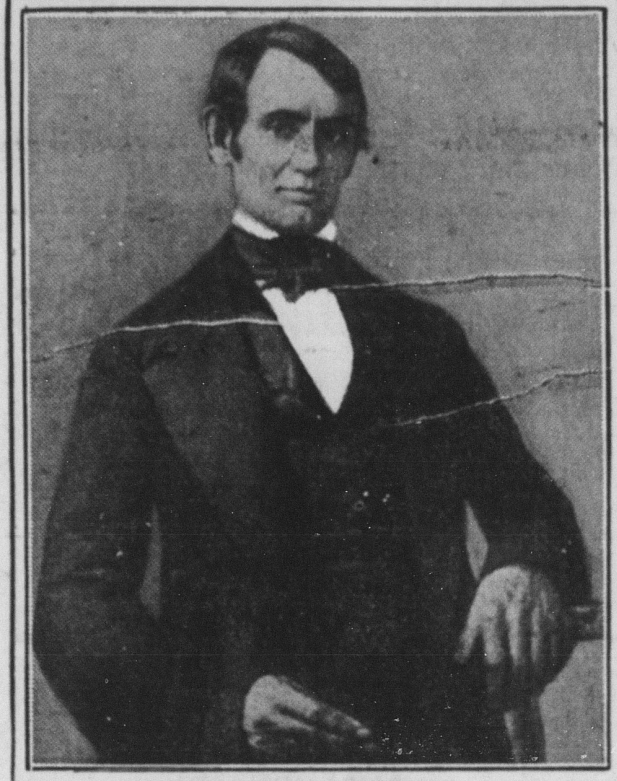


Lincoln, the Legislator



Lincoln in 1848

By ELMO SCOTT WATSON

ON FEBRUARY 12, 1835, the Illinois legislature, in session in the little town of Vandalia, was in the last-minute rush of finishing up its work before adjourning. That day one of its members was twenty-six years old, but it is doubtful if he paid much attention to the anniversary. Nor is it likely that his fellow-legislators, if indeed they knew about it, took the trouble to congratulate him and wish him "many happy returns of the day." For he was just an obscure member of the lower house from Sangamon county.

He had been an honest but unsuccessful storekeeper in the little hamlet of New Salem and a captain of volunteers in the Black Hawk war. But he had won no particular distinction in that unimportant conflict, nor had his brief military career helped him much politically. An unsuccessful candidate for the legislature in the autumn of 1832, he had split rails and done various other odd jobs to make a living while studying law by himself. Chosen postmaster of New Salem, he had been successful in his second attempt to win a seat in the general assembly, but during the session now coming to a close he had done nothing to single him out among his fellows as a "comer."

They knew him as a droll fellow who could set a group off into a gale of laughter with one of his funny stories, told in his high-pitched, singsong, nasal voice. Yes, Abe Lincoln was "good company" but there was no reason to believe that he would ever become famous. So the fact that February 12 was his birthday didn't mean a thing to the men who sat beside him in a room in the little two-story brick building in Vandalia—the capital of the sovereign state of Illinois. If they could have looked into the future and seen how that date was observed in every part of the United States, how their eyes would have bulged with surprise! Can't you hear them exclaiming: "In honor of Abe Lincoln? Why, 'tain't possible, no-how!"

So the "celebration" of Lincoln's birthday a hundred years ago was no celebration at all, for the very good reason that no one, not even the man himself, considered it of any importance. But it is worthy of remembrance for the reason that his biographer, Albert J. Beveridge, has pointed out in this paragraph from his "Abraham Lincoln, 1809-1858" (Houghton Mifflin company): "Finally, by the dim light of candles, the general assembly finished its work and, sometime before midnight, February 13, 1835, adjourned sine die. His first legislative experience thus ended, Lincoln went back to New Salem and again took up his surveying and handling of the scanty mail. The sum of his sojourn in Vandalia had been the making of friends, lessons in legislative procedure and manipulation, and the acquiring of basic procedure and constitutional principles. He had heard great questions discussed by able and informed men. He had met cultivated women, too, and, in short, had visited a new world. Small wonder that, when he reached New Salem, he plunged into study with such abandon that his health suffered and his friends thought him mentally affected. Henceforth the log-cabin hamlet on the Sangamon held little or nothing that was attractive to the aspiring young Lincoln."

So perhaps it is not too much to say that the greatness that was to be Abraham Lincoln's dates from that February day, a hundred years ago, when he turned his back on the scene of his first appearance on the stage of public affairs. Neither the scene nor his appearance upon it were especially impressive. Beveridge has given us an excellent description of both. He writes: "Upon the west bluff of the Kaskaskia river, sixty feet above high water, stood in 1834, perhaps a hundred buildings. All but two were of wood, some of them frame structures, but most of them log cabins. A little frame Presbyterian church house, without a steeple, nestled on a side street, while a still smaller building served for all other religious denominations as well as for school purposes and public gatherings. . . . Five or six of the bigger houses were taverns or boarding places, two of them would accommodate thirty or forty persons, though they were not entirely finished. . . .

"About eight hundred people, including children, lived in the town, and the adjacent country was scantily settled; but marriages were frequent. For the most part the surrounding land was heavily timbered, but to the north and west rolling prairies stretched into the horizon. The river bottoms were covered thickly with great trees, vines and all manner of rank vegetation; and from this valley came at the seasonable time clouds of mosquitoes. . . .

Resolved, that the Committee on Education be instructed to enquire into the expediency of providing by law for the examination, as to the qualifications of persons offering themselves as school teachers, and that no teacher shall receive any part of the salary of such examination, and that they pay of said such examination, and that they put by Hall & Stewart—



The Rail-Splitter by Charles Mulligan



Old State House at Vandalia, Ill.



Gov. Joseph Duncan

"Such was Vandalia when on a winter day late in November, 1834, the regular stage coach was driven into the capital of Illinois. Among the passengers was Abraham Lincoln, one of the newly elected representatives from Sangamon county.

"He wore a new suit which, made by a tailor in Springfield, had cost him sixty dollars. Lincoln had borrowed from Coleman Smoot two hundred dollars in order properly to equip himself and pay his expenses while away from New Salem on his first legislative adventure. The loan was, whimsically declared Lincoln when asking Smoot for the money, a kind of penalty upon Smoot for having voted for him. He was better attired and had more clothes than ever before in his life."

During this session Lincoln played a very small part and such measures as he voted upon had comparatively little historical significance. He was appointed to one minor standing committee and later to two special committees. The first bill he introduced, providing for a private toll-bridge across Salt creek in Sangamon county, was passed promptly. But when he branched out into larger fields of legislation he was not so successful.

The disposal of public lands belonging to the United States was an important question at that time. On January 10, 1835, Lincoln offered a resolution "that our senators be instructed and our representatives requested to use their whole influence in the congress of the United States to procure the passage of a law relative to the public lands, by the operation of which the state of Illinois would be entitled to receive annually a sum of money not less in amount than 20 per cent upon the amount annually paid into the treasury of the United States, for public lands lying within the limits of the said state of Illinois." This resolution was laid on the table, without roll-call, where it peacefully expired.

Even more important than the public land question was the problem of the National bank, the main issue in the Presidential campaign of 1832 in which Andrew Jackson was re-elected. A resolution, supporting Jackson's stand on this question, was introduced in the Illinois legislature in January, 1835, and precipitated a vigorous dispute. Says Beveridge: ". . . For nearly three weeks Lincoln heard what was said on all phases of the National bank and the currency; but it does not appear that he took part in the controversy."

But if Lincoln played an insignificant role during his first legislative experience, he was to play an active and conspicuous part in the special session of the legislature which Gov. Joseph Duncan called the following December. (This was the same Joseph Duncan who, as one of Maj. George Croghan's "boy lieutenants," had won a vote of thanks from congress for their heroism at the defense of Fort Stephenson during the War of 1812.) During this session the state was reappointed, the necessary legislation for starting work on the Illinois and Michigan canal was passed, as were the first of the flood bills providing for other internal improvements which rose to such a high tide in the next legislature and played no small part in the panic of 1837.

But more important, as regards Lincoln's career, was the fact that during this time he was helping pave the way for removing the capital to Springfield, an incident which brought him his first real prominence. Re-elected to the legislature in 1836, at its opening session in December he became the Whig floor leader and was "recognized on all hands as a clever parliamentary tactician and likely to become the manager in the house. . . . His supreme purpose now was to achieve the removal of the capital to Springfield and upon the achievement of that design he concentrated every faculty during the next three months."

In 1833 the legislature had authorized a referendum vote by the people on the question of selecting a permanent site for the capital but no majority was given for any one location. The leaders in the voting were Alton, Vandalia,

Springfield, Jacksonville and Peoria. In the order named. The citizens of Vandalia didn't want to lose the capital so they raised \$16,000 and hopefully began to build a new state house to replace the one in which Lincoln had first served as a legislator and which was now becoming sadly dilapidated. They little realized how the manipulations of some very clever politicians, including lanky Abe Lincoln, were to doom them to disappointment.

By the reapportionment act of 1835 Sangamon county had seven representatives and two senators, the largest delegation in the legislature. Because of the height of all these men (the average was well over six feet) they were called the "Long Nine." The senators were Job Fletcher and Archer Herndon and the representatives were Abraham Lincoln, John Dawson, Dan Stone, Ninian W. Edwards (son of a former governor), William F. Elkin, R. L. Wilson, and Andrew McCormick. They voted solidly together on all questions and held out the bait of such an important block of votes to backers of the internal improvements schemes in return for support of Springfield as the new capital.

"Although Lincoln and the Springfield partisans, of whom he was in command, strove to delay final action on the location of the capital until the passage of the Internal Improvement bill, they could not prevent frequent consideration of that irritating and dangerous subject," says Beveridge. "Sometimes they were on the very edge of defeat, twice they were actually beaten. His colleagues were despondent, hopeless; but Lincoln never despaired. In the darkest hours he called the Long Nine to his room in the tavern, heartened them and devised plans for victory."

That victory came on February 28, 1837. "Six days before adjournment, after three months of management, bargaining and intrigue, after the passage of the Internal Improvements bill with its clusters of improvident building, impossible improvements of impracticable streams, and appropriations of cash to importunate counties, the general assembly in joint session chose Springfield as the permanent site of the state capital. . . . The husbandry of the Long Nine had yielded its harvest."

After waging their successful fight to win the capital for their home county, Lincoln and the other members of the Long Nine went back to Springfield in triumph. He was resolved to make the new capital his home henceforth and to hang out his shingle as a lawyer there, for the very day after his victory for Springfield he had obtained from the Supreme court in Vandalia a certificate of admission to the bar of Illinois and was formally enrolled as an attorney.

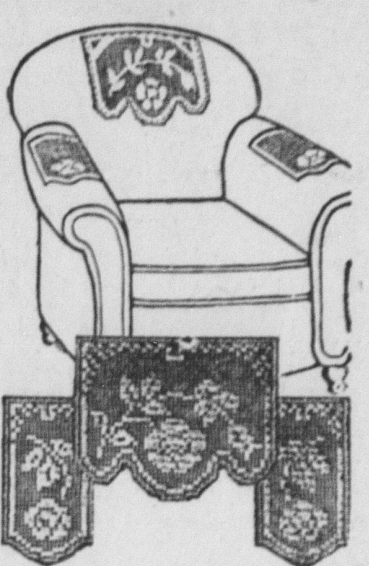
On April 15, 1837, the Sangamon Journal carried a new professional card in its advertising columns—"J. T. Stuart & A. Lincoln, Attorneys and Counsellors at Law, will practice, conjointly, in the Courts of this Judicial Circuit. Office No. 4, Hoffman's Row, upstairs, Springfield." (Twenty-eight years later, to a day, the columns of this newspaper would appear with heavy black borders in mourning for one of these "Attorneys and Counsellors at Law," now the Martyr President.)

"Here, then, was Lincoln, but twenty-eight years old, leader of his party in the house of representatives, winner of the fight for Springfield as the state capital, most talked of and best liked of all the Whigs of Sangamon county, and now partner of one of the ablest lawyers in Illinois and the foremost Whig in the state."—Thus, Albert Beveridge—"Astounding progress! But yesterday pottering about New Salem in contact only with little things and crude surroundings, heavily in debt and with dim prospects for advancement; today starting on the high road of ambition and achievement!"

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HERE'S CHAIR SET EASY TO CROCHET

By GRANDMOTHER CLARK



Since crochet work is again interesting the art needleworkers, why not pick up your No. 8 or 9 steel crochet hook and thread about size 15 and crochet this attractive three-piece set for your living room chair, or for a gift? It will surely be appreciated and admired. Chair backs and arm rests are old decorations but now growing in popularity and are modern. This set is worked in the large filet stitch, works up rapidly and is simple work even for the inexperienced. The center piece measures 14x11 inches, the arm rests 6x11 inches, with about size 15 thread. By using a larger hook and crocheting looser, the finished pieces will be larger, if desired.

In the large filet an open mesh equals 1 triple crochet (thread twice over hook). Chain 3, skip 3. A solid mesh equals 5 triple crochet. Add 4 triple crochet for each additional solid mesh.

Send 10 cents to our Crochet department for directions and working diagram for this No. 805, or if you have no material you can get the entire outfit for 40c, namely, instructions, diagram, crochet hook, and sufficient cream color thread to complete the three pieces.

Address—Home Craft Co.—Dept. B—Nineteenth and St. Louis Avenue, St. Louis, Mo. Enclose a stamped addressed envelope for reply when writing for any information.

PROFITABLE WATER

Some farmers in the drought regions who were able to improvise irrigation systems last summer reaped handsome profits. John C. Dunegan of the bureau of plant industry reports the experience of a fruit grower who irrigated 827 eight-year-old peach trees in an orchard at Springdale, Ark. He applied approximately 1,000,000 gallons of water during the drought at a cost of \$240. He marketed about 3,000 bushels of peaches from the trees, and the fruit was so much better size and quality than the peaches from unirrigated trees that his price was about 50 cents a bushel more than his neighbors were able to get.

Thus the \$240 expenditure for water was responsible for a \$1,500 increase in income, for quality, not counting the increase in the number of bushels he harvested as the result of irrigation.

Doctors Know!

... and they use liquid laxatives

You'd use a liquid, too, if you knew how much better it makes you feel. A liquid laxative can always be taken in the right amount. You can gradually reduce the dose. Reduced dosage is the secret of real and safe relief from constipation.

Just ask your own doctor about this. Ask your druggist how popular liquid laxatives have become. The right liquid laxative gives the right kind of help—and the right amount of help. When the dose is repeated, instead of more each time, you take less. Until the bowels are moving regularly and thoroughly without aid. People who have experienced this comfort, never return to any form of help that can't be regulated! The liquid laxative generally used is Dr. Caldwell's Syrup Pepsin. It contains senna and cascara, and these are natural laxatives that form no habit. It relieves a condition of biliousness or sluggishness without upset.

To relieve your occasional upsets safely and comfortably, try Syrup Pepsin. The druggist has it.



Try Faster Way to Relieve Your Colds

Medical Discovery Bringing Almost Instant Relief to Millions



1. Take 2 BAYER Aspirin Tablets. Make sure you get the BAYER Tablets you ask for.



2. Drink a full glass of water. Repeat treatment in 2 hours.



3. If throat is sore, crush and stir 3 BAYER Aspirin Tablets in a third of a glass of water. Gargle twice. This eases throat soreness almost instantly.

REMEMBER DIRECTIONS

The simple method pictured here is the way many doctors now treat colds and the aches and pains colds bring with them!

It is recognized as a safe, sure, QUICK way. For it will relieve an ordinary cold almost as fast as you caught it.

Ask your doctor about this. And when you buy, be sure that you get the real BAYER Aspirin Tablets. They dissolve (disintegrate) almost instantly. And thus work almost instantly when you take them. And for a gargle, Genuine Bayer Aspirin Tablets disintegrate with speed and completeness, leaving no irritating particles or grittiness.

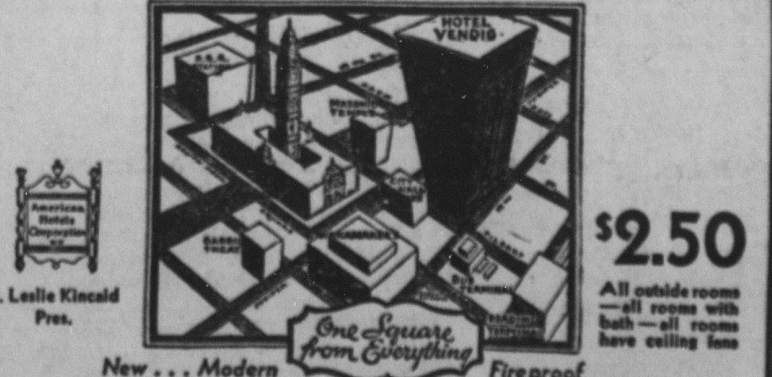
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