known to have attended church. We are not to assume, however, that he did not engage in religious worship during this period.

On eight different Sundays he is known to have written letters, most of them personal. But one political speech is recorded, and one political conference, though there were undoubtedly others. Two business conferences are also recorded. The very few other Sunday notations refer to travel.

It would be a favor, indeed, if readers of *Lincoln Lore*, learning of Abraham Lincoln's whereabouts during any of the intervals mentioned or on any Sunday during the seven years period, would communicate with the editor, and he will compile such information for Mr. Pratt.

Lincoln 1840-1846 Being the Day-by-Day Activities of Abraham Lincoln from January 1, 1840 to December 31, 1846. By Harry E. Pratt, Abraham Lincoln Association. Price \$3.75.