

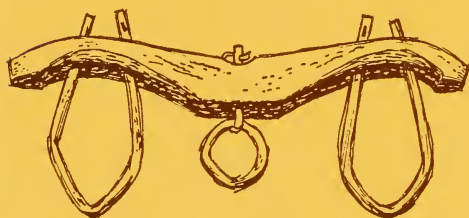
# LINCOLN AND THE RAILROADS

JOHN W. STARR, Jr.



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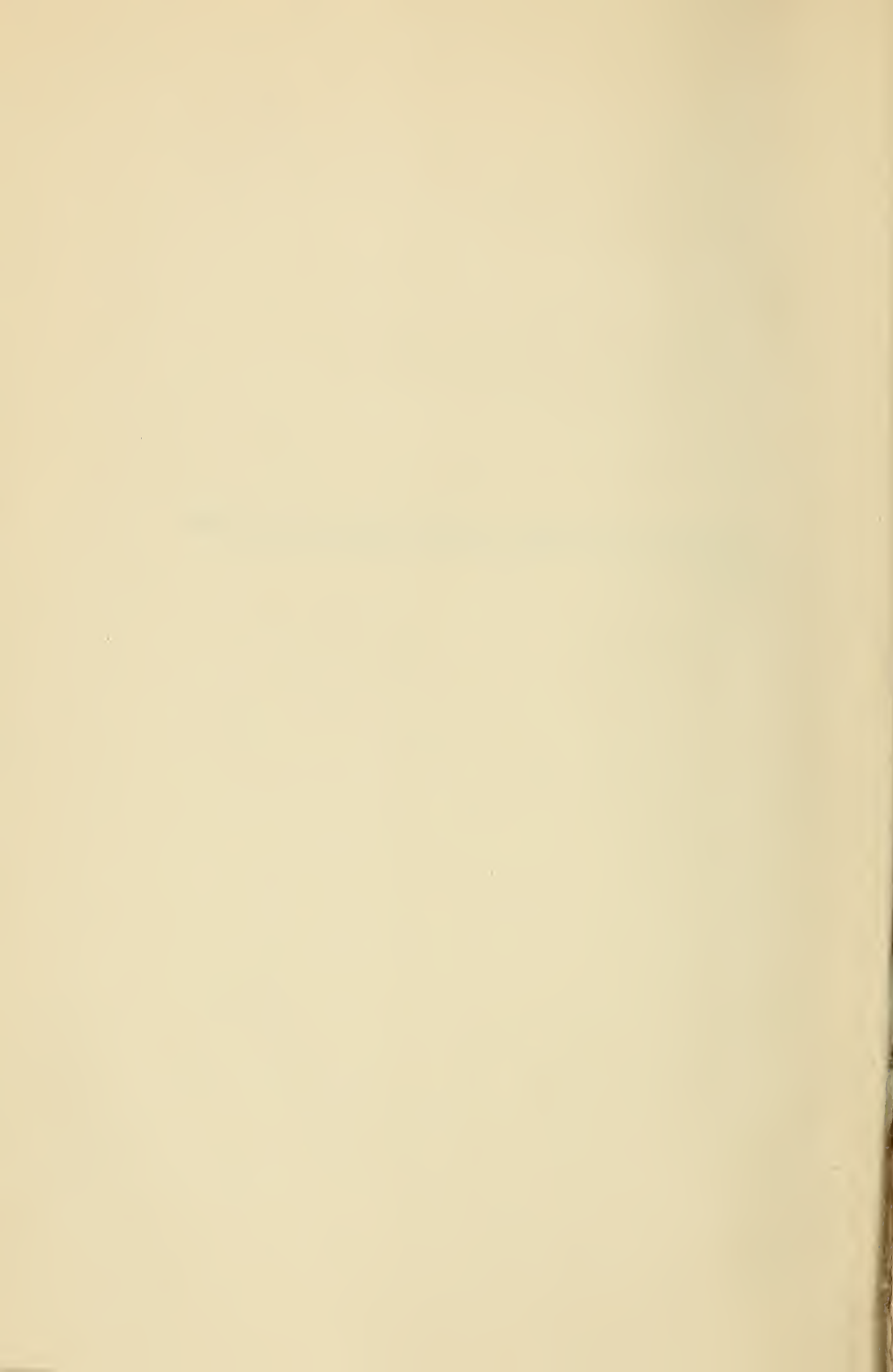
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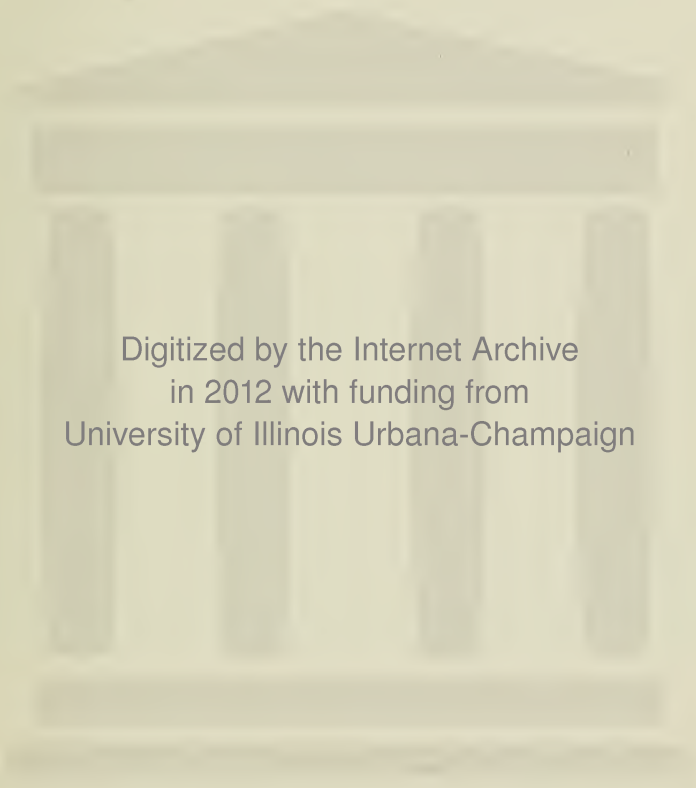
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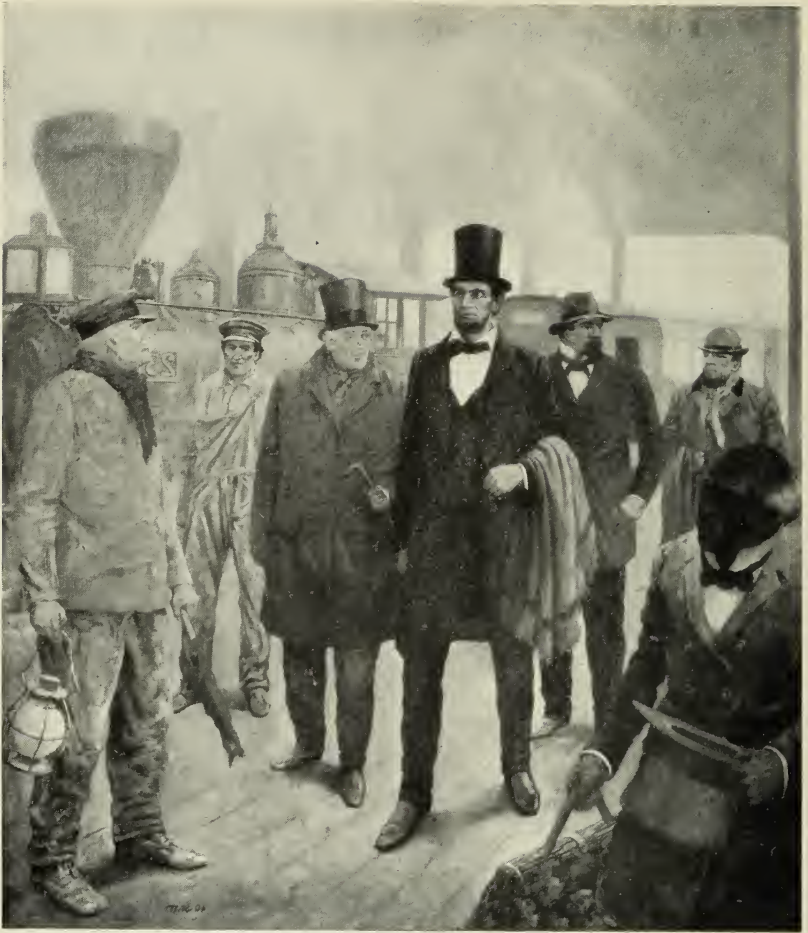


LINCOLN AND THE RAILROADS





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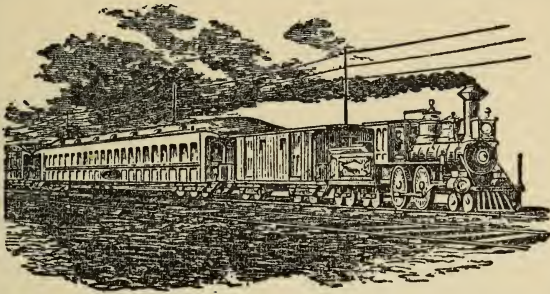
*Courtesy, Baltimore & Ohio Railroad Co.*

(From oil painting by Herbert D. Stitt)

#### PRESIDENT LINCOLN'S ARRIVAL AT WASHINGTON

In striking contrast to the crowded station in his home town of Springfield and the cheering crowds along the way, was the arrival of the President-elect at the Capital. Rumors of a threatened assassination at Baltimore caused a last moment change of plans, and Lincoln slipped quietly through that city arriving in Washington in the gray of early morning, unheralded.





LINCOLN & *the*  
RAILROADS

*A Biographical Study by*

JOHN W. STARR, JR.

*Author of A BIBLIOGRAPHY OF LICOLNIANA,  
LINCOLN'S LAST DAY, Etc.*

*Illustrated*



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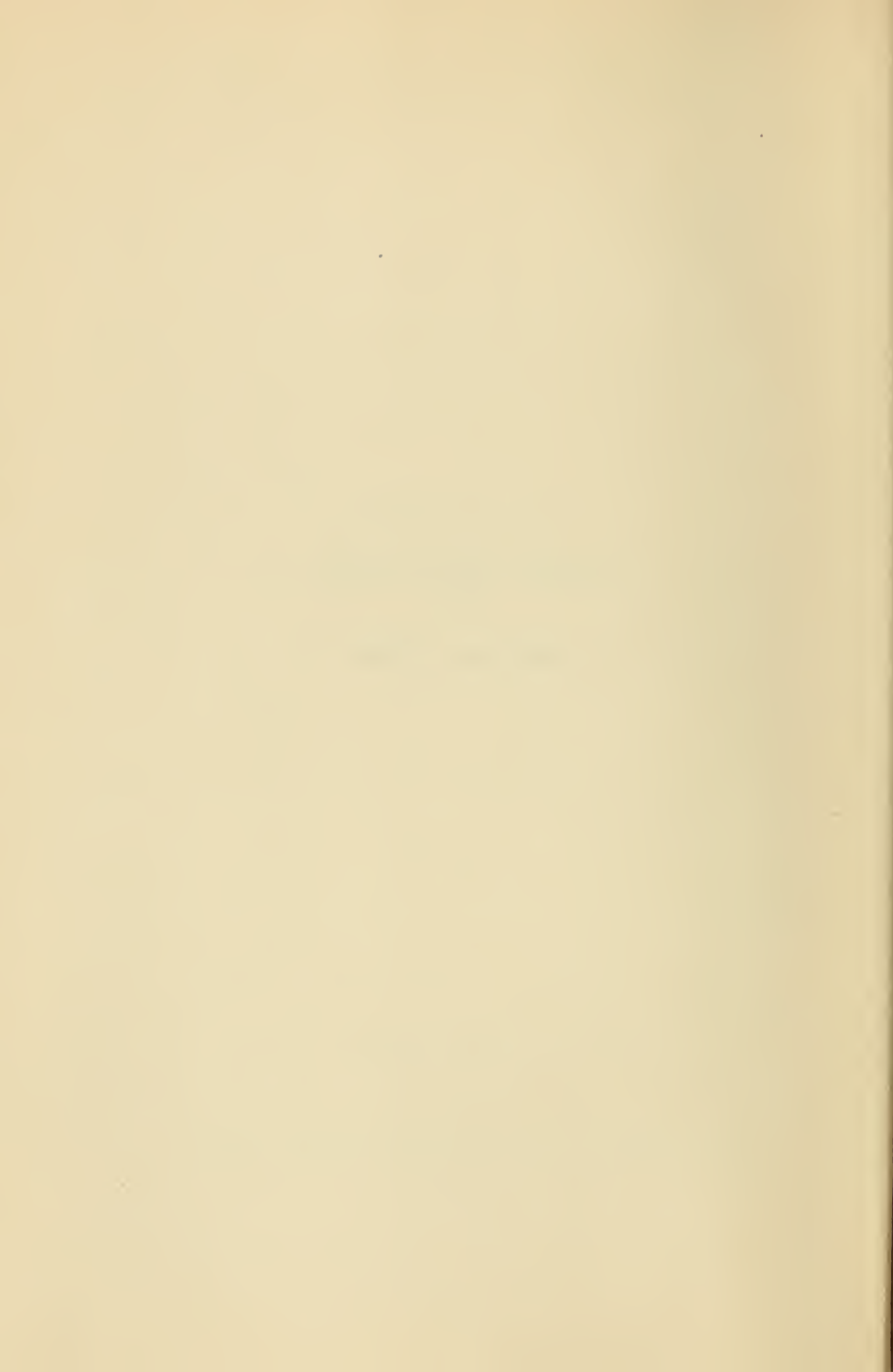
TO MY DAUGHTERS

**Esther Louise Starr**

AND

**Marianna Starr**

29054 HSEARCY



## PREFACE

Amid the voluminous literature concerning Lincoln—just how voluminous only those of us who have spent many years in the collecting of Lincolniana can appreciate—there is no concrete document, aside from the present one, which deals with the man in his relation to the railroads. Yet the facts of his life furnish many curious parallels with them.

American railroads are just one hundred years old. The first feeble lines were pushing their uncertain way across the Alleghenies and into the Middle West when the gangly young “rail-splitter” was growing to manhood. As a green legislator in Illinois he helped to promote the vicious legislation which went into the laws of the state, for excessive and unwise railroad building. As a rising lawyer some of his best clients were the railroads; although at times he appeared against them. He “chalked his hat,” or traveled on passes habitually. He was tempted with an offer from the New York Central, which, if accepted, would have changed his entire political career. He was a guiding spirit behind the first line to the Far West—the Union Pacific—and he helped determine its gauge, which became the standard gauge of the country. In the famous Rock Island Bridge case, he enunciated a right for common carriers which has become an accepted doctrine.

All these and many other curious and out-of-the-way

facts are the excuse and reason for the present book. The author believes that it will throw new light on both Lincoln and the history of transportation. If this result has been achieved, the author can by no means claim exclusive credit. He has been aided at every turn, not only by the biographers who have gone before, but also by the railroad companies who have cheerfully answered innumerable questions and placed at his disposal their files and correspondence. Rare pictures scattered through the text are likewise due to their cooperation. The author takes this means of making partial acknowledgment of his indebtedness to all those who have contributed to make this book possible.

In the preparation of the text, particular reference should be made to the various officials of the different lines under investigation, especially J. G. Drennan, Esq., General Attorney of the Illinois Central Railroad Company; Receiver and former President W. G. Bierd, of the Chicago and Alton Railroad Company; and President J. E. Gorman of the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railway Company, all of which roads Abraham Lincoln served as attorney; to the *New York Sun* for permission to reprint largely from copyrighted material; to Dr. L. D. Carman, of Washington, D. C., who has never failed when called upon to contribute his share of time and labor; to Mr. Jesse W. Weik, of Greencastle, Ind.; and to my mother for her kindly interest and helpful suggestions.

For the illustrations, acknowledgment should be made of the courtesy extended by the Pennsylvania Railroad; Baltimore and Ohio Railroad; Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railway; Norfolk and Western Railway;

Wabash Railway; Louisville and Nashville Railroad; Chicago and Alton Railroad; Cleveland, Cincinnati, Chicago, and St. Louis Railway; Boston and Maine Railroad; Illinois Central Railroad; Union Pacific Railroad; New York Central Railroad; Delaware and Hudson Company; Mr. Dwight C. Morgan, of the Pittsburgh and Shawmut Railroad; Mr. Frederick H. Meserve, of New York; and Miss Ida M. Tarbell and the Macmillan Company, for permission to reprint a map showing the railroad projection authorized by the 1836-37 session of the Illinois state legislature.

Finally I must express my appreciation of the editorial services of Mr. J. Walker McSpadden, whose aid in the way of advice and revision of text is gratefully acknowledged.

J. W. S. Jr.

Millersburg, Pennsylvania  
April 1, 1927





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LINCOLN AND THE RAILROADS



## CHAPTER I

### THE RISE OF THE RAILROADS

To the traveler of to-day the luxuries of modern transportation are such a familiar story, that it is difficult for him to visualize a time when the railroad and the steamship were unknown. And yet they are the products of the last century, their larger development having been realized within the last fifty years. It was not until after the Civil War in America that the steel highways finally completed their course from the East to the West.

The first growth of American railroads—their adolescent period, one might say,—was coincident with the formative years of our typical American, Abraham Lincoln. His fight for an education and a place in life, in the great untrodden spaces of the Middle West, affords many curious parallels and contacts with this new and then untried method of transportation.

When Lincoln was born in the little log cabin near Hodgenville, Kentucky, on February 12, 1809, the steam engine was likewise in its infancy. Not merely in the wildernesses of Kentucky, Indiana, and Illinois, where his early days were spent, was such a contrivance unknown, but even in civilized Boston, New York, and Philadelphia, people still traveled by stagecoach and canal-boat.

The first active experiments with steam were being carried on in England, in Lincoln's birth-year. As far

back as 1773 the new motive power had intrigued the English, beginning with the discoveries of James Watt. But in America the colonies were then talking liberty and the right to manage their own affairs. Mere scientific experiments did not greatly interest us during the stormy days of our Revolution when we had other things to think about than railroads. Following Watt came Trevithick, Blenkinsop, and the great Stephenson who, about the turn of the century, actually placed the first clumsy locomotives upon rails. But it was not until the year 1821 that a short railway was actually opened for traffic in England.

Meanwhile our American inventors had not been idle. Oliver Evans, one of the very first of these, made models of a steam carriage as early as the year 1804. Colonel John Stevens, of Hoboken, New Jersey, strongly advocated the building of a railroad system for our young Republic and, a few years later, constructed a successful locomotive which he ran upon a half-mile track on his own estate. Then Peter Cooper, of New York, made a diminutive machine which he called "Tom Thumb." Its boiler was little larger than one used for boiling clothes, and it had a single cylinder of three and one-half inches diameter—but it ran! On one trial trip before an amazed crowd it pulled two coaches carrying forty passengers, and at a speed of eighteen miles an hour.

Other early, successful locomotives of American make were the "Best Friend," operated in South Carolina, the "De Witt Clinton," in New York, and "Old Ironsides," the first of the long line of locomotives built by Baldwin, of Philadelphia. At the Sesquicenten-



nial Exposition of 1926, "Old Ironsides" still stood proudly exhibiting her seven and one-half tons in front of the ponderous three-hundred-ton giants of the present day.

Most of the early experiments in railroading, both in this country and England, were very crude, the horse furnishing the motive power. To Gridley Bryant is given the credit for having operated the first one of this nature in the United States which was a success. He built a tramway, in 1826, to haul granite in Massachusetts used in the erection of the Bunker Hill Monument. Two years later, the Delaware and Hudson Company, which had been organized to develop some mines in northeastern Pennsylvania, realized that their chief problem was transportation. They had heard of the locomotives made by George Stephenson, over in England, and accordingly sent Horatio Allen there to investigate the first line then being constructed. He returned with enthusiastic reports and, better still, with the promise of four locomotives, one of which was built by Stephenson himself. This was the famous "Stourbridge Lion," the earliest locomotive to see actual service in America.

The late twenties and the early thirties—just a century ago—saw determined efforts made upon the part of several companies to launch railway systems. But they faced peculiar difficulties, not merely of engineering but also of popular opinion. The railroads were looked upon by most people, particularly by the early legislators, as only improved common highways. They were classed with the macadamized turnpike, and their first charters were patterned after the turnpike char-

ters. Their use was not to be limited to the holding company, but was open to any person who could comply with the rules as to weight allowed, style of cars, and form of wheels. Further, the gauges were of varying width for different roads. The attitude of these early lawmakers on the subject is of special interest, as Lincoln himself served in the Illinois legislature at the pivotal time when the first railroads were penetrating the Alleghenies on their way to the Mississippi.

The first roads found their most earnest antagonists to be the stage lines, the turnpike and bridge companies, and those interested in canal development. That was the heyday of canals; people in some states were canal crazy; ditches were being dug everywhere and exclusive carrying privileges obtained between certain towns. Naturally their companies looked with disfavor upon this clumsy toy which puffed along tracks and tried to divert commerce from its great common carrier—water! A canal line between Boston and Lowell sought an injunction in the courts to prevent the competition of the railroad.

Among other forces arrayed against steam should be mentioned the farming element, who were fearful of losing the revenue derived from the sale of horses, hay and grain to the stage-coach lines, the canal lines, and the innkeepers along the way. Some of the good people were apprehensive of the innovation from moral reasons, and one little village in Connecticut went so far as to file a remonstrance with the directors of a projected route, asking that the peace and quiet of their orderly village should not be disturbed by steam cars,

nor by the strangers who would thus be rudely dumped into their midst.

However, with these and other natural difficulties of steam transportation in its pioneer days the boy Lincoln had nothing to do. The steam engine was scarcely described at all in the few books which he borrowed, as a gangly youth, and read laboriously by the light of a pitch-pine fire. But as the Lincoln family journeyed here and yonder in the mid-Western wilderness, urged on by the restless spirit of Tom Lincoln, they began to hear vague rumors of the iron horse.

"I hearn tell," said one farmer, punctuating his remarks by tobacco juice, "as how the contraption runs on rails—yes, sir, the ordinary road not being good enough fer *hit*. They build a fire and bile some water, and blest if the derved thing don't begin to wheeze an' snort an', purty soon if she don't blow up she starts rampagin' along them tracks! I call that flyin' in the face of Providence, *I do!*"

In some such way as this must the boy Lincoln have gotten his first impressions of the great common carrier whose early history was to touch his own at so many points, and whose twin rails stretching on and on became to him a sign and symbol of the manifest destiny of his later years.

## CHAPTER II

### LINCOLN'S LIFE BEFORE THE DAY OF RAILROADS

When Lincoln was about three years old, his father was seized with one of his periodical attacks of wanderlust and moved from the shack near Hodgenville to better farming land on Knob Creek, some fifteen miles away. Moving was a simple process with him, so far as household goods were concerned, but the Kentucky roads were little better than trails, and the lumbering, springless wagon bumped painfully along for hours over the rough land before they reached their destination.

Here at Knob Creek they lived and farmed after a fashion until the fall of 1816, when Tom heard of a still better place "just around the corner," and decided to move there. It was in the newly-admitted state of Indiana where plenty of land was ready and waiting for settlers, and crops grew while you waited. He told all this jubilantly to poor, patient Nancy Hanks Lincoln, his wife, his nine year old daughter, and the large-eyed boy of seven, and made ready to move on without more ado. He sold his Knob Creek farm for a little cash and some barrels of whiskey—as the latter were a ready means of barter between settlers and Indians—put his small worldly effects upon a raft, and floated down the Ohio on the first leg of his journey to his new home.

The further progress of the little family up into

Indiana was made partly by water, and partly overland. It was arduous in either case. The bogs were frequent and treacherous, the river currents uncertain. Once their boat capsized and their furniture went into the river, but fortunately into shallow water. The last stage of their journey was through virgin forest, to the site of their new home near Little Pigeon Creek, in what is now Spencer County. During their long journey of nearly one hundred miles Abe and his father slept in the open on fair nights. If it rained they took refuge under the wagon. It was a painful journey of many days. To-day as one makes his smooth progress in Pullman trains over the same country, a hundred miles is as nothing—a distance to be traversed while one is eating a leisurely lunch!

The years of hardship spent by this pioneer family in Indiana are a familiar story, and not unlike that of many another such home in the wilderness. Nancy Hanks Lincoln did not survive long enough to enjoy even the ordinary comforts of a home, but succumbed within a few months. Tom married again—a capable widow with children of her own—and the combined household moved sturdily forward.

For fourteen years they lived here—a long time for the restless Tom—and when young Abe was just turning twenty-one they decided to “pull up stakes” again and move over into Illinois. Those fourteen years on the Little Pigeon had seen the spindly youth shooting up like a sycamore. From the age of eight or nine he had begun to swing his axe in the clearings. For a time he seemed all arms and legs, but he was as hard as nails—all bone, sinew, and muscle, and a “holy terror” at

wrestling. At eighteen he had reached his full height of six feet, four inches.

It was about this time—the summer of 1826—that he got a job as ferryman on the Ohio, boating passengers across the stream at the mouth of Anderson's Creek. The river steamers were just then beginning to ply on the Ohio and Mississippi, and as he poled his craft back and forth he would watch these big, ungainly craft with eager eyes. It was his first direct contact with the giant, Steam. Flatboats, however, continued to be the popular medium for shipping produce, and the one great adventure of those days was to float down the great rivers clear to New Orleans with goods, and dispose of them there. Then one could return by steamer, or overland by horseback. Many a farmer was bitten with this idea, and Tom Lincoln made at least one trip to the southern port. Abe doubtless heard many stories about it.

When the latter was nineteen he was working for a man named James Gentry, who outfitted a flatboat for the New Orleans trip. This was loaded with produce and placed in charge of Abe and Gentry's son, Allen. Their plan was to trade at St. Louis and other points along the river, and "see the sights."

It was a journey of continuous marvel for the two backwoodsmen. The ever-changing stream, the small towns, the people, the country—all were like the opening pages of a book. It was, indeed, the book from which Lincoln gained most of his later wisdom. The trip itself was leisurely but not lazy. Their clumsy craft was kept to its course by two long sweeps, and at times it required their united efforts to keep it clear of snags

or sandbars, to say nothing of capricious eddies, cross-currents, or rapids. As they tugged at their sweeps and watched some puffing steamer pass them, they doubtless nodded their heads to each other, and remarked: "That is the life!"

After reaching the Mississippi River the boys commenced their trading, so that by the time they arrived at New Orleans the produce had been disposed of and other commodities received in exchange. This was a journey of about eighteen hundred miles. The only incident of the trip worth recording occurred at a plantation near Baton Rouge, where the boat had been tied up for the night. A party of negroes, bent on plunder, had gotten on board the craft, when they were heard by the boys, who quickly grabbing clubs beat off the marauders. In the *mêlée* Lincoln received a wound, the mark of which he carried to his grave.

The return trip was made by steamboat—a memorable experience in the lives of the two boys.

Early in 1830, Tom Lincoln decided to move again. He was dissatisfied with his surroundings, and rightly so, for the country in which he had settled turned out to be very unpromising. The locality was unhealthy and the soil unproductive. After a journey of fifteen days the emigrants reached Macon County, Illinois. A section of land on the north bank of the Sangamon River, about ten miles west of Decatur, was selected, and after helping his father erect a cabin and fence in the plot of ground, Abraham determined to strike out for himself. He had now attained his majority and was a physical giant. Yet we find him reaching man's estate with no profession and no trade. His opportuni-

ties for education had been of necessity distressingly meager, but he had read with avidity and absorption anything he could lay his hands on, and thus had a rather fair knowledge of things in general.

Abraham Lincoln left his father's roof in March or April, 1830. That summer and fall he worked in the neighborhood, chiefly as a farm hand. The winter of 1830-1831 is what is known in Illinois history as the "Winter of the Deep Snow," so that Lincoln could not have done much that season. Yet he secured employment for the coming spring.

A relative of his, John Hanks, had been asked by Denton Offutt, the leading business man along that portion of the Sangamon, to take a flatboat loaded with provisions and stock from Beardstown, Illinois, to New Orleans. A deal was made whereby Abraham Lincoln and John Johnston, his step-brother, were to accompany Hanks to assist in the work.

In March, when the snow was gone, it was found that traveling by land was almost impossible, due to the flooded country. So, purchasing a large canoe, the party of three embarked on the Sangamon to meet Offutt at Springfield. Here they found him, but were informed that, as he had not been able to get a boat at Beardstown as intended, they would be hired to hew down timber and build their own craft for the journey at Sangamon Town, seven miles northwest of Springfield. This was accordingly done, and on April 19th the long journey was begun. At New Salem, a few miles below Springfield, the boat stuck on a mill-dam, but through young Lincoln's ingenuity was gotten under way again.





*Courtesy, Illinois Central Railroad*

#### THE LINCOLN BIRTHPLACE CABIN

This rude log hut in which Lincoln first saw the light of day has been preserved to posterity in the Lincoln Memorial Hall, at Hodgenville, Kentucky.



The party remained in New Orleans about a month. The city had changed in many respects since Lincoln had been there before, the thing making the deepest impression upon him being the slave market, and the inhuman way in which it was conducted. It was there and then that "the iron entered into his soul."

The long trip back to Illinois was made in the pleasant month of June. Offutt took a great liking to his tall, awkward boathand, and offered him work in his store and mill in the village of New Salem. It was a lazy sort of job and gave Lincoln plenty of time to read and day-dream, as well as pursue his favorite study—that of human nature—but it did not last long. Offutt failed within a few months, and his clerk was once again thrown upon his own resources.

What should he do? He was a man grown, with an odd assortment of knowledge and experience, but no special training for anything. It is said that at one time he contemplated turning blacksmith. Meanwhile he did what odd jobs that came his way and drifted, until a new interest began to beckon. It was the field of politics and, strangely enough, one of his first bids for public support was upon the theme of railroads.

### CHAPTER III

## LINCOLN'S FIRST INTEREST IN TRANSPORTATION

Lincoln's journeys by water to New Orleans naturally inclined him to regard this as the prime means of transportation. He was an earnest advocate, as a young man, of the desirability of clearing the streams. The Sangamon River which flowed by his father's farm was constantly cluttered with driftwood, and he saw that if this were only cleared it would open up a natural highway for many miles.

While he was clerking for Offutt many were the arguments he carried on with the farmers. It is related that on one occasion a candidate for the state legislature came through on a stump-speaking tour, and took as his text this same theme of the opening up of the rivers. When he had ended, one of his hearers exclaimed: "You just ought to hear our Abe talk about it! Git up, Abe, and make a speech!"

Thus urged, the tall, ungainly clerk slowly got to his feet and made his way forward amid the good-natured jibes of his neighbors. He began hesitatingly, but soon the subject gripped him and his words poured forth. The laughter was changed to hearty applause, and the campaigner was generous enough to say: "You made a better speech than I did, young fellow!"

Lincoln had, in fact, been quietly preparing himself for just such an opportunity. During his spare time

at the store he had read an English Grammar closely and had even practiced speaking aloud to the sacks in the mill, or the saplings in some thicket safe from human ears. The opinion was gradually forming in his mind that he was as able to represent the constituency of his county in the legislature, as anyone else. The consequence was that in March, 1832, he boldly took the first step in this direction by publicly announcing his candidacy.

Under date of March 9th he prepared a hand-bill which was distributed to the people of Sangamon County, in which he gave at some length his views on local matters.

The first thing upon which he touched was the subject of internal improvements, and fully three-fourths of his "Address," as he called it, is devoted to this topic. It shows that he had begun, at this early period, to make a study of transportation problems, but had not as yet progressed to the point where he thought that the railroad would be as profitable an enterprise for the young country as the navigable waterway.

"With respect to the County of Sangamon," he said, "some more easy means of communication than it now possesses, for the purpose of facilitating the task of exporting the surplus products of its fertile soil, and importing necessary articles from abroad, is indispensably necessary. A meeting has been held by the citizens of Jacksonville and the adjacent country, for the purpose of deliberating and inquiring into the expediency of constructing a railroad from some eligible point on the Illinois River, through the town of Jacksonville, in Morgan County, to the town of Springfield,

in Sangamon County. This is, indeed, a very desirable object. No other improvement that reason will justify us in hoping for can equal in utility the railroad. It is a never-failing source of communication between the places of business remotely situated from each other. Upon the railroad the regular progress of commercial intercourse is not interrupted by either high or low water, or freezing weather, which are the principal difficulties that render our future hopes of water communication precarious and uncertain.

“Yet, however desirable an object the construction of a railroad through our county may be; however high our imaginations may be heated at thoughts of it,—there is always a heart-appalling shock accompanying the amount of its cost, which forces us to shrink from our pleasing anticipations. The probable cost of this contemplated railroad is estimated at \$290,000; the bare statement of which, in my opinion, is sufficient to justify the belief that the improvement of the Sangamon River is an object much better suited to our infant resources.”

On the ground of economy, therefore, Abraham Lincoln declared for the improvement of the Sangamon, rather than railroad construction. Yet we find him in a later session of the Illinois Legislature supporting some of the most injudicious and reckless railroad legislation ever enacted, without regard to finances, revenues, or taxes.

Hardly had Lincoln entered the political arena when he was afforded an opportunity to serve his state in another manner. The Governor of Illinois, about the middle of April, 1832, issued a call for volunteers to repel

the invasion of the Indian chief, Black Hawk, in the northwestern part of the state.

Along with many others, Lincoln enlisted, and was chosen Captain of the Sangamon company. They assembled at Beardstown, and after effecting a sort of organization, proceeded on their march. Mustered out in May, Captain Lincoln enlisted again as a private in the company of Captain Elijah Iles. Again discharged in June, he reënlisted as a private under Captain Jacob M. Early. The volunteers got as far north as Wisconsin (then called Michigan Territory), when, their services no longer required, the entire company was disbanded.

During this campaign Lincoln engaged in no battles, and, as he once said, did not even see "any live, fighting Indians," but he did have "a good many bloody struggles with the mosquitoes." His horse was stolen from him up in Michigan, and he had to make a return journey of about two hundred miles by foot, horseback, and canoe. This afforded him further opportunity to ruminate upon the joys of easy transportation.

Arriving back in New Salem he took off his coat and entered into the campaign with gusto. Campaigning in those days was a rough-and-tumble affair and free-for-all fights were frequently the wind-up of debate. It is said that on one occasion Lincoln stopped short in the midst of an impassioned outburst for better ways of travel, and jumping down from the rostrum made his way through the crowd to the spot where one of his adherents was getting the worst of it. He calmly separated the antagonists, gave them a shaking, and went back to finish his speech.

He was not elected in his maiden campaign, but doubtless derived some consolation from the fact that out of three hundred votes cast in New Salem, he received two hundred and seventy-seven.

Turning again to store-keeping, he entered into partnership with William Berry, acting also as postmaster, but devoting all his spare time to the study of law. The store was a failure, and for a time we find Lincoln turning his talents in an entirely new direction—that of surveying. While running the transit and level across country, he had still further opportunity to study the problems of transportation, both by water and land.

Again in 1834 he became a candidate for the legislature, and this time he was successful. Vandalia was then the capital, and one of the first projects in which the young legislator distinguished himself was the removal of the seat of government to the more central Springfield. He had made his first journey to Vandalia, of seventy-five miles, in a jolty stage and over impossible roads. So a little later when he and the other lawmakers heard of the approach of the railroads, it is not surprising that they welcomed them with open arms and unsound legislation. The story of Illinois, in this respect, is not different from the other states. For a time they were "railroad crazy."

Lincoln was reelected to the legislature in 1836, and in this year was also admitted to the bar. He spent the first years of his public life quietly, being content to study the men with whom he came in contact and their methods. This first term, however, developed his



self-possession and assertion to such a degree that he was able thereafter to cope with others in all the prominent legislation of the day. He had earned his spurs, and instead of the shambling youth was now Mr. Lincoln, seasoned legislator and lawyer.

#### CHAPTER IV

### LINCOLN AND THE INTERNAL IMPROVEMENT FOLLIES OF 1837

When the first session of the Tenth General Assembly of Illinois convened at Vandalia, then the capital of the state, in December, 1836, it found the country entering the throes of what has since been termed the "internal improvement follies of 1837." This period was made memorable by the reckless policy of various states in the question of internal improvements, and the unsound financial policy pursued. After the orgy of unwise expenditures had passed, many of the states found themselves in a bankrupt condition. Such was the case with the great eastern states of New York, Pennsylvania, and Maryland, while of those farther west, Ohio, Indiana, Michigan, and Illinois, were likewise included.

Since 1819, when Governor Bond in his message to the first state legislature of Illinois had spoken of a proposed Illinois and Michigan Canal, the attention of politicians and the people generally had been turned toward transportation problems. But practically nothing of a very definite nature had been done, aside from the passage of a few bills which had accomplished nothing.

The Illinois and Michigan Canal was to connect the Illinois River with the Great Lakes at Chicago. As

an engineering problem it was difficult, yet at the outset the state was faced with the problem of how to finance the project rather than the difficulty of completing it. Various legislators took their turn at passing legislation relating to it, until the canal commissioners, in November, 1831, advocated the construction of a railroad instead of a canal. They had placed the matter in the hands of a noted engineer, James M. Bucklin by name, who recommended that a railroad be built, as it would serve the purpose better. The matter dragged along until 1835, when by act of the legislature the Governor was authorized to negotiate a loan not to exceed \$500,000 on the canal lands and toll for the construction of the Canal. At this session the way was paved for the reckless manner in which its successor handled the internal improvement and fiscal legislation.

When Lincoln and his eight colleagues from Sangamon County took their seats in December, 1836, they found this legislature, by reason of a reapportionment, larger by fifty members than its predecessors. The Sangamon delegation consisted of two Senators and seven members of the House, who on account of their average height being over six feet, were dubbed the "Long Nine."

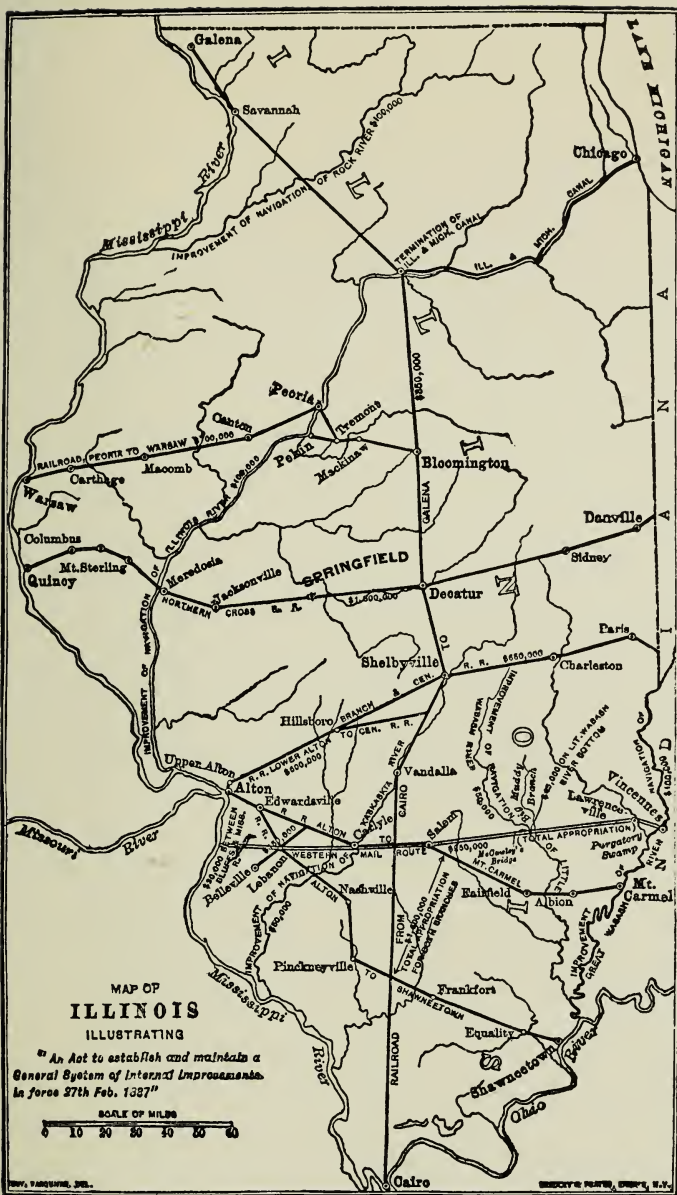
To Lincoln was assigned by common consent, the leadership of this delegation. In keeping with the temper of the people, they were to a man pledged to do what they could towards internal improvements. In a short statement issued June 13, Lincoln had said that he was "for distributing the proceeds of the sales of public lands to the several states, to enable our state,

in common with others, to dig canals and construct railroads without borrowing money and paying the interest on it."

Shortly before the legislature met, the Sangamon representatives had been instructed by a convention of their constituency "to vote for a general system of internal improvements," and on the evening of the day the legislature assembled, the hall of the House was turned over to a crowd of delegates from all over the state, recommending that their elected representatives enact such legislation "commensurate with the wants of the people."

Another matter of concern was the contemplated removal of the capital, already mentioned. Originally located in a wilderness, an agitation was begun in 1832 for removing it to another portion of the state, after the allotted twenty years assigned to Vandalia were up. Various other localities were mentioned, chief among them being Springfield, Alton, Peoria, and Jacksonville. Naturally the "Long Nine" were expected to do what they could for Springfield, which was located in their own county.

Lincoln was a member of the Committee on Finance, and as such had much to do with fostering the legislation concerning the two most prominent matters of transportation and finance, but the subject nearest the hearts of the entire Sangamon delegation was the removal of the capital of the state to their county. In order to accomplish this end, it must be confessed that under the able leadership of Lincoln, the "Sangamon Chief," they engaged in the reprehensible practice of log-rolling. We find them to a man voting for almost



Courtesy, Ida M. Tarbell, and The Macmillan Co.

EARLY RAILROAD MAP OF ILLINOIS

Showing projection of railroads, as well as improvement of various streams, and construction of the Illinois and Michigan Canal, as authorized by the State Assembly of 1836-7. In this orgy of reckless expenditures for public improvements Lincoln took a prominent part.



any kind of extravagant expenditures that was suggested, in order that they might go back to their constituents and tell them that their county would soon hold the seat of government for the "Prairie State." Then again they had been elected on pledges to support the measures aimed to aid the transportation problem of the state.

Several of Lincoln's contemporaries in this legislature have left their impressions of it and the part that Lincoln played in the enactment of the leading statutes passed.

"We ran perfectly wild on the subject of internal improvements," said General Usher F. Linder. "A map of that scheme, with the various routes along which our contemplated roads were to run, would be somewhat amusing to look at, at this day. . . . Every member wanted a road to his county town—a great many of them got one; and those counties through which no road was authorized to be constructed were to be compensated in money; which was to be obtained by a loan from Europe, or—God knows where.

"The enthusiastic friends of the measure, such as John Hogan, one of the members from Alton, an Irishman, who had been a Methodist preacher, and who was quite a fluent and interesting speaker, maintained that instead of there being any difficulty in obtaining a loan of the fifteen or twenty millions authorized to be borrowed, our bonds would go like hot cakes, and be sought for by the Rothschilds and Baring Brothers, and others of that stamp, and that the premium which we would obtain upon them would range from fifty to one hundred per cent, and that the premium itself would be

sufficient to construct most of the important works, leaving the principal sum to go into our treasury, and leave the people free from taxation for years to come.

"The law authorized these works to be constructed by the state, without the intervention of corporations or any individual interest whatever. Commissioners were to be appointed to go to Europe and borrow money on our state bonds. . . .

"I supported the measure, with many others, and am willing now to take my share of the blame which should attach to those who supported it. We were all young and inexperienced men."

In referring to his recollections of Lincoln at this session, General Linder says that "he made a good many speeches in the legislature, mostly on local matters. A close observer, however, could not fail to see that the tall six-footer, with his homely logic, clothed in the language of the humbler classes, had the stuff in him to make a man of mark."

Robert L. Wilson, one of the "Long Nine," in speaking of his fellow-representative's oratorical abilities, said that Lincoln was "in the halls of the Legislature a ready debater, manifesting extraordinary ability in his peculiar manner of presenting his subjects. He did not follow the beaten track of other speakers and thinkers, but appeared to comprehend the whole situation of the subject, and take hold of its principles. He had a remarkable faculty for concentration, enabling him to present his subject in such a manner that nothing but conclusions were presented."



But it was not alone as a speaker that Representative Lincoln excelled.

"He seemed to be a born politician," said Wilson. "We followed his lead, but he followed nobody's lead; he hewed his way for us to follow, and we gladly did so. He could grasp and concentrate the matters under discussion, and his clear statement of an intricate or obscure subject was better than an ordinary argument. It may almost be said that he did our thinking for us, but he had no arrogance, nothing of the dictatorial; it seemed the right thing to do as he did. He excited no envy or jealousy. He was felt to be so much greater than the rest of us that we were glad to abridge our intellectual labors by letting him do the general thinking for the crowd."

Wilson also relates circumstantially Lincoln's attitude during the progress of the bill to relocate the seat of government. The contest over this measure, he says, "was long and severe." Twice it seemed doomed to defeat. But in the darkest hour Lincoln did not despair. He rallied his forces and carried them to victory "just before the adjournment of the legislature."

While undoubtedly engaged in log-rolling during this session, another Representative, Henderson, is authority for an incident which occurred that winter illustrating Lincoln's "character for integrity and his firmness in maintaining what he regarded as right in his public acts, in a marked manner."

It seems that there were certain efforts being made to join the forces bent on the capital removal with those favoring some particular measure which Lincoln

did not see his way clear to support. Prolonged conferences did not change his attitude. Finally a caucus was called, in which not only those members most interested in the capital removal but citizens from the northern and central parts of the state were present. Far into the night the discussion waxed, but Lincoln was as adamant. His conscience would not allow him to be party to the deal, whatever it may have been. After midnight, when the participants had exhausted their persuasive powers, and the "candles were burning low in the room," Lincoln arose and made "one of the most powerful speeches" to which Henderson ever listened. While we have of course no printed report of it, yet Henderson is authority for the concluding remarks.

"You may," said Lincoln, "burn my body to ashes, and scatter them to the winds of heaven; you may drag my soul down to the regions of darkness and despair to be tormented forever; but you will never get me to support a measure which I believe to be wrong, although by so doing I may accomplish that which I believe to be right."

Let it be emphasized that this legislature with which Abraham Lincoln had to deal was no mediocre body of politicians. Aside from the fact that it contained a future president, there were other men of ability who afterwards became prominent in the state and nation as well. Here was Stephen A. Douglas, later United States Senator and candidate for president. Here was James Shields, native of Ireland, officer in the Mexican and Civil Wars, Senator from three states, and the only personage with whom Abraham Lincoln was engaged to fight a duel. Here also were John A. McCler-

nand, member of Congress and officer of high command during the Civil War; Orville H. Browning, United States Senator and Cabinet member; William A. Richardson, representative in Congress and candidate for Speaker of the House, and United States Senator; Augustus C. French, twice Governor of Illinois; James Semple, foreign Minister and United States Senator; not to mention others of more or less prominence.

The bill as finally passed in February, 1837, authorized the expenditure of over twelve million dollars for internal improvements. Estimating the cost of building railroads at about \$8,000 per mile, the plans called for the roads to be begun at intersections with navigable streams and important towns, and from thence extended in both directions. The sum of \$3,500,000 was to be expended on the Illinois Central Railroad, which received the largest single appropriation.

Let us see what the provisions of this "Act to establish and maintain a General System of Internal Improvements, in force 27th February, 1837," were.

First there was to be a railroad from Galena in the extreme northwestern part of the state extending southward through Springfield to Cairo, in the southern extremity, at the junction of the Ohio with the Mississippi River. From Alton, above St. Louis, at the junction of the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers, three roads were to radiate: one to Shawneetown, on the Ohio, about seventy-five miles northeast of Cairo; another to Mt. Carmel, just across the border from Indiana, on the Wabash River; and a third also extending in an easterly direction to the border, towards Terre Haute, Indiana.

There was also a road to run from Quincy, on the Mississippi, extending across the state through Springfield, to the Wabash River; one from Warsaw, also on the Mississippi, to Peoria, on the Illinois River; and finally a road from Pekin, also on the latter stream, just below Peoria, to Bloomington, a projected point on the main line running from Galena to Cairo. A short cut-off was to join the latter two roads running from Peoria to Tremont.

The first road described, to run from Galena to Cairo, was to be known as the Illinois Central.

In addition to authorizing the expenditure of four million dollars on the Illinois and Michigan Canal, provisions were made for the improvement of all the larger and some of the small streams in the state: the Great and Little Wabash Rivers, the Rock River, the Kaskaskia, and the Illinois.

To-day we cannot but marvel at the ease with which the raising and spending of the then enormous sum of twelve million dollars was provided for by these early Illinois law-makers, in view of the times and conditions prevailing.

“These sums,” say Nicolay and Hay, in their biography of Lincoln, “monstrous as they were, were still ridiculously inadequate to the purpose in view. But while the frenzy lasted there was no consideration of cost or of possibilities. These vast works were voted without estimates, without surveys, without any rational consideration of their necessity. The voice of reason seemed to be silent in the Assembly; only the utterances of fervid prophecy found listeners.

“Governor Ford (then the State Executive) speaks

of one orator who insisted, amid enthusiastic plaudits, that the State could well afford to borrow one hundred millions for internal improvements. The process of reasoning, or rather predicting, was easy and natural.

“The roads would raise the price of land; the state could enter large tracts and sell them at a profit; foreign capital would be invested in land, and could be heavily taxed to pay bonded interest; and the roads, as fast as they were built, could be operated at a great profit to pay for their own construction. The climax of the whole folly was reached by the provision of law directing that work should be begun at once at the termini of all the roads and the crossings of all rivers. . . .

“Mr. Lincoln is continually found voting with his friends in favor of this legislation, and there is nothing to show that he saw any danger in it. He was a Whig, and as such in favor of internal improvements in general and a liberal construction of constitutional law in such matters. As a boy, he had interested himself in the details of local improvements of rivers and roads, and he doubtless went with the current in Vandalia in favor of this enormous system.”

In considering this extravagant legislation it should be noted that the Assembly also voted wildly and injudiciously in the matter of banking legislation, which it is not our purpose to consider here in detail. We can only summarize one or two opinions.

“The legislature of which Mr. Lincoln was a member,” says his law-partner, Herndon, “was one that will never be forgotten in Illinois. Its legislation in aid of the so-called internal improvement system was signifi-

cantly reckless and unwise. The gigantic and stupendous operations of the scheme dazzled the eyes of nearly everybody, but in the end it rolled up a debt so enormous as to impede the otherwise marvelous progress of Illinois. The burdens imposed by this legislature under the guise of improvements became so monumental in size it is little wonder that at intervals for years afterward the monster of repudiation often showed its hideous face above the waves of popular indignation. . . . However much we may regret that Lincoln took part and aided in this reckless legislation, we must not forget that his party and all his constituents gave him their united endorsement."

"If Mr. Lincoln had no other claims to be remembered than his services in the legislature of 1836-7," say his secretaries, Nicolay and Hay, "there would be little to say in his favor. Its history is one of disaster to the state. Its legislation was almost wholly unwise and hurtful. The most we can say for Mr. Lincoln is that he obeyed the will of his constituents, as he promised to do, and labored with singular skill and ability to accomplish the objects desired by the people who gave him their votes. . . . In the account of errors and follies committed by the legislature to the lasting injury of the state, he is entitled to no praise or blame beyond the rest. He shared in that sanguine epidemic of financial and industrial quackery which devastated the entire community, and voted with the best men of the country in favor of schemes which appeared then like a promise of an immediate millennium, and now seem like midsummer madness. He entered political

life in one of those eras of delusive prosperity which so often precede great financial convulsions."

"The magnificent system of internal improvements which this Legislature evolved from the *nebulae* of desire and necessity," says Henry C. Whitney, law associate of Lincoln, "would have been all right if the state could have afforded it, or if the hoped-for development had been a well-founded pledge and promise of enough taxes to pay the interest on bonds promptly and surely; but, unfortunately, no such conditions existed, and this really able legislature was in the condition of a visionary but hopeful man, entering into enlarged business enterprises, with roseate hopes and brilliant anticipations for his sole capital. However, then as always in a farming community, the ordinary tax-list was the greatest burden to be borne, and to have carried into effect the grand schemes which were here proposed by law and on paper, would have bankrupted nine men out of ten in the whole state, so the inevitable and necessary result was that, after spending millions, the whole scheme was hopelessly abandoned, with very little substantial benefit. In point of fact, I happen to remember that, as late as 1884, a railway was built in the southern part of the state partly upon a grade made at the expense of the state nearly a half century before."

After this session of the legislature, Abraham Lincoln, having been largely instrumental in voting away twelve millions of dollars, returned to New Salem, walking the entire distance of seventy-five miles.

Following the adoption of the internal improvement

legislation, the Board of Fund Commissioners provided for in the bill prepared to begin the work of construction at the earliest possible moment. The distance was estimated at 1,341 miles, and about three hundred miles were at once put under contract, distributed among different roads. The total cost was estimated at \$11,470,444, and by December, 1838, the Commissioners had been drawn upon for the sum of \$1,142,027. It did not take a very close observer to see that the system was headed for the rocks.

Political opposition soon began to develop. Certain newspapers opened up their broadsides against the work of the legislature and its framers. The prospective taxation also was cause for antagonism. Reëlected to the legislature in 1838, we find in January of the following year that Lincoln, in the course of some remarks as a member of the Committee on Finance, suggested that, instead of taxation, all the unsold lands lying within the state be purchased from the United States government for speculation.

Meanwhile the finances of the state were daily becoming more snarled and it was getting harder to keep up the interest on the loans negotiated. The Fund Commissioners, in addition to facing the problem of how to obtain funds to carry on the project, were working at cross-purposes. The "Sangamon Chief" naturally came in for some of the opprobrium heaped upon the legislators, but it did not seem to affect his standing with his constituency.

Instead of curtailing expenditures, which it should have been seen was the wise thing to do, the Eleventh Assembly expanded upon the system. Additional out-



lays were authorized for other work. A general taxation law was passed, carrying with it the provision for a levy of twenty cents on each hundred dollars worth of property in the state.

Sentiment in opposition to the system rapidly crystallized. Indignation meetings in various counties denounced the law and passed resolutions asking for its repeal. Finally in February, 1840, two acts were drawn up and passed which stopped all railroad work in the state. Up to this time, after all this blowing of horns, only twenty-six miles of railroad, and one hundred and five miles of canal, had been constructed, and this included work done on the Illinois and Michigan Canal before the wholesale legislation had been enacted.

In considering the results of the speculative legislation in Illinois, it is but just to recall that it was in the year 1837 that the second great panic suffered by the United States occurred, due in part, as one historian has said, to the "preceding years of extraordinary speculation, carried on with a most unsound banking system."

## CHAPTER V

### THE FIRST RAILROAD IN ILLINOIS

As a result of all this wildcat legislation involving millions of dollars, it will be of interest to see the sort of railroad that was the first to be built—the pioneer transportation line of the state. This was known as the Northern Cross Railroad and probably had nothing to do with astronomy; it simply indicated that it was to cross the state in the northern section. It was to extend from Quincy through Jacksonville, Springfield, and Decatur to the Indiana line, the eastern terminus being just beyond Danville in Vermillion County.

After the passage of the Act authorizing this road, Murray McConnel, an aggressive lawyer, was selected to carry out the project in and around Jacksonville. In less than two months he had employed James M. Bucklin as chief engineer. He also induced several of his own relatives who had some knowledge of what had been done in New York in railroad construction to come West. The survey was rapidly pushed for a distance of fifty-five miles, and contracts let for construction. This right of way ran from Meredosia, on the Illinois River, to Springfield.

In the meanwhile the energetic McConnel ordered rails, cars, and other equipment from the East. In those days there were no large locomotive works waiting to turn out engines of any size or weight, but such things could only be obtained by "prayer and fasting."

A locomotive of any kind was a ten days' wonder, and its behavior when on the rails was highly problematical. The first one ordered was reported "lost in its passage," by one of the commissioners. It should be remembered that there were no connecting lines of road leading back East, and that a bulky object such as this would have to be transported largely by water. The problems of loading and unloading, to say nothing of portages, presented difficulties unknown to the shipper to-day.

The commissioner who had reported this loss soon after obtained another locomotive, which he claimed was purchased for another embryonic road in the north. This one was shipped by way of the Illinois River, on one of the little, puffing packet-boats of the time, and rolled ashore at Meredosia. The momentous event took place in November, 1838. The first rails had been laid six months earlier, so the important newcomer found a home and work to be done at once. For the first time on the wide prairies of the great West the puff of a locomotive was heard. It was also the first locomotive to be put in operation in the whole Mississippi Valley.

"The little locomotive had no whistle, no spark-arrester, no cow-catcher, and the cab was open to the sky," says an eye-witness. "Its speed was about six miles an hour, and where the railroad and the highway lay parallel to each other there was frequently a trial of speed between the locomotive with its 'pleasure cars' and the stage-coaches. Sometimes the stage-coaches came in ahead. Six inches of snow were sufficient to blockade the trains drawn by this American engine."

The builders of this pioneer Western engine were Rogers, Grosvenor, and Ketchum, of Paterson, New Jersey, the founders of a famous locomotive works. It was called the "Rogers."

By the latter part of 1838 the road was in running order from Meredosia to Jacksonville, a distance of twenty-four miles. Continuing eastward the road into Springfield was completed and opened for traffic, May 13, 1842. In the meanwhile a second engine was purchased, built by M. W. Baldwin, of Philadelphia, and placed in service February 14, of the same year.

An account of the construction of the roadbed is likewise interesting. The writer—another Mr. McConnel—says:

"The road was built by laying parallel lines of mud-sills, eight or ten inches square, under where the rails would come, save where the earth bottom was judged firm enough to lay cross ties much as is now done, only much further apart than now. On these ties were laid 'stringers' of oak, probably four by six, or four by eight inches, notched and pinned together, and on these were spiked flat strap-iron rails, some two and one-half inches wide, five-eighths of an inch thick, and probably twelve or fifteen feet long, with ends mitred, or slanted, so as to take the weight of a wheel on each rail before it had quite left the other. The frequent result may be easily imagined. These ends gradually curled up as the wheels rolled over them, till the points, rising higher than the wheel center, became what were called 'snake-heads,' were under-run by the wheels and shot up through the car and sometimes through an unfortunate passenger or employee.

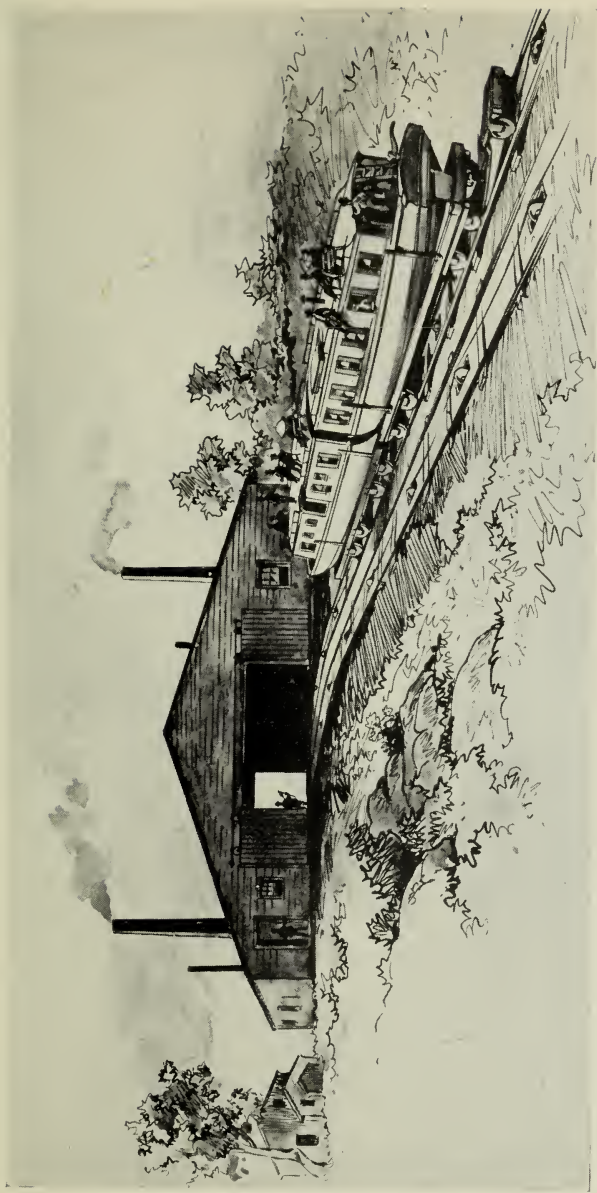
“The only passenger coaches the road possessed,” continues Mr. McConnel, “were about of the size and ‘build’ of the big omnibuses of the past generation. The seats ran along each side, like those of the omnibus, and the coaches were equally destitute of any and every other appliance for the comfort or convenience of the traveler, other than to sit down and ‘hang on’—if he could. The speed of the trains was very low, as speed is now measured, but it was, relatively to that to which that generation was accustomed, nearly as high as we now habitually know, the roadway was very uneven, there were no straps to hang to and the lurching about of passengers unfortunate enough to be obliged to stand, their stumbling over and trampling upon the feet of the seated travelers, into whose surprised embraces they not infrequently stumbled and sprawled, were often vastly amusing to onlookers howsoever exasperating to the participants. It was often equally disagreeable when passengers were few. There were no divisions of any kind in the seats. Along each wall of the coach ran a smooth stretch of bench-like seat, and a sudden lurch of the coach would often slide a sitter half the length of the coach, and land him or her, with a grue-some bump in the middle of the floor.

“These were specimen inconveniences for travelers, while the want of some of the simplest of the railway devices of the past twenty years brought serious hardships and hazards to the employees. Cars were coupled only with the long link and pin, operated by hand and resulting in any train of a number of cars suddenly stretching or shrinking in length with sudden changes of speed as much as a score or more of feet, with sudden

jars and hazards unknown on modern trains. There was no means then known for warming the water in the tank of the locomotive tender, and the only known means of conveying it from the tank to the boiler was by ordinary leathern hose swinging freely enough between the two to assure immunity from breaking in any one of these sudden elongations of the train. Often a stop of two or three minutes at any station exposed to the bitter cold blasts of winter, would suffice to freeze the water in these hose, tying up the train for from a few minutes to several hours, destitute of any means of informing anybody of the cause and probable duration of the delay. A few minutes of delay in pushing through a snow-drift far from any station would bring the same frozen hose, far from even the useless but sympathetic knowledge of the denizens of a bit of prairie station.

“Then it became necessary for the train crew to take wood from the locomotive tender—the art of burning coal in a locomotive furnace had not then been discovered—and carefully build a fire on the ground between the rails, and under the hose where it passed in festoons from tank to boiler, watching it like a hawk lest it scorch the leather, in which case the hose would crack and burst and the locomotive be left hopelessly ‘dead,’ till drawn away by some force other than its own.

“What this task must be for two or three men crouched in the narrow space under a locomotive cab, with a maniac-like northwest wind howling like a legion of devils across the open prairie, driving clouds of stinging snow before it, may be partly guessed by those who have seen a prairie blizzard, but can never be ap-



*Courtesy, Pennsylvania Railroad*

#### TRAVELING BY CANAL-BOAT

The method employed to cross the Alleghenies in 1840. The boats were lifted out of the water on cradles and hauled over the mountains by means of inclined planes. The passengers remained on board.





preciated save by him who has taken part in the torturing task.

“The facilities for supplying locomotives with fuel and water were very meager, and when the train stopped at any ‘wooding’ station, the whole train crew and not infrequently some of the passengers, joined in throwing the sawed wood into the great box of the tender, sometimes even having to add to the labors of the sawyers to fill the needed quantity. In many cases some slight accident has caused a stop at some point remote from scanty water stations, and lines of disgusted passengers trudged back and forth for hours between the impotent train and the nearest creek or farm well, often a distance of miles, each with one or two pails of some kind, carrying water to put into the tank.

“These are but a few of the embarrassments of railroading in those days. There were scores of others, for the signal code, the air brake, the automatic coupler, the toilet devices of to-day, the sleeping-car, the dining-car, steam-heated cars, all lights save candles alone, the use of the telegraph in operating trains, these and many another commonplace of to-day, were as yet undreamed of. I speak only of such as I saw something of in my boyhood.”

The road was operated by the state until 1847, when, being unable to complete all the works authorized by the original Act, the Governor by deed conveyed the railroad property to a combination of local individuals who reorganized it under the name of the Sangamon and Morgan Railroad Company. This company had been incorporated by the state legislature, March 1, 1845, and it retained the name of Sangamon and Mor-

gan until 1853, when the legislature changed its name to the Great Western Railroad Company.

Abraham Lincoln's name is found but rarely in these early years of railroading, although he was doubtless active both as lawyer and legislator. He appeared as opposing counsel to the corporation in certain litigation when it was operating under the latter two names, mention of which will be made in another chapter.

Later by various sales or consolidations, the road became a part of the present Wabash system, which literally follows the line surveyed and located by those old railroad pioneers of Illinois, on that part of its route.

It is interesting to note in passing that when the state turned over the road to its new owners in 1847, the two engines which had been in use were found to be so dilapidated and worn that they were unfit for further use. For several months the company was compelled to run the trains, consisting of two cars, with oxen and mules as motive power.

The present-day officials of the Wabash Railroad Company gave the writer the following story, which it is claimed was told by Lincoln while practicing law at Springfield, relating his experiences on one of the early runs. Lincoln said that he was a passenger on a train drawn by one of the little engines coming from Jacksonville, one stormy night, and as the train approached Springfield the fool engineer wanted to notify his wife that his train was coming. He gave a blast of the whistle and blew all of the steam out of the boiler, and the passengers had to walk to Springfield through the mud and rain!

## THE FIRST RAILROAD IN ILLINOIS 39

This Northern Cross Railroad, with its queer locomotive, primitive coaches and freight cars, and crude road-bed, was the first that Abraham Lincoln looked upon, and through it he made his acquaintance with railroads.

## CHAPTER VI

# LINCOLN AND THE ILLINOIS CENTRAL RAILROAD

It has been said that the "history of the Illinois Central Railroad is the history of Illinois." But as to whether Lincoln aided or opposed this project in its inception, there is conflicting testimony.

The idea of a railroad as a highway to connect the northern and southern parts of the state seems to have been first suggested by Lieutenant-Governor A. M. Jenkins in 1832, his proposition causing considerable discussion. Three years later, Sidney Breese, known as the "Father of the Illinois Central," disseminated his views as to a combination of internal improvement schemes, which included the building of a railroad. Several newspapers also took up their cudgels in favor of the project, notably the *Sangamon Journal*, a paper of influence in early Illinois history. Finally, on January 18, 1836, a year before the notorious internal improvement legislature passed its budget, the Central Railroad Company was incorporated to construct a railroad from "the mouth of the Ohio to a point on the Illinois River at or near the termination of the Illinois-Michigan Canal." However, as nothing of a permanent nature was done before the session of the legislature, it was certain that nothing could be done after it for some time to come.

The attendant financial break-down did not, however,

dishearten the progressive citizens of the state, and we learn that on March 6, 1843, the Great Western Railway Company, commonly called the Holbrook Company after the head of the enterprise, was incorporated. Meeting many difficulties of a financial nature, this project also failed, and two years later the charter was repealed. This road should not be confused with the Great Western *Railroad* Company, one of the successors of the Northern Cross.

Sidney Breese, having been elected to the United States Senate, tried to get the Government interested in a railroad through central Illinois, but it was not until the election of Stephen A. Douglas to the same body in 1847 that the proposition looked favorable. In September, 1850, a bill introduced by the latter in behalf of a land grant was ratified by both Houses of Congress and signed by President Fillmore. Under its terms the Federal Government granted to the state of Illinois alternate sections of public land for six miles on each side of a proposed railroad from Cairo to Galena, and from Chicago to a junction with the main line.

When the Illinois legislature met, on January 1, 1851, the members were confronted with the problem as to how to utilize the Federal Land Grant. There were four methods open:

First, state construction of the road by means of the grant, along the line of the internal improvement plan of 1837.

Second, the surrendering of the grant to bondholders and the consequent construction by them on terms similar to those holding canal bonds in 1840.

Third, the completion of the road under the charter of 1849 by the Great Western Railway Company, which included the retention of all state lands.

Fourth, the creating of an entirely new private corporation and the transfer to it of the land grant under certain restrictions and with certain payments to the state. Under this plan the company formed would assume entire responsibility for the completion of the road.

Many bills were presented in both Senate and House, but no agreement could be reached. At this stage of the game a Massachusetts promoter, Robert Rantoul, presented a memorial to the legislature suggesting that it create a corporation and surrender to it the Federal Land Grant. He was acting in the interest of a group of eastern capitalists who would form such a corporation, and would agree to build a railroad "equal in all respects to the railroad running between Boston and Albany, with such improvements thereon as experience has shown to be desirable and expedient."

There is evidence that Abraham Lincoln appeared before the legislature in the capacity of lobbyist for one or the other of the contending interests, but just which one is a matter of dispute. From a statement issued by the Illinois Central Railroad Company in 1922, on the authority of J. G. Drennan, we quote the following: Lincoln "appeared before the committee of the legislature of Illinois at the time it reported favorably the charter creating the Illinois Central Railroad Company, which charter as reported by the committee was passed by the Legislature, February 11, 1851. In 1904 we were able to establish Mr. Lincoln's connection with

the granting of the charter of the Illinois Central through a statement obtained from Judge Anthony Thornton, who at that time was the only living member of the legislature of Illinois which granted the charter. His statement declared that he had a distinct recollection that Mr. Lincoln was associated with Robert Rantoul, Jr., one of the members of the first board of directors of the Illinois Central Railroad Company, to obtain the company's charter. Severe opposition was encountered, for there were many legislators who looked with distinct disfavor upon chartering a concern of such debatable value as a railway company. But Mr. Lincoln's eloquence prevailed."

A former publication of the road gives these "excerpts" from the statement as dictated by Judge Thornton, in August, 1904: "Judge Anthony Thornton, at the request of Mr. John G. Drennan, Attorney for the Illinois Central Railroad, makes the following statement to Julia Embry, stenographer and notary public, in and for Shelby County, Illinois: 'From investigation I think I am the only living member of the legislature of Illinois that granted the charter of the Illinois Central Railroad Company in 1851. I have a distinct recollection that Mr. Lincoln and several members of the Legislature were engaged by the Illinois Central Railroad Company to obtain the charter for the company. A right of way of two hundred feet was asked for to avoid somewhat the danger of fire. The charter was granted at that legislature as amended, and, as I understand, it now exists.' "

Turning to the other evidence, we have on record a statement made before the Massachusetts Historical So-

ciety in 1909, by a son of Robert Rantoul, to the effect that Abraham Lincoln *opposed* the proposition of Rantoul, and that his lobbying was done for *western* promoters. Mr. Rantoul says: "I was visiting Washington in January, 1863, and saw Mr. Lincoln for the first time at a public reception in the East Room of the White House. When he got my card from the officer in attendance, he repeated the name to himself several times and then said: 'I wonder if you are connected with a lawyer of that name who came to Illinois about 1850, to secure from our legislature the charter of the Illinois Central Railroad?' I told him that was my father. Upon which he burst forth with a great roar of laughter and much gesticulation, and said that he did all he could to stop it, but was not successful. He said he was retained by local capitalists who, although they could not then build the road as they had already been intending, were very unwilling that eastern capitalists should step in and secure a grant which would make it forever impossible for them to build a road. But they were defeated. He favored me with some minutes of interesting conversation on this theme, and spoke with such amused good humor of the incident that my reception whetted rather than allayed my curiosity to see more of this extraordinary man."

Both Robert Rantoul and his son have since departed this life, but a daughter of the latter in a communication to the writer says: "My grandfather, Robert Rantoul, Jr., was sent to Illinois to get the charter through the Illinois legislature for the Illinois Central Railroad. He succeeded in getting it through. Mr. Lincoln told my father that they all opposed it as hard as



they could, because they did not want eastern capital to come out there and own the road. But Mr. Lincoln said, 'Your father beat me, he beat me,' and then roared with laughter."

In the face of this conflicting testimony, it would appear that no final conclusion can be reached, although to our mind it seems more plausible that Lincoln had been retained by local capitalists, rather than by those from the East. We have taken pains to have contemporary files of the early Illinois newspapers searched for anything connecting him as a lobbyist with this session of the General Assembly, but they are all silent. In fact, the names of no lobbyists appear, nor are any of their activities chronicled. History records that after considerable discussion and opposition, the proposition of Rantoul was accepted by the legislature and the bill signed by Governor French.

## CHAPTER VII

### FIRST JOURNEYS TO THE EAST

For several years after the coming of the railroads to Illinois, Lincoln's sole acquaintance with this new method of traveling was in his own state, and he probably used the stage-coach or a horse far more frequently. But as the lines of steel began to reach tentatively here and there across the country, linking up one important center after another, travelers came to depend upon them more and more.

We have already noted the curious analogy between Lincoln's political career and the railroads. As they reached here and there in the Midwest, his own name began to be bruited abroad. It was in the budding forties, that time of such rapid development of this section of the United States. It was a time that tended to the building of men.

Lincoln made at least six pilgrimages to the eastern seaboard before he took up his duties as President—five of which had some bearing upon his political career. Two were made as a member of Congress from Illinois. One took him to Washington as an applicant for a Federal office. Then came a trip to the New Jersey coast, in the nature of a pleasure excursion—one of the few such jaunts in his busy life. The next was the famous journey into the heart of an unknown and critical country to deliver his address at the Cooper Institute in New York. Then came the eventful journey

of a year later, with its attendant triumphs and perils, to take his seat as President of the United States.

Let us turn the pages of history back to the time, in 1847, when he talked about and planned his first long pilgrimage away from home to that mysterious land, the East. What did it have in store for him?—he must have pondered when he had attained the next rung on his political ladder, a seat in Congress. But the more immediate question was, How best to go? What route presented the fewest discomforts? A journey from Illinois to the Atlantic Coast was still a matter of many days, if not weeks, and the transcontinental traveler a *rara avis*.

When he left his home in Springfield, in October, 1847, to take his seat in the House of Representatives at Washington, Lincoln was eagerly looking forward to the journey, for it would be the first time in his life that he had been east of Ohio and Kentucky. He went by way of his native state, desiring to stop at Louisville to see his erstwhile Springfield friend, Joshua Speed.

At that period of American history his passage from Springfield to Washington would necessarily have been made chiefly by other means than rail transportation. He would have gone by stage as far as Louisville, by way of Terre Haute and Vincennes, Indiana. After leaving Speed the stage would again be made use of into Frankfort, where a short rail line operating between Frankfort and Lexington could have been used to the latter point. The present Louisville and Nashville Railroad had its inception in this early Kentucky road, incorporated by the state in 1830 as the Lexington and Ohio Railroad, and in operation since 1834.

From Lexington to Covington, Virginia, over what is known as the Boone Trail, the stage would again be used, as also from the latter point into Winchester, Virginia, by way of Staunton. Thence to Washington he must have gone by rail over what is now known as the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, but which then followed a more roundabout route than that of to-day.

When Lincoln went over it, the line running from Winchester to Harper's Ferry was called the Winchester and Potomac Railroad. Thence to Relay Station it was known as the Baltimore and Ohio; and from Relay Station into Washington, it was known as the Washington Branch of the Baltimore and Ohio, having been built under a separate charter.

Lincoln reached Washington, a tall, lank Westerner carrying his carpet-bag and looking uncertainly about him, on December 2. We find his name registered on that day, at Brown's Hotel. As he had left his home in October, the trip, counting his visit with his friend, Speed, must have taken over six weeks. He must have felt as if he had come from the other side of the world.

The following June he absented himself from the first session of the Thirtieth Congress long enough to attend the Whig National Convention which nominated General Zachary Taylor for the presidency. To do this he necessarily used the Washington Branch of the Baltimore and Ohio road as far as Baltimore, and from thence into Philadelphia, where the convention was held, the Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore Railroad, now a part of the Pennsylvania Railroad system.

This was his first glimpse of the Quaker City and

here he met for the first time that great Pennsylvania Commoner, Thaddeus Stevens, who undoubtedly made an impression upon the Illinois Congressman, as the following letter, hitherto unpublished, testifies:

Washington, Sept. 3, 1848.

HON. THADDEUS STEVENS

*Dear Sir:*

You may possibly remember seeing me at the Philadelphia convention—introduced to you as the lone Whig star of Illinois. Since the adjournment, I have remained here, so long, in the Whig document room—I am now about to start for home; and I desire the undisguised opinion of some experienced and sagacious Pennsylvania politician, as to how the vote of that state, for governor, and president, is likely to go. In casting about for such a man, I have settled upon you; and I shall be much obliged if you will write me at Springfield, Illinois.

The news we are receiving here now, by letters from all quarters is steadily on the rise; we have none lately of a discouraging character. This is the sum, without giving particulars.

Yours truly,  
A. LINCOLN

The course which Lincoln had pursued in Congress had attracted the attention of prominent Whigs, and he was invited to deliver several campaign speeches in Massachusetts after the adjournment of Congress.

Early in September he left Washington, using the same route previously traversed into Philadelphia. In going from Philadelphia to New York three different rail lines would have to be traversed as far as Jersey

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25  
55  
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City, at which point he crossed the river by ferry. These three roads form the present main line of the Pennsylvania Railroad, and were incorporated as follows: The Philadelphia and Trenton Railroad from Philadelphia to Trenton; the Camden and Amboy Railroad and Transportation Company from Trenton to New Brunswick, New Jersey; and the New Jersey Railroad and Transportation Company from New Brunswick to Jersey City.

Lincoln must have been much interested in the various lines he was to observe and traverse in his journey to New England, for he had heard much concerning them while the early rail legislation in Illinois was being agitated. The heavier roadbeds and more comfortable coaches were also a source of pleasure.

As Worcester, Massachusetts, was his first objective, two routes were open from New York, both of which necessitated a water-and-rail combination. His itinerary is thus outlined by President Pearson of the present New Haven system:

“We believe he must have traveled via the old Norwich Line of steamers from New York to Norwich, Connecticut, and thence by the Norwich and Worcester Railroad from Norwich to Worcester. This at that time was the most direct line of communication between the two cities. There is a possibility he might have taken the steamboat from New York to New Haven, the Hartford and New Haven Railroad from New Haven to Springfield, and the Western Railroad from Springfield to Worcester, although this line would be less direct than the line via Norwich which, according to our records, was the favored line to Worcester at that

period. The Norwich and Worcester Railroad is now leased to and operated by this company, and the Norwich Line steamers are owned and operated by the New England Steamship Company, our principal steamship line. Our present rail line between New York and New Haven was not opened until December 27, 1848."

On the evening of September 12, Abraham Lincoln spoke before a large audience in the City Hall at Worcester, making a very favorable impression. Three days later he delivered an address in Washingtonian Hall, Boston, reaching that point by the Boston and Worcester Railroad, now a part of the Boston and Albany. The next day he spoke at Lowell, in all likelihood traveling over the Boston and Lowell Railroad Corporation's tracks, which are now a part of the Boston and Maine system.

The next speech of which we have record was delivered on the 18th, at what was then called Lower Mills, Dorchester, now a part of Boston. This was reached by team, as there was then no other direct means of communication between those suburban points, which statement also applies to Chelsea, where he spoke the following day, and to Dedham, where an address was delivered in the afternoon of the 20th. That evening he spoke at Cambridge, reaching the latter place by way of the Fitchburg Railroad, now a part of the Boston and Maine.

Friday, September 22, was the outstanding day of his Massachusetts itinerary, for upon that evening he and William H. Seward of New York were the rival attractions at an immense Whig rally held at Tremont Temple in Boston.

The following morning Lincoln left Boston, intending to return home by way of Albany, Niagara Falls, and Lake Erie. In order to get to Albany he must have used the Boston and Worcester Railroad to Worcester; thence the Western Railroad to State Line; and from there into Albany, the Albany and West Stockbridge Railroad. These three roads now form the main line of the Boston and Albany Railroad.

While in Albany Lincoln called on Thurlow Weed and Millard Fillmore, Taylor's running mate. Who shall not say that this visit to Weed, the power in New York State politics, was not inspired by Seward, for Weed was Seward's political mentor?

Niagara Falls as the next objective, the returning Congressman could go by rail as far as Buffalo on a through schedule over a line consisting of seven different railroads, all now a part of the New York Central Railroad. At Buffalo a change of cars would be made to the Buffalo and Niagara Falls Railroad, likewise now a part of the New York Central system. Herndon, his law partner, states that from Buffalo Lincoln came down Lake Erie to either Toledo or Detroit by boat. From information in possession of the writer, it seems likely that the Detroit route was used.

It must have been late in September when Detroit was reached, and at that time the normal route would have been the Michigan Central Railroad as far as Kalamazoo. From this point he could go to New Buffalo, on Lake Michigan, by stage, a distance of seventy-five miles, thence by steamer to Chicago. An alternative would have been to use the stage to Niles, thence a river-boat up the St. Joseph River to St. Joseph,



also on Lake Michigan, and a steamer across the lake to Chicago. A local Benton Harbor historian, versed in the lore of the period, says of the latter route that "palatial river boats were running up and down the St. Joseph River in 1848. . . . This was a very noted and picturesque trip in those days, and it is possible that Lincoln followed this route."

The last leg of the journey home from Chicago can only be surmised. At that time the Chicago and Alton, the direct route to Springfield, had not been built. Lincoln may have come back—after all his wandering—by the stage-coach. However, enough has been given in the above rapid survey of his travels in 1848 to show the condition of the railroads at that time. It undoubtedly brought Lincoln back home with a wide and thorough first-hand knowledge of traffic conditions, which he was to put to excellent use in his later public life, as well as in the practice of law. He was no longer a provincial; he was a man of the world.

On February 13, 1849, on his return to Congress, we observe our "Lone Star" addressing the House "On the Bill Granting Lands to the States to Make Railroads and Canals." He favored the bill and sought earnestly to meet and combat the objections of those who opposed it.

"What motive," he asked, "would tempt any set of men to go into an extensive survey of a railroad which they did not intend to make? What good would it do? Do men act without motive? Do business men commonly go into an expenditure of money which could be of no account to them?"

This is the last speech that Lincoln made in Congress,

of which there is any record, and its specious reasoning sounds strange to-day only by virtue of the fact that we are all familiar with a certain class of American promoters.

A month or two later Lincoln left Washington for home again, but by what route we know not. However, he was not done with the capital city. In June he returned, seeking an appointment as Commissioner of the General Land Office, located there. But despite the fact that the new administration felt that some reward was due Lincoln for his efforts in the campaign, the plum was given to a rival aspirant.

In the latter part of July he again journeyed east, with his wife, likely reaching Philadelphia by the Pennsylvania Railroad route. This passage has been unnoticed by all biographers and other writers, and our knowledge comes from the fact that on July 31 he registered at the famous summer resort, Cape May, as having arrived from Philadelphia.

Cape May, New Jersey, at that time boasted the largest hotel in the United States, the Mount Vernon, which was, however, burned down six years later. In addition there were the Philadelphia House, Cape May House, Arctic Hotel, Congress Hall, and the Mansion House, which latter hostelry Lincoln and his wife patronized. It was run by William S. Hooper, grandfather of State Senator Lewis T. Stevens, of Cape May County, the writer's informant as to this visit of Lincoln.

Cape May, we are told, had been a summer resort, and advertised as such in the Philadelphia newspapers, since 1804, and had contained large hotels since 1816.

At the time of Lincoln's sojourn it had a residential population of about fifteen hundred, but during the summer season those within its borders numbered from five to ten thousand.

The Mansion House was a famous hotel in its day, and the register wherein appears the words "A. Lincoln & wife 24 Phila." is still intact. Senator Stevens says by way of explanation that the Lincolns evidently occupied Room No. 24 in the hotel and that it was the custom for many of the tourists to register from the place where they last happened to be. He has made an examination of contemporary Philadelphia newspapers and finds no mention made of Lincoln as going through the city or stopping at any hotel there, explaining it on the ground that Lincoln being "only an Ex-Congressman," and not yet a national figure was probably the true reason.

Among the others registering at the Mansion House that day, were John S. Irick and wife, accompanied by their son, then a lad of twelve, from Vincentown, New Jersey. Irick was an acquaintance of Lincoln, the two families making the trip from Philadelphia together, and it is of interest to note that he later became a Union general during the War.

Other arrivals for July 31 included residents of Philadelphia, New York City, Charleston, S. C., and Dublin, Ireland. The third name registered below Lincoln's was that of Louis Davis, captain of the *Ohio*, and the fifth below Davis's was Captain Clark of the *Traveler*, the two river steamers having arrived at Cape May that day from Philadelphia. It is impossible to find out on which one of them Lincoln came.

There were four steamers running at that time, two going each way every day in the week, except Sunday, when there was no traveling done. Each boat would come down the Delaware one day and return the next, the scheduled leaving time at each end of the run being 7 A. M. and the arriving time 4 P. M. At Cape May they landed at what was called Steamboat Landing, now Cape May Point, three miles from the town, and the passengers were conveyed in hacks from the landing to the hotels and cottages. The fare from Philadelphia to Cape May and return was \$3.50, according to contemporary Philadelphia newspapers.

There is no record of how long the Lincolns remained at Cape May. It must have been a purely recreational visit, and as play spells were rare in this man who had struggled up from poverty, as a boy, and throughout life had tasks of constantly increasing magnitude set before him, his biographers have overlooked the incident. But we like to think of him here on the beach spending one sunny day after another, boating, fishing, bathing, idling on the sand, and enjoying the carefree hours which were denied him in his boyhood, as in the stormy days to come.

## CHAPTER VIII

### LINCOLN AS ATTORNEY FOR THE ILLINOIS CENTRAL

Lincoln's term in Congress was limited to two years, and he was not reëlected. He had not made himself popular with his constituents by his outspoken stand against the Mexican War, and by fighting the admission of Texas as a slave-holding state. Thus early in his political life he became recognized as an opponent of slavery, and it made him unpopular with a faction even in his home state.

He returned home to take up the practice of law again, and for the next few years we find him appearing in various cases affecting the railroads, as was but natural. He was not known, however, as a railroad attorney, although he accepted a retainer from the Illinois Central. There is a difference of opinion as to whether this connection was continuous, or not. Henry C. Whitney, who was an associate attorney with Lincoln in this railroad litigation, affirms that it was not; while present-day officials of the Illinois Central believe that it was.

Mr. J. G. Drennan, connected with the legal department of the corporation, and an authority on the subject of Lincoln's relations to it, says in a communication to the writer: "My understanding is that Mr. Lincoln was continuously one of the attorneys for the Illinois Central Railroad Company from its organiza-

tion until he was elected President. He was not a salaried attorney, but his employment, no doubt, was similar to that of our present local attorneys, say at Springfield, Illinois. An annual pass is given them as a retainer. All of our business is referred to them in that vicinity, and when the services are performed, the usual fee is paid."

Colonel Anderson, in his series of articles running in the Illinois Central Magazine, in 1913, says: "The Hon. James F. Joy, the leading railroad lawyer at that time, became in 1852 the chief counsel for the Illinois Central Railroad Company, when . . . he retained Abraham Lincoln as local attorney at Springfield, to which, by Lincoln's influence, the state capital had been moved from Vandalia. As the local attorney for the road under those formative conditions, Lincoln had plenty to do."

In an article in the same magazine for February, 1922, Mr. Drennan says in referring to Lincoln's retention: "In 1852 he was employed by James F. Joy, then general counsel, to represent the company in litigation at Springfield, the state capital, and generally in central Illinois. He continued to serve the Illinois Central as one of its lawyers until his election to the presidency. Records still in existence disclose that he was consulted frequently and that his opinions were highly respected."

On the other hand, Mr. Jesse W. Weik, inheritor of the Herndon manuscripts and a Lincoln authority, writes: "Mr. Lincoln, as I understand, had no regular employment as attorney. . . . According to Mr. Whitney, who for many years represented the Illinois Cen-

tral in the courts of Champaign, McLean, and other counties in that region, Mr. Lincoln frequently assisted him in caring for the interests of that road. But the connection was not continuous."

In his "Real Lincoln," Mr. Weik quotes from a lengthy conversation he once had with Whitney as to his estimate of Lincoln as a lawyer, in which he said that "as attorney for the Illinois Central Railroad I had authority to employ additional counsel whenever I chose to do so, and in Judge Davis' circuit I frequently applied to Lincoln when I needed aid. I never found him unwilling to appear in behalf of a great 'soulless corporation.' In such cases he always stood by me, and I always, of course, tried to win."

The writer is of the opinion that after a certain period Lincoln was carried on the rolls as an employee, certainly on no salaried or "regular employment" basis, as Mr. Weik expresses it, but on a pecuniary arrangement, as Mr. Drennan explains, similar to the one now in force with their local attorneys. We know that he carried an annual pass over their line, and that he never appeared against this road in any cases carried to the Supreme Court of the State, as he did in the case of several other roads, mention of which is made in another chapter. But the continuity of his service did not extend as far back in the road's formative period as the officials claim, as the following correspondence written in the latter part of 1853 proves.

Under date of September 12, Lincoln addressed a communication to Thompson R. Webber, Clerk of the Court of Champaign County, which is self-explanatory. It ran as follows:

“On my arrival here to court I find that McLean County has assessed the land and other property of the Central Railroad, for the purpose of county taxation. An effort is about to be made to get the question of the right to so tax the Co. before the court, and ultimately before the Supreme Court, and the Co. are offering to engage me for them. As this will be the same question I have had under consideration for you, I am somewhat trammelled by what has passed between you and me, feeling that you have the prior right to my services, if you choose to secure me a fee something near such as I can get from the other side. The question in its magnitude to the Co. on the one hand, and the counties in which the Co. has land, on the other, is the largest law question that can now be got up in the State; and therefore, in justice to myself, I cannot afford, if I can help it, to miss a fee altogether. If you choose to release me, say so by return mail, and then an end. If you wish to retain me, you better get authority from your court, come directly over in the Stage, and make common cause with the county.”

Three days later John B. Thomas, Judge of Campaign County, wrote Webber at some length, referring to the anticipated lawsuit. He also seems to have realized early the importance of the case and the necessity for securing good legal talent. The Mr. Jaquith mentioned in his communication was the County Associate Judge, Jesse W. Jaquith.

At Home, Sept. 15th, 1853.

MR. T. R. WEBBER

*Dear Sir:—*

I did not get home until late last night and in order to communicate with you certainly this morning I send



"Can there be any valid pre-emption on sections of land alternate to the sections granted to the Illinois Central Railroad?"

My opinion is asked on the above question—

"An Act to appropriate the proceeds of the sale of the public lands, and to grant pre-emption rights" Approved Sep. 4. 1841, contains the first permanent, or prospective pre-emption law—  
5. U. S. Stat. at large 453.

Sections ten, eleven, twelve, thirteen, fourteen, and fifteen, of this act, relate exclusively to pre-emption— In Section ten it is provided that "no sections of land reserved to the United States alternate to other sections granted to any of the States for the construction of any canal, railroad or other public improvement, shall be liable <sup>to entry</sup> under and by virtue of the provisions of this act."

This act continues to be our general pre-emption law, up to the present time— and, although some supplementary provisions had afterwards been enacted, the above provision, in section ten, remained untouched up to Sep. 20. 1850, when the Central Railroad grant was made—

The latter act, preserved existing pre-emptions, on the even sections, granted generally, for the Road; but made no mention of pre-emption, as to the odd sections reserved to the United States—

9 Stat. at large 466.

August 2. 1852 "An Act to protect actual Settlers upon the Land on the Line of the Central Railroad and Branches, by granting Pre-emption Rights, thereto?"

By this act, pre-emptions were given on these <sup>odd</sup> ~~even~~ sections—

Courtesy, Illinois Central Railroad

LEGAL PAPERS WRITTEN BY LINCOLN

Facsimile of an opinion furnished by Lincoln concerning the construction of the charter of the Illinois Central Railroad Company, given at the request of the company in 1858.

several sections, to such persons as were settled on them, on Sep. 20. 1850, in such way as to be entitled to the benefit of the act of Sep. 4. 1841, 10. Stat. at large - 27.

This, it is perceived, limits the right to those who had made actual settlements upon the lands, on the 20<sup>th</sup> of Sep. 1850 — the date of the Central Railroad grant.

March 3. 1853 "An Act to extend Pre-emption Rights to certain lands therein (mentioned) was enacted —

By this act the general pre-emption laws are extended to these reserved sections, with a proviso "That no person shall be entitled to the benefit of this act who has not settled and improved, or shall not settle and improve such lands prior to the final allotment of the alternate sections, to such Railroads, by the General Land Office" 10 Stat. at large - 244.

I have examined all the subsequent acts of Congress up to the close of the Session, on March 3 1855; and I do not discover that the above proviso has even been disturbed — in the act of Sep. 4. 1841, and the act of Sep. 20. 1850, for Railroad purposes, approved, March 3, 1854 — do not affect the the act last mentioned. 10 Stat. at large 269 —

The final allotment of the alternate sections to the Illinois Central Railroad Company, by the General Land Office, was made on the 13<sup>th</sup> day of March. 1853 —

It is my opinion that persons who settled on those reserved sections prior to the date of such "final allotment" might have a valid pre-emption; and that those who settled thereon after the date of said allotment, can not —

As to the mode of redress, in cases of pre-emption having been improperly allowed by the Register and Receiver, it is more difficult to answer, owing to that matter depending upon the regularization, or special action, of the Departments, and not upon express statutory provisions—

I understand that if a pre-emption be illegally allowed by the Register and Receiver, or, even legally allowed, but upon false or fraudulent land proof, and forwarded to the General Land Office; the party interested to contest the pre-emption, may address a letter, or petition/petition, to the Commissioner of the General Land Office, describing the land, stating the facts, and pointing out wherein the illegality or fraud consists, and asking for a re-hearing; and that, thereupon, the Commissioner will direct the Register and Receiver to give a re-hearing, upon notice to both pre-emptor, and contestant—

I, therefore, would advise that whenever, on their several sections, a settlement and improvement have been made before the "allocation" of the General Land Office, made before, March 13, 1852, and <sup>as claim is now settled</sup> the claim should be contested, on the ground that the right has been lost, by not being followed up with claim, proof, and payment, in due time— See Section 15 of the Act of Sep. 4, 1841—

In cases where settlements were made after the allocation, contest them on the ground that the new was a right—

The contest to be made in the mode above pointed out— The letter, or petition, to the Commissioner, should, in this class of cases, contain a reference to the <sup>above</sup> Acts of Sep. 4, 1841— Sep

20 1850 - August 2, 1852 - March 3, 1853 & March 27,  
1854 - and particularly to that of March 3, 1853 -  
Also, if it be intended to assail the proof, in  
the prescripter has made, as being false or faul-  
ulent, it would be better to verify the Petition  
by affidavit.

March 6, 1856

A. Lincoln

Abraham Lincoln }  
" }  
The Illinois Cen- }  
tral Railroad }  
Company }

Trepan on the car or pieces  
Damage \$6000.00.

The clerk of the McLean County  
Circuit Court will please issue a summons  
in the above entitled case

Lincoln per se

my little boy up with a line. I fully concur with your opinion that no time is to be lost in securing the services of Mr. Lincoln and hope you or Mr. Jaquith will leave immediately for Bloomington, confer with the authorities of McLean and take such measures as the circumstances may suggest as to the fee to be offered Mr. Lincoln. I have only this to say that we have no right to expect his services for a trifle and in this respect have no hesitation in giving you full authority to contract for a fee in proportion to the importance of the claim. I would however suggest that you draw from the Treasury the sum of fifty dollars and take it with you as a retaining fee (you need not give it all if less will do) and contract for an additional contingent fee such as may be necessary even to \$500. I would further recommend if Mr. Jaquith agrees that an order be entered on the record of the County Court authorizing you to make contract with Mr. Lincoln or any other lawyer that may be necessary to carry out the object in view. . . .

I do not know but we had best get the assistance of some other able counsel as well as Mr. Lincoln. Say Judge Breese, Archibald Williams, Logan or J. T. Stuart. . . .

Yours as ever

JOHN B. THOMAS.

Under date of October 3, Lincoln wrote to Mason Brayman, the Illinois Central attorney located at Chicago, this brief note:

“Neither the county of McLean nor any one on its behalf has yet made any engagement with me in relation to its suit with the Illinois Central Railroad on the subject of taxation. I am now free to make an engage-

ment for the road, and if you think of it you may 'count me in.' Please write me on receipt of this. I shall be here at least ten days."

Now what are we to gather from this correspondence? As evidenced by Lincoln's first communication, he had undoubtedly been approached by persons representing the counties involved, as well as by the railroad. There being no question of ethics involved, the attorney at Springfield considered it the proper thing to enlist his services on the side promising the highest remuneration—and so we find him appearing for the railroad.

This was the first suit on record, in which Lincoln acted for the Illinois Central, it being carried to the Supreme Court of the state on account of its importance. Lincoln and James F. Joy argued the case for the road, in the higher court, and the decision was rendered in its favor.

Originally brought in McLean County as a suit in chancery to enjoin the collection of the tax which had been assessed by the county assessor, the case had gone against the corporation. Thereupon it was appealed to the state Supreme Court. In handing down an opinion reversing the judgment of the Circuit Court, Chief Justice Scates sustained these points:

"It is within the constitutional power of the legislature to exempt property from taxation, or to commute the general rate for a fixed sum. The provisions, in the charter of the Illinois Central Railroad Company, exempting its property from taxation, upon the payment of a certain proportion of its earnings, are constitutional."

The Illinois Central people themselves claim that this was probably the most important of the many cases that Abraham Lincoln handled for their road. Its effects were far-reaching.

“The case,” says Mr. Drennan, “involved an interpretation of the charter of the company. The charter provides that the company, in lieu of all other taxes, shall pay into the state treasury annually an amount equal, at least, to seven per cent of the gross revenue derived from its charter lines in Illinois. McLean County took the position that the exemption from all other taxes applied only to state taxes, and sought to levy county taxes against the property of the company in McLean County. . . . The importance of the McLean County suit can be realized when it is reflected that, if the company had lost, every county, city and school district in Illinois through which the road ran or which contained property of the company would have had the right to assess and collect local taxes, adding to the considerable burden imposed upon the revenues of the company by the seven per cent contract.”

For his services in this suit, Lincoln received the largest fee by far of any that he acquired during his entire legal career. To insure its collection, he himself had to resort to litigation, whether friendly or otherwise, and it has been deemed appropriate that this matter should be separately considered under another chapter.

In speaking of this particular time in the career of Abraham Lincoln, Frederick Trevor Hill, in his study of “Lincoln the Lawyer,” says that “he argued and won the McLean County case for the Illinois Central, pre-

pared and appeared in the McCormick reaper action, argued no less than thirteen appeals in the court of last resort, and otherwise spent the most active year and a half in his entire professional career."

In 1856 Lincoln's services were again brought into requisition on a question concerning the construction of the company's charter, although his name does not appear in the Supreme Court Reports as attorney. The corporation submitted the matter to Lincoln who wrote out his opinion. This the company filed away for future reference in the litigation which followed. The name of the Illinois Central does not appear as party to the suit which was argued before the State Supreme Court in session at Ottawa, during the April term, 1857.

Commenting on the opinion furnished by Lincoln and made use of in this litigation "on the rights of settlers under the national preëmption laws and the relative rights of the railroad company growing out of grants made to the latter," John T. Richards, of the Chicago Bar, says that "the questions were complicated, but the opinion was short and concise. It reveals abundant evidence of careful research and a thorough familiarity with the legal questions involved."

In the December term of the Supreme Court held at Springfield that year we find Abraham Lincoln representing the Illinois Central in two cases involving damage to live stock while in transit, in both of which he was associated with Henry C. Whitney. The major suit which the corporation attorneys handled to a successful conclusion, concerned an alleged shrinkage on a shipment of four hundred head of cattle from Urbana to Chicago, the Supreme Court reversing the verdict



reached by a jury of Coles County which had awarded the live stock shippers damages to the amount of \$1,200. The other suit, for \$600, went against the railroad.

It may have been in relation to one of the foregoing cases that Whitney told this story: "In a railway case we were trying," he said, "the opposing lawyer tried to score a point by stating that the plaintiff was a flesh-and-blood man, with a soul like the jurymen had, while our client was a soulless corporation."

This was Lincoln's reply with reference to the accusation: "Counsel avers that his client has a soul. This is possible, but from the way he has testified under oath in this case, to gain, or hope to gain, a few paltry dollars, he would sell, nay, has already sold, his little soul very low. But our client is but a conventional name for thousands of widows and orphans whose husbands' and parents' hard earnings are represented by this defendant, and who possess souls which they would not swear away as the plaintiff has done for ten million times as much as is at stake here."

Whitney also gives the following incident as occurring during the trial of one of their railroad cases. "Once I had an important railroad suit that I secured Lincoln's aid in, and as the able counsel on the other side was dealing out heavy 'wisdom licks' at us, I got alarmed, and spoke to Lincoln about it. He sat inflexibly calm and serene, and merely remarked: 'All that is very easily answered,' and when his time came he blew away what seemed to me as almost an unanswerable argument as easily as a beer-drinker blows off the froth from his foaming tankard."

Lawrence Weldon, a fellow attorney of the circuit, relates that in 1858 or 1859 Lincoln and C. H. Moore were attending to the litigation for the Illinois Central Railroad in Dewitt County. A case came up, which for some reason or other, the company did not want tried at that term of the court.

"We are not ready for trial," attorney Lincoln said.

"Why is not the company ready to go on trial?" asked Judge Davis, who was presiding.

22 pp 75-6  
 "We are embarrassed by the absence, or rather want of information from Captain McClellan," was the reply.

"Who is Captain McClellan," Davis asked, "and why is he not here?"

"All I know of him," said Lincoln, "is that he is the engineer of the railroad, and why he is not here deponent saith not."

X  
 During the last two or three years of Lincoln's connection with the road, George B. McClellan—the later famous general of the Civil War—then following his profession of civil engineering, acquired a leading position with the railroad and was frequently brought into contact with the Springfield attorney. "Long before the war," says the general in his memoirs, "when Vice-President of the Illinois Central Railroad Company, I knew Mr. Lincoln, for he was one of the counsel of the company. More than once I have been with him in out-of-the-way county-seats where some important case was being tried, and, in the lack of sleeping accommodations, have spent the night in front of a stove listening to the unceasing flow of anecdotes from his lips. He was never at a loss, and I could never quite make up my

mind how many of them he had really heard before, and how many he invented on the spur of the moment. His stories were seldom refined, but were always to the point."

In speaking of the legal standing which Abraham Lincoln had acquired in Illinois in the late fifties, Richards says that while Lincoln was one of the counsel for the Illinois Central, he "in that capacity was recognized as a lawyer of no ordinary learning and ability." Hill adds that when he was attorney for the Illinois Central Railroad it was "the greatest corporation in the state, and one which doubtless had its choice of legal talent."

Mr. Drennan informs the writer that the length of the Illinois Central Railroad Company, at the time Lincoln was one of its attorneys, was between seven and eight hundred miles. The engines, cars, and equipment were of the old type used in that day upon all the railroads. The roadbed was of the same inferior grade.

Professor F. I. Herriott, of Des Moines, says: "In the spring of 1859 Mr. Lincoln visited Iowa,—and under circumstances that indicate the solid character of Mr. Lincoln's close relations with powerful industrial interests that are always potent and present in political counsels. Some time in April, probably the latter part, he was attending court at Galena. He appeared in some cases affecting the Illinois Central Railroad Company—a corporation that had employed him almost from the time of the incorporation of the company in 1849. He had won an important case for the company, and between it and some later hearings or proceedings he made a visit to Dubuque, nearly opposite Galena, stop-

ping for a day and a night at the Julien House, a well-known hostelry of that city.

“He came with a party of officials of the Illinois Central Company. He rode in a private car, on his own pass furnished him in his capacity as attorney for the company. The distinction of a private car and the privilege of free transportation greatly impressed some of the young Republican leaders of Dubuque . . . who attended at the Julien House to observe the notables. It is not clear whether Mr. Lincoln’s visit to Dubuque was primarily in connection with the official party of the railroad company, then greatly interested in securing control of a western terminus in Dubuque and extensions into and through Iowa, or whether it was taken on his own initiative on account of private business or pleasure and happened to coincide with the official party’s visit. . . .

“The visit in and of itself was not of particular political consequence. The circumstances of the visit, however, in the writer’s judgment, bring into view a fact of the greatest significance. They exhibit the close, not to say intimate relations, Mr. Lincoln had as a lawyer with great and powerful industrial corporations: factors of greatest potency in the decisions of political bodies.”

We now come to the last case which Abraham Lincoln handled for the Illinois Central Railroad Company, and carried to the state Supreme Court. It likewise was the last case he ever argued before that tribunal. In fact, the final decision was not made until after he was seated in the presidential chair at Washington.

The case goes back to December, 1857, when we find Lincoln on the 21st of that month writing "as a friend" to Jesse K. Dubois, then serving as State Auditor, as follows:

"Dear Dubois: J. M. Douglas of the I. C. R. R. Co. is here and will carry this letter. He says they have a large sum (near \$90,000) which they will pay into the treasury now, if they have an assurance that they shall not be sued before January 1859—otherwise not. I really wish you would consent to this. Douglas says they can not pay more and I believe him.

"I do not write this as a lawyer seeking an advantage for a client; but only as a friend, only urging you to do what I think I would do if I were in your situation. I mean this as private and confidential only, but I feel a good deal of anxiety about it."

Richards states that the "docket of the Supreme Court shows that this case was argued orally by Stephen T. Logan on behalf of the State, and by J. M. Douglas and Mr. Lincoln on behalf of the railroad company, on January 12, 1860, and that at the conclusion of the arguments the court took the case under advisement." It was not finally decided, as we have stated, until later, at the November term, 1861. Concerning it, officials of the railroad say: "This was a case of considerable importance and it was largely due to the efforts of Mr. Lincoln that judgment was rendered in favor of the company."

A few years later we find the relations of Lincoln and his old client, the Illinois Central, far different.

Now as Chief Executive of the Nation, he was in a position to confer favors and at the same time expedite the Government's business.

From almost the beginning of the War, the Illinois Central became a potent factor in the moving of supplies and troops to the front. The division extending from Centralia to Cairo, over a hundred miles in length, was, as one who had charge of it said, "a thoroughfare for the armies going South, and funeral trains coming North."

Active opposition soon developed at Washington to paying the corporation for such transportation, on the ground that the original Land Grant specifically provided that all supplies and troops of the United States should be carried over the road without charge. Simon Cameron was Secretary of War at this time, and Thomas A. Scott, of the Pennsylvania Railroad, was Assistant Secretary.

On August 15, 1861, Cameron addressed a communication to President W. H. Osborne, of the Illinois Central offering an allowance of two cents per mile for passenger travel less a discount of thirty-three and one third per cent; and the freight rates allowed other railroad companies less a similar discount, was made, as "a proper compensation."

This did not settle the matter, however, and the controversy seems to have dragged on for a couple of years. It was at last brought to the personal attention of President Lincoln. In May, 1863, he wrote the following letter exhibiting his usual good judgment to Secretary Stanton, who had succeeded Cameron in the

War portfolio. This communication has never appeared in print before, and is worth while as showing Abraham Lincoln's tendency to cut red-tape, and substitute therefor a "gentlemen's agreement."

Washington, May 23, 1863.

HON. SEC. OF WAR,

*My dear Sir:*

In order to continue the Illinois Central Railroad, a large grant of land was made by the United States to the State of Illinois, which land was again given to the Railroad Company by the State, in certain provisions of the Charter. By the U. S. Grant, certain privileges were attempted to be secured from the contemplated Railroad to the U. S. and by the Charter certain percentage of the income of the road was to be from time to time paid to the State of Illinois. At the beginning of the present war the Railroad did certain carrying for the U. S. for which it claims pay, and as I understand, the U. S. claims that at least part of this the road was bound to do without pay. Though attempts have been made to settle the matter, it remains unsettled. Meanwhile the Road refuses to pay the percentage to the state. This delay is working badly; and I understand the delay exists because of there being no definite decision whether the U. S. will settle its own accounts with the Railroad, or will allow the state to settle it, and account to the state for it. If I had the leisure which I have not, I believe I could settle it; but *prima facie* it appears to me we better settle the account ourselves, because that will save us all questions as to whether the state deals fairly with us in the settlement of our account with a third party—the Railroad.

I wish you would see Mr. Butler, late our State Treasurer, and see if something definite can not be done in the case.

Yours truly,  
A. LINCOLN

The result of his efforts at adjustment is seen in the following excerpt of a letter dated eleven days later, written by Quartermaster General M. C. Meigs to General Allen, Chief Quartermaster of the Western Department of the United States Army:

“The enclosed copy of a report of the Qr. Master General in relation to the settlement of claims of the Illinois Central Rail Road Company for transportation of troops, etc., during the early part of the war, with the approval of the Secretary thereon, is transmitted for your information and guidance. . . .

“You will examine the claims of the above named company, when presented, and allow them, for all service performed prior to March 3d, 1862, their tariff in accordance with the last clause of the circular issued from this office, dated May 1st, 1862, provided it does not exceed the enclosed rates, a deduction of 33 $\frac{1}{3}$  per cent on account of grant of land to be made from the gross amount of the bills thus made out.”



## CHAPTER IX

### LINCOLN'S LARGEST RAILROAD FEE

While Lincoln was acting as attorney for the Illinois Central, in 1853, he represented that road in a highly important case, and won it. Thereupon he sent in his bill for \$5,000—a large fee for those days and the high-water mark for Lincoln, who was still considered a country lawyer. The resulting suit on his own behalf against the railroad, to collect his fee, forms one of the most interesting episodes in his legal career.

At this time William H. Herndon was Lincoln's law partner, and his version of the incident is given in his life of Lincoln. While his account is circumstantial, later authorities have controverted various points in it. Herndon says:

“Probably the most important law suit Lincoln and I conducted was one in which we defended the Illinois Central Railroad in an action brought in McLean County, Illinois, in August 1853, to recover taxes alleged to be due the county from the road. The Legislature had granted the road immunity from taxation, and this was a case intended to test the constitutionality of the law.

“The road sent a retainer fee of \$250. In the lower court the case was decided in favor of the railroad. An appeal to the Supreme Court followed, and there it was argued twice, and finally decided in our favor. This last decision was rendered some time in 1855.

“Mr. Lincoln soon went to Chicago and presented our bill for legal services. We only asked for \$2,000 more. The official to whom he was referred,—supposed to have been the Superintendent George B. McClellan who afterwards became the eminent general,—looking at the bill expressed great surprise.

“‘Why, sir,’ he exclaimed, ‘this is as much as Daniel Webster himself would have charged. We cannot allow such a claim.’

“Stung by the rebuff, Lincoln withdrew the bill, and started for home. On the way he stopped at Bloomington. There he met Grant Goodrich, Archibald Williams, Norman B. Judd, O. H. Browning and other attorneys, who, on learning of his modest charge for such valuable services rendered the railroad, induced him to increase the demand to \$5,000, and to bring suit for that sum.

“This was done at once. On the trial six lawyers certified that the bill was reasonable, and judgment for that sum went by default. The judgment was promptly paid. Lincoln gave me my half, and much as we deprecated the avarice of great corporations, we both thanked the Lord for letting the Illinois Central Railroad fall into our hands.”

Mr. Weik, collaborator with Herndon and himself an indefatigable Lincoln investigator, in his recent “Real Lincoln” puts the concluding sentence in a slightly different setting.

“The judgment was finally paid,” Herndon told Weik in relating his version of the case, “and Lincoln gave me my half. He brought the money down from Bloomington one evening and sent me word to come

In the Circuit Court of  
McLean County -  
April Term A.D. 1857

State of Illinois }  
McLean County } SS.

Abraham Lincoln, plaintiff,  
complains of the Illinois Central Railroad  
Company, defendants, being in custody to  
of a plea of trespass on the case, or pro-  
mise;

For that whereas heretofore, to-wit, on the  
first day of January in the year of our Lord  
one thousand eight hundred and fifty seven,  
at the county aforesaid, in consideration that  
the said plaintiff, at the special interest and  
request of the, <sup>said</sup> defendants, had before  
that time, done, performed, bestowed, and  
given his work and labor, care, diligence,  
attendance and skill, as an attorney and  
solicitor of and for the said defendants, and  
upon their retainer, in and about the promo-  
ting, defending, and soliciting of divers causes,  
suits, and business for the said defendants,  
they, the said defendants, undertook, and  
then and there faithfully promised the said  
plaintiff to pay him so much money as he  
therefor reasonably deserved to have of the  
said defendants, when they, the said defen-

ants should be thereunto answered, requir-  
ted. And the <sup>said</sup> plaintiff ~~and~~ avers, that  
he therefore reasonably deserved to have, of  
the said defendants, the sum of five thous-  
and dollars, to wit, at the County aforesaid,  
whereof the said defendants, aforesaid, to wit,  
on the day and year aforesaid, had voted.

Yet the said defendants (although often re-  
quested so to do) have not as yet paid the  
said sum of money, or any part thereof; but  
so to our laws hitherto wholly neglected and  
refused, and still do neglect, and refuse -  
to the damage of the said plaintiff of Six  
thousand dollars; and therefore he brings his  
suit to

Lincoln per se

(Copy of account sued on)

The Illinois Central Railroad Company

To A. Lincoln

D<sup>n</sup>

To professional services in the case  
of the Illinois Central Railroad  
Company, against the County of  
DeWitt, twice argued in the  
Supreme Court of the State of Ill-  
inois, and finally decided at the  
December Term 1855

\$5000.00

For legal services in an important case, Lincoln presented a bill for \$5,000. The Railroad contested the amount, and a friendly suit was brought, in 1857, which resulted in a victory for the plaintiff. The above facsimile is Lincoln's statement of his claim, in his own handwriting.

to the office. It was after dark and when he had pushed my share of the proceeds across the table to me, he covered it for an instant with his hand, smiled, and said:

“‘Billy, it seems to me it will be bad taste on your part to keep on saying the severe things I have heard from you about railroads and other corporations. The truth is, instead of criticizing them, you and I ought to thank God for letting this one fall into our hands.’”

Seventeen years before the appearance of Herndon's work, Ward H. Lamon in his ill-fated biography of Lincoln had referred to the matter briefly, stating that when Lincoln presented a bill for \$5,000 for his services, “the company treated him with such rude insolence that he contented himself with a formal demand, and then immediately instituted suit on the claim.”

Lamon was a contemporary attorney and associate of Lincoln, whom the latter took to Washington in 1861 where he acted as Marshal until the close of Lincoln's career. Lamon had purchased much of the manuscript used in his book from Herndon, to whom he was undoubtedly indebted for the story of Lincoln's lawsuit.

William E. Curtis, in his “True Abraham Lincoln,” following the lead of Herndon, declares that the bill for \$2,000 originally presented, was declined “on the ground that it was as much as a first-class lawyer would charge” which, of course, aroused the indignation of Lincoln. Curtis, however, corrects the impression left by Herndon as to McClellan's having been the official who snubbed Lincoln.\* At the time spoken of, 1855, McClellan was in Europe as a Commissioner from the

\* See p. 66, Pgs 4-7, inc.

United States Army, and it was not until the beginning of 1857 that he became connected with the Illinois Central Railroad.

It seems probable that, if there was any snubbing done at that time, James F. Joy, an influential counsel for the railroad, did it. According to Henry C. Whitney, a fellow-attorney of the road, when Lincoln's bill came in and Joy had to audit it, he disallowed it and spoke contemptuously of Lincoln as a "common country lawyer." The latter then brought suit in the McLean Circuit Court. The solicitor of the railroad, John M. Douglas, consulted with Whitney about the matter.

"I said that even if the amount was too large," remarks Whitney, "we could not afford to have Lincoln as our enemy, instead of an ally, on the circuit, and I insisted further that he would beat us anyhow. Douglas paid the fee."

A half-century after this memorable controversy, in 1905, the Illinois Central published its own side of the case. It appeared in a handsome, limited brochure entitled "Abraham Lincoln as Attorney for the Illinois Central Railroad Company." This really worth-while publication was the work of John G. Drennan, one of the road's leading attorneys, who had delegated to Charles L. Capen, of Bloomington, the task of getting at the truth regarding Lincoln's suit against the road.

After referring to the issues involved in the original suit, Mr. Drennan goes on to say that when "Mr. Lincoln presented a bill for his fee . . . for five thousand dollars, the then general counsel of the road advised Mr. Lincoln that while he recognized the value of his

services, still, the payment of so large a fee to a western country lawyer without protest would embarrass the general counsel with the board of directors in New York, who would not understand, as would a lawyer, the importance of the case and the consequent value of Mr. Lincoln's services.

"It was intimated to Mr. Lincoln, however, that if he would bring suit for his bill in some court of competent jurisdiction, and judgment were rendered in his favor, the judgment would be paid without appeal. . . .

"When the case was reached for trial on Thursday morning, June 18, 1857, no one appearing for the defendant, judgment was taken by default for five thousand dollars. That afternoon John M. Douglas, one of the company's general solicitors at that time, arrived from Chicago too late of course to attend the trial. He told Mr. Lincoln that default placed him in an embarrassing position, that he (Lincoln) ought to have the fee, and asked him to permit the default to be set aside, and the case tried. To this Mr. Lincoln readily consented, and the case was set down for trial on Tuesday, June 23, 1857. On the trial of the case Mr. Douglas called Mr. Lincoln's attention to the fact that two hundred dollars had already been paid him on account of this fee, which Mr. Lincoln said he had forgotten, and accordingly reduced his demand to four thousand eight hundred dollars.

"Mr. Lincoln had taken the depositions of some of the leading lawyers of the State as to what was a reasonable fee. . . . He tried his own case, and as he got up to speak to the jury a button on his trousers gave

way. Saying 'Wait a minute 'til I fix my galluses,' he took a knife, whittled a stick and used that in place of the button.

"Mr. David Davis, afterward a Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, was the presiding judge. The jury returned a verdict for Mr. Lincoln for the full amount of four thousand eight hundred dollars, which was promptly paid by the company."

There are in existence to-day the original legal documents bearing on the case, in the handwriting of Abraham Lincoln. These have been reproduced by the Illinois Central in their publications, and include the "praecipe," the declaration, the bill rendered for professional services, the notice to take depositions, and Lincoln's own brief. The latter contains the following pertinent notes as to the important points to be stressed in presenting his case before the court.

*Retainer.*

Brayman & Joy's letters, with proof of their signatures, and that they were the active agents of the Company—

*That I did the service*, arguing the case twice.

What was the question—How decided—& on what point.

The record—the final order—& the opinion—

That *I*, and not Joy, made the point & argument on which the case turned—

*The Company own* near two million acres, and their road was through twenty-six counties—

That half a million, put at interest, would scarcely pay the taxes—

Are or not the *amount of labor*, the *doubtfulness* and



1897

Retainer.

Brayman & Joy's letter, with proof of their signatures, and that they were the active agents of the company -

That I and the service, signing the case twice.

Logan & Stuart.

~~What~~ What was the question - How decided - & on what point.

The record - the final order - & the opinion -

That I, and not Joy, made the point & argument on which the case turned -

Logan & Stuart -

The company own near two millions acres, & then passers through twenty six counties -

That half a million, put at interest, would scarcely pay the tax -

~~of the amount~~ of the amount of labor, the difficulties and complexity of the question, the degree of success in the result, and the amount of pecuniary interest involved, not merely in the particular case, but covered by the principles involved, and then presented to the client, and all proper elements, by the course of the profession, <sup>to consider</sup> in determining what is a reasonable fee in a given case -

That \$5000 is not an unreasonable fee in this case -

Courtesy, Illinois Central Railroad

#### FURTHER PAPER IN LINCOLN'S LAWSUIT

Facsimile of Lincoln's brief, made for his own use, of important points to be presented in his suit against the Illinois Central Railroad. He contends: "That \$5,000 is not an unreasonable fee in this case."

State of Illinois }  
Sangamon County } 55

Abraham Lincoln, the plaintiff in  
a certain <sup>pending in the Circuit Court of Sangamon County, Illinois</sup> suit at law, wherein the Illinois Central  
Railroad Company, are defendants, being first duly  
sworn, states on oath that he desires to take the  
depositions of Norman B. Judd, <sup>James N. Arnold</sup> and Grant Goodrich  
of Chicago, Illinois; Archibald Williams and Orville  
McBrooming, of Quincy, Illinois; Norman H. Purple,  
of Peoria, Illinois, and Stephen T. Logan of Spring  
field Illinois, to be read in evidence in said  
suit; and that each and all of said witnesses  
reside in different counties from the county of  
Sangamon, in which said suit is pending -  
A. Lincoln -

Affirmant, of which above is a copy, mailed to  
Clerk at Bloomington Jan'y 11. 1857.

Courtesy, Illinois Central Railroad

#### FURTHER PAPER IN LINCOLN'S LAWSUIT

Facsimile of plaintiff's notice to take depositions in the case of  
Lincoln vs. the Illinois Central Railroad Company, April term, 1857.

*difficulty of the question, the degree of success in the result; and the amount of pecuniary interest involved, not merely in this particular case, but covered by the principle decided, and thereby secured to the client, all proper elements, by the custom of the profession to consider in determining what is a reasonable fee in a given case.*

That \$5,000 is not an unreasonable fee in this case.

The court records still in evidence substantiate the story of Lincoln's suit and its successful outcome. Judge Davis, under whom the suit was tried, is quoted as saying that "Mr. Lincoln never before received such a fee, and rarely as much in the aggregate as \$5,000 a year."

It is also a fact that Lincoln gave half of the fee to his partner, Herndon, although he himself had done the arguing and handled the original case for the railroad.

Lincoln's bill and the resulting suit have been the subject of wide differences of opinion on the part of succeeding biographers—some accepting Herndon's version, and others inclining toward the railroad. The difference existing between the contending parties, however, was more than likely handled in a friendly manner during the course of the suit, as the testimony of Mr. Capen, a trustworthy investigator, would indicate. This is also proven by the fact that the professional relations of attorney and railroad were not severed. Abraham Lincoln, as the company states, continued to handle its litigation afterwards, the same as he had done before.

## CHAPTER X

### OTHER RAILROAD CASES

As more and more railroads were projected or built through Illinois, the attorney in Sangamon County found himself more and more in demand. We have already emphasized the fact that Lincoln's rise was coincident with that of the railroads. His career during the forties and fifties leading up to the Presidency continually illustrates the point.

In addition to his work for the Illinois Central, we find him representing other roads, such as the Chicago and Alton, the Ohio and Mississippi, and the Rock Island. A study of the records of these companies throws valuable light upon Lincoln's legal methods, and his growing reputation.

The Alton and Sangamon Railroad Company was incorporated in 1847 by the Fifteenth General Assembly of the Illinois State Legislature. The proposed road was to extend from Alton to Springfield.

"There has been a tradition in Springfield ever since I can remember," writes Mr. William L. Patton of the legal department of the present Chicago and Alton road, "that the original ordinances whereby the Alton and Sangamon Railroad Company acquired its right of way in Third Street in the city of Springfield, were drafted by Mr. Lincoln, but a reference to the Journals of the City Council of the dates of the passage of

the ordinances gives no information whatever as to the connection of Mr. Lincoln therewith, and a search of the deposit boxes in which the old ordinances were kept fails to reveal the original ordinances."

However, we do know that from 1847 to 1850 Abraham Lincoln was connected with this corporation in a minor capacity in the law department, although definite details are lacking.

During the years 1851 and 1852 we find his name appearing as attorney in four different cases carried to the State Supreme Court. In the first two he appeared alone in behalf of the road, while in the latter two the firm of Lincoln and Herndon handled the suits. Yet it should be borne in mind that during this partnership the senior member "rode the circuit" and pleaded the majority of the cases, while the junior attended to the office work.

Three of these suits were decided in favor of the railroad, while the fourth, although affirming an assessment on the company of \$480 damages, sustained the stand taken by the road's attorneys as to an important principle involved. All of them were appealed from Sangamon County, Lincoln's old friend, David Davis, being the Circuit Judge before whom the first two were originally heard.

The two suits argued by Lincoln before the December, 1851, term of the Supreme Court held at Springfield, had to do with unpaid stock subscriptions. James A. Banet, who had subscribed for thirty shares, and Joseph Klein, who had subscribed for five, sought to be discharged from their obligations on the ground that alterations in the original charter granted the com-

pany exonerated them from payment. The Supreme Court held otherwise, however.

Just one year later Lincoln handled two right-of-way cases for the corporation, winning the one and losing the other, his opposing attorney being Stephen T. Logan.

In 1853 he came into rather close contact with the engineer in charge of construction of the Chicago and Mississippi Railroad, successor to the Alton and Sangamon, then building an extension out of Bloomington. When this addition was completed the following year, Lincoln, by virtue of this friendship, was appointed local attorney for the road at Springfield and furnished with annual free transportation. This he evidently received for two or three years, as the following letter accompanying an expired annual pass for 1855, received by his friend Morgan, testifies:

Springfield, Feby. 13, 1856.

R. P. MORGAN, ESQ.

*Dear Sir:*

Says Tom to John "here's your old rotten wheelbarrow. I've broke it, usin' on it. I wish you would mend it, 'case I shall want to borrow it this arternoon."

Acting on this as a precedent, I say "Here's your old 'chalked hat.' I wish you would take it, and send me a new one, 'case I shall want to use it by the first of March."

Yours truly

A. LINCOLN.

This request for renewal was couched in the railroad parlance of that day, but would be little understood

Springfield, Oct 13 1857

R P Morgan, Esq  
Dear Sir.

Says Tom to John "Heres your  
dew potten wheelbarrow" "Lew looks it, usen ont"  
"I wish you wouen mear it, cause I shall want  
to bonow it this afternoon!"

Acting on this as a precedent,  
I say "Heres your dew "Chalk-hat" I wish you  
wouen take it, I wou becal me a new one, cause  
I shall want to use it the first of March"

Yours truly  
H. Lincoln

H. Lincoln.  
Richard Price Morgan

Courtesy, Dwight C. Morgan

#### WHEN LINCOLN "CHALKED HIS HAT"

All holders of passes from the railroads were said to have their "hats chalked," from the custom of the early conductors of so marking the headgear. Lincoln as a railroad attorney was not averse to passes, and even after elected President, asked a friend to obtain this courtesy for him, from a connecting road. The above is a similar request made ten years earlier.





now. During that early period of railroading in Illinois, the fortunate possessor of an annual pass would say to the conductor going through the train, "I have a chalked hat," or more briefly, "I chalk," referring to the practice of the conductors of placing a white ticket in the hat band of the "dead heads."

As noted elsewhere, Abraham Lincoln was not carried on the rolls of the corporation in 1857, for it was in that year that he acted as opposing counsel in the famous Dalby case.

A letter addressed to Joel A. Matteson, in control of the St. Louis, Alton and Chicago Railroad, as it was then called, written by Lincoln in the fall of 1858, shortly after the close of the Lincoln-Douglas debates, testifies to the fact that the Springfield attorney was undoubtedly engaged at that period to handle certain litigation for the road. That he did not carry the matter to a conclusion does not alter the fact.

"Last summer," he wrote under date of November 25th, "when a movement was made in court against your road, you engaged us to be on your side. It has so happened that, so far, we have performed no service in the case; but we lost a cash fee offered us on the other side. Now, being hard run, we propose a little compromise. We will claim nothing for the matter just mentioned, if you will relieve us at once from the old matter at the Marine and Fire Insurance Company, and be greatly obliged to boot. Can you not do it?"

This Joel A. Matteson was Governor of Illinois from 1853 to 1857, and it was largely through Lincoln's influence that he had been defeated for United States Senator by the Legislature in 1855. Although un-

doubtedly aware of Lincoln's action, and of the fact that he had appeared against the corporation in the Dalby case six months before, Matteson's engagement of Lincoln in the summer of 1858 speaks volumes for the high legal reputation which Abraham Lincoln had attained at that time.

Beside the several cases each which he argued before the Supreme Court of Illinois for the Chicago and Alton, and Illinois Central Railroads, there is record of but one other road which Lincoln represented before that tribunal, and as that one, the Tonica and Petersburg, after successive incorporations and consolidations, eventually passed into the hands of the present-day Chicago and Alton, it may appropriately be referred to at this point.

This was another unpaid-stock subscription case, originally brought before a local Justice of the Peace and then taken to the Menard County Court. Here the firm of Lincoln and Herndon represented the corporation, and losing the suit, appealed to the Supreme Court. Pitted against Lincoln were the firm of Stuart and Edwards, and Thomas P. Cowan. In this instance the Court decided that Stein, the defendant, was not obligated to pay the amount of his subscription inasmuch as "he did not subscribe in such manner as to bind him."

Mr. Jesse W. Weik is authority for the statement that the only investment made by Lincoln himself in railroad stock, or stock of any kind in a corporation, of which we have record, was in several shares of old Alton and Sangamon Railroad. He informs the writer that

he has in his possession a "list of those persons in Springfield and the vicinity who had the temerity to subscribe for stock in a railroad company. The list is in Herndon's handwriting, but the paper bears a paragraph or so in Lincoln's hand. Four hundred and eighty-eight shares of stock were subscribed for. The paper recites the fact that each subscriber agrees to pay \$5 on each share of stock, the balance to be paid in installments as called for by the board of directors. The largest subscription was by Thomas Lewis, who took fifty shares; John W. Bunn twenty-five shares; N. W. Edwards (Lincoln's brother-in-law) twenty shares; John T. Stuart five shares; and Lincoln himself subscribed for six shares."

Another important case in which Lincoln figured was on behalf of the Ohio and Mississippi Railroad—later a part of the Baltimore and Ohio system—and involved a sum in excess of \$300,000. This company was incorporated in Illinois, in 1851, and the right of way extended from East St. Louis across to the Wabash River opposite Vincennes. Work was pushed actively on the road and it was opened for business on May 1, 1857. However, it encountered various vicissitudes, and while still under construction was sold to a certain Henry D. Bacon. In October, 1857, he reconvened all his right, title, and interest back to the company, although in the meantime the property had been leased for a term of fifteen years to one George W. Jenks.

Suit was brought by Bacon against the railroad, in 1856, in the U. S. District Court at Springfield. Abraham Lincoln was retained by the railroad. The legal

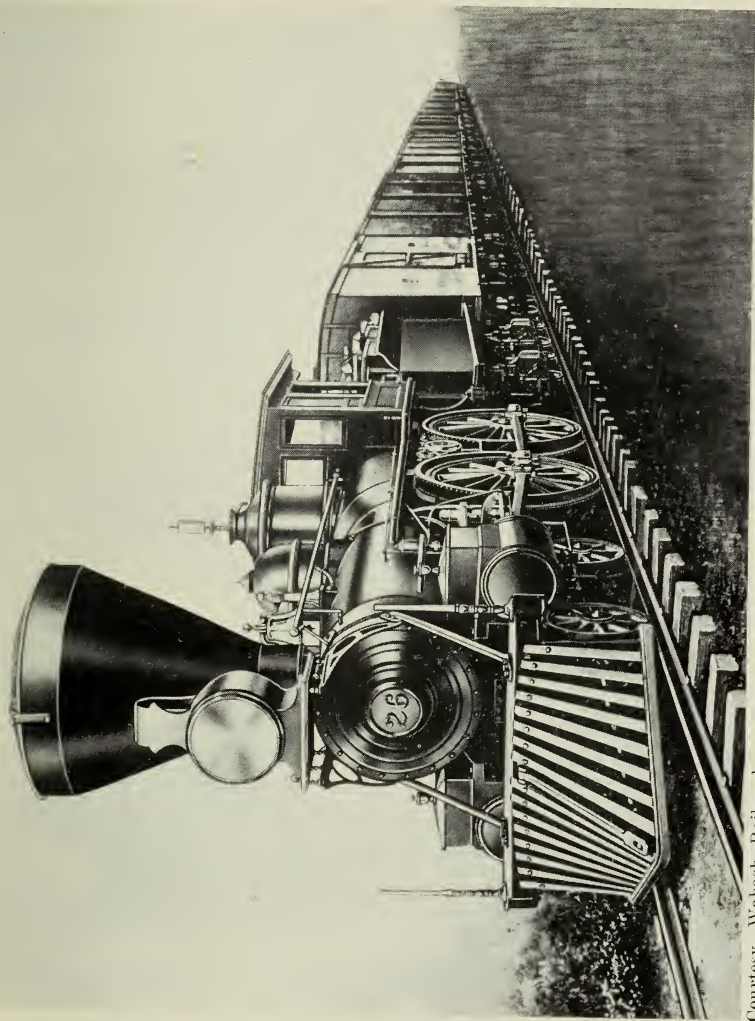
aspects of the case are set forth in a brief signed by Herndon, his law partner, but evidently written by Lincoln himself. It is as follows:

In the Circuit Court of the United States  
for the Southern District of Illinois.  
March Term A. D. 1856.

United States of America }  
Southern District of Illinois } Ss

Henry D. Bacon, who is a citizen of the State of Missouri, plaintiff, complains of the Ohio and Mississippi Railroad Company, a corporation created by and doing business within, the State of Illinois, defendants, being in custody &c of a plea that they render to the said plaintiff, the sum of Six hundred and twenty-four thousand two hundred and thirty-six dollars, and seventy cents, which said defendants owe to, and unjustly detain from said plaintiff—

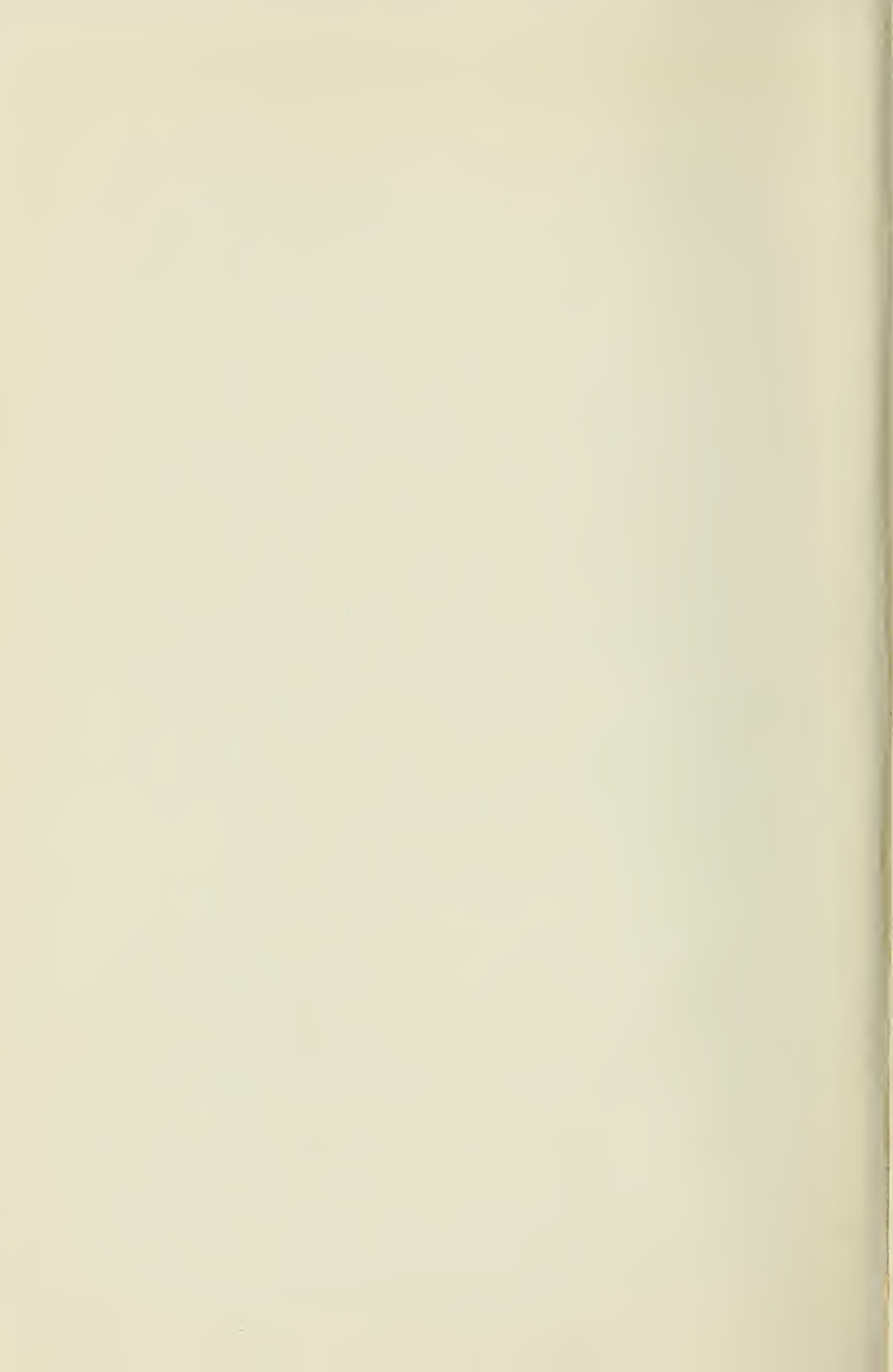
For that whereas, said defendants heretofore, towit, on the twenty-eighth day of February in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and fifty-six, at St. Louis, towit, at the Southern District of Illinois aforesaid, made their certain promissory note in writing, bearing date the day and year aforesaid, and then and there delivered said note to Page & Bacon, by which said note they, the said defendants, then and there promised to pay, one day after the date thereof, to the order of the said Page & Bacon, the sum of three hundred and twelve thousand one hundred and thirty three dollars, and thirty five cents, for value received, negotiable, and payable, without defalcation, with interest from date— And afterwards, towit, on the day and year aforesaid, at the Southern District of Illinois aforesaid, the said Page & Bacon, by their endorsement thereon in writ-



Courtesy, Wabash Railroad

ENGINE AND TRAIN, GREAT WESTERN RAILROAD

A familiar type of early, mid-Western equipment. The Great Western was the predecessor of the Wabash Railroad. Lincoln carried a pass over it at one time, and upon different occasions appeared as opposing counsel in its earlier litigation.



ing, assigned said note to the said plaintiff, and then and there delivered the same to the said plaintiff. By means whereof, and by force of the statute in such case made and provided, the said defendants then and there became liable to pay to the said plaintiff the said sum of money in said note specified, according to the tenor and effect of the said note; and although the said sum of money, in said note specified, has long since been due and payable according to the tenor and effect of said note, yet the said plaintiff, in fact says, that the said defendants (although often requested so to do) did not, nor would pay the said sum of money in said note specified or any part thereof, to the said plaintiff, or otherwise howsoever, but have hitherto wholly neglected and refused so to do, whereby an action has accrued to the said plaintiff, to demand, and have, of and from the said defendants, the said sum in the said note specified, parcel of the said sum above demanded.

And whereas also, the said plaintiff, afterwards, to-wit, on the third day of March, in the year aforesaid, at the Southern District of Illinois aforesaid, had paid, laid out and expended, a certain other sum of money, to-wit, the sum of three hundred and twelve thousand one hundred and thirty three dollars and thirty five cents, for the said defendants, and at their special instance and request, and to be paid by the said defendants to the said plaintiff when they the said defendants should be thereunto afterwards requested, whereby, and by reason of the said last mentioned sum of money being and remaining wholly unpaid and action has accrued to the said plaintiff to demand and have of and from the said defendants the said last mentioned sum of money, other parcel of the said sum above demanded.

Yet the said defendants (although often requested so

to do) have not as yet paid the sum of money above demanded, or any part thereof; but so to do, have hitherto wholly neglected and refused and still do neglect and refuse— To the damage of the said plaintiff of one thousand dollars and therefore he brings his suit &c.

W. H. HERNDON, p. L.

Endorsed: Filed March 4, 1856.

GEO. W. LOWRY, Clerk.

“Undoubtedly Mr. Herndon’s name was signed to the declaration by Lincoln,” says James M. Graham, who is District Attorney for the road at Springfield and who investigated the court records, “as a mere matter of convenience and because the case did not involve a contest. The declaration consists of two counts: the first avers diversity of citizenship—Mr. Bacon lived in Missouri—the second count is general and avers money laid out and expended, etc.”

And finally we have the judgment entry, also in the handwriting of Lincoln :

Henry D. Bacon

vs.

The Ohio & Mississippi  
Railroad Company

This day came the plaintiff and, on leave filed his declaration herein; and thereupon, Abraham Lincoln, an Attorney of this court, entered the appearance of said defendants, filed the authenticated preamble and resolution of said defendants, authorizing their Vice-President to execute their note, and a Power of Attorney to confess a judgment; and also filed said note and Power of Attorney, duly authenticated, and thereupon confessed the indebtedness in the declaration mentioned,



to the amount of three hundred and twelve thousand, one hundred and thirty-three dollars and thirty-five cents, with interest to the amount of two hundred and fifty-six dollars and fifty-four cents, and also costs of suit.

It is therefore adjudged by the court that the plaintiff recover of and from the defendants the sum of three hundred and twelve thousand one hundred and thirty-three dollars and thirty-five cents, his debts aforesaid, and also the further sum of two hundred and fifty-six dollars and fifty-four cents, as his damages herein, together with his costs therein expended, and that he have execution therefor.

Mr. Graham elaborates on his opinion as to why the declaration and entry of appearances which also contains the court order, were written by Abraham Lincoln himself. "I have no doubt in my mind," he writes, "that both these papers were written by Mr. Lincoln. There is an individuality about his handwriting which is unmistakable to one familiar with it. The lines of his handwriting are as distinct—as Lincolnian—as the lines in his face or the propositions of his arguments."

It is the opinion of present-day attorneys of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad that the litigation was probably friendly.

"The amount of the note and judgment was large for those days," says Morison R. Waite, General Solicitor of the Western Lines, "but it was an agreed and not a litigated matter. Bacon had title to the railroad company's property under a conveyance pursuant to a deed of trust at the time he took this judgment. The purpose must have been to either strengthen his title

or possibly reach other assets not covered by the conveyance.”

“It seems to have been a friendly suit,” says Graham, “and was important only because it involved a large sum of money—\$312,000.”

All that is known of the later history of the case, is contained in a letter written the following year by Abraham Lincoln to a legal associate:

Springfield, July 10, 1857.

HON. G. KOERNER,

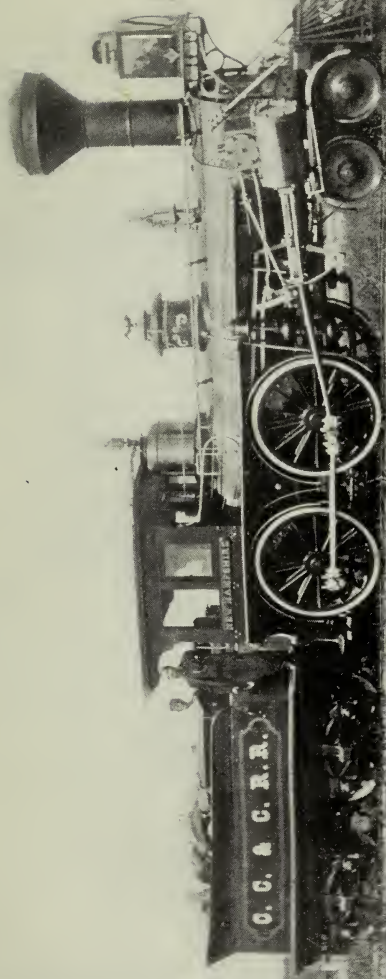
*Dear Sir:*

Your letter of the 8th to Lincoln and Herndon was received and opened by Mr. Herndon in my absence; but finding it relating to business with which I was more familiar he laid it by till my return which was only yesterday.

The judgment to Page & Bacon against the Ohio and Miss. Railroad Company in the United States Court here, was taken, by confession on a cognovit, at the March term, 1856, for the sum of \$312,413.74 including costs. Execution issued April 16th, 1856, which was by order of the plaintiffs returned unsatisfied, sale having been postponed June 6, 1856. While it was in the hands of the Marshal it was levied on the entire property of the road (as I suppose, a large amount at any rate) which levy remains undisposed of.

Will you please remember that our Sangamon Circuit Court commences Aug. 10, when I suppose our Quo Warranto cases will come up, and when I shall be glad to have the benefit of your legal assistance.

Yours very truly,  
A. LINCOLN.



*Courtesy, Cleveland, Cincinnati, Chicago & St. Louis Railroad*

THE "NEW HAMPSHIRE"

Early locomotive used on the predecessor of the present "Big Four" System. In 1857 Lincoln was asked by that company to handle certain litigation for it, but his other railroad and political activities prevented him from so doing.



The records of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroads further disclose that, in 1858, the road encountered financial difficulties, a receiver being appointed in 1860. On June 2, 1862, the property was sold on the petition of the second mortgage bondholders for \$480,000.

What fee Abraham Lincoln received for his services rendered in the Bacon suit cannot be ascertained, as the old files of the Ohio and Mississippi Railroad were destroyed when the Baltimore and Ohio system acquired the road.

## CHAPTER XI

### THE ROCK ISLAND BRIDGE CASE

The year 1853 is important in railroad history in the Middle West, as it marks the beginning of the first of the railway bridges to span the Mississippi River. The conquest of the Far West was begun. This pioneer bridge when completed spanned the Father of Waters from Rock Island, Illinois, to Davenport, Iowa. At this point in the stream an island out in the channel—"Rock Island"—avoided the necessity of a straight span clear across.

As the Rock Island Company itself has explained: "The construction really involved three portions—a bridge across the narrow arm of the river between the Illinois shore and the island; a line of tracks across Rock Island, and a long bridge between the island and the Iowa shore. The channel of the river passed very close to the west side of the island, and down the middle of this channel ran the boundary line between the two states."

The proposed bridge, on what is now a part of the main line of the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railway, encountered bitter opposition. The very idea of the Mississippi being "obstructed" by a bridge of any sort aroused the antagonism of powerful river interests. Leading river towns—St. Louis in particular—saw that with such innovations they ran the risk of losing the commercial advantages, amounting almost to a mon-

opoly, which they had hitherto enjoyed. The rivermen on their part foresaw in the coming of the railroads a formidable rival in the field of transportation. The building of bridges across "their" river was added fuel to the flame. They loudly insisted that such structures would interfere with the free transit of the stream.

This argument, so familiar to latter-day railroad people, was then new and brought many influential adherents into the camp of the opposition. Legal obstacles were put in the way of the Rock Island bridge, but the company was able to set them aside, and the bridge was built.

The opposition, however, did not end here; it only bided its time to make a test case of the whole matter. This soon came. In May, 1856, a steamboat, the *Effie Afton*, struck one of the piers of the bridge and was wrecked and totally destroyed by fire. The lawsuit which resulted promised to be one of the most important in the history of railroading up to that time. The owners of the steamboat instituted a damage suit against the railroad company; while the latter maintained that the so-called accident was intentional. Incidentally, a portion of the bridge was burned.

This case with all its interesting legal angles derives further importance from the fact that our Sangamon County lawyer was retained for the railroad. It reveals Lincoln in the plenitude of his powers, holding his own against the best legal talent of that section. The time was but a few years before he became a national figure in politics.

"Who can tell the true story of the *Effie Afton*, that Louisville-New Orleans packet sent north from St.

Louis on her first trip?" say the Rock Island management in a recent statement. "Who can describe the impelling thought that controlled this boat on the morning of May 6th—fourteen days after the crossing of the first train—when the boat proceeded some two hundred feet above the draw pier, and then, one of her side wheels stopping, she swung in against the bridge? Who can tell just how the stove tipped over that set fire to the boat and which, in its burning, destroyed the span where it struck? Is it possible that Parker, the pilot, might solve the riddle were he here?"

While the case was pending, several officials of the Chicago and Rock Island road met for a conference in the lobby of the Tremont Hotel in Chicago.

"This man Hurd and his associates will, undoubtedly, secure a favorable verdict in the lower court," said Joseph Knox, attorney of Rock Island, referring to the plaintiffs.

"Well," replied Norman B. Judd, general attorney of the road and a leading director, "we still have the United States Circuit Court open to us."

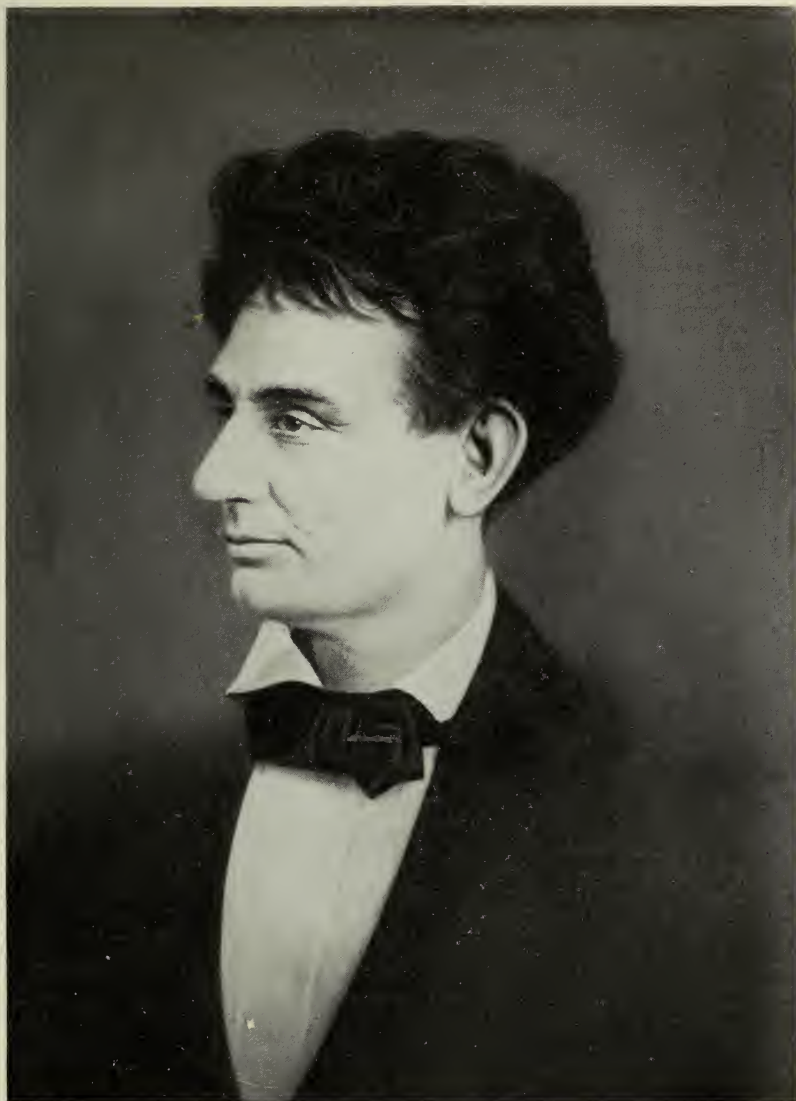
"And will need a strong, popular man to handle the case," rejoined Knox.

"Well, gentlemen," Judd went on, "there is only one man in this country who can take this case and win it, and that is Abraham Lincoln."

"And who is Abraham Lincoln?" asked Henry Farnam, contractor, construction engineer, and promoter high in railroad circles.

"A young lawyer from Sangamon County," was the reply, "one of the best men to state a case forcibly and convincingly that I ever heard. And his personality





*Courtesy, Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railroad*

**“AND WHO IS ABRAHAM LINCOLN?” ASKED FARNAM**

When the Rock Island System undertook its very important suit against the steamboat and river interests, to maintain its right to build a bridge across the Mississippi River, the question at once arose as to the best attorney to represent the Railroad. The above query by Mr. Farnam resulted in the selection of the “young lawyer from Sangamon County,” who won his case.



will appeal to any judge or jury hereabouts. I heard him first at the Waterways Convention here in Chicago back in 1847, when we were after President Polk's scalp for vetoing as unconstitutional the bill which Congress had passed for the improvement of rivers and the construction of harbors in our Lake Michigan."

"Let's get him up here to-morrow," Farnam said, "and discuss the matter."

"I would suggest," said Judd, "that we take him in your private car and go to Rock Island, let him look the ground over, and then abide by his opinion."

This was accordingly done, and a few days later while young Benjamin Brayton, son of the superintendent under whose charge the work of excavation had been done for the bridge, was sitting out on one of the spans of the bridge a considerable distance from shore, he noticed a tall stranger standing beside him.

"Do you live around here, my boy?" asked attorney Lincoln, for it was he.

"Yes, sir, in Davenport," replied Brayton.

"And what might your name be?" Lincoln went on.

"Brayton, Bud Brayton, they call me," the boy answered; "my dad helped build this railroad."

Lincoln laughed. "Oh, I see," he said.

Then he sat down beside the youth on the end of the bridge ties, with his legs dangling towards the water.

"And I suppose you know all about this river?" he asked.

"Well, I guess I do," was the reply. "It was here when I was born, and—it's been here ever since."

This sally evoked another laugh from the tall stranger.

"Well, well," he said; "I'm mighty glad I walked out here where there is not so much opinion and a little more fact. Now tell me," he went on, "how fast does this water run under here? Have you ever thought of that?"

"No," said young Brayton, "but I know how to find out."

Lincoln smiled kindly down on his companion.

"I knew you did," he said. "Tell me how, will you?"

"Of course," the lad explained, "if you sight the logs and brush coming down the river, you'll see they swing out from the island up there about three hundred yards, and then they swing in again right here under the bridge. Have you got a watch?" he asked, turning to his visitor.

"Right here," was the reply, as Lincoln drew a large silver time-piece from his vest pocket.

"Now," explained the boy, "when I spy a log swinging out from the island, I'll tell you, and you take the time. Then, when it comes here under us, you can take it again and then we've got the distance and the time. Can't we figure it that way?"

Thus through the precocious intelligence of an observant lad fifteen years of age, the Sangamon County lawyer found out what he wanted to know concerning the currents of the mighty "Father of Waters." Years later this same youth became a trusted engineer of the Rock Island Railroad.

In August, while engaged in preparing his data for the trial, Lincoln received a communication from Governor Grimes of Iowa, asking him to come over to his state and make a few political speeches for the fall

campaign. While desiring to accommodate his Republican friends, Lincoln felt that he could ill afford to spare the time just then.

"I lost nearly all the working-part of last year," he wrote, "giving my time to the canvass; and I am altogether too poor to lose two years together. I am engaged in a suit in the United States Circuit Court at Chicago, in which the Rock Island Bridge Company is a party. The trial is to commence on the 8th of September, and probably will last two or three weeks. During the trial it is not improbable that all hands may come over and take a look at the bridge, and if it were possible to make it hit right, I could then speak at Davenport."

It may be remarked here, however, that "all hands" did not get this opportunity.

The best legal talent available was engaged by both sides of the case. H. M. Wead, of Peoria, T. D. Lincoln, of Cincinnati, and Corydon Beckwith, of Chicago, represented the prosecution. Norman B. Judd, Abraham Lincoln, and Joseph Knox acted as counsel for the defense.

The trial opened on September 8 with the contending forces well primed. On account of its far-reaching influence Chicago was filled with people from far and near, interested in the proceedings.

A contemporary has furnished a description of the court-room in which the case was tried.

"The court held its sessions," says this spectator, "in what was known as the 'Saloon Building' on the southeast corner of Clark and Lake streets. The room appropriated for its use was not more than forty feet

square, with the usual division for the judge, clerks and attorneys occupying perhaps twenty feet on the farther side, and provided with the usual furniture. The rest of the room contained long benches for the accommodation of the public. Near the door was a large stove of the 'box' pattern surmounted by a 'drum.' These were common throughout the West in those days, when modern appliances were not thought of.

"Alongside the stove was drawn one of the long benches, its front and sides cut and lettered all over. Here in cool weather frequently sat idlers, or weary members of the bar, and witnesses in cases on trial."

We do not think that there is a better statement of the situation than that given by John T. Richards, Lincoln authority, and Chicago attorney.

"The contention of the plaintiffs," says Mr. Richards, "was that the building of piers in the river constituted an obstruction to navigation; and while the particular case here mentioned was a suit to recover damages which were sustained by the owners of the steamboat, *Effie Afton*, in consequence of that steamboat having been driven by the current, as was claimed, against a pier of the bridge at Rock Island, it was hoped by the plaintiff and those in sympathy with him that such an amount of damages would be recovered as to make the maintenance of that and other bridges across the navigable streams unprofitable to the railroad companies, thereby compelling them to unload their freight on the banks of the river, transport it across by ferry-boats, and reload it for shipment to the points of destination. If this could have been accomplished, the cost of transportation by railroad would

have been made prohibitive and the steamboat monopoly would have continued. For these and similar reasons the war between the respective interests was relentless."

The case was legally docketed "Hurd et al. v. Railroad Bridge Company," with Hon. John McLean of the United States Supreme Court presiding.

From the day of the opening of the trial until the 20th of the month, the time was consumed chiefly with submission of the evidence pro and con and the argument of important questions thereby arising by the contending counsel. A keen observer of the proceedings, Colonel Peter A. Dey, a noted railroad engineer, many years later said that "Mr. Lincoln's examination of the witnesses was very full and no point escaped his notice. I thought he carried it almost to prolixity, but when he came to his argument I changed my opinion."

"Much time was taken up by testimony and contentions between counsel," says another, who was a frequent attendant upon the court sessions, "and as the participation of the St. Louis Chamber of Commerce was openly charged, great interest was manifested in the evidence and the manner in which it was presented.

"As the character of the Mississippi River was described,—the nature of its currents, their velocity at certain periods, the custom of navigators and pilots in allowance for drift, the depth of water at the 'draw' of the bridge, the direction of the piers in relation to the channel, and many other points involving mechanics and engineering being drawn out,—the spectators showed their sympathies unmistakably.

"Engineers in the service of the government, civil engineers, pilots, boat-owners and river-men had testi-

fied under the most searching examination. Lincoln seemed to have committed all the facts and figures to memory, and often corrected evidence so effectively as to cause a ripple of mirth in the audience.

“During a tedious examination by one of the opposing counsel, Lincoln rose from his chair, and walking wearily about,—this seemed to be his habit,—at last came down the aisle between the long benches toward the end of the room; and seeing a vacant space on the end of the bench which projected some distance beyond the stove, came over and sat down.

“Having entered the room an hour before, I sat on the end, but, as Lincoln approached, moved back to give him room. As he sat down he picked up a bit of wood, and began to chip it with his knife, seeming absorbed, however, in the testimony under consideration. Some time passed, when Lincoln suddenly rose, and walking rapidly toward the bar, energetically contested the testimony, and demanded the production of the original notes as to measurements, showing wide differences. Considerable stir was occasioned in the room by this incident, and it evidently made a deep impression as to his comprehension, vigilance and remembrance of the details of the testimony.”

During the trial, Judd, who lived in Chicago, invited Lincoln to spend the evening at his home, on the shore of Lake Michigan. Mrs. Judd has left a rather full and interesting account of this visit, and as it reveals another side of this versatile man, it is worth while to reproduce it here.

“After tea, and until quite late,” narrated Mrs. Judd, “we sat on the broad piazza, looking out upon



as lovely a scene as that which has made the Bay of Naples so celebrated. A number of vessels were availing themselves of a fine breeze to leave the harbor, and the lake was studded with many a white sail. I remember that a flock of sea-gulls were flying along the beach, and dipping their beaks and white-lined wings in the foam that capped the short waves as they fell upon the shore.

“While we sat there, the great white moon appeared on the rim of the eastern horizon, and slowly crept above the water, throwing a perfect flood of silver light upon the dancing waves. The stars shone with the soft light of a midsummer night, and the breaking of the low waves upon the shore, repeating the old rhythm of the song which they have sung for ages, added the charm of pleasant sound to the beauty of the night.

“Mr. Lincoln, whose home was far inland from the Great Lakes, seemed greatly impressed with the wondrous beauty of the scene, and carried by its impressiveness away from all thought of the jars and turmoil of earth.

“In that mild, pleasant voice, attuned to harmony with his surroundings, and which was his wont when his soul was stirred by aught that was lovely or beautiful, he began to speak of the mystery which for ages enshrouded and shut out those distant worlds above us from our own, of the poetry and beauty which was seen and felt by seers of old when they contemplated Orion and Arcturus as they wheeled, seemingly around the earth, in their nightly course; of the discoveries since the invention of the telescope, which had thrown a flood of light and knowledge on what before was in-

comprehensible and mysterious; of the wonderful computations of scientists who had measured the miles of seemingly endless space which separated the planets in our solar system from our central sun, and our sun from other suns, which were now gemming the heavens above us with their resplendent beauty.

“He speculated on the possibilities of knowledge which an increased power of the lens would give in the years to come; and then the wonderful discoveries of late centuries as proving that beings endowed with such capabilities as man must be immortal, and created for some high and noble end by Him who had spoken those numberless worlds into existence; and made man a little lower than the angels that he might comprehend the glories and wonders of His creation.

“When the night air became too chilling to remain longer on the piazza,” continued Mrs. Judd, “we went into the parlor, and, seated on the sofa, his long limbs stretching across the carpet, and his arms folded behind him, Mr. Lincoln went on to speak of other discoveries, and also of the inventions which had been made during the long cycles of time lying between the present and those early days when the sons of Adam began to make use of the material things about them, and invent instruments of various kinds in brass and gold and silver. He gave us a short but succinct account of all the inventions referred to in the Old Testament from the time when Adam walked in the Garden of Eden until the Bible record ended, 600 B. C.”

This made an impression on his hostess, who was evidently a lady of talents.

"Mr. Lincoln," she said, "I did not know that you were such a Bible student."

"I must be honest, Mrs. Judd," Lincoln replied, "and tell you just how I came to know so much about these early inventions."

He explained that in order to satisfy himself, after a discussion with one of his friends as to the relative age of the discovery and use of precious metals, he made a systematic research of the Bible for data, and became so interested that he took a full set of notes of the different discoveries and inventions mentioned therein, from which he prepared and delivered, at least in one instance, a lecture on "Discoveries and Inventions."

When Lincoln had left the Judd residence that night, Mr. Judd remarked to his wife: "I am constantly more and more surprised at Mr. Lincoln's attainments and the varied knowledge he has acquired during years of constant labor at the Bar, in every department of science and learning. A Professor at Yale could not have been more interesting or more enthusiastic."

With further reference to Lincoln's share in the famous trial, we quote from Mr. Richards again.

"The record of that trial shows that Abraham Lincoln was accorded the most important position among counsel for the defendant," he says. "He made the closing argument to the jury on behalf of the defendant, and was otherwise active during the trial. Had he been other than a high-class lawyer, he would not have been employed as the leading counsel for the defendant, or employed in connection with that case.

His address to the jury was a forceful presentation of the contentions of the defendant. His careful analysis of the plaintiff's claims and of the evidence introduced at the trial shows also a thorough familiarity with the questions involved."

Mr. Frederick Trevor Hill, of New York, in referring to the case says that "new and vital questions of law arose, which Lincoln handled in a masterful manner on behalf of the Rock Island Railroad." And again in referring to the bitter feeling engendered at the time, "under these circumstances it required a cool head and an even temper to carry the day, and Lincoln was equal to the occasion. His argument, one of the few legal speeches which have been preserved, was reported by Robert R. Hitt, and it demonstrates Lincoln's conspicuous ability in presenting close questions of law, and indicates his notable development as a lawyer."

Hill's allusion to the argument as reported by Hitt, refers to the stenographic report made for the *Chicago Daily Press*, issue of September 24, 1857.

On the 22nd, Abraham Lincoln commenced his argument before the jury. Colonel Peter A. Dey says that "Lincoln went over all the details with great minuteness, until court, jury and spectators were wrought up to the crucial point. Then drawing himself up to his full height, he delivered a peroration that thrilled the court-room and, to the minds of most persons, settled the case."

Another spectator, a star witness for the railroad interests, was O. P. Wharton, a Rock Island newspaper man, who says that Lincoln "conducted the case for the Bridge Company with such masterly ability that

the opposition had no show of any consequence for its contention against the right to bridge the Mississippi River at any point where the interests of transportation east and west required such a structure."

Judge Blodgett, of Chicago, has left more detailed recollections of his impressions. "The two points relied upon by the opponents of the bridge," he says, "were: First, that the river was the great waterway for the commerce of the valley, and could not legally be obstructed by a bridge. Second, that this particular bridge was so located with reference to the channel of the river at that point as to make it a peril to all water craft navigating the river and an unnecessary obstruction to navigation.

"The first proposition had not at that time been directly passed upon by the Supreme Court of the United States, although the Wheeling Bridge case involved the question; but the court had evaded a decision upon it, by holding that the Wheeling Bridge was so low as to be an unnecessary obstruction to the use of the river by steamboats. The discussion of the first proposition on the part of the bridge company devolved mainly upon Abraham Lincoln.

"I listened with much interest to his argument on this point, and while I was not impressed by it as a specially eloquent effort (as the word eloquent is generally understood), I have always considered it as one of the ablest efforts I ever heard from Mr. Lincoln at the Bar. His illustrations were apt and forcible, his statements clear and logical, and his reasons in favor of the policy (and necessarily the right) to bridge the river, and thereby encourage the settlement and building up of

the vast area of fertile country to the west of it, were broad and statesmanlike.

“The pith of his argument was in his statement that *one man had as good a right to cross a river as another had to sail up or down it*; that these were equal and mutual rights which must be exercised so as not to interfere with each other, like the right to cross a street or highway and the right to pass along it. From this undeniable right to cross the river he then proceeded to discuss the means for crossing. Must it always be by canoe or ferryboat? Must the products of all the boundless fertile country lying west of the river for all time be compelled to stop on its western bank, be unloaded from the cars and loaded upon a boat, and after the transit across the river, be reloaded into cars on the other side, to continue their journey east? In this connection he drew a vivid picture of the future of the great West lying beyond the river, and argued that the necessities of commerce demanded that the bridges across the river be a conceded right, which the steamboat interests ought not to be allowed to successfully resist, and thereby stay the progress of development and civilization in the region to the west.

“While I cannot recall a word or sentence of the argument, I well remember its effect on all who listened to it, and the decision of the court fully sustained the right to bridge, so long as it did not unnecessarily obstruct navigation.”

Abraham Lincoln's argument lasted two days. At the end of the first day, as Joseph Knox, one of the associate counsel, sat down at the dinner table of Judd at



*Courtesy, Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railroad*

THE BRIDGE IN THE CASE

Old view of the railroad bridge at Rock Island which was partially destroyed when a steamer ran afoul of it and caught fire, in 1856. The resulting test case was an effort on the part of river men to prevent any and all railroads from throwing bridges across the stream.





whose home he was being entertained, he became greatly excited.

“Lincoln has lost the case for us,” he said. “The admissions he made in regard to the currents in the Mississippi at Rock Island and Moline will convince the court that a bridge at that point will always be a serious and constant detriment to navigation on the river.”

But Judd was not disturbed. He replied that Lincoln’s admissions in regard to the currents were facts that could not be denied. They only proved that the bridge should have been built at a different angle to the stream, and that a bridge so built could not injure the river as a navigable stream.

The argument of Lincoln as preserved to us by Hitt is worth noting in detail. From a careful perusal of it, we observe that the points as recalled by Judge Blodgett were brought out in the first part of his plea, while the latter was devoted to more complicated matters: the river currents, their velocity, the position of the piers, engineering problems of river navigation, and the like, all being handled with mathematical precision.

Lincoln started in by saying that it was not his purpose to assail anybody, but that he expected to grow earnest as he proceeded.

“There is some conflict of testimony in the case, but one quarter of such a number of witnesses seldom agree, and even if all were on one side, some discrepancy might be expected. We are to try to reconcile them and to believe that they are not intentionally erroneous as long as we can,” he went on.

He said that he had no prejudice against the steam-

boats or steamboatmen, nor against St. Louis. Their feelings were only natural. "But," he continued, "there is a travel from east to west whose demands are not less than that of those of the river. It is growing larger and larger, building up new countries with a rapidity never before seen in the history of the world. This current of travel has its rights as well as that of north and south. If the river had not the advantage in priority and legislation, we could enter into free competition with it and we could surpass it."

It was at this point that he dilated upon the growing West, picturing it in glowing colors, as recalled by Blodgett.

"This particular railroad line," he went on, "has a great importance and the statement of its business during a little less than a year shows this importance. It is in evidence that from September 8th, 1856, to August 8th, 1857, 12,586 freight cars and 74,179 passengers passed over this bridge. Navigation was closed four days short of four months last year, and during this time while the river was of no use this road and bridge were valuable. There is, too, a considerable portion of time when floating or thin ice makes the river useless, while the bridge is as useful as ever. This shows that this bridge must be treated with respect in this court, and is not to be kicked about with contempt. . . . The proper mode for all parties in this affair is to 'live and let live,' and then we will find a cessation of this trouble about the bridge.

"What mood were the steamboat men in when this bridge was burned? Why, there was a shouting and ringing of bells and whistling on all the boats as it fell.

It was a jubilee, a greater celebration than follows an exciting election."

He then referred rather sarcastically to the decrease in the number of accidents occurring.

"From April 19th, 1856, to May 6th—seventeen days—there were twenty accidents, and all the time since then there have been but twenty hits, including seven accidents, so that the dangers of this place are tapering off and as the boatmen get cool, the accidents get less. We may soon expect if this ratio is kept up that there will be no accidents at all."

Lincoln then discussed the alleged difference between a "float" and a "boat," and the angular position of the piers, but said that he would not take up the question, "What is a material obstruction?" as he was willing to trust Judge McLean's instructions on that technical point.

"What is reasonable skill and care?" was his next point. "This is a thing of which the jury are to judge. I differ from the other side when it says that they are bound to exercise no more care than was taken before the building of the bridge. If we are allowed by the Legislature to build the bridge which will require them to do more than before when a pilot comes along, it is unreasonable for him to dash on heedless of this structure which has been legally put there. The *Afton* came there on the 5th, and lay at Rock Island until next morning. When a boat lies up the pilot has a holiday, and would not any of these jurors have then gone around the bridge and gotten acquainted with the place? Pilot Parker has shown here that he does not understand the draw. I heard him say that the fall from

the head to the foot of the pier was four feet; he needs information. He could have gone there that day and seen there was no such fall. He should have discarded passion and the chances are that he would have had no disaster at all. He was bound to make himself acquainted with the case.

“McCammon says that the current and the swell coming from the long pier drove her against the long pier. In other words, drove her toward the very pier from which the current came. It is an absurdity, an impossibility. The only recollection I can find for this contradiction is in a current which White says strikes out from the long pier and then like a ram’s horn turns back, and this might have acted somehow in this manner.”

He then went into a lengthy discussion of the currents of the stream, their velocity, the average speed of the destroyed boat, the absence of cross currents.

“Next I shall show,” he said, “that she struck first the short pier, then the long pier, then the short one again, and there she stopped.”

The testimony of eighteen witnesses was then cited.

“My next proposition is that after she struck the short and long pier and before she got back to the short pier, the boat got right with her bow up.”

At this point court adjourned until the following day.

On the fourteenth day of the trial, it was observed that Abraham Lincoln had a model of a boat in the court room. After he had resumed his argument it was seen just why he had that model, when he used it in explaining to the jury that the “splash door” on such

a boat was just behind the wheel. This was necessary for their understanding of his contentions.

"The boat struck," he said, "on the lower shoulder of the short pier as she swung around in the splash door, then as she went on around she struck the point or end of the pier where she rested.

"Her engineers say," he went on, "that the starboard wheel was then rushing around rapidly. Then the boat must have struck the upper point of the pier so far back as not to disturb the wheel. It is forty feet from the stern of the *Afton* to the splash door, and thus it appears that she had but forty feet to go to clear the pier. How was it that the *Afton*, with all her power, flanked over from the channel to the short pier without moving one foot ahead? Suppose she was in the middle of the draw, her wheel would have been thirty-one feet from the short pier. The reason she went over thus is her starboard wheel was not working. I shall try to establish the fact that the wheel was not running and that after she struck she went ahead strong on this same wheel. Upon the last point the witnesses agree that the starboard wheel was running after she struck, and no witnesses say that it was running while she was out in the draw flanking over."

He then cited various witnesses proving that the starboard wheel was not working while the *Afton* was out in the stream, and that this was not unknown to the captain of the craft.

"The fact is undisputed," he stated, "that she did not move one inch ahead while she was moving this thirty-one feet sideways. There is evidence proving that the current there is only five miles an hour, and the

only explanation is that her power was not all used—that only one wheel was working. The pilot says he ordered the engineers to back her up. The engineers differ from him and said they kept one going ahead. The bow was so swung that the current pressed it over; the pilot pressed the stern over with the rudder, though not so fast but that the bow gained on it and only one wheel being in motion the boat nearly stood still so far as motion up and down is concerned, and thus she was thrown upon the pier.

“The *Afton* came into the draw, after she had just passed the *Carson*, and as the *Carson* no doubt kept the true course, the *Afton* going around her got out of the proper way, got across the current into the eddy which is west of a straight line drawn from the long pier, was compelled to resort to these changes of wheels which she did not do with sufficient adroitness to save her.

“Was it not her own fault that she entered wrong, so far wrong that she never got right? Is the defense to blame for that?”

Then he indulged in a little irony. “For several days,” he said, “we were entertained with depositions about boats ‘smelling a bar.’ Why did the *Afton* then, after she had come up smelling so close to the long pier, sheer off so strangely? When she got to the center of the very nose she was smelling, she seemed suddenly to have lost her sense of smell and to have flanked over to the short pier.

“The plaintiffs have to establish,” he said in closing, “that the bridge is a material obstruction and that they have managed their boat with reasonable care and skill.

As to last point, high winds have nothing to do with it, for it was not a windy day. They must show due skill and care. Difficulties going down stream will not do, for they were going up stream. Difficulties with barges in tow have nothing to do with the accident, for they had no barge."

With this Lincoln rested his case, saying that he had much more to say and many things yet to suggest to the jury, but would close to save time.

The jury failed to agree and was discharged.

Carrying the case to a conclusion, we learn that it was not until 1862 that it was finally settled by the Supreme Court of the United States, permitting the bridge to remain and settling the question for all time.

For his legal services in this highly important case, Lincoln may have received the modest sum of five hundred dollars. This has not been fully established and, we believe, the evidence has never before appeared in print. It is furnished by J. E. Gorman, now president of the Rock Island system, in response to an inquiry by the present writer, who had seen the statement that Lincoln acted as attorney for the Rock Island Railroad, in other cases, implying that he was carried on the rolls of the company, in the same capacity as for the Illinois Central, and Chicago and Alton roads. This appears to be an error, for with reference to these statements Mr. Gorman writes:

"We have made a diligent search through such records as are now available covering the period between 1850 and 1860. Mr. Lincoln's name does not appear on our payrolls for that period. However, we do find in the

records of the Chicago and Rock Island Railroad, the name of the corporate company at that time, covering the line as it was then operated between Chicago and Rock Island, a voucher showing that on September 30th, 1857, Abraham Lincoln was paid for legal services the sum of \$500 for the account of the Mississippi River Bridge Company.

“We can find no other record of any other payments to the Bridge Company, account legal expenses furnished by Mr. Lincoln, and it seems evident that his connection with this company at that time was confined to the period during which the Rock Island Bridge case was being tried, and from the fact that his name does not appear on our payrolls, it can also be assumed that he was employed on a fee basis.”

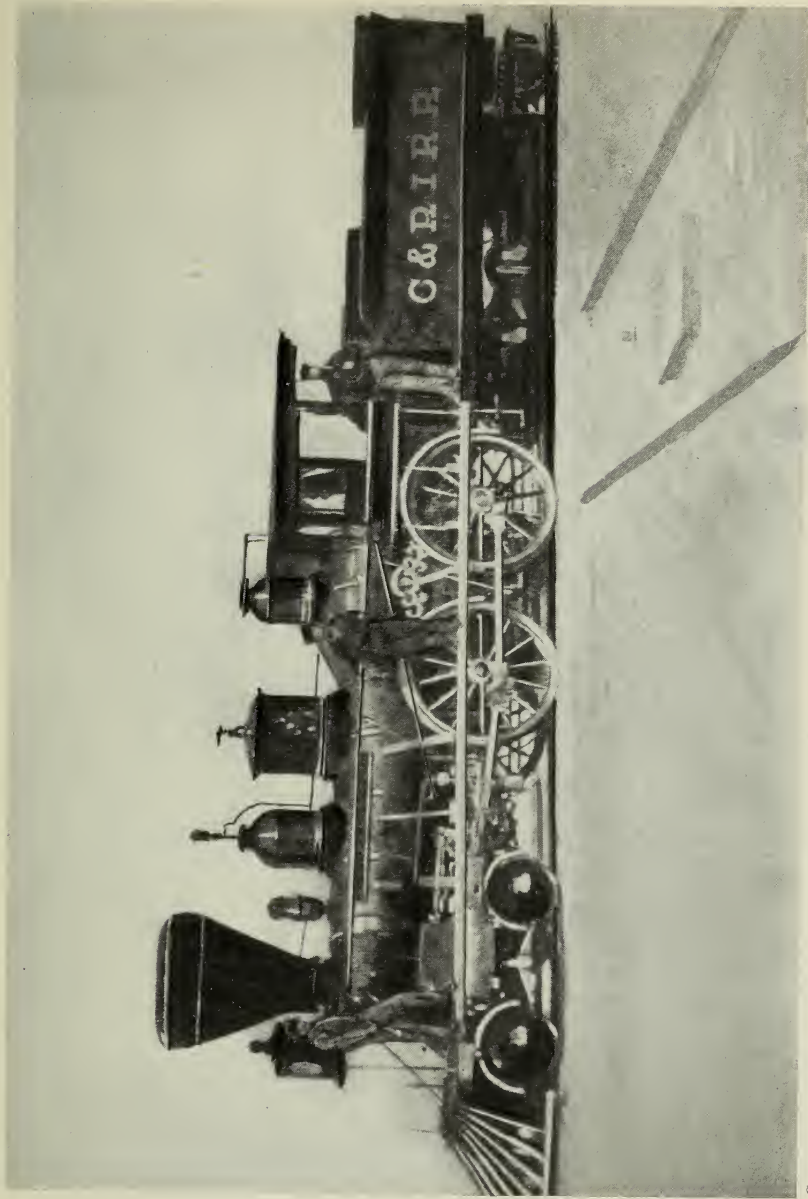
In a still later letter, however, dated February 16, 1927, Mr. Gorman writes:

“Your letter of January 27th, seeking to obtain copy of voucher amounting to five hundred dollars paid Abraham Lincoln on September 30th, 1857, in connection with legal services rendered the Rock Island Bridge Company at the time this bridge was partially destroyed, is received.

“We have, on a number of occasions, endeavored to locate the voucher referred to in my letter of May 16th, 1922, but without success. One of these occasions was in connection with information desired by former Senator, Albert J. Beveridge . . . to whom our Valuation Engineer wrote as follows:

“I have personally checked the records of the Chicago and Rock Island, and the Mississippi and Missouri Railroad, for some record of payment made Mr. Lincoln; I have also discussed this feature with Curator





*Courtesy, Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railroad*

FIRST LOCOMOTIVE OPERATED IN IOWA

This engine was taken across the Mississippi from Illinois, by steamboat, in July, 1855.



Harlan, of the Historical Society of Iowa, but without avail. . . .

“My thought, after a great deal of deliberation, is that the law firm headed by Norman B. Judd actually managed the case, and the intimate (sic) of friendship which existed between Abraham Lincoln and Mr. Judd secured the services of the former in the case, and that Mr. Judd simply handed Mr. Lincoln a personal check, or, probably, cash, in accordance with the price which the two gentlemen agreed between themselves was proper.’

“At the time the foregoing was given Senator Beveridge, Mr. Nevins had considered the five hundred dollar entry—mentioned in our previous letter to you—and had decided that this was not in remuneration for services rendered in the bridge case, but for legal services rendered in connection with other matters.”

In a lengthy argument filed within recent years by prominent attorneys, in a case in chancery, in Illinois, a significant reference is made to the important bearing which the Rock Island Bridge case exercised upon later legislation. The report says in part:

“The same bridge was the subject of the unsuccessful suit to abate, brought in the Iowa District in 1858, and in which the abatement order by the United States District Court of Iowa was reversed, and the bill dismissed by the United States Supreme Court. The case is valuable as marking the evolution of the Lincoln doctrine that a man has as good right to go across a river as another has to go up or down the river, that the two rights are mutual, that the existence of a bridge which does not prevent or unreasonably obstruct navigation

is not inconsistent with the navigable character of the stream. Mr. Lincoln exerted a powerful influence upon the development of the transportation system of the continent. He is the author of the American doctrine of bridges.”

## CHAPTER XII

# LINCOLN AS OPPOSING COUNSEL TO RAILROADS

Because Abraham Lincoln was often found on the side of the railroad corporations in their early litigation in the state of Illinois, it does not necessarily follow that he was averse to appearing against them before the judicial tribunals.

On the contrary, there is evidence that he appeared quite frequently on the opposite side, carrying four cases as high as the State Supreme Court in the firm name of Lincoln and Herndon, three of which he lost.

Beside these, there were evidently a number which he pleaded in various Circuit Courts, but the data concerning them cannot be found to-day among the court records, on account of the general pilfering which has been done in the early files of those documents bearing the name of Abraham Lincoln. This has been brought to the writer's attention quite forcefully several times in investigations made concerning the railroad litigation which Lincoln handled before the lower courts. There are two cases, however, of which we have knowledge, which were not appealed to the higher body.

The first was a suit brought by a certain John B. Watson against what was then known as the Sangamon and Morgan Railroad Company, now a part of the Wa-

bash system. The case was instituted, July 25, 1849, and Watson was represented by the firms of Lincoln and Herndon, and Stuart and Edwards.

Watson had contracted to deliver to the railroad company, one hundred and twenty thousand cross-ties. The ties were all delivered, but only a small portion of the money due him had been paid at this time. The itemized bill in the complaint showed a balance yet due of \$93,450, which included interest.

Unfortunately the final outcome of the trial cannot be ascertained. The court records for Sangamon County, where the case was tried, have disappeared, and no other contemporary records are in existence.

The other case is of an entirely different nature. Jesse W. Weik, the Lincoln authority, has furnished the writer with an exact copy of the declaration written by Lincoln in the first personal injury damage suit he brought against our common carrier. This was in 1854 and, as Mr. Weik says, "very soon after railroads began to traverse the prairies of Illinois, and damage suits as the result of amputated limbs were more or less of a novelty."

"The declaration," continues Mr. Weik, "though signed Lincoln and Herndon, was written by Lincoln, and when contrasted with the phraseology of a bill of complaint as lawyers now word such things, is about as crude and primitive as the machinery and appliances of that early period appear, when compared with the ponderous and elaborate equipment now in use by the railroads of this day."

A verbatim copy of the declaration, as to punctuating, spelling and underscoring, follows:

In the Circuit Court of Sangamon County  
 March term A. D. 1854.

State of Illinois }  
 Sangamon County } SS.

Jasper Harris, plaintiff, complains of The Great Western Railroad Company, defendant, being in custody etc. of a plea of trespass on the case— For that whereas heretofore to wit, on the — day of November, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and fifty three at the county of Scott, to wit, at the county aforesaid, the said Railroad Company were possessed of a certain Railroad and were then and there possessed of and using thereon certain Locomotive-steam-engines, tanks, cars etc. and then and there had in their employment, as servant and *engineer*, managing and running one of their Locomotive steam engines with a tank and with and without cars attached, on their said Railroad, one — Edgar; and also said Railroad Company, then and there, had in their employment, as servant and *conductor*, in charge of the same Locomotive-steam-engine, tank and cars managed and run by said Edgar as engineer as aforesaid, one George Armstrong; and also said Railroad Company, then and there, had in their employment, as servant and *brakeman*, on and about the Locomotive-steam-engine, tank and cars, last aforesaid, the aforesaid plaintiff— And the plaintiff avers that it was, then and there, the duty of both said engineer and brakeman, severally, to obey the proper orders of said conductor, and then and there, was the duty of said Railroad Company by their engineer, whenever said Locomotive-steam-engine and whatever might be thereto attached, should be at rest, to not put the same in motion without the order of said conductor, nor without giving a known signal of the intention to do so— Yet the said Railroad Company, on the day and

year aforesaid and at the county aforesaid, by their said engineer being then and there in their employment as aforesaid and in the prosecution of their lawful business aforesaid; and the said Locomotive-steam-engine, then and there being at rest, with said tank thereto attached, (and said plaintiff then and there being in the attempt to go aboard of said tank in obedience to the proper order of said conductor and without any fault on his part) they, the said Railroad Company, by their said engineer, and without the order of said conductor, and without the giving of the signal aforesaid, put said engine and tank in motion, whereby said plaintiff was thrown down and his right foot, ankle, leg and thigh greatly torn, crushed and broken; so that thereby said plaintiff became and was sick, lame and disordered, and has so remained for a long space of time, towit for the period of four months; and also by means of which said wrong of said Railroad Company, amputation of his said right limb above the knee became and was necessary, and has actually been performed, and said limb has been wholly lost to said plaintiff; and other wrongs the said Railroad Company then and there did to the said plaintiff, and to his damage of ten thousand dollars and therefore he brings his suit etc.

LINCOLN & HERNDON, p. q.

Jasper Harris

vs

The Great Western  
Railroad Company

Trespass on the case

Damage \$10,000.

The Clerk will issue a Summons in the above entitled case— And also a Subpœna for George Armstrong—

LINCOLN & HERNDON p. q.

The outcome of this case also is in doubt, and we have no means of knowing whether Harris got his ten



thousand dollars or not. The Great Western Railroad mentioned is now a part of the Wabash.

An interesting exhibition of Abraham Lincoln's absolute honesty and fairness as a lawyer is told in a story given of an early case which he was handling against a railroad corporation, although details as to the case itself are lacking. The incident is mentioned by at least four different authorities, and we append it as related by Lamon, who was probably present.

"The case was concluded in his (Lincoln's) favor," says Lamon, "except as to the pronouncement of judgment. Before this was done, he rose and stated that his opponents had not proved all that was justly due to them in offset, and proceeded to state briefly that justice required that an allowance should be made against his client for a certain amount. The court at once acquiesced in his statement, and immediately proceeded to pronounce judgment in accordance therewith."

Gustave Koerner in his "Memoirs" refers to Lincoln and himself as "being engaged together in an important case in 1854 for the city of St. Louis against the Ohio and Mississippi Railroad Company, or rather against the directors of that company," but gives no details.

The first case which Lincoln handled against any railroad corporation before the Illinois Supreme Court, was heard at the December, 1855, term of the court in session at Springfield. Associated with him was Grant Goodrich, of Chicago, a prominent attorney with whom he had declined a partnership, shortly after his return to civil life from his term in Congress.

Arrayed against them was the redoubtable James F.

Joy, who was representing the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad in an application for a mandamus. The road as constituted at that time was but a small part of the large system of similar name in existence to-day. It ran from East Burlington to Turner Junction (West Chicago), with trackage rights into Chicago over the Galena and Chicago Union Railroad, now a part of the Chicago and Northwestern.

The Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad Company had petitioned Judge Wilson of the Thirteenth Judicial District, to appoint commissioners to fix the compensation which should be paid for taking over certain lands and lots for use of the railroad, for constructing and maintaining "turn-outs, depots, engine houses, shops and turntables."

The Judge had denied this petition, but agreed that if in the opinion of the Supreme Court commissioners should be appointed, he would waive the necessity of an alternate mandamus. The higher tribunal handed down a decision favoring the corporation, stating that "on an application to a Judge for the appointment of commissioners to condemn lands, he is compelled to act, if such a case is made as the statute directs."

The next two cases listed were heard just two years later, the first being docketed: "Charles Sprague, Plaintiff in Error, v. the Illinois River Railroad Company, et al., Defendants in Error."

Sprague had requested a perpetual injunction restraining the Cass County Court from issuing bonds to the amount of \$50,000 authorized at a general election held in 1853. His argument was based on the

grounds that several amendatory acts since passed by the General Assembly had materially changed the original proposition, and absolved the County from their subscription to the proposed road.

The plaintiff was represented by the firm of Lincoln and Herndon, and H. E. Dummer, while the road's attorneys were Stephen T. Logan, Lincoln's ex-law partner, and D. A. Smith. While the case was lost, it should be remembered that the leading opposing attorney was one of the best lawyers in the state in his day. Indeed, one of their contemporaries once heard Lincoln say that it was his highest ambition to become as good a lawyer as Judge Logan.

It was at this session of the Court that Lincoln appeared against his old client of long standing, the Chicago and Alton road, in the case of "The St. Louis, Alton and Chicago Railroad Company, Appellant, v. Joseph A. Dalby, Appellee."

This was a suit originally brought by a passenger for personal damages received at the hands of the railroad's employees, before Judge Davis and a jury in Logan County. It was what is termed an action of trespass against the railroad and a conductor by the name of True Woodbury, although the latter was not served with a process. The jury had returned a verdict against the corporation, assessing the damages at one thousand dollars. Half of this fine Dalby remitted, which had caused the Court to overrule a motion of the road for a new trial. It had then been carried to the Supreme Court by the firm of Lincoln and Herndon, the opposing counsel being Stuart and Edwards. The

higher tribunal affirmed the judgment of the lower court.

The last case heard before the Supreme Court had to do with the old subject of stock subscriptions, although in this instance Abraham Lincoln appeared in a different rôle. It was what is known as a "suit in assumpsit," originally brought in the Circuit Court of Shelby County, by the Terre Haute and Alton Railroad Company against one Daniel Earp, to recover the sum of \$500 subscribed by him for ten shares of the capital stock of the company. The case going against the corporation, it was carried to the Supreme Court and heard before the January, 1859, term of the court at Springfield.

The Terre Haute and Alton Railroad, to run between Terre Haute, Indiana, and Alton, Illinois, was incorporated in both states in 1851, and opened for business March 1, 1856. Later that same year a consolidation was effected with the Belleville and Illinoistown Railroad Company, running from Belleville to what was then called Illinoistown, but is now known as East St. Louis, with an extension from the latter point to East Alton, the new organization being known as the Terre Haute, Alton and St. Louis Railroad Company.

Joseph Gillespie, S. W. Moulton and Levi Davis were the railroad attorneys, while the firm of Lincoln and Herndon represented Earp.

Earp's attorney sought to avoid payment on the ground that the "new and deflected road" had thereby made "the real terminus . . . to be at said Illinoistown, and not at Alton aforesaid, and that the same

was done without the consent of the defendant." Despite this argument, however, the case went against Lincoln, the Supreme Court reversing the judgment of the lower tribunal.

## CHAPTER XIII

# LINCOLN'S OFFER FROM THE NEW YORK CENTRAL

One of the most interesting of all the stories clustering around Lincoln's connection with the railroads has to do with the offer which is said to have been made to him by the New York Central Railroad, to serve as its General Counsel. Little attention has been paid to this in existing biographies, and some writers treat it as only a tradition, but it comes as well authenticated as many other things connected with his legal career.

It arouses in the reader of to-day a vein of alluring speculation. Lincoln, the rising Western attorney—so the story goes—was offered a tempting plum—a position high in the railway and legal world. If he had accepted it, would we ever have had Lincoln the President? It was the crossroads of his career.

In the spring of 1860 he had come East by invitation to deliver a political address at the Cooper Institute, in New York. It was the first opportunity on the part of the East to hear this remarkable man from Illinois. One of his auditors on that memorable evening was Erastus Corning, a prominent financier who was president of the New York Central. At that time, the railroad extended from Buffalo, on the west, to Albany, where it connected with the Hudson River Railroad running down to the metropolis. Both roads are now a part of the Central system.

Mr. Corning, like others, was deeply impressed by the speaker of the evening. Lincoln, as we know, had faced a highly critical audience and had won it over. The railroad magnate had heard of him as a successful attorney for the Illinois Central and other Western roads, but had never met him. As he listened Corning was seized with an inspiration. He would secure this Westerner for his own railway.

As Corning cast about in his mind for ways and means he recalled that his own cousin, James B. Merwin, was a friend of Lincoln's. They had stumped the state of Illinois together politically and had been on intimate terms for the past six years.

Lincoln was stopping at the Astor House, then one of the city's leading hostelries, situated on lower Broadway near City Hall Park. Corning went down there early the next morning following the Cooper Institute speech. He met Merwin in the lobby, and immediately came to the point of his errand.

"I want to see Mr. Lincoln on business," he said. "Can I get to him?"

"He's the easiest man in the world to see," Merwin replied, as he led the way to his friend.

After the introduction the railroad president opened the subject which lay on his mind.

"Mr. Lincoln," he said, "I understand that in Illinois you win all your lawsuits."

Lincoln laughed softly.

"Oh, no, Mr. Corning, that is not true," he replied, "but I do make it a rule to refuse unless I am convinced the litigant's cause is just."

"Would you entertain an offer from the New York

Central Railroad, Mr. Lincoln," continued Corning abruptly, "to become its General Counsel at a salary of \$10,000 a year?"

This proposition was as amazing as it was sudden. Both his hearers were struck dumb with surprise. Merwin stared first at Corning, then at Lincoln, and the latter lapsed into a deep study.

"Why, Mr. Corning," he said at last, "what could I do with \$10,000 a year? It would ruin my family to have that much income. I don't believe that I had better consider it."

But Corning did not want a hasty decision. He desired Lincoln to think over the proposition calmly and from all points.

"You don't have to decide till you get a letter from me," he said as he took his departure. "I'm going to get our directors together and advise them to engage you at \$10,000 per year."

Lincoln seemed dazed after his visitor left, and looked inquiringly at Merwin.

"Of course you'll accept?" the latter suggested.

But the Sangamon attorney slowly shook his head.

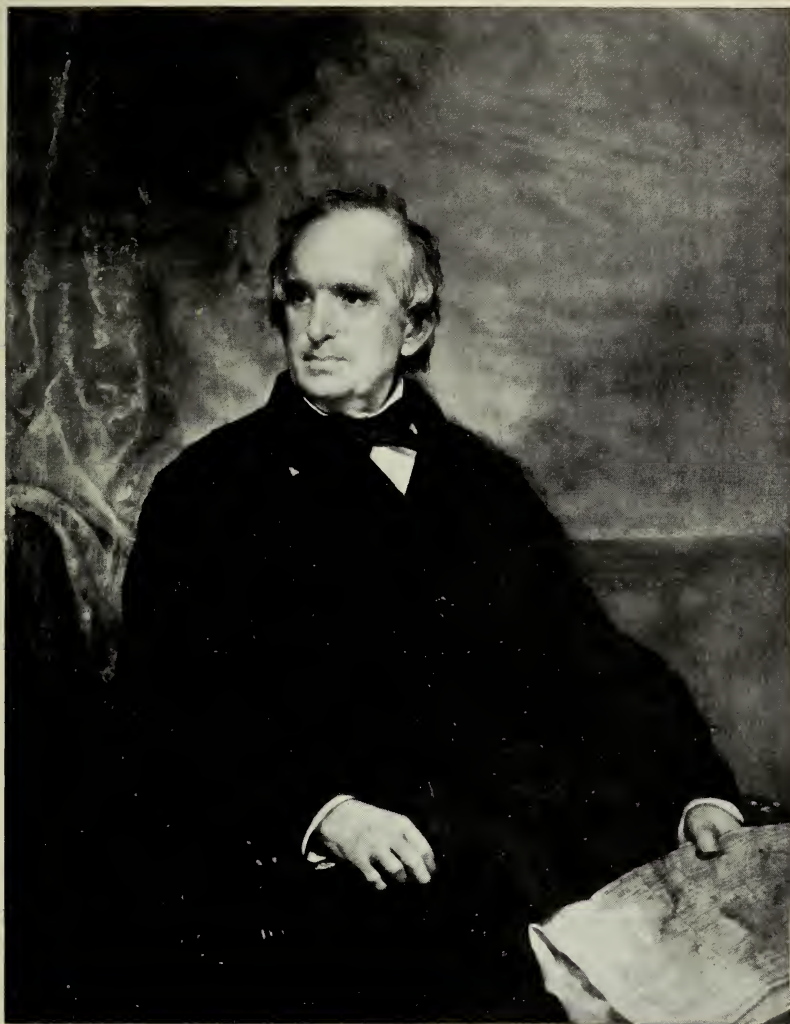
"No, Merwin, I don't think I shall," he replied.

"Why, man alive, of course you'll accept!" Merwin persisted. "Why debate about it?"

But Lincoln continued to shake his head, quietly and thoughtfully. His thoughts seemed to be concerned not so much with the effect an acceptance might have on his political prospects, but rather as to how it would affect himself and his family. Would it be the right thing to do?

Merwin accompanied Lincoln to New England on his





*Courtesy, New York Central Railroad*

#### ERASTUS CORNING

After hearing Lincoln speak in New York, Mr. Corning, who was then president of the New York Central Railroad, sought an interview with the Western lawyer, at the old Astor House, and there made him a verbal offer of the General Counselship of his road. This tempting offer Lincoln finally declined, thereby changing the tenor of his whole later career.



speech-making tour, which followed the opening gun in New York; for as a native of Connecticut and acquainted with the leading Republicans, Merwin proved a valuable companion. On this itinerary the subject of Corning's proposition was often discussed, but no decision was reached. When Lincoln returned home, Merwin accompanied him as far west as Chicago. Several days later Merwin journeyed to Springfield to learn if his friend had settled the matter.

He reached Lincoln's law office about nine o'clock in the morning, only to find that the senior partner had not yet arrived. He waited about half an hour until Lincoln walked in.

"Of all the God-forsaken looking men I had ever seen," Merwin related in after years, "he was the worst. He looked as if he had been up all night, and seemed fearfully depressed."

"Lincoln," his caller said when they were alone, "your good fortune seems to have a queer effect on you. Of course you'll accept Corning's offer?"

"No, Merwin, I have decided to decline it," replied Lincoln. "I've got his letter offering the place and am going to answer it to-day, in the negative."

Merwin saw that Lincoln had made up his mind, so refrained from arguing with him—though feeling that he was making a serious mistake.

Before the day was over Merwin learned what had made Lincoln late at his office. Arising early that morning, he had made his way to a little grove just outside of Springfield, for solitude and reflection. To this spot he was wont to repair when he had a knotty problem he wanted to straighten out in his own mind.

“There he had literally wrestled with the question of leaving Springfield and becoming a New York corporation lawyer,” as Merwin puts it. When he came out of the woodland, tired and haggard, he had put behind him the tempting prize and the life of ease in the East. Illinois was still to be his battle-ground and home.

This is the story substantially as Merwin tells it. The present writer has endeavored to throw official light upon it through the medium of the New York Central’s files. From the Secretary of the Company, who has kindly co-operated in this search—Mr. E. F. Stephenson—he received the following communication:

“I have had a very careful search made of the minutes of the meetings of the Board of Directors of the New York Central Railroad Company during the years 1859 and 1860; also all other books and papers in the vault at Albany that might contain some reference to the proposition alleged to have been made President Lincoln by Erastus Corning, President of the New York Central Railroad Company, and no record of any kind was found that would enable me to verify the accuracy of the account referred to by you.

“Mr. Corning was a Director of the Hudson River Railroad during the years 1859, 1860, and 1861; Samuel Sloan was President and D. T. Vail, Vice-President. I have personally examined the minute books of that company in this office and they contain nothing relative to the subject about which you enquire.

“It is indeed more than likely that the appointment of such a prominent man to a position of General Counsel of a large corporation would have been discussed by some of the Directors and officers prior to the presentation of any sort of definite proposition and would only

have been submitted to the Board for formal action after some general understanding had been reached.

“You will gather from the above that the offer could readily have been made and declined without any record having been entered.”

Mr. Charles T. White, on the staff of the *New York Herald-Tribune*, and an intimate of Major Merwin during the latter part of his life, throws additional light on the published narrative. It develops that White wrote the article appearing in the *New York Sun*, at the dictation of Merwin, the latter being enfeebled by age.

“I am satisfied that his (Merwin’s) story about Corning’s offer was substantially true,” writes Mr. White. “You will recall that during the War Corning headed a sort of Copperhead movement following the Vallandigham blow-up, in which Lincoln wrote him a historic letter—one of the greatest that ever came from his pen. . . . Doubtless Corning took pains that no record was left (if any ever was made) connecting him with Lincoln.”

Additional confirmation has recently come to the writer from a grandson of Erastus Corning, Hon. Parker Corning, Member of Congress from Albany, to the effect that a knowledge of this offer has been for many years in the possession of the Corning family, he having heard of it from his father.

And so we pass on from this thought-provoking episode, to a view of Lincoln in other capacities than that of railroad attorney. He has already, as we know, entered the alluring field of politics. Henceforth, the railroad is only an incidental factor in his life.

## CHAPTER XIV

### THE LINCOLN-DOUGLAS DEBATES

Lest the reader of this volume get an improper perspective of our subject, we should emphasize two important points. First, as an attorney Lincoln handled a wide variety of cases other than those connected with railroads. He was a general practitioner in a wider sense of the term than is true of the legal profession today, where specialization has entered in so largely. Second, the realm of politics was absorbing more and more of his attention.

Back in the days when Lincoln was a raw young legislator in Vandalia he first met another fledgling attorney and law-maker. His name was Stephen A. Douglas. He was as short in stature as Lincoln was long, and between the two, who were later to become bitter political rivals, there were other marked differences. Douglas came of better social stock than Lincoln, and had received more advantages in the way of an education. Naturally quick and brilliant he early attracted attention, and bade fair to eclipse the Sangamon attorney entirely. By the time the latter had served a brief term in Congress and gone back to private life, Douglas had become senior Senator from Illinois and a national figure. His friends confidently predicted the highest honors in the gift of the nation for the "Little Giant."

While Douglas was in the Senate, the hue and cry over the admission of certain states, some "slave" and some "free," was agitating the country. A bill was introduced into Congress to repeal the Missouri Compromise Act, which provided that all states above a certain latitude should be non slave-holding. The repeal of this Act would, of course, permit slaves to be introduced into the North, at the discretion of each state—particularly those both north and south now demanding admission.

Douglas was a member of the Senate committee which prepared bills for the admission of Kansas and Nebraska, and openly advocated the repeal of the Missouri Compromise. It was a sop thrown to the South, for political purposes. "Let the states themselves decide whether they shall be slave or free," he said, "that is what is meant by States' Rights."

While this move made him strong in the South, it put him on the defensive in his own state, Illinois. Back around the stoves of the country stores, and along the rail fences of the farms, excited little groups talked it over and decided the destinies of the nation—as was their wont. Everywhere the tall lawyer from Sangamon County went he was held up by neighbors and friends demanding to know how he stood upon the Missouri Compromise. He did not mince matters in letting them know.

Meanwhile, the senior Senator was not finding it smooth sailing. He had hurried back home to steer his bark into quieter waters, but it was no easy task. When he tried to speak in Chicago, they howled him down. But Douglas was no coward. He continued on a tour

down through the state and won a respectful, if not always sympathetic hearing.

In October, 1854, he reached Springfield, the state capital. It was during the State Fair, and farmers for miles around had driven in, their interest worked up to a high pitch by the report that Abraham Lincoln had been chosen to answer him. It was the first time these two great rivals had locked horns.

"Why," argued Douglas, suave and smiling, "should we try to impose our wills upon the people of Kansas and Nebraska? Why not give them the privilege that other states have enjoyed—to make their own laws?"

"I admit," replied Lincoln, drily, "that the farmer over in Kansas or Nebraska is quite competent to govern himself; but I deny his right to govern any other person without that person's consent—be he white or black." Later he stated the case for the slave still more boldly: "What my distinguished opponent means is, that if you do not object to my taking my hog to Nebraska, therefore, I must not object to your taking your slave over there, too. I admit this is perfectly logical—if there is no difference between hogs and negroes!"

Lincoln was at that time a member of the old Whig party, and as it was divided over the question of slavery, a new party was organized, in 1856—the Republican. Lincoln was one of its founders and first mouth-pieces. He saw that slavery was likely to split the nation, and he reiterated the Scriptural saying, "A house divided against itself cannot stand."

When Douglas came up for reëlection to the Senate, in 1858, it was inevitable that he should have to



meet Lincoln in public debate, as the latter was the nominee of the new political party. From one town to another in Illinois they journeyed, appearing upon the same platforms in that series of great discussions which has become historic. In the present book it falls only within our province to treat of the problem of their transportation.

The Illinois Central with its network of branch lines which were even then beginning to cover the state was the railroad most frequently used, and it is illuminating to study the different treatment accorded to the two protagonists. That Lincoln got the "cold shoulder" is a matter of record, a fact which is all the more remarkable when we consider that for several years the Republican nominee had been representing, and was also later to represent, the corporation in important litigation taken as far as the state Supreme Court.

George B. McClellan, then Vice-President of the road, was a personal friend of Senator Douglas who, as we have said, was a candidate for reëlection. Again the fact of Douglas' being a political power in the state and nation may have had its influence in shaping the action of the officials. At any rate, there is abundant evidence tending to show that the behavior of both management and men towards the Republican Senatorial aspirant was not such as might have been expected.

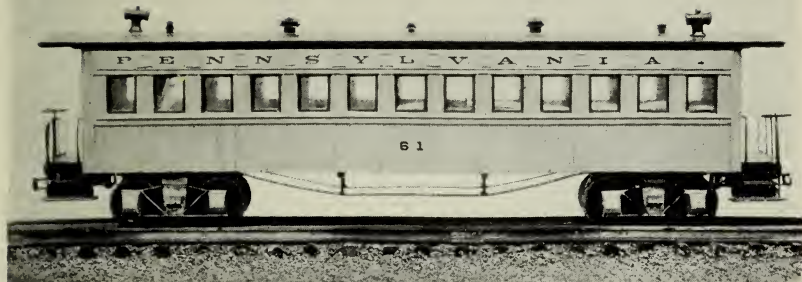
"At all points on the road where meetings between the two great politicians were held," says Lamon in his "Recollections," "either a special train or a special car was furnished to Judge Douglas; but Mr. Lincoln, when he failed to get transportation on the regular trains in time to meet his appointments, was reduced

to the necessity of going as freight. There being orders from headquarters to permit no passenger to travel on freight trains, Mr. Lincoln's persuasive powers were often brought into requisition. The favor was granted or refused according to the politics of the conductor.

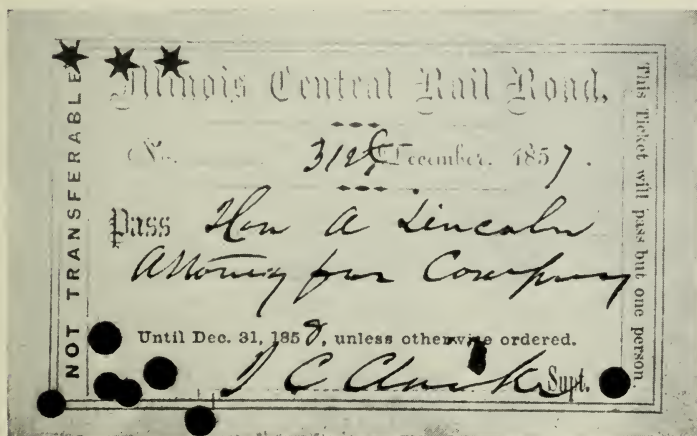
"On one occasion, in going to meet an appointment in the southern part of the state—that section of Illinois called Egypt—Mr. Lincoln and I, with other friends were traveling in the caboose of a freight train, when we were switched off the main track to allow a special train to pass in which Mr. Lincoln's more aristocratic rival was being conveyed. The passing train was decorated with banners and flags, and carried a band of music which was playing 'Hail to the Chief.' As the train whistled past, Mr. Lincoln broke out in a fit of laughter and said: 'Boys, the gentlemen in that car evidently smelt no royalty in our carriage!'"

Henry C. Whitney, for many years on the rolls of the corporation, waxes very wroth and sarcastic in referring to this difference of treatment. Whitney accompanied Lincoln from Centralia to Mattoon the night before the Charleston debate on a regular passenger train, and has narrated how in order to obtain some rest he was obliged to resort to a stratagem to secure his friend entrance into an unoccupied apartment car attached to the rear.

"George B. McClellan took special charge of Douglas," says Whitney in referring to the campaign, "furnished him with the Director's car—and a platform car for his cannon, and frequently went with him! I need scarcely add that the commissary department was provided with several huge demijohns. Lincoln



Courtesy, Pennsylvania Railroad



Courtesy, Illinois Central Railroad

#### LINCOLN MEMENTOES

1. Typical passenger coach in use between 1855 and 1865.
2. Pass used by Lincoln on the Illinois Central.



travelled on an attorney's pass the same as I did, but he got no further courtesies. . . . The entire management of the road, emulating McClellan's example, was in deadly hostility to Lincoln."

At another time Whitney said that "every interest of that road and every employee was against Lincoln and for Douglas," which, however, is an exaggeration. Contrary to popular belief, and in justice to the corporation, it should be stated that Frederick Trevor Hill, who has made a careful study of the circumstances attending the debates, thinks that Douglas "was charged a good round sum for all his privileges."

Probably the best description that has been penned by a spectator of Lincoln as a passenger is the one given by Carl Schurz, who first met him in 1858 during the series of debates. Schurz was on a train bound for Quincy, where the sixth of the scheduled political discussions was to be held.

"The car in which I traveled," says Schurz, "was full of men who discussed the absorbing question (of slavery) with great animation. A member of the Republican State Committee accompanied me and sat by my side.

"All at once, after the train had left a way-station, I observed a great commotion among my fellow-passengers, many of whom jumped from their seats and pressed eagerly around a tall man who had just entered the car. They addressed him in the most familiar style: 'Hello, Abe! How are you?' and so on. And he responded in the same manner: 'Good-evening, Ben! How are you, Joe? Glad to see you, Dick!' and there was much laughter at some things he said, which,

in the confusion of voices, I could not understand.

“‘Why,’ exclaimed my companion, the committeeman, ‘there’s Lincoln himself!’ He pressed through the crowd and introduced me to Abraham Lincoln, whom I then saw for the first time.

“I must confess that I was somewhat startled by his appearance. There he stood, overtopping by several inches all those surrounding him. Although measuring something over six feet myself, I had, when standing quite near to him, to throw my head backward in order to look into his eyes. That swarthy face, with its strong features, its deep furrows, and its benignant, melancholy eyes, is now familiar to every American. It may be said that the whole civilized world knows and loves it. At that time it was clean-shaven and looked even more haggard and careworn than later, when it was framed in whiskers.

“On his head he wore a somewhat battered ‘stove-pipe hat.’ His neck emerged, long and sinewy, from a white collar turned down over a thin black necktie. His lank, ungainly body was clad in a rusty black frock-coat with sleeves that should have been longer; but his arms appeared so long that the sleeves of a ‘store’ coat could hardly have been expected to cover them all the way down to the wrists. His black trousers, too, permitted a very full view of his large feet. On his left arm he carried a gray woolen shawl, which evidently served him for an overcoat in chilly weather. His left hand held a cotton umbrella of the bulging kind, and also a black satchel that bore the marks of long and hard usage. His right he had kept free for hand-shaking, of which there was no end until every-

body in the car seemed to be satisfied. I had seen in Washington and in the West, several public men of rough appearance, but none whose looks seemed quite so uncouth, not to say grotesque, as Lincoln's.

“He received me with an off-hand cordiality, like an old acquaintance, having been informed of what I was doing in the campaign; and we sat down together. In a somewhat high-pitched but pleasant voice, he began to talk to me, telling me much about the points he and Douglas had made in the debates at different places, and about those he intended to make at Quincy. . . . When, in a tone of perfect ingenuousness, he asked me—a young beginner in politics—what I thought about this and that, I should have felt myself very much honored by his confidence, had he permitted me to regard him as a great man. But he talked in so simple and familiar a strain, and his manner and homely phrases were so absolutely free from any semblance of self-consciousness or pretension of superiority, that I soon felt as if I had known him all my life, and we had very long been close friends. He interspersed our conversations with all sorts of quaint stories, each of which had a witty point applicable to the subject in hand, and not seldom concluded an argument in such a manner that nothing more was to be said. He seemed to enjoy his own jests in a childlike way. His usually sad-looking eyes would kindle with a merry twinkle, and he himself led in the laughter; and his laugh was so genuine, hearty, and contagious that nobody could fail to join in it.”

Horace White, who accompanied Abraham Lincoln during the entire debates as a reporter for the *Chicago*

*Press and Tribune*, narrates the following incident in which the Republican candidate came very nearly being carried by his station on account of taking a nap from which he happened to wake just as the train was pulling out. His traveling companion, however, was not so fortunate.

After the joint debate at Freeport, the Lincoln party went to Carlinville, in Macoupin County, where Lincoln and John M. Palmer delivered speeches for the Republican cause. Their next destination was Clinton, DeWitt County, which was reached by way of Springfield and Decatur.

“During this journey,” relates Mr. White, “an incident occurred which gave unbounded mirth to Mr. Lincoln at my expense.

“We left Springfield, about nine o’clock in the evening for Decatur, where we were to change cars and take the north-bound train on the Illinois Central Railroad. I was very tired and I curled myself up as best I could on the seat to take a nap, asking Mr. Lincoln to wake me up at Decatur, which he promised to do.

“I went to sleep, and when I did awake I had the sensation of having been asleep a long time. It was daylight and I knew that we should have reached Decatur before midnight. Mr. Lincoln’s seat was vacant. While I was pulling myself together, the conductor opened the door of the car and shouted, ‘State Line.’ This was the name of a shabby little town on the border of Indiana. There was nothing to do but to get out and wait for the next train going back to Decatur.

“About six o’clock in the evening I found my way to Clinton. The meeting was over, of course, and the



*Chicago Tribune* had lost its expected report, and I was out of pocket for railroad fares.

"I wended my way to the house of Mr. C. H. Moore, where Mr. Lincoln was staying and where I too had been an expected guest. When Mr. Lincoln saw me coming up the garden path, his lungs began to crow like a chanticleer, and I thought he would laugh, *sans* intermission, an hour by his dial. He paused long enough to say that he also had fallen asleep and did not wake up till the train was starting *from* Decatur. He had very nearly been carried past the station himself, and, in his haste to get out, had forgotten all about his promise to waken me. Then he began to laugh again.

"The affair was so irresistibly funny, in his view, that he told the incident several times in Washington City when I chanced to meet him, after he became President, to any company who might be present, and with such contagious drollery that all who heard it would shake with laughter."

Another reporter who has left us an interesting view of the Republican candidate for Senator is Henry Villard, the noted journalist, who had an interview with Lincoln in a box car at a small way station, while waiting for a train during a thunderstorm. Villard was reporting the debates for an eastern paper, the *New York Staats-Zeitung*.

At Freeport, where the second debate of the series was held, Villard met Lincoln for the first time. Thereafter he frequently met him during the course of the campaign, and it is one of these meetings which Villard has described in detail to which we refer.

"He and I met accidentally," narrates Villard,

“about nine o'clock on a hot, sultry evening, at a flag railroad station about twenty miles west of Springfield, on my return from a great meeting at Petersburg in Menard County. He had been driven to the station in a buggy and left there alone. I was already there.

“The train that we intended to take for Springfield was about due. After waiting vainly for half an hour for its arrival, a thunderstorm compelled us to take refuge in an empty freight car standing on a side track, there being no buildings of any sort at the station.

“We squatted down on the floor of the car and fell to talking on all sorts of subjects. It was then and there he told me that, when he was clerking in a country store, his highest political ambition was to be a member of the State Legislature.

“‘Since then, of course,’ he said laughingly, ‘I have grown some, but my friends got me into *this* business (meaning the canvass). I did not consider myself qualified for the United States Senate, and it took a long time to persuade myself that I was. Now, to be sure,’ he continued, with another of his peculiar laughs, ‘I am convinced that I am good enough for it; but in spite of it all, I am saying to myself every day: “It is too big a thing for you; you will never get it.” Mary [his wife] insists, however, that I am going to be Senator and President of the United States, too.’

“These last words he followed with a roar of laughter, with his arms around his knees, and shaking all over with mirth at his wife's ambition. ‘Just think,’ he exclaimed, ‘of such a sucker as me for President!’

“He then fell to asking questions regarding my antecedents, and expressed some surprise at my fluent use

of English after so short a residence in the United States. Next he wanted to know whether it was true that most of the educated people in Germany were 'infidels.'

"I answered that they were not openly professed infidels, but such a conclusion might be drawn from the fact that most of them were not church-goers.

"I do not wonder at that,' he rejoined; 'my own inclination is that way.'"

Lincoln was no doubt referring to his own rather desultory church attendance, but Villard, a confessed agnostic, professed to believe that Lincoln entertained views similar to his own.

"Our talk continued till half-past ten," Villard continues, "when the belated train arrived. I cherish this accidental rencontre as one of my most precious recollections, since my companion of that night has become one of the greatest figures in history."

By way of contrasting the inherent qualities of the great political rivals, Lincoln and Douglas, B. F. Smith, the horticulturalist, has left on record the impressions he received in 1859 while employed as a brakeman on the Illinois Central.

"Senator Douglas rode with me in the brakeman's seat from Odin to Champaign one trip in 1859," said Smith in relating the occurrence. "He offered me a cigar, which I refused, saying that I had never learned to smoke. At Champaign he took a seat in the second-class car, next to the baggage car. Here he emptied a small bottle of liquor into his stomach, or nearly all of it. When I went through the car at Chicago, he roused up before his friends came to meet him and

offered me a drink from his bottle, which I refused. It seemed strange to him for a railway brakeman to refuse to smoke or drink with him.

“The other distinguished man who rode with me about that time was Abraham Lincoln. He sat in my seat on the run from Champaign to Tolono. It was about sunrise. There was only one farm then between those two stations, in 1859, all green prairie. A beautiful sun rising attracted Mr. Lincoln. He called my attention to it,—the sun just rising over those beautiful, undulating hills. He wanted me to share with him his admiration of the scene. I admitted that it was lovely. I had been seeing the sun rise every morning between those two stations, as we left Chicago at 9 P. M., and hadn’t thought much about the beauty of it. Mr. Lincoln had been asleep until we reached Champaign.

“Well, the moral of this is in the contrast of the two great men. One of them tempted me by offering a cigar at the beginning of the journey and at the end of it desired me to help him empty a bottle of whiskey. The other called my attention to that beautiful sunrise over the virgin prairies of Illinois and invited me to share with him the impression of it.”

A retired conductor of the Chicago and Alton road has left his impressions of Lincoln as a passenger whom he often had on his run. He was accustomed to having many of the most distinguished Illinois politicians of the day on his train, a comparison with whom did not place Lincoln at a disadvantage.

“Lincoln was the most folksy of any of them,” says this trainman. “He put on no airs. He did not hold himself distant from any man. But there was something

about him which we plain people couldn't explain that made us stand a little in awe of him. I now know what it was, but didn't then. It was because he was a greater man than any other one we had ever seen. You could get near him in a sort of neighborly way, as though you had always known him, but there was something tremendous between you and him all the time.

"I have eaten with him many times at the railroad eating houses, and you get very neighborly if you eat together in a railroad restaurant; at least we did in those days. Everybody tried to get as near Lincoln as possible when he was eating, because he was such good company, but we always looked at him with a kind of wonder. We couldn't exactly make him out.

"Sometimes I would see what looked like dreadful loneliness in his look, and I used to wonder what he was thinking about. Whatever it was, he was thinking all alone. It wasn't a solemn look, like Stephen A. Douglas sometimes had. Douglas sometimes made me think of an owl. He used to stare at you with his great dark eyes in a way that almost frightened you. Lincoln never frightened anybody. No one was afraid of him, but there was something about him that made plain folks feel toward him a good deal as a child feels toward his father, because you know every child looks upon his father as a wonderful man."

Robert H. Browne, the young and enthusiastic secretary of the Champaign County Republican Committee in 1858, has recorded his recollections of a train journey he made with Lincoln from Bloomington to Clinton. They had both been in attendance at a Congressional convention which had renominated Owen

Lovejoy, and left Bloomington about ten o'clock at night. And while their destination lay but twenty miles south, it is a sad commentary on the railroad transportation of their day to say that it was midnight when Clinton was reached.

Browne says that "there were crowds, noise and confusion about the station" when they took their train, which was filled with passengers returning home. Lincoln and his companion took a smoker, about the middle of the car.

There was a very noisy personage in the front who was speaking disrespectfully of Lincoln. Browne did not know him and asked Lincoln who he was. Lincoln smiled drily, and then raising his voice to its shrill pitch, said:

"That's Long Jim Davis, of ——. There are two of them, both small politicians in the same town; and the 'Short Jim' Davis is very much the best man. He has something in him like integrity and gratitude; but this one hasn't a bit of either in his make-up, and is only a man because he looks like one. Through my recommendation he was given an appointment under the Harrison administration in 1841, and returned to the same place under Taylor in 1849, with a relative or two crowded into office employment with him. He not only has not recognized my help in a grateful way, but has been busy ever since the Democrats turned him out in abusing me. He claimed to be a Whig, but kept blaming me for not keeping him in office, as he insisted I was able to do, against all parties and what was common practice of the Democrats in making removals. Now I understand he has turned Democrat, with all

the zeal of a new convert, and is set on me like a little fice, to provoke and annoy me. I am to speak in the afternoon; and he will raise his lofty voice in his lost-office sort of disappointment that will be chiefly personal strictures of myself. He has been running very loosely for some time that way, as I learn. For myself, I am glad to be rid of him, even on his terms; but before I take up the subject of my speech, I am going to take him up first, and peel him as clean as you can strip a hickory sprout when the sap rises in the spring."

While talking, Lincoln's voice "rang through the car," as Browne says, and evidently penetrated the hides of "Long Jim" and his cohorts, for they relapsed into silence and not even the bandying of Browne could bring them out. Indeed, when the train arrived at Clinton, the squelched politician failed to get off and did not show up at the political gathering next day.

"When the talk quieted down," Browne relates, "Mr. Lincoln doubled himself down on two seats turned together, where he took a good hour's sleep. When he was comfortably at his ease, he could lie down and take an hour's sound refreshing sleep almost anywhere, rise up from it rested, invigorated, and ready for the irregular and laborious work of his campaigns, for which no man had the health, strength and endurance he then had.

"It was almost twelve o'clock when we left the deserted railway station at Clinton. He was strong, vigorous and active, and had something like the speed of a race horse, as I then thought, after the run to the hotel. I was about a foot under his height and not near his weight, but young and vigorous.

“He took my arm as we stepped from the platform, saying: ‘Come, Robert, now for our hotel and a roost, and a late one for me, as I have nothing much to do before noon, seeing that “Long Jim” has run away.’

“He almost lifted me from the ground in his strong, firm grasp, that filled me besides with a sense of the wonderful energy of the man. We made the half-mile trot and run to the hotel in a few minutes, where a sleepy watchman took us upstairs to the end rooms of a narrow hall, giving us two little boxes on either side of it, with the doors opening and facing each other. He took us there because these were farthest removed from the noisy part of the house, where Mr. Lincoln could take an undisturbed sleep in the morning. The speed from the train had stirred up our blood, so that neither of us was ready for the sleep we were anxious for.

“In this mood, with our doors wide open, as the outside windows were also, Mr. Lincoln called me into his room, where, in it and the narrow hall, we sat over two hours. . . . In his pleasing and entertaining talk, that was sure to interest any one to whom he gave his confidence, he reviewed the exciting passages of the day in humor and pathos that would have held a houseful in close attention. . . .

“Our pleasant review closed after two o’clock in the morning when the tallow-candle burned out in the socket of the old brass candle-stick. I rose early to take my road home across the country, leaving him to the rest he needed, where he slept until nearly noon, as he afterwards told me. To me it was a revelation,



always remembered, as the day and night when we made the election of Lovejoy a certainty, preventing serious party division, and I had looked into the soul of Lincoln."

## CHAPTER XV

### LINCOLN'S TRAVELS DURING THE FIFTIES

The outward result of the Lincoln-Douglas debates, as nearly every schoolboy knows, was a defeat for Lincoln. A Senator was not at that time chosen by direct vote of the people, and the State Legislature reëlected Douglas as the safer man. Lincoln was deemed too radical for that hair-trigger time. He returned to Springfield and once more resumed his interrupted practice of law. Political honors seemed more remote from him than ever.

During the Fifties he had become a familiar figure in "riding the circuit," or attending the various courts in his district on legal business. The Eighth Judicial Circuit then included fourteen counties, namely Sangamon, Tazewell, Woodford, McLean, Logan, DeWitt, Champaign, Vermillion, Piatt, Edgar, Shelby, Moultrie, Macon and Christian, which embraced an area of about a hundred and ten by a hundred and forty miles. However, in 1853 by legislation enacted, the last six enumerated were removed from this circuit.

Lincoln was the only one of the attorneys riding the Eighth Circuit who traveled over the entire district, attending every session of the court and remaining until the end. This was his custom up to 1858, when he turned his attention to an active participation in politics.

His friend Whitney, one of this coterie of itinerant lawyers, says that "during the greater part of the time that Lincoln rode the circuit, railways did not form the usual means of travel; and our methods of locomotion and accommodation on the circuit were of the era of the stage-coach and country taverns, and those who are without experience cannot know to how great an extent the advent of the locomotive is the exodus of sentiment, and a destruction of homely simplicity." And in speaking of the county alignment of 1853 the same authority says that "railways had just made their advent when I first settled in that circuit, and five out of eight county seats were reached by modes other than rail."

In the summer of 1855 Lincoln was in Cincinnati, being retained as one of the leading attorneys in the now famous patent case of McCormick vs. Manny. Here he spent about a week, and it was during this time that he received the so-called "snub" from Stanton, the truth of which it is hard to determine.

In 1856 as head of the Fremont and Dayton electoral ticket for Illinois, Lincoln "traversed the state in every direction" as his secretaries put it, delivering about fifty speeches altogether. A little known fact, however, is that during the campaign he went outside the borders of his state and delivered an address at Kalamazoo, Michigan. This was at a Republican rally in the latter part of August. In order to reach Kalamazoo he undoubtedly made use of the newly-completed Michigan Central Railroad from Chicago, and there is a story to the effect that while the train stopped for a time at Niles, he got off for a closer view of his surroundings.

In 1858 during the Lincoln-Douglas debates he covered the state of Illinois pretty thoroughly. It is not so generally known, however, that he invaded the boundaries of Iowa; but on the evening of October 9 he spoke in Burlington. There is reason to believe that he also addressed a group of school children in Keokuk, farther down the Mississippi, upon an occasion while the boat on which he was traveling was "wooding up."

A brief record of journeys into other states, at this period, should also be made.

Shortly after the conclusion of the debates with Douglas he delivered an address in Indianapolis, Indiana. In the following spring he visited Dubuque, Iowa, with a party of Illinois Central Railroad officials, mention of which is made in another chapter. Late in July or the beginning of August of that same year, 1859, he journeyed to Kansas, returning by boat part of the way. While tarrying at St. Joseph, Missouri, he decided to go to Council Bluffs, Iowa, where he had some real estate investments. It was during his stay at Council Bluffs that he first met General Dodge and became interested in the projection of a contemplated Pacific railroad.

In September he went to Ohio, fulfilling political engagements, speaking twice in Columbus on the 16th. The following afternoon, enroute for Cincinnati, he addressed crowds at Dayton and Hamilton. After his speech at Cincinnati, that evening, there is nothing more chronicled of his movements on that journey.

Later in the same month he visited Wisconsin, addressing the State Historical Society at a Fair held in

Milwaukee on the 30th. The next day on his way home he delivered a speech at Beloit in the afternoon and one at Janesville in the evening.

In the latter part of November Lincoln left home for another trip West, this time of a political nature. He came into St. Joseph, across Iowa, over what was then known as the Hannibal and St. Joseph Railroad, and was ferried across the river to Elwood, Kansas, where he made his first speech. The Hannibal and St. Joseph road is now a part of the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy. While in Kansas Lincoln spoke at many points in addition to Elwood, among them, Troy, Doniphan, Atchison, Leavenworth, and Stockton.

It is of particular interest to note that there was not a mile of railroad in the territory at that time, and all the traveling was done by horse and wagon, over roads that were knee-deep in dust in dry weather and hub-deep in mud after a rain. But Lincoln was used to this. It probably brought back to him memories of his own early days.

Lincoln made frequent trips to Chicago, beginning back as far as 1847, or even earlier. In 1856, the year of the birth of the Republican Party, and the time when he may be said to have reached the hey-day of his legal career, there were already eleven different lines centering in the rapidly growing metropolis on the Lake. Here might be met travelers from every part of the Union, and Lincoln was brought into intimate contact with many outside influences. It proved to be still another means by which his name was becoming familiar in widely scattered sections of the country.

He doubtless made trips to St. Louis, also, to appear before the United States Court there, although there is little on record to this effect.

In the late Fifties the railroads were emerging from their earlier crudities into some measure of comfort. The roadbeds were being more solidly ballasted. Locomotives were heavier and faster. The crude, rickety coaches were being replaced by cars of more substantial design, fitted with better springs and gradually installing comforts and conveniences. Then an inventor by the name of George M. Pullman conceived the brilliant idea of the sleeping-car, where the traveler could actually retire and rest.

The first cars built by Pullman were tried out on the Chicago and Alton Railroad, and it is said that Lincoln once rode in the pioneer sleeping-car. It is one of those rumors that is hard to pin down to cold fact. A letter of inquiry to President Bierd, of this road, elicits the following reply:

“I think there is no question about that. Mr. Pullman spent almost his entire time from 1857 to 1863 building and perfecting the sleeping-car which has since come to bear his name, and as his first experiment ran on our line between Springfield and Chicago, it is reasonable to suppose that Mr. Lincoln rode in this car many times.

“In fact, we had in our offices here in Chicago, for quite a while, an extra long sofa couch, which tradition says was carried in this same sleeping-car and used by Lincoln frequently; from the fact that the berth space was so contracted that the President found it difficult

to curl himself up in the interior of the berth and found more comfort and rest on the couch."

From the time that he came into close contact with the railroad as a means of transportation, Lincoln was accustomed to using this method of travel free of charge, due largely to his legal work for the roads. We know that for many years he held an annual pass over the Illinois Central; he also carried one good over the Great Western, now the Wabash; and for a time at least, one that he used over the predecessors of the Chicago and Alton. As a Member of Congress he naturally availed himself of the privileges then extended to such personages, as well as distinguished travelers and prominent citizens, and the transportation charges incurred in his two journeys to New England were probably negligible.

Whitney mentions an occasion early in April, 1858, when he boarded a midnight train at Champaign for Chicago, and found Lincoln on board. The latter explained that he too was bound for the same destination, and as he held passes over the Illinois Central and Great Western both, and none over the direct route—the Chicago and Alton—he was using that circuitous way of getting to Chicago.

A story illustrating Lincoln's spirit of kindness is given by a lady of Springfield whose name is not mentioned. In it he appears in the rôle of "hackman," and according to Mrs. Pickett, wife of General Pickett, the incident occurred just after his return from Congress.

"My first strong impression of Mr. Lincoln," says the lady, "was made by one of his kind deeds.

"I was going with a little friend for my first trip alone on the railroad cars. It was an epoch of my life. I had planned for it and dreamed of it for weeks.

"The day I was to go came, but as the hour of the train approached, the hackman, through some neglect, failed to call for my trunk. As the minutes went on, I realized, in a panic of grief, that I should miss the train. I was standing by the gate, my hat and gloves on, when Mr. Lincoln came by.

"'Why, what's the matter?' he asked, and I poured out all my story.

"'How big's the trunk? There's still time, if it isn't too big.' And he pushed through the gate and up to the door.

"My mother and I took him up to my room, where my little old-fashioned trunk stood, locked and tied.

"'Oh, ho,' he cried; 'wipe your eyes and come on quick.' And before I knew what he was going to do, he had shouldered the trunk, was down stairs, and striding out of the yard. Down the street he went, fast as his long legs could carry him. I trotted behind, drying my tears as I went.

"We reached the station in time. Mr. Lincoln put me on the train, kissed me good-bye, and told me to have a good time. It was just like him."

And here is another story of Lincoln as a traveler that we must include.

In 1855 while in Cincinnati engaged on the McCormick reaper case, Lincoln and a young lawyer named Ralph Emerson, both of whom with others had been engaged by the defendant, took a long walk together. The hearing had been ended, the arguments on both



sides concluded, and Lincoln was in one of the dejected moods of his fitful temperament.

As they continued their stroll they found themselves down by the banks of the Ohio River.

Suddenly Lincoln stopped, and pointing to the Kentucky shores across the river, delivered himself of his bit of philosophy on the slavery question in-so-far as it pertained to a certain phase of railroading which had come under his personal observation :

“Here is this fine city of Cincinnati, and over there is the little town of Covington. Covington has just as good a location as Cincinnati, and a fine country back of it. It was settled before Cincinnati. Why is it not a bigger city? Just because of slavery, and nothing else. My people used to live over there, and I know.

“Why, the other day I went to ship my family on a little railroad they have got down there from Covington back into the country. I went to the ticket office and found a lank fellow sprawling over the counter, who had to count up quite a while on his fingers how much two and one-half fares would come to. While over here in Cincinnati, when I shove my money through the window, the three tickets and the change come flying back at me quick. And it is just the same way in all things through Kentucky. That is what slavery does for the white man.”

In April, 1860, Abraham Lincoln accepted an invitation from Julius White, then Harbor Master of Chicago and member of the Board of Trade, to visit him at his home in Evanston, a rising suburb of Chicago. It should be remembered that Lincoln was well acquainted in Chicago at this time and had been for

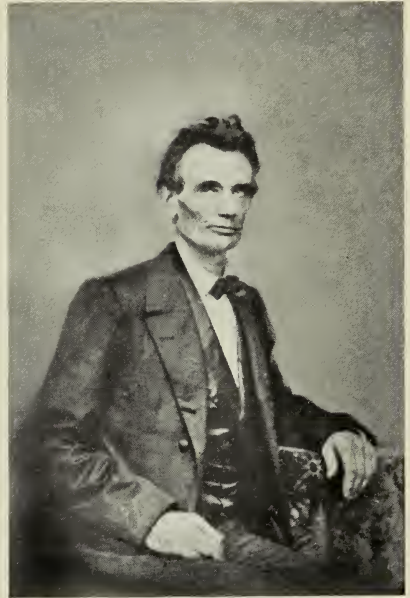
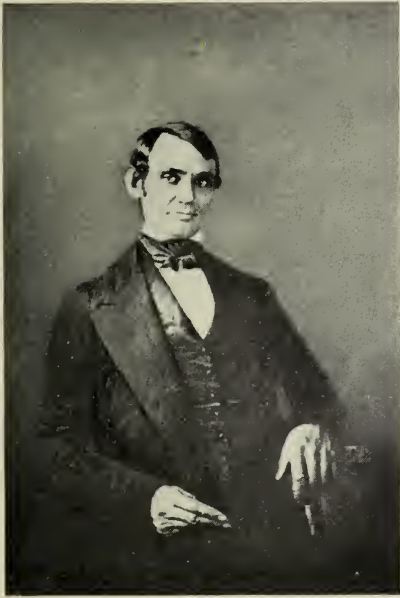
years, by virtue of his legal practice and prominence as a politician.

A man by the name of Harvey B. Hurd was selected to accompany him from Chicago to Evanston, which was reached by what was then known as the Chicago and Milwaukee Railroad, now part of the Chicago and Northwestern. An evening train was used.

"On the way," narrates Hurd, "Mr. Lincoln and I occupied the same seat in the railway car, that next to the stove. Putting his long legs up behind the stove and leaning down toward me, he related to me some of the more amusing episodes in his New England tour, such as he thought I would recognize as characteristic of Yankeedom (I had told him I was a native of Connecticut), some of them bringing out in strong light the issues of the campaign and how he presented them.

"Calling to mind his great debate with Mr. Douglas and how he had grown in popularity all over the country, and that he was being talked of for the presidency, I could not help a passing analysis of his characteristics. The way he impressed me at that time was well summed up by a countryman at another time. 'Not that he knew it all, and that I knew little or nothing, but that he and I were two good fellows, well met, and that between us we knew lots.'"

"Uncle Joe" Cannon has often told of his first meeting with Lincoln in May, 1860, when the latter was being prominently mentioned for the presidency by his fellow Republicans of Illinois. The meeting occurred in the railroad station at Decatur, where Lincoln had gone to send a telegram. Cannon at that time was living in Tuscola, and along with other young Repub-



*Courtesy, F. H. Meserve*

EARLY PORTRAITS OF LINCOLN

1. Lincoln in 1849; one of his earliest portraits. 2. Lincoln at the time of his nomination for President.



licans had been driven across country to attend the Republican State Convention which was to convene the following day for the purpose of electing delegates to the National Convention to be held in Chicago.

“When we drove into Decatur and through the main street, one of our party, a man by the name of Vanderon, said, ‘There’s Abe!’ and called out to a tall man on the sidewalk, ‘Howdy, Abe!’ to which Mr. Lincoln responded, with like familiarity, ‘Howdy, Arch!’

“A little later somebody wanted to send a telegram. We went down to the railroad station and there saw Lincoln writing a telegram. Mr. Vanderon expressed surprise at seeing him, and asked if he had come to the convention, being a candidate for president.

“Lincoln looked at his questioner for a moment, and then with a drawl, replied: ‘I’m ’most too much of a candidate to be here, and not enough of one to stay away.’”

## CHAPTER XVI

### ANOTHER TRIP EAST—AND ITS RESULTS

While Lincoln's debates with Douglas had resulted in an apparent victory for the latter, the real verdict was to come only a few months later in Lincoln's nomination for the presidency. A contributing factor to this was his important trip East in the spring of 1860, mention of which has already been made in another chapter.

Lincoln's first objective point was New York, and he went direct from Springfield to Chicago, thence over the Pennsylvania Railroad, or its connecting lines, to Philadelphia, and thence to Jersey City where he took the ferry for New York. It was a journey which required a week or more, and as the sleeping-car was still an untried quantity, the jaded traveler had the choice of curling up on the short coach seats—a hard job for the lanky Lincoln—or stopping off at taverns overnight.

The problem of eating on long journeys was also yet unsolved. No meals were, of course, served on the train. Many passengers carried their own baskets of food, which served them for several days, while others stopped off at the railway eating-houses or any other convenient inns, and gobbled their food, while watching the conductor out of one eye.

Born of the debates with the Little Giant, considerable curiosity had developed in the East as to what manner of man this Lincoln was. The common report

was that he was awkward and uncouth, and that his principal hold upon his audience was because of his jokes. A hall had been provided for his first address in Brooklyn, but such was the public interest that the meeting was transferred to New York, where a larger auditorium—and one of the largest then available—at Cooper Union was secured.

Lincoln's hearers included such notables as Horace Greeley, of the *New York Tribune*; William Cullen Bryant, of the *Post*; and George William Curtis, of *Harper's Magazine*. His audience, while friendly, was extremely critical. They expected to be amused, at any rate. What they heard was a ringing challenge to all enemies of the Union, so lofty in its logic, so fiery in its native eloquence, as to leave them spellbound. Greeley said that it was one of the finest examples of sustained oratory he had ever heard, or ever expected to hear.

The next morning's papers appeared with large pictures of the man whose homely features, until then unfamiliar, were destined to be the best known and loved and hated, during the ensuing stormy years, of any living American. He had stepped off the Jersey City ferry as only one of many incoming strangers and chiefly remarkable for his stature. He left the city a marked man. "There goes Lincoln!" said the cab-driver and the newsboy, who had seen his picture, if they had not read his speech.

From New York he proceeded on into New England, speaking in several cities. It was not his first visit there, on a political mission, as it will be recalled that, while a Congressman, in 1848, he had spoken in Boston,

Worcester, and other cities. Few, however, probably recalled the obscure legislator of twelve years before. As for his route, it was practically the same as that outlined in an earlier chapter describing this pilgrimage. But the railroads—like Lincoln himself—had undergone rapid changes in the intervening time. They had passed through the formative period.

The roads were being linked up into connected systems, passengers now being conveyed for considerable distances without change of cars. The coaches of these Eastern roads were far better than those still in use in the West. The running time was nearly twice as fast, due to heavier rails and locomotives. Lincoln doubtless noticed the great improvement in the service, over his former visit.

Lincoln returned home by way of Chicago, reaching there in time to attend the state convention of the Republican Party, held in Decatur. It was here that he first got the nickname of "Rail-splitter"—because of a little homely trick introduced by his friends. Two men came marching down the aisle carrying a couple of fence rails on their shoulders, with a placard stating that Abe Lincoln had split them and three thousand more. It was a bit of stage play similar to many which have since been used, but far more successful than most. It sent a wave of enthusiasm through the convention, and their delegates were instructed to vote for Lincoln as the state's favorite son, at the forthcoming national convention, in Chicago.

The scenes in the latter conclave have been often described—how the "Rail-splitter" was nominated for President amid the wildest demonstrations. With all



this and the tumultuous campaign which followed, the present chronicle has little to do—for the good and sufficient reason that the candidate was not a traveler. He used the railroads not at all. He stayed quietly at home and let delegations visit him. But the Springfield ticket office did a land-office business in the summer and fall of 1860.

Lincoln's ancient rival, Douglas, had been nominated by the Democratic Party—at least, by one wing of it, as there were four candidates in the field,—and he traveled energetically, and continuously. If we should trace his itinerary, it would probably take in all the leading railway lines in the Middle West and South. In the election which followed, Douglas was second, having received nearly 1,300,000 votes, as against 1,850,000 for Lincoln.

From that November election day until the following February, when he started East to take up the heavy burden of his high office, all the lines leading into Illinois did a big passenger traffic business. Lincoln's own home was constantly besieged by importunate office-hunters, favor-seekers, or politicians advising this, that, or the other.

It was but a foretaste of the stress and strain of public life. But before he took the final plunge he turned aside to one pilgrimage which had no political significance.

## CHAPTER XVII

### LINCOLN'S LAST VISIT TO HIS FOSTER-MOTHER

As the time drew near for the President-elect to leave his Illinois home for the national capital, his thoughts went back to his relatives living in Coles County, and more particularly to his old stepmother, then living at Farmington with her daughter, Mrs. Moore. His father had been dead ten years. He never lived to witness his son's larger fame. Lincoln determined to pay his mother a last visit before his departure, as a strong bond of affection had always existed between the two. Farmington itself could not be reached by rail, the nearest station being Charleston, on the Terre Haute and Alton Railroad.

An old circuit-riding friend and law associate, Henry C. Whitney, whose name has appeared in these pages, relates that calling at Lincoln's home early one morning in the beginning of February, 1861, he was informed that Lincoln had gone to keep a political appointment at the Chenery House with a future Cabinet officer of his, Judge Edward Bates. He was, however, expected home soon, as he had not yet breakfasted, and intended leaving that morning for Charleston to bid his stepmother good-by.

While awaiting Lincoln's return, Whitney picked up a book to read, and did not hear his friend come in until he stood before him. Whitney stated his errand,

and Lincoln asked him if he would not accompany him to Charleston, to talk over matters on the train. But as Whitney had other engagements to attend to, this did not entirely suit him. In view of the circumstances, however, he agreed to ride part way.

Hastily eating his breakfast, Lincoln presently announced that he was ready for the journey.

In order to get to Charleston at that time it was necessary to traverse three different roads, all of which Lincoln had had dealings with, as an attorney. The Great Western, now a part of the Wabash, carried him as far as Tolono, where a change to the Illinois Central was necessary. This road would carry him to Mattoon, whence the Terre Haute and Alton would be used to Charleston. This latter road is now a part of the Cleveland, Cincinnati, Chicago and St. Louis Railway, popularly known as the "Big Four."

Whitney gives a picturesque description of the appearance of his distinguished fellow-traveler, that morning.

"The nation at large," he said, "would have been extremely surprised to behold their President-elect at this time. He had on a faded hat, innocent of a nap; and his coat was extremely short, more like a sailor's pea-jacket than any other describable garment. It was the same outer garment that he wore from Harrisburg to Washington, when he went to be inaugurated. A well-worn carpet-bag, quite collapsed, comprised his baggage. After we had started for the depot, across lots, his servant came running after us and took the carpet-bag, but he was soon sent back after some forgotten thing, and we trudged on alone."

Lincoln mentioned to Whitney that he was not decided as to what he should do with his house while he was gone. There were objections to both selling and renting.

Then he switched on to politics, discussing a former United States Senator from Indiana, Judge Pettit, who had been to see him the night before to boost himself for a Federal appointment. The Judge, he said, was going east on the same train with them.

Nearing the station, Lincoln remarked that as his "hat" wasn't "chalked" on this particular road any more, he "reckoned" he would have to purchase a ticket. But Whitney thought that could be fixed satisfactorily.

"I ridiculed him," narrates Whitney, "and handing him the attenuated carpet-bag, I went into Mr. Bowen's office, who was superintendent of the road, and asked for a pass for Mr. Lincoln. Mr. Bowen was entirely alone—not even a clerk being present, it being breakfast time for them—and, as he commenced to write a pass, he suggested that I invite Lincoln in there to wait, the train not yet having come in from the west. Repairing to the waiting-room, I found the President-elect surrounded by the few persons who were also waiting for the train, tying the handles of his carpet-bag with a string."

Lincoln accompanied Whitney into the Superintendent's office.

"Bowen," he asked, when he was comfortably seated, "how is business on your road now?"

"Pretty good, just now," replied the Superintendent.

"You are a heap better off," Lincoln then went on,

“running a good road, than I am playing President. When I first knew Whitney, I was getting on well—I was clean out of politics and contented to stay so; I had a good business, and my children were coming up, and were interesting to me, but now, here I am——”

But whatever his reactions were at the moment, he abruptly stopped, and led the conversation into other channels.

Just then the train came along, and Lincoln and his companion left the Superintendent's office. On board they were joined by Judge Pettit and Thomas Marshall, State Senator from Coles County, who was going to his home in Charleston.

The morning express left Springfield at about a quarter to ten, and its rate of speed may be judged from the fact that it was not due to arrive at Tolono until about half past one o'clock in the afternoon, requiring almost four hours to cover the seventy-five miles between those two points.

Whitney states that during the five minute wait of the Great Western express at Springfield, Lincoln had time to tell a story or two, while the passengers gathered around for a look at the man who had now arisen to national prominence.

One other incident is related by Whitney which, although small in itself, throws a flood of light on the great heart of our “First American.”

“I recollect in particular,” he says, “that Lincoln took pains, though not with ostentation, to secure an humble old lady, whom he knew, a double seat.”

As the train sped on, Lincoln and Whitney attended

to the business on hand, and at the first convenient opportunity the latter left the eastbound train and returned to Springfield.

Tolono was reached in due time, and the change of cars made to the Illinois Central. Mattoon, the next junction, being about thirty-five miles away to the south, the greater part of two hours more would be consumed while traversing this distance.

At Tuscola, the rising young lawyer, Joseph G. Cannon who resided there, boarded the train, bound for Mattoon, where he was to try a lawsuit. This was the second meeting that "Uncle" Joe Cannon, the later Speaker of the House, had with Lincoln. He saw Lincoln seated with Senator Marshall, and the latter beckoned to the new passenger, who was a constituent of his.

"Mr. Lincoln," Marshall said, not knowing that the two had met before, "I want to introduce you to a young lawyer in this county."

After a moment or two of conversation, Cannon relates that he stepped back, as there were a good many other people in the car crowding around Lincoln, many of them desiring an introduction.

"He was," says Cannon, in speaking of the journey, "of course, the most distinguished man on the train, and he was constantly surrounded by the other passengers. But he was just one of the passengers in the day coach, in all his bearings."

Cannon also states that Lincoln himself did not do much talking, but in response to a query from a man by the name of Morgan who appeared to know him well, asking if he was going to see his mother, replied:

“I am going down to spend a day visiting her before I go to Washington to take the oath of office.”

Arriving at Mattoon, Lincoln and the other passengers whose destinations lay on the connecting line, learned that their train had arrived too late to make the Terre Haute and Alton connection.

Although Charleston was but ten miles away, there was now no means of reaching that point save by way of the eastbound freight, which would not pass through till towards evening.

James A. Connolly, a practicing lawyer at Charleston, tells how he and other Charlestonians repaired to the railroad station to get a glimpse of the newly-elected President. Upon the arrival of the regular passenger train, they were disappointed to learn that the Illinois Central passengers had failed to make the connection, and would come over later in the caboose of the evening freight.

“We waited a long while,” related Mr. Connolly many years later, “and when the train finally drew in and stopped, the locomotive was about opposite the station, and the caboose, or car which carried the passengers, was some distance down the track.

“Presently, looking in that direction, we saw a tall man wearing a coat or shawl, descend from the steps of the car and patiently make his way through the long expanse of slush and ice beside the track as far as the station platform. I think he wore a plug hat. I remember I was surprised that a railroad company, with so distinguished a passenger aboard its train as the President-elect of the United States, did not manifest interest enough in his dignity and comfort to deliver

him at the station instead of dropping him off in the mud several hundred feet down the track.

“In addition to myself, quite a crowd of natives were gathered on the platform to see him. I confess I was not favorably impressed. His awkward, if not ungainly figure, and his appearance generally failed to attract me, but this was doubtless due to the fact that I was a great admirer of Douglas, whose cause I had earnestly supported.

“There were no formalities. Mr. Lincoln shook hands with a number of persons, whom he recognized or who greeted him, and in a few minutes left for the residence of a friend, where, it was understood, he was to spend the night.”

Lincoln was entertained at Charleston at the home of Colonel A. H. Chapman, who had married a daughter of Dennis Hanks, Lincoln's cousin and a playmate in the days when they were boys together.

Connolly had another glimpse of the distinguished visitor, that evening, when with many others—some old acquaintances—they thronged at the Chapman home. The further impression that Connolly carried away with him was that Lincoln was a “marvel—a charming story-teller and in other respects one of the most remarkable men” to whom he had ever listened.

Early the next morning, Lincoln and Chapman got into a two-horse buggy—a familiar rig in those days and for many years thereafter—and drove over to Farmington, the last home of Sarah Bush Lincoln.

It would require the brush of a great artist to depict this meeting between the tall man who leaped eagerly over the dash of the buggy and the frail little



woman who extended her arms to him at the door. He was not a President-to-be; he was her boy, Abe, again. And as he looked into her faded eyes, he must have glimpsed again those early days of hardship when they dug a scant living out of the forest with their bare hands.

Long they sat and talked—foster-mother and son—recalling scenes now grave now gay. It was as though Abraham Lincoln were summoning up his boyhood again, to bid it an eternal farewell.

He lingered in this quiet village for a day or two, taking short trips with Chapman through the surrounding country, and when he started back for Charleston, his stepmother accompanied them. Here, the next day, their paths diverged—not again to come together.

As she embraced him in a last farewell she must have had a presentiment of this. Her voice shook with emotion as she said, "God bless you and keep you, my good son!" And his own eyes were wet as he turned at the corner of the street to wave her a final greeting.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### THE JOURNEY TO WASHINGTON IN 1861

In these days of quick travel and quicker communication it is hard to understand the reason for the long interval between the election of a president to office, and his inauguration. The man chosen by the people must wait from early November until early March—four months—before taking up his duties. This provision of time had been made in the beginning of the Republic, long before the railroad and the telegraph, when it required days if not weeks for the news to reach every corner of the country, and when the new official would likewise need ample traveling time. The news of Lincoln's election was carried to the Pacific Coast by Pony Express, as this was before the days of the trans-continental railroad, with its attendant lines of wire.

But even in Lincoln's day this awkward hiatus between election and inauguration worked great hardships for the incoming administration. The outgoing President, Buchanan, did not feel justified in taking active steps against the secession movements of various Southern states. He argued that he must not embarrass the new President. Meanwhile, Lincoln's own hands were tied, and he could only witness, helplessly, the sinister actions which spelled disruption of the Union.

Lincoln allowed three weeks for his journey from Springfield to Washington, but this was partly on ac-

count of scheduled stops for receptions and speech-making. During this four months' period of waiting he had been literally showered with invitations from state legislatures, cities and towns, inviting him to share their hospitality when he journeyed to Washington. Various railroads also tendered the use of special trains for the President-elect and his party. The invitations from the legislatures of Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York, and New Jersey were accepted, while that from Massachusetts was regretfully turned down on the ground of want of time to detour by way of the Bay State. The plan finally adopted provided for scheduled stops to be made at the cities of Indianapolis, Cincinnati, Columbus, Pittsburgh, Cleveland, Buffalo, Albany, New York, Trenton, Philadelphia, and Harrisburg for the purpose of enjoying the hospitality extended, and arrangements were made accordingly.

The entire charge of the transportation and other arrangements was put in the hands of W. S. Wood, of New York, who had been recommended by William H. Seward, Lincoln's Secretary of State to be, the latter in all probability receiving a suggestion as to the availability of Mr. Wood from Thurlow Weed, long a power in the politics of New York State and the nation. Under Wood's management provision was made for special trains, preceded by pilot engines, for the entire journey.

Having leased his residence to another tenant several days before the scheduled leaving time, Lincoln secured temporary quarters for himself and his family at the Chenery House, then the leading hostelry in Springfield. Robert, his eldest son, had arrived from the East

where he was attending college, to accompany the party.

Weik in his "Real Lincoln" quotes from a contemporary local newspaper account of Abraham Lincoln's last morning at the hotel, which gives us another illuminating glimpse of the homely simplicity of the man who was leaving to assume the reins of government. "The complete absence of ostentation and his physical self-reliance," says this writer, "was illustrated on the morning of his departure, when in the hotel office he roped his trunks with his own hands, took some of the hotel cards, on the back of which he wrote:

A. Lincoln  
White House  
Washington, D. C.

and tacked them on the trunks, supplementing the act by writing his autograph on another card and giving it to the landlord's daughter. In due time the omnibus backed up in front of the hotel and he left for the depot."

Can we imagine any official in this day and time—even the mayor of a city—stopping to label his own trunks?

February 11 was the date scheduled for departure on this momentous journey. The presidential train left Springfield from the station of the Great Western Railroad. It is interesting to note in passing that part of this original structure is still standing, used as a freight depot by the Wabash Railroad, successor to the Great Western.



*Courtesy, Wabash Railroad*

WHERE LINCOLN BADE FAREWELL TO HIS HOME FOLKS

This old building at Springfield, Illinois, still in use as a freight office, is the same structure which was used by the Great Western Railroad as a passenger station, in 1861. Here the President-elect addressed a few words of farewell to his neighbors, gathered to bid him Godspeed.



Although the morning was dark and gloomy and the air chilly, a crowd of several hundred of his neighbors gathered early at the little station to bid good-by and God-speed to their fellow-townsmen. From the time Lincoln arrived there until almost the time of departure, his friends filed by him in the waiting room in a steady stream, shaking him by the hand, speaking a few words and otherwise demonstrating the affection in which he was held. Some were so overcome by their emotions that they merely pressed his hand silently.

At five minutes of eight, Lincoln, preceded by Wood, left the station and passed slowly through the crowd to his special car on the rear of the train. As he gained the rear platform of the coach he paused, and facing the people, removed his hat. Although he had told the newspaper men the day before that nothing of a nature warranting their attendance would transpire at the station that morning, yet as he looked upon the expectant faces raised towards his, he felt that he must say something, and mastering his emotions, raised his hand.

The train was ready to start, the bell had rung, and the conductor had reached up to pull the bell-rope, when Lincoln began to speak.

“My friends,” he said, “no one, not in my situation, can appreciate my feelings of sadness at this parting. To this place, and the kindness of these people, I owe everything. Here I have lived a quarter of a century, and have passed from a young to an old man. Here my children have been born, and one is buried. I now leave, not knowing when or whether ever I may return, with a task before me greater than that which rested upon Washington. Without the assistance of that Di-

vine Being who ever attended him, I cannot succeed. With that assistance, I cannot fail. Trusting in Him, who can go with me, and remain with you, and be everywhere for good, let us confidently hope that all will yet be well. To His care commending you, as I hope in your prayers you will commend me, I bid you an affectionate farewell."

During the delivery of this short address, the rain was falling fast; and yet the assemblage, imitating the speaker, stood with bared heads, scarcely noting the falling drops.

As he stopped speaking, the train moved slowly away, and Abraham Lincoln, standing in the doorway of the coach, took his last look as a private citizen at Springfield. What must have been his thoughts as he was borne away towards a "task greater than that which rested upon Washington"?

His friend and law associate, Isaac N. Arnold, once told an aristocratic assemblage of Englanders: "I know of nothing in history more pathetic than the scene when he (Lincoln) bade good-by to his old friends and neighbors."

What his neighbors thought of this leave-taking has been most ably described in the contemporary issue of the *Springfield Journal*, by the editor, Edward L. Baker, who says:

"It was a most impressive scene. We have known Mr. Lincoln for many years; we have heard him speak upon a hundred different occasions; but we never saw him so profoundly affected, nor did he ever utter an address which seemed to us so full of simple and touching eloquence, so exactly adapted to the occasion, so worthy of



the man and the hour. Although it was raining fast when he began to speak, every hat was lifted and every head bent forward to catch the last words of the departing chief. When he said, with the earnestness of a sudden inspiration of feeling, that with God's help he should not fail, there was an uncontrollable burst of applause. At precisely eight o'clock city time the train moved off bearing our honored townsman, our noble chief, Abraham Lincoln, to the scenes of his future labors and, as we firmly believe, of his glorious triumph. God bless honest Abraham Lincoln!"

The train bearing the party from Springfield consisted of an engine, baggage-car, and passenger coach. This equipment was the property of the Great Western Railroad, which was to carry them to the Indiana-Illinois state line where the Tolono and Wabash Railway would then take charge of the party as far as Lafayette, Indiana. This route from Springfield to Lafayette is now operated as part of the main line of the present Wabash system from Toledo to St. Louis, acquired later through various consolidations.

The presidential party aboard the train consisted of the following persons: Robert T. Lincoln, his eldest son; Dr. W. S. Wallace, a brother-in-law; Lockwood Todd, a relative of Mrs. Lincoln; John G. Nicolay and John Hay, private secretaries; Colonel Elmer E. Ellsworth, a former law student of Lincoln's and later to be one of the first martyrs to the cause; Judge David Davis, life-long friend afterwards appointed to the United States Supreme Court; Major David Hunter, Captain John Pope, and Captain George W. Hazard, of the United States Army; J. M. Burgess, George C.

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Latham, B. Forbes, and last but not least, W. S. Wood, the managerial master of ceremonies.

Mrs. Lincoln and the two younger sons, William and Thomas, did not accompany the special from Springfield, but joined the party the following morning in Indianapolis.

Col. E. V. Sumner, also of the United States Army, who was to have reported at Springfield, did not connect with the special until at Indianapolis. From this point, these four personages remained with the others until their destination was reached.

The train leaving Springfield also had on board, in addition to the presidential party, Lincoln's political manager, Norman B. Judd, later to receive a foreign post, who left the party at Harrisburg; Henry Villard, the correspondent, who "sickened" at New York; Ward Hill Lamon, Lincoln's traveling companion on his secret midnight ride from Harrisburg to Washington by way of Philadelphia, which we will describe later; Orville H. Browning, Senator-elect; Governor Richard Yates, Ex-Governor John Moore, Jesse K. Dubois, O. M. Hatch, Ebenezer Peck, Robert Irwin, Josiah Allen, and Edward L. Baker, editor of the *Springfield Journal*. Most of these accompanied Lincoln only as far as Indianapolis. Newton Bateman, State Superintendent of Schools, who had been among those of Lincoln's friends favored with a special invitation to go that far, was not present, declining on the ground of pressing official duties.

After the train had left Springfield behind, the newspaper correspondents on board surrounded Abraham Lincoln, requesting him to furnish them with a copy of

the little speech he had made. They reminded him that as he had intimated the day before there would be no speech-making, they were not in readiness to take down his remarks.

Lincoln replied that his remarks were impromptu, and he had no manuscript copy, but that he would write them out in full as he recalled them.

He asked Nicolay to bring him paper and pencil, and sat down to collect his thoughts. He wrote a few lines, and then handed the paper to Nicolay, asking him to write as he dictated. But this method did not proceed very far before he had the paper returned to him. Penciling a few more lines he again turned the sheet over to his secretary and dictated the remainder of the address, copies of which were given the newspaper men.

Thomas Ross, who acted as brakeman on the train as far as the state line, has given his lurid recollections of the journey across Lincoln's home state, as follows:

"The enthusiasm all along the line was intense. As we whirled through the country villages, we caught a cheer from the people and a glimpse of waving handkerchiefs and of hats tossed high into the air. Wherever we stopped there was a great rush to shake hands with Mr. Lincoln, though of course only a few could reach him. The crowds looked as if they included the whole population. There were women and children, there were young men, and there were old men with gray beards. It was soul-stirring to see these white-whiskered old fellows, many of whom had known Lincoln in his humbler days, join in the cheering, and hear them shout after him, 'Good-by, Abe. Stick to the

Constitution, and we will stick to you!" It was my good fortune to stand beside Lincoln at each place at which he spoke—at Decatur, Tolono, and Danville. At the state line the train stopped for dinner. There was such a crowd that Lincoln could scarcely reach the dining-room.

"'Gentlemen,' said he, as he surveyed the crowd, 'if you will make me a little path, so that I can get through and get something to eat, I will make you a speech when I get back.'

"I never knew where all the people came from. They were not only in the towns and villages, but many were along the track in the country, just to get a glimpse of the President's train. I remember that, after passing Bement, we crossed a trestle, and I was greatly interested to see a man standing there with a shotgun. As the train passed he presented arms. I have often thought he was there, a volunteer, to see that the President's train got over it in safety.

"As I have said, the people everywhere were wild. Everybody wanted to shake hands with Lincoln, and he would have to say: 'My friends, I would like to shake hands with all of you, but I can't do it.' At Danville I well remember seeing him thrust his long arm over several heads to shake hands with George Lawrence. Walter Whitney, the conductor, who went on to Indianapolis, told me when he got back that, after Lincoln got into a carriage, men got hold of the hubs and carried the vehicle for a whole block. At the state line I left the train, and returned to Springfield, having passed the biggest day in my whole life."

Still traveling eastward, the party reached Lafayette,

Indiana, where another change of railroad had to be made. Leaving the tracks of the Toledo and Wabash Railway they entered upon those of the Lafayette and Indianapolis Railroad, which carried them to Indianapolis. This road now forms a part of the Cleveland, Cincinnati, Chicago and St. Louis Railway, one of the New York Central Lines as at present constituted.

Indianapolis was reached late in the afternoon of the same day, about five o'clock. At the Union Station Lincoln was welcomed by a delegation headed by Governor Morgan, to whose remarks he made formal reply.

The Lincoln party stayed at the Bates House over night, the President-elect addressing the Legislature the next morning. Following this the party boarded the special provided to take them to Cincinnati, where the second scheduled stop was to be made.

From Indianapolis to Cincinnati, the Indianapolis and Cincinnati Railroad was used, this corporation owning the line as far as Lawrenceburg, and having trackage rights from this point into Cincinnati over the roadbed of the old Ohio and Mississippi Railroad, now a part of the Baltimore and Ohio.

Leaving Indianapolis at ten o'clock, but few stops were made. At Shelbyville, Greensburg and Lawrenceburg, where large crowds had assembled, Lincoln appeared and bowed to the people, with a few brief remarks.

Late that afternoon the special reached Cincinnati, where two addresses were made, one directly to the Mayor and citizens assembled, and one to a procession of German Free Workingmen which called on the President-elect that evening at the Burnet House.

At nine o'clock the following morning the party left Cincinnati over the Little Miami Railroad for Xenia, from which point the Columbus and Xenia Railroad would be used to Columbus, their next objective. Both of these roads are now incorporated in the great Pennsylvania system.

They reached Columbus at two o'clock that afternoon, after having encountered the usual throngs gathered along the route. Shortly after arrival, Lincoln addressed the State Legislature, and in the evening a largely attended reception was held at the residence of Governor Dennison, by whom he was entertained. It was while in this city that Lincoln received the official notice of his election from Washington in the form of a telegram notifying him that the votes had been counted, and he was declared President.

The delay in this official notification, coming weeks and months after election and while actually on his way to take office, speaks volumes for the lack of communication which yet prevailed over the United States.

The morning following the levee the party left Columbus at eight o'clock, using a train furnished by the Steubenville and Indiana Railroad, as far as Steubenville. However, from Columbus to Newark the road had trackage rights only over the Central Ohio Railroad. From Steubenville to Rochester, Pennsylvania, the Cleveland and Pittsburgh Railroad was used, and from the latter point to Pittsburgh, the Ohio and Pennsylvania Railroad. All these roads from Columbus to Pittsburgh are now operated by, and a part of, the Pennsylvania Railroad system.

At Cadiz Junction the entire party was treated to

an elaborate dinner, prepared by Mrs. T. L. Jewett, wife of the president of the Steubenville and Indiana Railroad, over whose tracks the train was passing.

At Steubenville, where a short stop was made, it was found that the rainfall which had commenced before leaving Columbus had ceased, and Lincoln made a brief address to the populace awaiting the special. At either Rochester or the next station, Freedom by name, a delay of two hours occurred, occasioned by the wreck of a freight train a short distance ahead.

Allegheny City was reached late that evening, about eight o'clock. Here the rain was again coming down in torrents, serving to diminish somewhat the size of the crowd assembled to greet the distinguished guest.

The young man who was both railroad agent and telegraph operator at Allegheny at the time, in later years related how he was among the privileged few who entered the private car of Lincoln and his family, and says that "I shall never forget the deep impression which his towering form and his already sad and always kindly face made on me as he took my hand."

Lincoln stopped at the Monongahela House in Pittsburgh. Here two addresses were made, one on the evening of his arrival to the throng of people which had turned out to see him, and one the next morning to the Mayor of the city and its citizens.

Following the latter speech, the party resumed their journey, leaving Pittsburgh in a dense downpour of rain. The next objective was Cleveland, Ohio. From Pittsburgh to Alliance, Ohio, the Ohio and Pennsylvania Railroad was again made use of, and from the latter point to Cleveland, the Cleveland and Pittsburgh

Railroad, both now a part of the Pennsylvania system. Along the way the usual concourses of people were encountered, and at Alliance a dinner was served. Cleveland was reached at four-twenty in the afternoon.

Proceeding to the Weddell House, where he was to stay, Lincoln was formally welcomed to the city, and responded in a speech addressed to the chairman of proceedings and his fellow-citizens. Saturday morning dawned bright and clear, and as the presidential party was scheduled to leave at nine o'clock, the early dawn found many people assembled at the station for a last glimpse of the President-elect.

It is estimated that at about forty stations along the route from Cleveland to Buffalo crowds of people were gathered. From Girard, Ohio, to Erie, Pennsylvania, where the party dined, Lincoln was accompanied by Horace Greeley. From Cleveland to Erie, the special traveled over the tracks of the Cleveland, Painesville and Ashtabula Railroad; from Erie to the New York-Pennsylvania state line, those of the Erie and North East Railroad; and from the latter point into Buffalo those of the Buffalo and State Line Railroad. The Erie and North East Railroad Company operated the entire trackage of the last two lines. All these roads are now a part of the New York Central system.

At Westfield, Chautauqua County, New York, Lincoln's kindness was displayed in an incident which has been told more than once by the little participant, who is still living in Kansas, and to whom we are indebted for the following account.

It seems that during the presidential campaign, an eleven year old girl by the name of Grace Bedell, liv-



ing at Westfield, was given a portrait of the Republican candidate. Staunch little Republican though she was, she was disappointed in her hero's looks, and in her childish mind arose the thought that if he were to raise whiskers, his appearance would be improved. She thereupon wrote him a letter to this effect, to which a few days later she received a reply from Lincoln himself. It was signed "your sincere well-wisher, A. Lincoln," and in it, referring to her suggestion he said that "having never worn any, do you not think people would call it a piece of silly affectation if I were to begin wearing them now?"

However, her suggestion was to bear fruit. As the train stopped at Westfield for a few moments, Lincoln appeared on the platform, made a short speech, and then said: "I have a correspondent in this place, a little girl whose name is Grace Bedell, and I would like to see her."

Grace was discovered on the outskirts of the crowd, and conveyed to the President-elect, who stepped down from his coach, and extended his hand. "You see, I have let these whiskers grow for you, Grace," he said. Then reaching out his long arms, he lifted the little girl up and kissed her in his fatherly way, stepped on board the train and was gone.

In referring to this in the White House, Lincoln once remarked to his marshal, "How small a thing will sometimes change the whole aspect of our lives."

That afternoon the party reached Buffalo, where they found a vast throng of people, headed by Ex-President Fillmore, and the party proceeded to the American Hotel. The jam was so great that Major

Hunter had his shoulder dislocated. Arriving at the hotel, Lincoln was formally welcomed by the mayor, to whose remarks an appropriate response was given.

It will be recalled that this was now Saturday, the 16th, and it had been decided that the party were to remain at Buffalo over Sunday, resting quietly.

On Sunday morning Abraham Lincoln attended church with Mr. Fillmore and later was dined by him.

The following morning the Lincoln party left Buffalo at an early hour, but the usual throng was in evidence. The train pulled out from the station at five-forty-five.

The next regular stop was Albany, reached by the New York Central Railroad, but we observe the distinguished traveler speaking to assemblages at Rochester, Syracuse, and Utica enroute, while many other places had to be content with his appearance on the car platform as he bowed in acknowledgment to the homage paid him.

Albany was reached between two and three o'clock that afternoon. Here Lincoln was met by both municipal and state authorities in formal welcome, and we find him that afternoon addressing the mayor of the city, the governor of the state, and both Houses of the Legislature in joint assembly.

During his stay here Lincoln stopped at the Delavan House, and at eight o'clock on the morning after his arrival left for New York.

At that time there was no railroad bridge crossing the Hudson River at Albany. The usual mode of travel was for passengers to cross by ferry to the town of East Albany. Here they took a train over the Hudson



*Courtesy, Delaware & Hudson Railroad*

THE "L. H. TUPPER"

Locomotive which hauled Lincoln's train from Albany to Troy on its triumphant progress East, in 1861.



River Railroad following the lordly stream down to the metropolis. As we have previously stated, this road, then a separate line, is now a part of the Central system.

The usual route as above outlined was not followed by Lincoln's party, however, because of unusually high water prevailing at Albany. Arrangements were made to detour by way of Troy.

This necessitated the passing of the special train over three different roads in a short distance. The cars of the New York Central used in traveling from Buffalo to Albany were requisitioned for this purpose.

The train passed up the west side of the river over the tracks of the Albany and Vermont Railroad, leased to and operated by the Rensselaer and Saratoga Railroad Company, to Waterford Junction. Thence to Green Island, on the west bank of the river, the tracks of the Rensselaer and Saratoga proper were used. From Green Island to the east bank of the river a railroad bridge owned by the latter company over which the Troy Union Railroad Company had running rights was traversed, the Troy Union proper operating within the limits of the city of Troy only, and it was over this latter road that Abraham Lincoln and party arrived in the Union Station at Troy. These roads are now a part of the Delaware and Hudson Company.

Troy was reached a few minutes after nine o'clock, a crowd of about thirty thousand people awaiting the special. After a brief address by Lincoln the party boarded the train of the Hudson River Railroad awaiting, and left after a stop of thirty minutes.

Crowds were assembled all along the route of the

Hudson River road, brief addresses being made by the President-elect at Poughkeepsie, Hudson, and Peekskill.

New York was reached about three o'clock that afternoon. The reception here was most imposing and on a large scale, as befitted the leading city of the New World. Business houses were closed generally, flags displayed, and the streets seemed overflowing with humanity. Lincoln stopped at the old Astor House, the same hotel of his former visit, from the balcony of which he was compelled to address the cheering crowds wedged tightly in the street below.

In the evening a more or less private reception was tendered him by a delegation of politicians who had participated actively in the presidential campaign, headed by E. D. Smith.

The following morning, Wednesday the 20th, the President-elect was escorted to City Hall, where he was formally welcomed by Mayor Wood, to whose address a fitting response was given. In the afternoon Barnum's Museum was visited, and that evening the distinguished guest was given an opportunity to gratify another side of his complex nature, when he attended Verdi's opera "The Masked Ball," at the Academy of Music.

At eight o'clock the next morning the Hudson River was crossed by ferry-boat, and upon reaching the Jersey City shore a large throng was found waiting to catch a glimpse of the man who was to rule over the destinies of the nation. After a few remarks in reply to W. L. Dayton who had welcomed him to the state of New Jersey, Lincoln and his party boarded the train provided for them.

Philadelphia, the next objective, although only ninety miles away, required the use of three roads, all now a part of the Pennsylvania Railroad system. The status of these roads was the same then as in 1848 when Lincoln the Congressman had made use of them. At Newark he was called upon to say something in response to the words of welcome from the mayor, and at Trenton he was met by a committee from the Legislature which escorted him to the State House. Here he addressed both Senate and Assembly separately, and afterwards spoke to a crowd from the Trenton House, where the party lunched. Following this, they boarded the special provided by the Philadelphia and Trenton Railroad, reaching Kensington depot in Philadelphia at four o'clock in the afternoon.

From the balcony of the Continental Hotel, where Lincoln remained overnight, Mayor Henry made an address of welcome, to which Lincoln replied with a brief speech. As in New York, the crowds encountered in Philadelphia were tremendous, and enthusiasm ran high.

The following morning the party made its way through the streets with difficulty to Independence Hall, where Lincoln made two speeches. Thence they proceeded directly to the depot to take train for Harrisburg, the state capital.

As far as Lancaster the Pennsylvania road followed practically the same route as used to-day, by way of Downingtown. It had leased another short line known as the Harrisburg, Portsmouth, Mount Joy and Lancaster, and operated the two lines as one, to Harrisburg.

The capital was reached about two o'clock that afternoon. After replying to an address of welcome by Governor Curtin, Lincoln was escorted to the Legislature, before both branches of which in joint session he delivered a short speech. While in Harrisburg the party stopped at the Jones House.

Up to this point the journey, now so nearly completed, had been in the nature of a triumphal progress. No discordant note had been struck, no outward threat made. Had an assassin lurked, he must have had frequent opportunities to strike a blow, as the tall form of the man of destiny made its way through the dense throngs. The constant change from road to road likewise offered chances for the desperate train-wrecker or bomb-thrower. The railroad and secret service officials were constantly alert, and doubtless each company heaved a sigh of relief when the presidential party had passed safely over its lines.

At Harrisburg disturbing rumors came to those who guarded the safety of Lincoln. Baltimore, which was to be visited on the way to Washington, was a doubtful quantity. It was said that a plot had been hatched to assassinate the President-elect as he passed through there. Definite intelligence had reached the ears of the secret service, who also knew the uncertain temper of this semi-Southern city—later shown by its treatment of some of the first Northern troops to march through a few months later. Under the circumstances the persons charged with safeguarding Lincoln wisely decided to take no chances.

It had been the intention of the party to leave Harrisburg for Baltimore over the Northern Central Rail-



way, at nine o'clock the next morning. It will be observed that on all the route up to this point the presidential train had traveled in the daytime, and avoided night runs. This was due to at least three reasons: the greater safety of day travel; the lack of sleeping-cars worthy of the name; and the opportunity given the waiting throngs to greet Lincoln.

However, under the new plan, while the majority of the party carried out the original schedule and proceeded on to Baltimore, Abraham Lincoln, accompanied by Ward H. Lamon and Allan Pinkerton the detective, that night traveled in a special train consisting of an engine and one car over the Pennsylvania Railroad back to Philadelphia. Here a change was secretly made to the sleeping-car of the regular midnight Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore express, which connected with the Baltimore and Ohio running into Washington at Baltimore. By this arrangement the President-elect and his two companions reached the capital city at six o'clock on the morning of the 23rd. A striking contrast this to the beginning and progress of his journey! Here at the end a deserted platform along which three figures hurried to a waiting carriage. Thus it was that President Lincoln reached Washington.

As for the journey itself, which we have hurriedly sketched from its transportation side, "a proper description," say his secretaries, "would fill a volume. It embraced two weeks of official receptions by committees, mayors, governors and legislatures; of crowded evening receptions and interminable hand-shakings; of impromptu or formal addresses at every ceremony;

of cheers, salutes, bonfires, military parades, and imposing processions amid miles of spectators. Political discussion was for the moment hushed in the general curiosity to see and hear the man, who by free and lawful choice of the nation had been called to exercise the duties of the presidential office."

Villard, one of the correspondents accompanying the party, says: "Everywhere there were formal welcomes by the state or municipal authorities and by great crowds of people, with brass bands, and public and private receptions. In different localities pleasant variations were offered in the way of serenades, torchlight processions, and gala theatrical performances. Altogether, the President had every reason to feel flattered and encouraged by the demonstrations in his honor. But the journey was a very great strain upon his physical and mental strength, and he was well-nigh worn out when he reached Buffalo. He must have spoken at least fifty times during the week. In the kindness of his heart—not from any love of adulation, for he really felt very awkward about it—he never refused to respond to a call for his appearance wherever the train stopped."

One other phase of this momentous journey should be discussed for the purposes of the present study. This is in regard to the expenses of the trip, and by whom borne.

At this late day it is seemingly impossible to get at the facts regarding these expenses. Mr. Henry B. Rankin, yet living at an advanced age, was a student in the law office of Lincoln and Herndon at the time. In a communication referring to this Mr. Rankin says:

“Memory impressions of my own as to who met the expenses I am not disposed to rely on. I am—in memory—quite sure Lincoln and his family met their expenses, *in part*, but that the railways gave passes to the Lincoln household and secretaries. But I will not be positive I am correct.”

Lincoln’s secretaries and biographers, Nicolay and Hay, refer to the tendering of special trains to the party by different roads, but make no further comment upon the details. We do not know, therefore, whether this applied to all roads or not, or what arrangement was made to defray other necessary transportation expenses.

## CHAPTER XIX

### LINCOLN AND THE UNION PACIFIC

The most important railway measure with which Lincoln as President was associated was the projection of the Union Pacific, the first railway line to link up the East with the far West. Although this road became a reality some years after his death, it was a project which had profoundly interested him even before he became President, and it is undoubtedly true that his aid while in the White House hastened its reality.

Lincoln had lived all his life on the border of the great West, and must have visioned the tremendous future of this country when the Plains over which the buffalo roamed were converted into wheat and corn fields, and when the Pacific Slope had been brought into communication with the rest of the Union. Staunch Unionist that he was, he early realized the necessity of making that Union a physical possibility.

A year prior to his nomination to the presidency—to be exact, in August, 1859,—he had visited Council Bluffs, Iowa, to look after his real estate holdings there and incidentally see the country. A contemplated railroad to extend westward from the Missouri River to the Pacific Coast was a live but no new topic. For years such a possibility had been discussed, and in the first national campaign conducted by the Republican party in 1856, a Pacific railroad was made a rather

prominent issue. The party's presidential nominee, John C. Frémont, the "Pathfinder," on account of his Western explorations, was thought to be the right man to push such a project.

The Democrats, also, deemed it necessary to endorse the plan; however, they could not favor it too strongly, because of the influence of the Southern members, who believed that the extension of slavery would necessarily be retarded by the construction of such a road.

There was much interest shown throughout the country in the proposition. But with the election of Buchanan, the project was not promoted very vigorously, although several desultory attempts were made to pass legislation relating thereto. In fact, to precede our story, in December, 1860, a bill introduced in the House by Representative Samuel R. Curtis, of Iowa, sponsoring a Union Pacific Railroad, was passed by that body, but allowed to go no further.

Shortly before his trip to Council Bluffs, Abraham Lincoln had purchased several town lots from his fellow railroad attorney, Norman B. Judd, who had acquired them from the Chicago and Rock Island Railroad. Council Bluffs at this time was a frontier town, containing about fifteen hundred people.

Accompanied by O. M. Hatch, Secretary of the State of Illinois, Lincoln had come from Saint Joseph, Missouri, up the Missouri River by steamboat. They put up at the Pacific Hotel. This was on August 12. The following night, Lincoln, at the request of the citizens of the community, who thought favorably of him on account of the manner in which he had conducted his

debates with Douglas, delivered a speech in Concert Hall.

Almost simultaneously with Lincoln's arrival, Grenville M. Dodge, then a young engineer in the employ of several railroad promoters, had returned from a surveying trip for a proposed Pacific Railroad, and had camped with his party in a ravine north of the town. He attended the meeting in Concert Hall and listened with much interest to the speech of the Illinoisian, which impressed him favorably on the slavery question.

Lincoln, having heard of the arrival of the engineering party, desired some first-hand information. General Dodge, many years afterward, gave the following account of the interview, which lasted about two hours, and which took place on the porch of the Pacific Hotel.

"After dinner at the hotel," said the general, "Mr. Lincoln sought me out, and engaged me in conversation about what I knew of the country west of the Missouri River. He greatly impressed me by the marked interest he displayed in the work in which I was engaged, and he expressed himself as believing that there was nothing more important before the nation at that time than the building of a railroad to the Pacific Coast. He ingeniously extracted a great deal of information from me about the country beyond the river, the climate, the character of the soil, the resources, the rivers and the route. When the long conversation was ended, I realized that most of the things that I had been holding as secrets for my employers in the East, had been given to him without reserve."

General Dodge also relates that "during Lincoln's visit, some of the citizens of Council Bluffs took him

to a high bluff known as Cemetery Hill, just north of the town. From this point could be had a view of the country ten miles north and ten miles south, up and down the great Missouri River valley, and across the Missouri River five miles west. He was greatly impressed with the outlook; and the bluff from that time has been known as Lincoln's Hill. . . . From here he looked down upon the place, where by his order, four years later, the terminus of the first trans-continental railway was established."

The platform of the Republican National Convention, that nominated Abraham Lincoln for President in May, 1860, at Chicago, declared in the sixteenth plank: "That a railroad to the Pacific Ocean is imperatively demanded by the interests of the whole country; that the Federal Government ought to render immediate and efficient aid in its construction; and that, as preliminary thereto, a daily overland mail should be promptly established."

Lincoln, as nominee, in his letter of acceptance, referring to the platform in general, said "the declaration of principles and sentiments . . . meets my approval: and it shall be my care not to violate or disregard it in any part."

He later was to be given opportunity to put into practical effect the declaration regarding the Pacific Railroad. At the extra session of Congress convened by him as President in July, 1861, Representative Curtis reintroduced his bill for a road to be known as the Union Pacific. Action was retarded by the outbreak of war, and Curtis shortly afterwards resigned his own seat for a commission in the Federal army.

In the Senate, James Harlan, of Iowa, later a member of President Lincoln's Cabinet, became a strong advocate of the measure. But probably there was no firmer friend of the Union Pacific bill than the President himself, who advocated its passage and the construction of the road, "not only as a military necessity, but as a means of holding the Pacific Coast to the Union," as General Dodge has said.

Finally, in 1862, a law was passed chartering "The Union Pacific Railroad Company." This was entitled "An Act to aid in the construction of a railroad and telegraph line from the Missouri River to the Pacific Ocean, and to secure to the government the use of the same for postal, military, and other purposes." The Act was approved by President Lincoln on July 1.

Under the provisions of this Act, to the President of the United States was delegated specific authority as to the appointment of directors and commissioners. He was also authorized to fix the point of commencement in the territory of Nebraska; approve the route in Kansas; decide which were the three hundred miles most mountainous and difficult of construction (this having to do with the number of bonds issued to cover); determine the uniform width of track upon the entire line, including its branches; fix the point on the western boundary of the State of Iowa from which the road was to be constructed, and fix certain other points and junctions in connection with the Union Pacific and other roads mentioned and sponsored in the Act.

It will thus be seen how Lincoln was inextricably connected with the active construction of the road, and that



upon him would necessarily devolve the settlement of many important questions.

This Act, in addition to chartering the Union Pacific, authorized the Central Pacific Railroad of California, chartered under the laws of that state, to construct a road and telegraph line eastward from the Pacific Coast, to the eastern boundary of California, there to meet and join with the Union Pacific; or in the event of the California Company arriving there first, continue construction eastward until they should meet at a point nearer the Missouri River.

On September 2 an organization was perfected and a set of officers elected. Samuel R. Curtis, now a Major-General, was elected chairman of the board of commissioners. Peter A. Dey, under whom Grenville M. Dodge had done his first surveying west of the Missouri River, was selected to make a survey from the Missouri to Salt Lake, and to have a report ready for the next meeting of the board.

The writer's investigations into the relations of President Lincoln to the Union Pacific during the formative period of the road, led to the Governmental departments at Washington. Through the courtesy of Mr. F. M. Goodwin, Assistant Secretary of the Department of the Interior, all the records in relation thereto, on file in the Office of the Commissioner of Railroads, were placed at his disposal. There, among other data, seven orders, appointments and endorsements of President Lincoln, hitherto unpublished, were discovered, all of which are incorporated in this chapter.

Mr. L. O. Leonard, present historian of the Union Pacific system, engaged in compiling data for an offi-

cial history of the road, informs the writer that in his researches he formed the opinion "that no statesman that ever lived had a keener interest in the Union Pacific than Abraham Lincoln. His clear vision of the future and what transportation really meant to the country he loved so well, and for which he gave his life, is most clearly shown in the close scrutiny it is quite evident he gave to all those papers which were presented to him for his signature."

We must also remember that this was during the stress and strain of the Civil War, when the Chief Executive's mind was burdened with a thousand military details.

In the spring of 1863 General Dodge relates that he received orders from his superior officer, General Grant, to report to the President at Washington. His thought was that he was about to be taken to task for some military offense. Entering the service early in the war, Dodge had risen to the rank of Brigadier-General of volunteers, and was then stationed at Corinth.

But he was soon disabused, although Lincoln was aware of his so-called "offense." He found that President Lincoln, with his marvelous memory and keen judgment, wanted to discuss with him the proper place where the initial point of the Union Pacific should be located. This, it will be remembered, was one of the provisions of the Act of 1862, which the President should determine. He had recalled the conversation with the young engineer on the hotel porch in Council Bluffs four years before.

General Dodge, in narrating his account of this in-

terview, says: "There was great competition from all the towns on both sides of the Missouri River for fifty miles above and below Council Bluffs, Iowa, for the distinction of being selected as this initial point. I found Mr. Lincoln well posted in all the controlling reasons covering such a selection, and we went into the matter at length and discussed the arguments presented by the different competing localities. I detailed to him, in so far as I could without having my maps or data at hand, where, from an engineering and commercial point of view, the Union Pacific Railroad should make its starting point from the western boundary of Iowa.

"The physical conditions of the country both east and west of the Missouri River controlled this selection. Directly west of Council Bluffs was the great Platte valley, extending from the base of the Rocky Mountains in one continuous valley six hundred miles east to the Missouri River. The survey we had made for the Union Pacific followed this valley the entire distance and crossed the divide of the continent through an open country, not exceeding 8,000 feet in elevation, while to the north and south the Rocky Mountains towered from ten to thirteen thousand feet high.

"It is a singular fact, that while the United States had spent a great deal of money in exploration for a feasible line for the Pacific Railroad, the Government never had examined the natural route along the forty-second parallel of latitude. All the surveys had been made and all the data obtained by private citizens connected with the Rock Island Railroad, at the head of which was Henry Farnam, of Connecticut. President

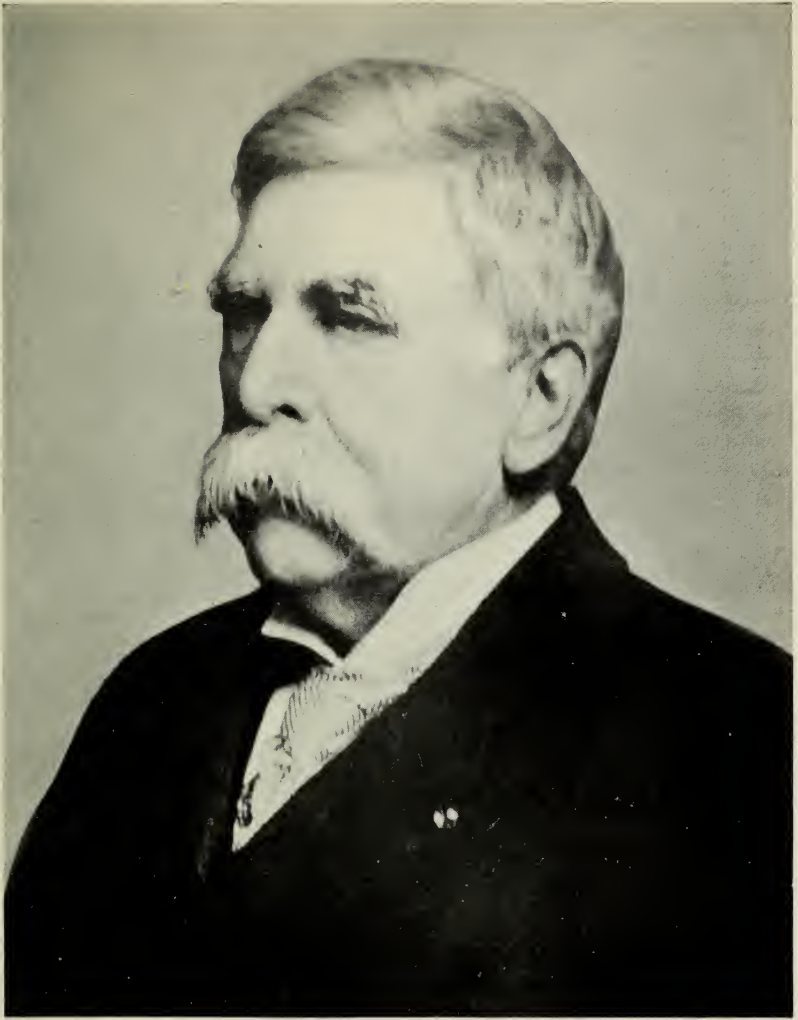
Lincoln, after going over all the facts that could be presented to him, and from his own knowledge, finally fixed the eastern terminus of the Union Pacific Railroad where our surveys determined the proper locality—at Council Bluffs, Iowa.

“After this discussion of the location, he took up with me the question of building the road. The law of 1862 had failed to bring any capital or men to undertake the work, and I said to him that in my opinion private enterprise could not build the road.

“Mr. Lincoln said that the Government had its hands full, and could not assume the task, but was ready to support any company to the fullest legal extent, and amend the law so as to enable such a company to issue securities that would furnish the necessary funds.”

When General Dodge left Washington, he went to New York and there met the parties who were connected with the Union Pacific Railroad as it was then constituted, John A. Dix, Henry Farnam, T. S. Durant, George Francis Train, and others. In an executive session he narrated to them an account of his interview with President Lincoln and what he had said concerning the part the Government would play in any further developments. Thus encouraged, the officials went to work on a new measure to be presented to the next Congress for action.

One of the results of General Dodge's call upon Lincoln was the issuance of an official order, several months later, written by the President, locating the starting point of the Union Pacific Railroad on the western boundary of Iowa. It reads as follows:



*Courtesy, Union Pacific Railroad*

GENERAL GRENVILLE M. DODGE

The man with whom Lincoln consulted about the projected road across to the Pacific, both before and after he became President. Dodge was a young civil engineer when Lincoln first met him, and after the Civil War was long connected with the Union Pacific.



## LINCOLN AND THE UNION PACIFIC 203

Executive Mansion,  
Washington, November 17, 1863.

In pursuance of the fourteenth section of the Act of Congress, entitled "An Act to aid in the construction of a Pacific Railroad and Telegraph line from the Missouri River to the Pacific Ocean, and to secure to the Government the use of the same for postal, military and other purposes," approved July 1, 1862;

I, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, do hereby fix so much of the western boundary of the State of Iowa as lies between the north and south boundaries of the United States Township, within which the City of Omaha is situated, as the point from which the line of railroad and telegraph in that section shall be constructed.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

In answer to a communication received from John A. Dix, then president of the Union Pacific, President Lincoln directed one of his secretaries to send the following reply:

Executive Mansion, December 1, 1863.

MAJOR-GENERAL JOHN A. DIX,  
President of the Union Pacific Railroad Company,  
New York.

*Dear Sir:*

I have not been permitted until to-day to present to the President your communication of November 23. He directs me to express his deep regret that his illness will prevent him from giving on this occasion expression to the profound interest he feels in the success of a work

so vast and so beneficent as that which you are about to inaugurate.

Respectfully, your obedient servant,  
JOHN HAY, Assistant Private Secretary.

The illness referred to was a mild attack of varioloid, contracted shortly after his journey to the battlefield of Gettysburg to take part in the dedicatory exercises.

In December, 1863, the Thirty-eighth Congress assembled. An amendatory act in connection with the one passed by the preceding Congress was early agitated.

In his Annual Message to Congress, December 8, the President, in referring to a proposition for enlarging the water communication between the Mississippi River and the northeastern seaboard, said that "augmented interest is given to this subject by the actual commencement of work upon the Pacific Railroad, under auspices so favorable to rapid progress and completion. The enlarged navigation becomes a palpable need to the great road."

On March 1, 1864, the Senate passed a resolution of inquiry as to whether the President had fixed the point of commencement of the Pacific railroad, as authorized by the 8th and 14th sections of the act incorporating the road. Six days later President Lincoln issued the following:

In pursuance of the provisions of section 14, of the act of Congress entitled "An Act to aid in the construction of a Railroad and Telegraph Line from the Missouri River to the Pacific Ocean, and to secure to the Government the use of the same for Postal, Military,



and other purposes" approved July 1st, 1862, authorizing and directing the President of the United States, to fix the point on the Western boundary of the State of Iowa, from which the Union Pacific Railroad Company is by said section authorized and required to construct a single line of Railroad and telegraph, upon the most direct and practicable route, subject to the approval of the President of the United States, so as to form a connection with the lines of said Company at some point on the one hundredth meridian of longitude in said section named:

I, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, do, upon the application of the said Company, designate and establish such first above named point, on the Western boundary of the State of Iowa, East of, and opposite to the East line of Section 10, in Township 15, North of Range 13, East of the Sixth principal meridian, in the Territory of Nebraska.

Done at the City of Washington, this seventh day of March, in the year of our Lord, one thousand eight hundred and sixty-four.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

This was followed by a special Message to the Senate, still further clarifying the matter and revealing Lincoln's keen interest in the project.

March 9, 1864.

To the Senate of the United States:

In compliance with the resolution of the Senate, of the first instant, respecting the points of commencement of the Union Pacific Railroad; on the one hundredth degree of west longitude, and of the branch road from the western boundary of Iowa to the said one hundredth degree of longitude, I transmit the accompany-

ing report from the Secretary of the Interior, containing the information called for.

I deem it proper to add, that on the seventeenth day of November last an executive order was made upon this subject and delivered to the vice-president of the Union Pacific Railroad Company, which fixed the point on the western boundary of the State of Iowa, from which the company should construct their branch road to the one hundredth degree of west longitude, and declared it to be within the limits of the township, in Iowa, opposite the town of Omaha, in Nebraska. Since then the company has represented to me that, upon actual surveys made, it has determined upon the precise point of departure of their said branch road from the Missouri River, and located the same as described in the accompanying report of the Secretary of the Interior, which point is within the limits designated in the order of November last; and in as much as that order is not of record in any of the executive departments, and the company having desired a more definite one, I have made the order of which a copy is herewith (transmitted) and caused the same to be filed in the Department of the Interior.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

The latter order referred to is the one issued two days before.

The platform of the Republican National Convention held in Baltimore, June 7 and 8 of the same year, would necessarily be supposed to contain some reference to the Pacific road, as it had been sponsored by the Republican administration. Other matters, chiefly the War itself pressed for attention. However, this measure

could not be ignored. The ninth plank, in a total of eleven, read:

“Resolved, That we are in favor of the speedy construction of the railroad to the Pacific Coast.”

The long-looked-for amendatory act was finally passed by both Houses of Congress, and signed by the President, July 2, 1864. Under the provisions of this law, the President of the United States was authorized to do the following:

Designate places in each of several cities named in addition to the general office of the company in New York City, as well as other localities selected by him, at which subscriptions to the capital stock of the Union Pacific Railroad Company were to be received.

Appoint for each and every one of the roads provided for in the original act, three commissioners to examine the first twenty miles of railroad and telegraph line completed, instead of three commissioners for the Union Pacific alone when forty miles had been finished.

Appoint three directors to serve until the next regular election, in addition to those elected by the stockholders, which were to be fifteen in number; and thereafter appoint five directors.

Several members of the Thirty-eighth Congress have left their impressions of the law as finally passed, with reference to the financial aid extended by the United States Government.

James G. Blaine, then serving in the House, says that “the necessity of communication with our Pacific possessions was so generally recognized that Congress

was willing to extend generous aid to any company which was ready to complete the enterprise. The association of gentlemen who had organized under the provisions of the (original) Act, were unable, as they reported, to construct the road upon the conditions prescribed and the aid tendered. It was impossible to realize money from the lands under the grant, as they were too remote for settlement, and \$16,000 per mile was declared insufficient to secure the means requisite for the construction of the road across trackless plains, and through rugged passes of the Rocky Mountains.

“The corporators had accordingly returned to Congress in 1864 for further help, and such was the anxiety in the public mind to promote the connection with the Pacific that enlarged and most generous provision was made for the completion of the road. The land grant was doubled in amount; the Government for certain difficult portions of the road allowed \$32,000 per mile, and for certain mountainous sections \$48,000 per mile. The whole of this munificent grant was then subordinated as a second mortgage upon the road and its franchise, and the company was empowered to issue a first mortgage for the same amount for each mile—for \$16,000, \$32,000 and \$48,000, according to the character of the country through which the road was to pass.

“The terrible struggle to retain the Southern States in the Union had persuaded the Administration and the Government that no pains should be spared and no expenditures stinted to insure the connection which might quicken the sympathy and more directly combine the interests of the Atlantic and Pacific Coasts.” He

adds, however, that "a more careful circumspection might perhaps have secured the work with less expenditure."

On the other hand, John Sherman, then representing Ohio in the House, says that such bills prove "that it is not wise during war to provide measures for a time of peace.

"Under this Act, the first lien of the United States for bonds advanced to the company, provided for by the Act of 1862, was made subordinate to the lien of the bonds of the company sold in market—a fatal error, which lent to all the serious complications which followed. The proceeds of the sale of the first mortgage bonds of the company, with a portion of those issued by the United States in aid of the company, built both the Union and Central Pacific, so that the constructors of these roads, who were mainly directors and managers of the company, practically received as profit a large portion of the bonds of the United States issued in aid of the work, and almost the entire capital stock of the company.

"If the Act had been delayed until after the War, when the securities of the United States rapidly advanced in value, it could not have passed in the form it did. The construction of the road was practically not commenced until the War was over. The constructors had the benefit of the advancing value of the bonds and of the increasing purchasing power of United States notes."

Cornelius Cole, member from California, naturally interested in the construction of such a transportation system which should link his section with the East,

as one of the Committee on the Pacific Railroad, and having several times crossed the Plains, was much in consultation with President Lincoln, Thaddeus Stevens, Chairman of the Committee, and others.

“The work of building the roads,” says Mr. Cole, “had devolved upon the Republican party. The War, instead of impeding, added arguments in favor of its early completion, as the railroad was now deemed desirable from a military point of view, and not less so, to unite more firmly our Pacific Coast possessions with the Atlantic States. . . . Better overland communication, by reason of the war, being rendered extremely desirable, everybody was clamorous for the railroad; consequently it was deemed advisable for Congress to encourage its builders by doubling the land grants to the companies, and to allow them to issue their own first mortgage bonds to an amount equal to the Government bonds, such bonds to take precedence of the Government bonds and to constitute a first lien upon the roads. These, and some twenty other amendments and provisions, were added to the original law, rendering it eminently practical and as free from obstructions as the builders of the road could desire. After this the work was prosecuted with unexampled energy.”

After the passage of the Act, many communications recommending that General Dodge be appointed one of the Government Commissioners began to be received by the Department of the Interior, and are on file there to-day. The appointment, however, was not made. The following order appointing the three directors on the part of the Government was issued by the President:

Executive Mansion,

Washington, Oct 16 ..... 1863

To the officers of  
The Pacific Railroad

Richard P. Morgan, bearer of this, is my personal acquaintance and friend, whom I would like to have oblige in any reasonable way. I became acquainted with him, while he was acting as a Railroad Civil Engineer, and I knew him long enough and well enough in this capacity to believe him to be both competent and faithful.

Yours to  
A. Lincoln

Courtesy, Dwight C. Morgan

#### A LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION

Written by President Lincoln, in 1863, to the Union Pacific Railroad, on behalf of his friend, Richard P. Morgan. Although Lincoln had two secretaries, he wrote many letters and papers personally.





Executive Mansion.  
July 19th, 1864.

By virtue of the authority conferred upon the President of the United States, by the thirteenth section of the Act of Congress approved July 2nd, 1864, amending the act to aid in the construction of a Railroad and Telegraph line from the Missouri River to the Pacific Ocean, etc.

Jesse L. Williams of Indiana  
George Ashmun of Massachusetts

and Charles Sherman of Ohio

are hereby appointed directors on the part of the Government of the United States, for the Union Pacific Railroad and Telegraph Company, to serve until the next ensuing regular election of directors for said Company.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

Eight days later this official order was promulgated:

Executive Mansion.  
July 27th, 1864.

By virtue of the authority vested in the President of the United States, by the sixth section of an act entitled An Act to amend an act entitled "An act to aid in the construction of a Railroad and Telegraph Line from the Missouri River to the Pacific Ocean, and to secure to the Government the use of the same for postal, military, and other purposes" approved July 2nd, 1864.

Richard W. Thompson, of Indiana, is hereby appointed a Commissioner, to examine the road or roads authorized by said Acts to be constructed by the "Union Pacific Railroad Company," and the "Union Pacific Railroad Company Eastern Division," and make report

to him in relation thereto as contemplated and specified by said Acts.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

While the President had been authorized under the amendatory act to appoint three commissioners for each and every one of the roads mentioned in the original Act, this appointment of Thompson is the only one of which we have record to-day. It is probable that in the other instances the Secretary of the Interior performed that office.

As the election of directors according to the Act of 1864 was to be held on the first Wednesday of October, the President issued the following order:

Executive Mansion.  
October 7th, 1864.

By virtue of the authority conferred upon the President of the United States, by the thirteenth section of the Act of Congress approved July 2, 1864, amending the act to aid in the construction of a Railroad and Telegraph line from the Missouri River to the Pacific Ocean, etc.

Jesse L. Williams of Indiana  
George Ashmun of Massachusetts  
Charles T. Sherman of Ohio  
Springer Harbaugh of Pennsylvania  
and Timothy J. Carter of Illinois

are hereby appointed directors on the part of the Government of the United States, for the Union Pacific Railroad and Telegraph Company, to serve until the next ensuing regular election of the directors for said Company, and until their successors are qualified.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

The next official document on the subject of which we have record, emanating from President Lincoln, was an endorsement of the permanent location of the first hundred miles of the Union Pacific Railroad requested by the Vice-president of that road.

Thos. C. Durant, V. P. Union Pacific Rail Road Company.

Secretary's office, New York, 13 Williams St.  
November 3rd, 1864.

To his Excellency,  
Abm. Lincoln,  
President of United States.

*Sir,*

I have the honor to ask your approval of the permanent location of the first one hundred miles of the Union Pacific Rail Road as indicated by the map forwarded to the Department of the Interior on the 20th ulto—

With great respect

Your Obt. Svt.

THOS. C. DURANT.

(Endorsement on other side.)

Executive Mansion.  
November 4th, 1864.

The permanent location of the Union Pacific Railroad, for one hundred miles west from Omaha, Nebraska, as shown by the map thereof certified by the President and Secretary of said Company, Oct. 19, 1864, is hereby approved.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

In his Annual Message to Congress, transmitted December 6 of that year, President Lincoln made reference to this location in connection with his remarks on the transcontinental railroad.

“The great enterprise,” he said, “of connecting the Atlantic with the Pacific States by railways and telegraph lines has been entered upon with a vigor that gives assurance of success, notwithstanding the embarrassments arising from the prevailing high prices of materials and labor. The route of the main line of the road has been definitely located for one hundred miles westward from the initial point at Omaha City, Nebraska, and a preliminary location of the Pacific Railroad of California has been made from Sacramento, eastward, to the great bend of Truckee River, in Nevada.”

While there is on file no order from the President concerning this latter location, yet it may be in reference thereto that the following incident is told, as it appeared in a recent official publication of the Union Pacific system.

“By the original railroad Act,” so runs the story, “the President was to fix the point where the Sacramento valley ended and the foothills of the Sierra Madre began. The Chief Engineer had designated Barmores, thirty-one miles from Sacramento as the beginning of the mountains. The Supreme Court decided the foothills commenced at thirty miles from that city. Several attempts were made to bring this to the attention of President Lincoln, but the President’s occupation with heavier duties connected with the War prevented the action. The time came, however, when it could not be longer delayed. It was important to the railroad company that the foothills should begin as near as possible to Sacramento. Senator Sargent claims the credit of moving the mountain from Barmores to

Arcade Creek, a distance of twenty-four miles. He relates the affairs as follows. Lincoln was engaged with a map when the Senator substituted another and demonstrated by it and the statement of some geologist that the black soil of the valley and the red soil of the hills unite at Arcade. The President relied on the statements given by him and decided accordingly. 'Here you see,' said the Senator, 'my pertinacity and Abraham's faith removed mountains.'"

A careful study of the Act referred to, as well as the later act, fails to locate any authority for having the President's approval necessary for such location. Moreover, this "Senator" Sargent, as he is called, was not a member of the United States Senate during this period. Aaron A. Sargent represented California in the national House of Representatives in the 37th Congress, from 1861 to 1863, and again from 1869 to 1873. From 1873 to 1879 he served in the United States Senate. Therefore, if Representative Sargent had any official dealings with President Lincoln in relation to the Union Pacific Railroad, it must necessarily have been before December 7, 1863, when the first session of the 38th Congress convened. The second session of the 37th Congress terminated March 4, 1863. Mr. Leonard, Union Pacific historian, believes that the anecdote is "all a myth."

Yet in view of all these circumstances, the writer is of the opinion that President Lincoln had to do with fixing a certain western location, whatever it may have been, and that there are some grounds for the story, garbled as it must be. We know that he approved the route of the main line westward for the first hundred

miles, which also was not mentioned specifically in either Act, and it is not impossible that he had previously been called upon to decide a question of location for the California line building eastward.

In response to a communication from the office of the Union Pacific Railroad in New York, concerning a proper disposition of the subscription books of their company, the President issued the following order :

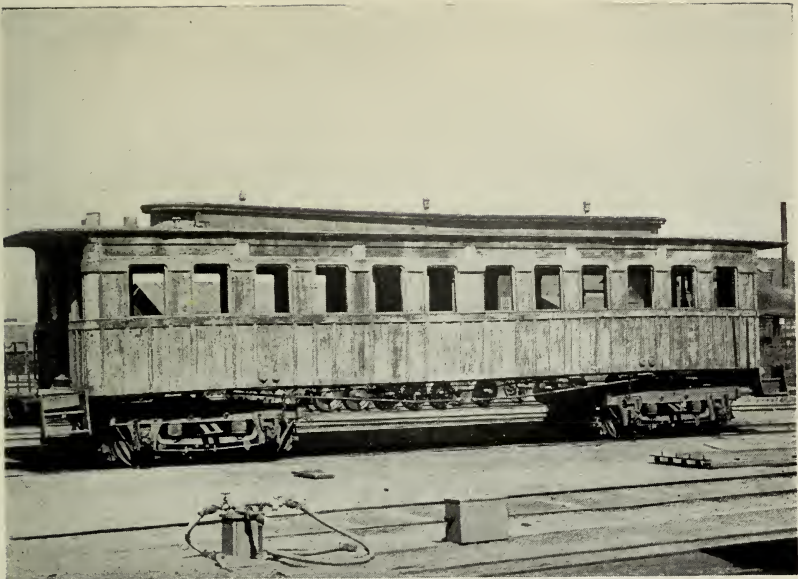
By the authority conferred upon the President of the United States by the 2d section of the Act of Congress, approved July 2d, 1864, entitled "An Act to amend an Act to aid in the construction of a Railroad and Telegraph Line from the Missouri River to the Pacific Ocean," Etc., Etc.

I, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, do hereby designate the Merchants' National Bank, Boston; the Chicago and Rock Island Railroad Company's Office, Chicago; the First National Bank at — Philadelphia; the First National Bank at Baltimore; the First National Bank at — Cincinnati; and the First National Bank at St. Louis, in addition to the General Office of the Union Pacific Railroad Company, in the City of New York, as the places at which the said Union Pacific Railroad Company shall cause books to be kept open to receive subscriptions to the capital stock of said Company.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

Washington, D. C.  
December 31st, 1864.

Four months and a half later, the President was assassinated, and this is the last incident or order con-



Executive Mansion  
November 4<sup>th</sup> 1864.

The permanent location  
of the Union Pacific Rail-  
road for one hundred miles  
west from Omaha, Nebraska,  
as shown by the map thereof  
certified by the President and  
Secretary of said Company, Oct. 19,  
1864. is hereby approved.

Abraham Lincoln.

Courtesy, Union Pacific Railroad

#### OTHER RARE RAILROAD ITEMS

1. The "Lincoln Car," built for him as President, but rarely used by him. It was later the "Funeral Car," which conveyed his body to Springfield. It is now owned by the Union Pacific. 2. Facsimile of Lincoln's approval of the first one hundred miles of the Union Pacific Railroad.





necting him with the Union Pacific, of which we have record.

There is one matter, however, in connection with the part that Lincoln played in the projection of this road which deserves more than passing mention.

While pursuing our investigations in the Department of the Interior, we were surprised to discover that while to-day the uniform track width of the Union Pacific Railroad is the standard gauge of four feet, eight and one-half inches, conforming to the gauge of all other standard American roads, yet there is on file in that Department an order signed by the President, fixing the gauge of that road at five feet. The order is dated January 21st, 1863. This anomolous situation called for further investigation.

It will be recalled that one of the provisions of the bill passed in 1862 provided that the President should determine the uniform width of track, so that when completed cars could be run from the Missouri River to the Pacific Coast. In October, November, and December of that year, many letters were addressed to the Department of the Interior, giving the views of the writers as to what should be the width of this Pacific road. They are still on file, the majority being from various railroad officials of the East and Middle West, arguing for a four feet, eight and one-half inch gauge, to conform to the majority of the roads east of the Missouri River. As an example, we append one from Thomas A. Scott, of the Pennsylvania Railroad, written in the interim between his two terms as member of President Lincoln's Cabinet:

Vice President's Room. Pennsylvania Rail Road Co.  
No. 238 South Third St.  
Philadelphia. October 30, 1862.

HON. CALEB B. SMITH,  
Secretary of the Interior.

*Dear Sir:*

In reply to your inquiry of yesterday, I beg to say that in my opinion the proper gauge of the Pacific Railroad would be four feet, eight and one-half inches, this being the gauge of all the New England roads; the New York Central, the Pennsylvania Central, the Baltimore and Ohio, as also all the roads leading westward from Detroit, Toledo, Chicago and Indianapolis.

Should the Pacific Railroad Co. adopt four feet, eight and one-half inches as the gauge, the effect would be in a very few years to change that on the roads in Ohio, Indiana and Illinois which now use the gauge of four feet, ten inches, and thus practically giving us a uniform connection throughout all the free states, an advantage to the Government, at times, beyond value. The uniform gauge of five feet in the Southern States has proven to be of great service to the Rebels by giving them the power to concentrate all their Railway equipment at any given point.

The gauge of four feet, eight and one-half inches is deemed to be by our best practical railway minds as economical as any other, and most preferable to the six feet gauge, which last requires extra heavy machinery and cars, causing a large increase for maintenance and for the movement of dead weight, which should be avoided in any case but more particularly in the construction of a line so important to the commercial world as that of the Great Pacific Railway.

I think you should adopt the four feet, eight and one-

half inch gauge, and hope that upon mature consideration it will be done.

Very respectfully yours,  
THOMAS A. SCOTT,  
Vice-President.

The chief advocates for the broad gauge, it seems, came from California, where the railroad promoters had seen fit to decide upon a gauge of five feet, and had placed their contracts upon that basis. It will be remembered that the original act authorized the California road to build eastward until it met the Union Pacific. This consideration undoubtedly had its influence on Lincoln's decision.

Hon. Cornelius Cole, but recently deceased, and up to the last retaining an unusually clear memory for one of his years, in a communication to the writer in 1922, telling of his relations to President Lincoln, said that the President "was greatly interested in the Pacific Railroad, and as I was the California member of the special committee, he conferred with me freely regarding it. As it devolved upon him to fix the gauge, I remember well his sending for me to confer with him on this subject. I was in favor of the broad gauge, and he the narrower."

His attention being called to the discrepancy between the two gauges, he further said "my understanding and recollection is that Mr. Lincoln did not fix the gauge while I was present. And I learned soon afterwards that he had adopted the 'standard gauge' which I believe was four feet, eight and one-half inches. I suppose he did this at the request of the railroad builders. I

don't know anything about Mr. Lincoln fixing the gauge at five feet, and I have never heard of it until now, that I can remember."

We may safely deduce from the above that Lincoln's feelings personally were for the "standard gauge."

Walter B. Stevens, the noted newspaper correspondent, gives a story in his "Reporter's Lincoln" under the caption "He Established Standard Gauge," which must be largely mythical, although given on the authority of L. D. Yager, an attorney of Alton, Illinois.

"When the Union Pacific, the first transcontinental railroad project, reached the stage of legislation, there was necessary, of course, an enabling act," said Mr. Yager. "One branch of Congress insisted that the rails should be four feet and ten inches apart. The other body wanted a gauge of four feet and seven inches. On an issue apparently so trivial, the Senate and House took opposing sides. The question was taken to the White House by interested parties. President Lincoln was asked to express his opinion as to the proper width for a transcontinental railroad track. He took one and one-half inches from the wider gauge, and added it to the narrower gauge, making the width four feet, eight and one-half inches. In other words, he split the difference.

"The compromise was accepted by the law-makers and standard gauge was fixed thereby. Other railroads conformed to this government gauge, one after another, until it became the almost universal width between rails."

Now this could not have been true while the original law was pending, and as we shall see, the same is true

of the supplementary Act, passed March, 1863, fixing the gauge at four feet, eight and one-half inches. And in view of our knowledge concerning the different gauges in effect at that time, the concluding paragraph is also impossible.

At the regular Cabinet meeting held January 20, 1863, the matter of the gauge was taken up, the following being entered in the "Diary" of Gideon Welles, Secretary of the Navy.

"A California committee was, on Tuesday, before the Cabinet, relative to the gauge of the Pacific Railroad. They gave their views—every one, I believe, in favor of the five-foot gauge. When they left, the President proposed a vote without discussion—not that it should be conclusive, but as an expression of the unbiased opinion of each.

"I was, for the present at least, for four [feet], eight and one-half [inches], chiefly for the reason that a change could be made from the wide to the narrow at less expense than the reverse; the aggregate cost will be millions less; that usage, custom, practical experience, knowledge proved the superiority of that gauge if they had proved anything, etc., etc. I believe the majority were for that gauge."

Yet the following day we find the President issuing the accompanying order, fixing the gauge at five feet:

Whereas, by the 12th section of an act of Congress, entitled "An Act to aid in the construction of a Railroad and Telegraph Line, from the Missouri River to the Pacific Ocean and to secure to the Government the use of the same, for postal, military, and other Pur-

poses," approved July 1st, 1862, it is made the duty of the President of the United States of America, to determine the uniform width of the track of the entire line of the said railroad and the branches of the same; and whereas, application has been made to me, by the Leavenworth, Pawnee and Western Railroad Company (a company authorized by the Act of Congress above mentioned to construct a branch of said railroad) to fix the gauge thereof.

Now, therefore, I, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States of America, do determine that the uniform width of the track of said Railroad and all its branches which are provided for in the aforesaid Act of Congress, shall be Five (5) feet, and that this order be filed in the office of the Secretary of the Interior, for the information and guidance of all concerned.

Done at the City of Washington, this 21st day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty three.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

The narrow gauge advocates must have immediately become active, for we note that on February 2, Senator Robert Wilson, of Missouri, introduced a bill in the Senate establishing the uniform width of the Pacific Railroad and its branches at four feet, eight and one-half inches. The bill was introduced by unanimous consent, read a first and second time to comply with the requirements of the Senate, and that same day referred to the select committee on the Pacific Railroad. On February 18, Senator James Harlan, of Iowa, moved to take up Senate Bill number 483, as it was known, which was thereupon debated upon.

The chief opposition to this bill came from the two

Senators from California, Milton S. Latham and James A. McDougall, and in part also from Senator Samuel C. Pomeroy, of Kansas. It will be observed that the broad-gauge advocates seemed to think that one of their best arguments lay in the fact that the President had officially decided upon that gauge, "after mature investigation."

Senator Latham in opening the debate, said that he had not paid particular attention to the bill, leaving it in charge of his colleague, but he hoped it would not become a law.

"By the bill passed during the last session of Congress," he said, "the power was vested in the President to fix the gauge of the Pacific Road. In January he called to his assistance the most efficient and learned men on the question of these railroad gauges, and after most mature and deliberate consideration fixed the gauge at five feet, and made a proclamation to that effect, and contracts have been made for the making of the running machinery in accord with this gauge."

He further stated that the Kansas road and those in his state, now five feet, would have to be changed at great expense. Other arguments were cited which do not have to be considered here.

Senator Harlan then took up the cudgels for the bill, and he and Latham debated the matter of "transshipment."<sup>1</sup> To-day it makes strange reading to hear of a United States Senator saying that some transshipment would be absolutely necessary on the grounds of cleanliness, preservation of material, and other reasons. Yet

<sup>1</sup> (By transshipment is meant the transference of commodities from one car or railroad to another.)

that is the stand Latham took, claiming he based his statements on the reports of railroad men.

Latham stated that there would have to be a transshipment some place, and it might just as well occur in the neighborhood of the Mississippi River as at any other. He further claimed that it would be utterly impossible to carry troops from the Mississippi Valley to the Pacific Coast without a transshipment.

Harlan contended that transshipment was merely a convenience.

"This gauge has been fixed," said Latham, "by the only competent authority that could fix it, having in view all the interests concerned and to be affected by it. At the last session, we, by our vote, gave to the President of the United States the power to settle this question, and he has taken it upon himself after mature investigation and consultation with railroad men and those whose interests were to be affected, to fix this gauge at five feet."

After some further lively debate the roll was called, and the bill in favor of the narrower gauge passed by a vote of twenty-six to nine.

It is interesting to note, in passing, that of the nine votes recorded against it, but three were from states east of the Mississippi, those of Fessenden of Maine, Hicks of Maryland, and King of New York. Both of the California Senators, Senators Harding and Nesmith of Oregon, Henderson of Missouri and Lane of Kansas recorded their disapproval of the bill. Senator Fessenden was afterwards appointed by President Lincoln to the office of Secretary of the Treasury, upon the resignation of Salmon P. Chase.



On March 2, the House passed the bill without debate in the closing proceedings of that session of Congress, and the following day it was signed by Speaker Galusha A. Grow, of Pennsylvania. On the latter date also, President Lincoln affixed his signature to this bill along with the usual large number awaiting action at the end of a Congress.

This is the bill in its entirety:

An Act to Establish the Gauge of the Pacific Railroad and its Branches.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

That the gauge of the Pacific Railroad and its branches throughout their whole extent, from the Pacific Coast to the Missouri River, shall be, and hereby is, established at four feet, eight and one-half inches.

Approved March 3, 1863.

The evidence is all in, so far as we are able to gather. It is an interesting matter of conjecture what the inner forces working around the President were, causing him to fix upon a five feet gauge, when the preponderance of opinion, including his own, was for the narrower; and that he was compelled to reverse himself by signing a bill, one month later, which necessitated a right-about-face movement on his part.

## PRESIDENT LINCOLN'S TRAVELS

When Abraham Lincoln came to Washington as President, in 1861, the street railway had not yet made its appearance in that city. Its introduction the following year was, as one writer says, "in itself an innovation." In the Fifties and early Sixties the omnibus was in its heyday, and the older residents seemed slow to take to the new order of things.

It is certain that President Lincoln made but little use, if any, of this new method of municipal transportation, using saddle-horse or carriage for his many local and near-by journeyings. When he visited the armies in the field, water transportation was used in most instances.

We have no record of him straying very far from Washington in the year 1861, save that he did considerable driving around to the neighboring forts and armies.

On the evening of May 5, 1862, with other dignitaries, including Secretaries Stanton and Chase, he left Washington by boat for a visit of several days to Fort Monroe. Due to the elements, the party did not reach their destination until the following night. The next day the President witnessed a naval engagement, and during his sojourn at the Fort the city of Norfolk was captured by the Union forces. The boat started on the return trip the evening of the 11th.

On the 23rd Lincoln paid a visit to General McDowell's headquarters at the Lacy House on the north side of the Rappahannock River, no doubt going and returning by boat.

On June 24 he made a hurried trip by gunboat from Washington to West Point, where he had a consultation with the venerable General Winfield Scott, then living in retirement.

In the beginning of July, the Army of the Potomac, encamped along the James River, was visited, Harrison's Landing being reached on the 8th. The following morning the President left for home, after having consulted with General McClellan and his staff as to the status of military affairs. This trip likewise was undoubtedly made by boat.

Probably on the last day of September, shortly after the Battle of Antietam had been fought, President Lincoln again left Washington for McClellan's headquarters, in order to get some firsthand information as to why the Federal forces had not followed up their advantage. The Army of the Potomac was now quartered along the Potomac River, nearer Washington, such a change having been deemed advisable. Lincoln arrived at Harper's Ferry on the first of October; by what means we know not. He may have come by rail over the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, at least part way.

He stayed in the vicinity of Harper's Ferry until the morning of the 4th, when he left for Frederick, Maryland. During his visit he had many rides and consultations with the commanding general, reviewing the troops, visiting the different encampments, and go-

ing over the battlefields of South Mountain and Antietam.

General O. O. Howard relates this anecdote as occurring during one of the reviews:

“As the generals and handsome staff officers escorted the President near to my front I joined the reviewing party. Mr. Lincoln rode along in silence, returning the salutes. . . . Suddenly we saw a little engine named ‘The Fying Dutchman’ fly past us on a railroad track. Mr. Lincoln seeing it and hearing a shrill, wild scream from its saluting whistle, laughed aloud. He doubtless was thinking of John Brown’s terrorism of a few years before, for we were near the famous engine-house where John Brown was finally penned up and made prisoner; for, referring to the locomotive, Mr. Lincoln said: ‘They ought to call that thing “The Skeared Virginian.”’”

In November, General A. E. Burnside replaced McClellan as head of the Army of the Potomac. It was his plan to move the army southward with Fredericksburg as the objective, from which point he intended to press towards Richmond. As the army lay along the north bank of the Rappahannock River, it faced that of Lee, at Fredericksburg along the south bank.

On the 27th of the month, the President, in the steamer *Baltimore*, went down the Potomac as far as Aquia Creek, where he and Burnside had a lengthy consultation. Lincoln thought that the plans of his new commander as outlined were too hazardous, and formulated a set of his own. Exception being taken to these by both Burnside and Halleck, the President allowed himself to be overruled.

After the terrible repulse of Burnside, in December at Fredericksburg, General Joseph Hooker was placed in command of the Army of the Potomac. From that time until spring he devoted his energies to whipping the army into shape for a new trial of strength with Lee, who was still camped at Fredericksburg, where Burnside had failed to dislodge him.

It was the intention that President Lincoln should review the various encampments preliminary to the engagement, and on April 4, 1863, he embarked on the river steamer *Carrie Martin* from the Washington Navy Yard, bound for Falmouth, General Hooker's headquarters.

A severe snowstorm set in shortly after leaving Washington, which rendered navigation so difficult that the party had to anchor for the night in a small cove on the Virginia shore of the Potomac, opposite Indian Head, Maryland.

The next morning the little steamer reached the landing place called "The Creek" on Aquia Creek, where the party disembarked with the snow-fall unabated.

Brooks, the newspaper correspondent, accompanied the party as a friend of the President, and describes this port as a "village of hastily constructed warehouses," with "its water front lined with transports and government steamers. Enormous freight-trains were continually running from it to the army encamped among the hills of Virginia lying between the Rappahannock and the Potomac. As there were 60,000 horses and mules to be fed in the army, the single item of daily forage was a considerable factor in the problem of transportation."

At Aquia Creek elaborate railroad facilities had been provided to take the distinguished party inland.

"The President and his party," says Brooks, "were provided with an ordinary freight car, fitted up with rough plank benches, and profusely decorated with flags and bunting. A great crowd of army people saluted the President with cheers when he landed from the steamer, and with 'three times three' when his unpretentious railroad carriage rolled away."

This road, then in possession of the Union forces, was what was known as the Aquia Creek Railroad, in operation since 1842 from Fredericksburg to Aquia Creek, constructed by the old Richmond, Fredericksburg and Potomac Railroad Company. It was several times destroyed and rebuilt during the War.

The President remained with the army about a week, reviewing the different divisions, which made an excellent showing, but he was rather disheartened at the over-confidence of Hooker.

How well this apprehension was justified is shown by the defeat three weeks later at Chancellorsville, when Lee again routed the Federal forces. The news of this latter repulse reached Lincoln on the afternoon of May 6, and he immediately got into action.

At four o'clock that same afternoon he and General Halleck having boarded a steamer ordered for the purpose, left Washington for the headquarters of the defeated Hooker. Arriving there, he gathered the details for himself, and immediately formulated plans for the next campaign. On this occasion President Lincoln probably stayed but a day or two.

The next journey of which we have record, was the

trip taken to the battlefield of Gettysburg, in November of that year, treated separately in another chapter.

On April 14, 1864, Lincoln delivered an address at the Sanitary Fair held in Baltimore, coming and going by way of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. This Fair was for the purpose of raising money for the United States Sanitary Commission, corresponding to our modern Red Cross. While at Baltimore, President Lincoln remained at least over one night, staying at a private residence.

On June 16 he spoke at a similar affair in Philadelphia, necessarily using the Baltimore and Ohio as far as Baltimore, thence going by the Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore road.

Some months later in conversing with two ladies who had requested his presence at another Sanitary Fair to be held in Chicago, he gave a rather humorous account of his visit to the Quaker City. The interview occurred only about five weeks before his assassination.

He started in by saying that he did not know whether he wanted to attend any more of those big Fairs, and then added: "Why, I was nearly pulled to pieces before I reached Philadelphia. The train stopped at every station on the route, and at many places where there were no stations, only people; and my hand was nearly wrung off before I reached the Fair. Then from the depot for two miles it was a solid mass of people blocking the way. Everywhere there were people shouting and cheering; and they would reach into the carriage and shake hands, and hold on, until I was afraid they would be killed, or I pulled from the carriage.

"When we reached the Fair it was worse yet. The

police tried to open a way through the crowds for me, but they had to give it up; and I didn't know as I was going to get in at all. The people were everywhere; and, if they saw me starting for a place, they rushed there first, and stood shouting, hurrahing, and trying to shake hands. By and by the Committee had worried me along to a side door, which they suddenly opened, pushed me in, and then turned the key; and that gave me a chance to lunch, shake myself, and draw a long breath.

“That was the only quiet moment I had; for all the time I was in Philadelphia I was crowded, and jostled, and pulled about, and cheered, and serenaded, until I was more used up than I ever remember to have been in my life. I don't believe I could stand another Fair.”

Before they left, however, the ladies had secured the President's promise to be present at the Fair to be held in the Northwest.

Four days after his appearance at the Fair in Philadelphia, we find President Lincoln leaving Washington at five o'clock in the afternoon, again bound for Army headquarters. But this time, although at a period of great anxiety, he must have nevertheless been far more light-hearted than on any of his previous excursions, for he was now going to confer at last with a man in whom he had absolute confidence, General U. S. Grant, in supreme command of the Union forces. Grant's headquarters at City Point, up the James River, were reached the next day, the President having had a rough voyage on the way down. He stayed but a day or two, reviewing the troops and conversing with the officers.

Lincoln's Secretary of the Navy meeting him at a



Cabinet meeting upon his return home, noted in his diary that "the President was in very good spirits. His journey has done him good, physically, and strengthened him mentally, and inspired confidence in the General and army."

It was this same Cabinet officer, who a few days before when the President left Washington, had frowned upon the expedition, setting down his view thus:

"This step . . . I do not approve. It has been my policy to discourage these presidential excursions. Some of the Cabinet favored them. Stanton and Chase, I think, have given them countenance heretofore.

"He can do no good. It can hardly be otherwise than harmful, even if no accident befalls him. Better for him and the country that he should remain at his post here. It would be advantageous if he remained away from the War Department and required his Cabinet to come to him."

On July 30, the President went to Fort Monroe for another consultation with General Grant. It was evidently of short duration for he was home the following day. This trip, presumably, was also made by water.

On February 2 of the following year we find President Lincoln again repairing to this fortress, preceded a day by Secretary of State Seward, this time for the purpose of attending a conference with three Confederate Commissioners with the avowed purpose of a cessation of hostilities. On the morning of the 3rd a meeting was held in the cabin of the transport, *River Queen*, which, however, as is well known, was devoid of results.

The return trip was made partly by water and

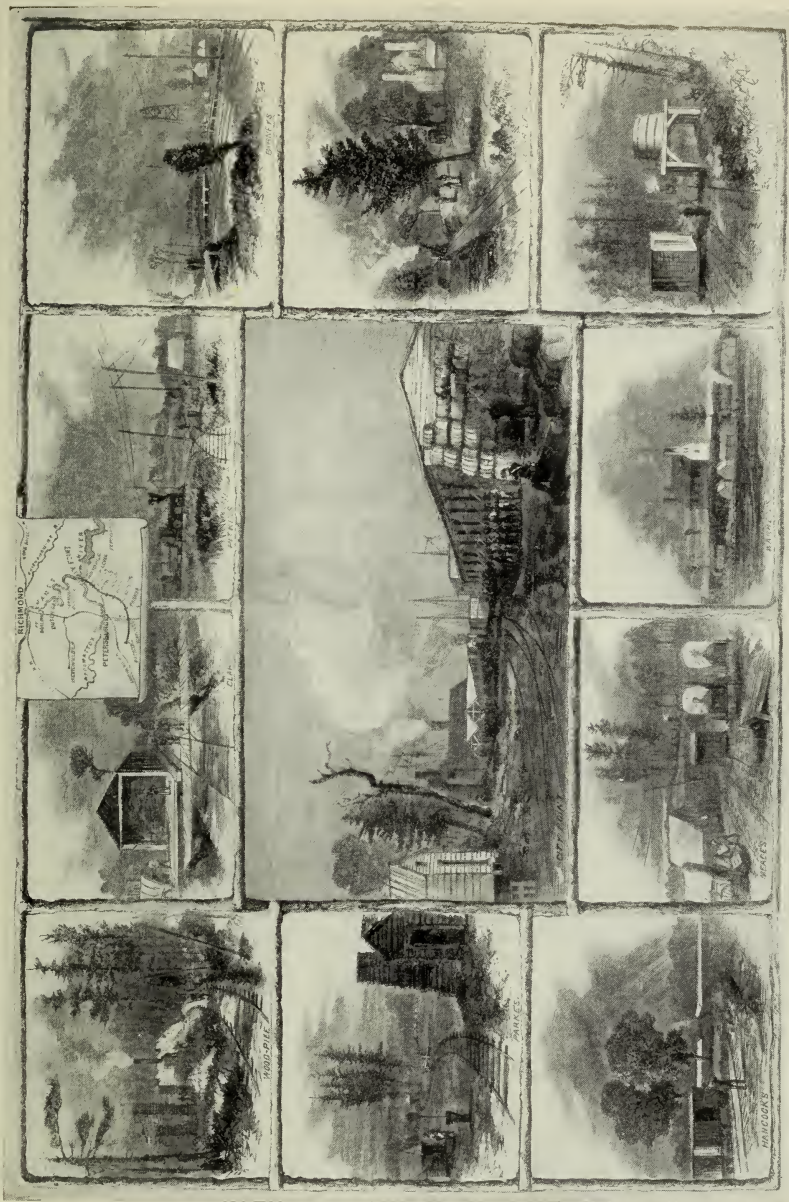
partly by rail, in the same manner as they had gone to Hampton Roads. The transport proceeded up the Chesapeake Bay to Annapolis, where the party disembarked. Here a special engine and car had been provided by Secretary Stanton.

From Annapolis to Annapolis Junction, the old Annapolis and Elkridge Railroad, repaired by General Butler in 1861, was used, and from the latter point into Washington, the Baltimore and Ohio.

An incident that occurred while the party was waiting for the train to pull out of Annapolis was related many years later to David Homer Bates, one of the War Department telegraph operators, by Major Thomas T. Eckert, his chief in the old days. Major Eckert had preceded both Seward and Lincoln in opening negotiations with the Confederate Commissioners as a sort of personal representative of the President, and was well thought of by Lincoln.

"When they [the President's party] reached the old railroad station," says Bates, "the platform was crowded with people all eager to catch a glimpse of the President. In the crowd there were many newspaper reporters interested in obtaining definite news, or even a hint, from Lincoln, Seward, or Eckert, as to the outcome of the momentous meeting. On the platform Eckert recognized an acquaintance, who managed to draw him aside, and, in a hurried conversation, which he said must be strictly confidential, asked him for the result of the conference, at the same time placing in his hand an envelope, saying that the contents would recompense him for his trouble.

"After some parleying, Eckert returned to the car,



Courtesy, Norfolk & Western Railroad

GRANT'S MILITARY RAILROAD IN VIRGINIA

These sketches appeared in Harper's Weekly, issue of December 24, 1864, and were made by A. W. Warren. This is the road that President Lincoln was familiar with, and traveled over, when he visited Grant in the spring of 1865.



and in Lincoln's presence opened the envelope and showed him a certified check for \$100,000, telling him how it came into his hands. Lincoln asked who gave it to him. Eckert replied: 'I am not at liberty to say, but when the train is ready to leave, I will be on the platform, and hand the envelope to the man from whom I received it, so that you can see who he is.' This was done, Eckert telling the man that he was obliged to decline the offer, and could give him no news of the conference. Lincoln saw the transaction, and recognized the man as one prominent in political affairs, and who had held a responsible position in one of the Western states.

"Upon returning to the car, Lincoln remained silent for a long time, but afterward, when he and Eckert could converse together without attracting Seward's special attention, or that of Robert S. Chew, his private secretary, it was agreed that neither should disclose the incident to any one excepting only Secretary Stanton, Eckert contending that the effect on public opinion generally, and especially as it related to the Administration, of an announcement of such an offer having been made, would be very injurious at a time of such extreme tension, and that if the public were to learn of the failure of the Peace Conference, without at the same time receiving Lincoln's own clear explanation, they would be inclined to criticize him for having once more defeated possibly well-meant efforts to bring the war to an end."

It was the morning of the 4th when the party arrived home.

We have but one more excursion of President Lincoln

to consider, during which he was away from Washington for a longer period of time than any other. While this trip was necessarily more or less of a business nature, yet it was the nearest approach to a vacation which Abraham Lincoln had during his incumbency of the Presidential chair, and we therefore propose to treat of it in detail.

On March 20 General Grant telegraphed from his headquarters to President Lincoln: "Can you not visit City Point for a day or two? I would like very much to see you, and I think the rest would do you good."

That same day Grant received the following reply: "Your kind invitation received. Had already thought of going immediately after the next rain. Will go sooner if any reason for it. Mrs. Lincoln and a few others will probably accompany me. Will notify you of exact time, once it shall be fixed upon."

On the 23rd the following supplementary message was sent, and the party embarked on the *River Queen*: "We start to you at 1 P. M. to-day. May lie over during the dark hours of the night. Very small party of us. A. Lincoln."

The following day about nine o'clock in the evening the transport arrived at City Point, and after a warm exchange of greetings with General Grant and some of his staff, the presidential party retired to their rooms on board the vessel, as they were fatigued from the voyage.

While at breakfast the next morning, news of an engagement near the front was brought, and later learning that the Union forces had been successful, the

President determined to visit the scene of action.

Captain Barnes of the Navy, who as commander of the gunboat *Bat* acting as convoy to the *River Queen*, had been ordered by the Department to place himself under the immediate directions of President Lincoln, and who was charged with his safe return to Washington, says in describing this little jaunt:

"A special train was made up about noontime, and with a large party, we slowly proceeded over the Military Railroad, roughly constructed between City Point and the front, to General Meade's headquarters. On our arrival there, and indeed before we reached the scene, while we were passing through a portion of the field of battle, the very serious nature of the conflict of that morning was apparent.

"The Confederates under General Gordon, at early daylight, had made a swift and sudden assault upon our lines of investment of Petersburg, had captured Fort Stedman and several other batteries, with many persons, including a general officer, and driven our men back close to and over the railroad embankment upon which our train was then halted. The ground immediately about us was still strewn with dead and wounded men, Federal and Confederate. The whole army was under arms and moving to the left, where the fight was still going on, and a desultory firing of both musketry and artillery was seen and heard."

The President, escorted by General Meade, both on horseback, rode over the ground, witnessing the harrowing scenes always attendant after a military conflict, the cries and groans of the wounded and dying,

the heaps of dead lying around, the gruesome work of the burial parties. This naturally had its effect upon the sympathetic Lincoln.

“Once again on the train,” narrates Barnes, “to which cars filled with our wounded men had been attached, Mr. Lincoln looked worn and haggard. He remarked that he had seen enough of the horrors of war, that he hoped this was the beginning of the end, and that there would be no more bloodshed or ruin of homes.”

The return movement of the train to City Point was slow, and due to his late experiences, the President retired to the *River Queen* for the rest of the day with his family, declining Grant’s invitation to supper at his headquarters. The night was spent aboard the boat.

The next morning as Lincoln sauntered into the tent of the telegraph operators connected with the army at City Point, he pulled a telegram from his pocket and smiled at the officers sitting there.

“The serious Stanton is actually becoming facetious,” he said. “Just listen to what he says in his despatch:

“Your telegram and Parke’s report of the scrimmage of this morning are received. The rebel rooster looks a little the worse, as he could not hold the fence. We have nothing new here. Now you are away, everything is quiet and the tormentor’s vanished. I hope you will remember General Harrison’s advice to his men at Tippecanoe, that they can “see as well a little farther off.” ’ ’ ”

Meanwhile at Washington, just about this time, the Secretary of War was remarking in the presence of two



other Cabinet officers, "that it was quite as pleasant to have the President away, that he [Stanton] was much less annoyed." To which sally neither of the others responded.

Secretary Welles, who formerly had frowned upon these "presidential excursions," now seems rather inclined to condone Lincoln's latest offense. The day that the President left Washington we find he noted in his diary :

"The President has gone to the front; partly to get rid of the throng that is pressing upon him, though there are speculations of a different character. He makes his office much more laborious than he should. Does not generalize and takes upon himself questions that properly belong to the Departments, often causing derangement and irregularity. The more he yields, the greater the pressure upon him. It has now become such that he is compelled to flee. There is no doubt he is much worn down; besides he wished the war terminated, and, to this end, that severe terms shall not be exacted on the rebels."

Later on the 26th there was to be a review of that portion of the Army of the James encamped on the north side of the James River, and the President and party left City Point in their boat about eleven o'clock that morning.

After the ceremonies, the boat returned, reaching City Point about dark. That evening a band was brought aboard and dancing was indulged in by some of the party; however, neither President Lincoln nor General Grant joined in this diversion, but sat conferring together.

The next morning Lincoln spent ashore at Grant's headquarters, listening to the conversation about him. According to the opinions expressed by the officers, the fall of Petersburg was imminent and that of Richmond would of necessity follow.

The afternoon was given over to an excursion to what was called the Point of Rocks, on the Appomattox River, rendered historical as the spot where Pocahontas had saved the life of Captain John Smith.

That evening General Sherman, who had detached himself from his army, arrived, and paid his respects to the President.

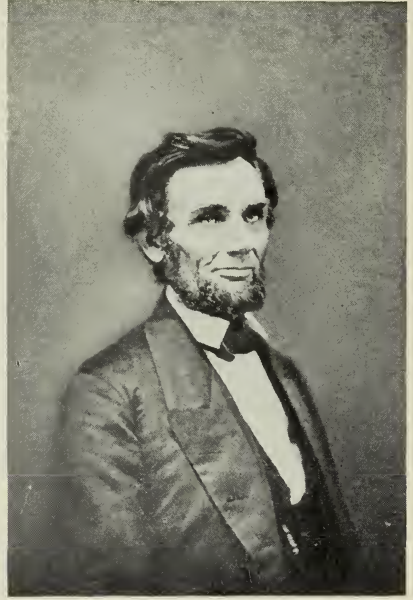
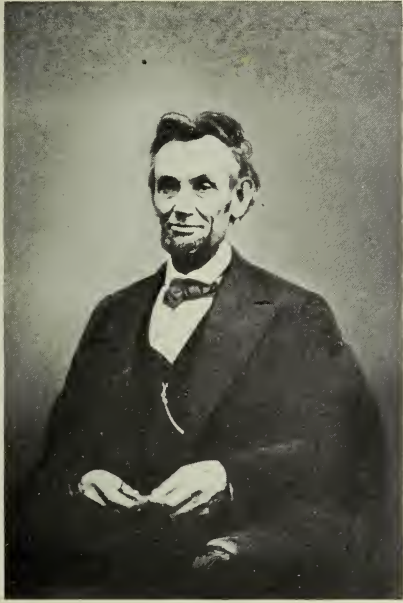
On the following day, the 28th, occurred the famous conference in the cabin of the *River Queen*, participated in by President Lincoln, Generals Grant and Sherman, and Admiral Porter.

The plans of the army were given in detail to the President by Grant and Sherman. He listened carefully and expressed a desire to act leniently toward the vanquished enemy, exclaiming again and again against any more bloodshed, when in the opinion of both generals the possibility of one more bloody battle was apparent.

General Grant explained that Sheridan at that time was preparing to strike the South Side and Danville Railroads with his magnificent cavalry force.

The South Side Railroad was a road then one hundred and twenty-three miles in length, extending from Petersburg to Lynchburg, Virginia, and had been in operation for about ten years. It is now a part of the Norfolk and Western Railway.

The Danville road was evidently what was then



*Courtesy, F. H. Meserve*

PHOTOGRAPHS OF LINCOLN

1. One of the last portraits of Lincoln; taken within the week of his assassination. 2. Portrait taken early in 1861.



corporately known as the Richmond and Danville Railroad, extending from Richmond to Danville, Virginia, a distance of one hundred and forty miles. It is now part of the Southern Railway system.

When Sherman had stated his plans, outlining the relative positions of his army and that of General Joseph E. Johnston, against whom he was pitted, Lincoln mentioned the possibility of the Confederate army escaping south again by making use of the railroads, and that then the chase would have to be begun again.

Sherman, however, contended that this was impracticable. "I have him," he said, "where he cannot move without breaking up his army, which, once disbanded, can never again be gotten together: and I have destroyed the Southern railroads, so that they cannot be used again for a long time."

"What is to prevent their laying the rails again?" Grant asked.

"My 'bummers' don't do things by halves," Sherman replied. "Every rail, after having been placed over a hot fire, has been twisted as crooked as a ram's-horn, and they never can be used again."

The roads to which General Sherman was paying his respects were then known as the Macon and Western Railroad, extending from Atlanta to Macon, Georgia, a distance of one hundred and five miles, and the Central Railroad and Banking Company of Georgia, running from Macon to Savannah, Georgia, one hundred and ninety miles in length. These roads are now both a part of the Central of Georgia Railway.

In a recent communication, President Winburn of

the Central of Georgia says: "It may interest you to know that the line of the Central Railroad and Banking Company of Georgia from Macon to Savannah was completely destroyed during the latter part of 1864 by General Sherman in his march from Atlanta to the sea. The rails were removed, station buildings, water-tanks, and any other transportation adjunct that would burn went the way of the torch. Many of the locomotives and cars were burned all along the line."

It had been decided that Grant's headquarters should be moved nearer to the Petersburg front, and the following morning about half past eight o'clock the President came ashore to bid the General and staff good-by. They were to go by way of the military railroad to the terminus near Petersburg, and Lincoln accompanied the party to the station. When the train was ready to pull out, he was almost overcome with emotion. Shaking the officers by the hand, and returning their salutes, he said:

"Good-by, gentlemen. God bless you all! Remember, your success is my success."

After this departure, President Lincoln spent the next several days in quarters provided for him on Admiral Porter's flagship, *Malvern*.

On April 2 he received a telegram from Grant to the effect that Petersburg was "completely enveloped from river below to river above" and suggesting that the President come to see him on the morrow. The next morning another telegram was received stating that Petersburg was evacuated, and Lincoln determined to go to that point at once. A train was made up, and the celerity with which this was done may be imagined when

we learn that it consisted, in addition to the engine, of a single car.

One of the party, a French marquis, has left his recollections of this little journey by rail. "Our car," he says, "was an ordinary American car, and we took seats in its center, grouping ourselves around Mr. Lincoln. In spite of the car's being devoted to Mr. Lincoln's special use, several officers also took their places in it without attracting any remark. Curiosity, it seems, also had induced the negro waiters of the *River Queen* to accompany us. The President, who was blinded by no prejudices against race or color, and who had not what can be termed false dignity, allowed them to sit quietly with us.

"For several miles the train followed the outer line of Federal fortifications which extended at our left; we were a half hour without noticing them; at the end of that time we reached a place known as Fort Stedman; there a battle had been fought less than a fortnight before. . . . Since then, however, both armies had buried their dead and carried away their wounded. The ground, foot-trodden and here and there broken up by the wheels of artillery wagons, had retained no other traces of a past so recent and so terrible.

"Farther on we crossed the Confederate lines of defense that had protected Petersburg. Soon Petersburg loomed up in the distance. Mr. Lincoln gazed awhile on its first houses, which had been partly destroyed by Federal bullets. When we had passed these the train slackened its speed; it had been hardly possible to open us a path through this mass of ruins; at our left the depot buildings were torn down, on the right the rail-

road bridge had been wrenched by the explosion of a mine."

Coffin, the correspondent, was in Petersburg and witnessed the President's entry. "I heard the whistle of the locomotive on the military railroad," he says, "and saw the train which brought President Lincoln to the scene. The soldiers saw him, swung their hats, and gave a yell of delight. He lifted his hat and bowed. Perhaps I was mistaken, but the lines upon his face seemed far deeper than I had ever seen them before. There was no sign of exultation in his demeanor."

Of course, while there the President had a long conference with General Grant, and shortly thereafter repaired to the train which took the party back to City Point.

The railroad extending between City Point and Petersburg was a line nine miles long, constructed in 1837, and now known as the City Point Branch of the Norfolk and Western Railway, of which road it was the genesis.

That evening, receiving a telegram from Secretary Stanton objecting to the Chief Executive's "unnecessary exposure," he sent one in reply thanking him for his caution, but stating that he had already been to Petersburg, and as it was certain that Richmond had fallen, added "I think I will go there to-morrow. I will take care of myself."

The next morning, before starting for Richmond, he sent Stanton another telegram stating that "General Weitzel telegraphs from Richmond that of railroad stock, he found there 28 locomotives, 44 passenger and baggage cars, and 106 freight cars."



The President then boarded the *River Queen*, and attended by Porter's *Malvern* and the tug *Bat* proceeded up the James River to Richmond which was reached that afternoon.

General Weitzel had taken the Confederate Executive Mansion near the Capitol Grounds for his headquarters, and for a while President Lincoln sat in the office chair but recently occupied by Jefferson Davis. Later he was driven around the city, being shown the principal points of interest. That evening he slept aboard the *Malvern* and the next day returned to City Point.

The morning of the 8th the party left for Washington, arriving there the evening of the following day.

Secretary Welles noted in his diary under date of Monday, April 10th: "Called on the President, who returned last evening, looking well and feeling well."

Four days later Wilkes Booth's bullet had done its fatal work.

## THE JOURNEY TO GETTYSBURG

In the preceding chapter we have dealt in detail with the various trips by rail and otherwise which Lincoln made as President—with the single exception of that to the Gettysburg battlefield, in 1863. It has demanded separate treatment, for it gave rise to the most famous single document now associated with his name.

The “high tide of the Confederacy” broke on the hard-fought plains and hills of Gettysburg, on July 1st to 3rd, 1863. Lee’s victorious campaigners, not content with holding the Northern forces at bay in Virginia, were making a bold counter-stroke and actually carrying the war up into the North. The little town of Gettysburg just across the border in southern Pennsylvania had been reached, before the Union army under General Meade came up with them. Gettysburg is some sixty miles due north of Washington, and this encircling movement on the part of Lee must have been watched with keen anxiety by Lincoln and his advisers.

A story goes that when news of the Union victory reached the capital late at night, Stanton himself carried it over to the President, who was then in bed, after having himself haunted the telegraph office for hours. Lincoln leaped up at the sound of his voice without taking time to dress and opened the door to his bedchamber, exhibiting—as Stanton afterwards said—the shortest nightshirt and the longest pair of legs he ever saw. He

grabbed Stanton by the shoulders and they danced a can-can around the room!

By a strange coincidence of history, on the day that news of Meade's victory was sent over the country—the Fourth of July—Grant telegraphed from the South that Vicksburg had fallen. This opened up the mouth of the Mississippi. So it was a "Glorious Fourth" indeed.

Since Meade had not followed up his victory by a rear attack upon the retreating forces of Lee, Grant was put in supreme command of the Union forces. With characteristic energy he deployed his forces to the east and fought the battle of Lookout Mountain. He next split the Confederacy in twain by sending Sherman on his march through Georgia to the sea.

The autumn of this year, 1863, saw brighter skies for the Union than at any time since Lincoln's incumbency in office. A spirit of optimism and thanksgiving pervaded the North. As one result, it was decided to dedicate the battlefield of Gettysburg as a National Soldiers' Cemetery. Two prime movers in this were Governor Curtin of Pennsylvania and David Wills, an influential citizen of Gettysburg.

The project quickly elicited wide interest, and preparations were made on a fitting scale. Edward Everett, the brilliant statesman and orator of Massachusetts, was asked to deliver the dedicatory address. He accepted, and the date agreed upon was November 19.

The President of the United States, his Cabinet, General Meade, commander of the Union forces during the battle, and other prominent men were invited to be present. President Lincoln was asked to "formally set

aside these grounds to their sacred use by a few appropriate remarks." The invitation being accepted, Secretary Stanton was thereupon authorized to make the necessary arrangements for transportation.

It is not our purpose to consider the "Gettysburg Address" as such for obvious reasons, except in-so-far as it relates to the preparation of the document and its attendant circumstances.

Three different sets of claims have been advanced:

First, that the address was composed in Washington before the journey;

Second, that the address was written by the President while on the train enroute to Gettysburg; and

Third, that it was not written until his arrival at the home of David Wills, by whom he was entertained.

From a careful analysis of the controversy, it is our opinion that work was done upon the preparation of his speech by President Lincoln upon all three of the occasions referred to.

Noah Brooks, newspaper correspondent and intimate friend of Lincoln, tells of his accompanying the President to Gardner, the photographer, on the Sunday before the dedication of the Cemetery, at which time Lincoln showed him a copy of the speech which Everett was to deliver, and which he had kindly sent him. Lincoln told Brooks that he had already written out his remarks but had not finished them. His speech, he said, would be "short, short, short." Bringing his notes with him, he had expected to go over them in the studio, but had no chance to do so.

Ward Lamon, Marshal of the District of Columbia under Lincoln, says that, a day or two before the dedi-

cation, the President took from his hat a sheet of foolscap, which he showed him as being a memorandum of what he intended his remarks to be on that occasion. Lamont says that they were in substance what afterward appeared in print as his Gettysburg speech.

Isaac N. Arnold, friend of the President and Representative in Washington during the war, says in his "Lincoln and the Overthrow of Slavery": "President Lincoln while on his way from the Capital to the battlefield, was notified that he would be expected to make some remarks. Retiring a short time, he prepared the following address," etc.

In his biography of Lincoln prepared some years later, the same writer states that Lincoln, after being notified while on the train that he would be expected to make some remarks, asked for some paper. "A rough sheet of foolscap was handed to him, and retiring to a seat by himself, with a pencil he wrote the address which has become so celebrated."

J. G. Holland, editor of the *Springfield Republican* and later of *Scribner's Monthly*, the best of the early biographers, whose life of Lincoln came out in 1866 and contained much original matter, after giving the speech, said: "Did Mr. Everett say more or better in all his pages than Mr. Lincoln said in these lines? Yet they were written after he left Washington, and during a brief interval of leisure."

William O. Stoddard, one of the President's private secretaries, although not with his Chief on this journey, has written many intimate details of Lincoln. In his "True Story of a Great Life" in referring to the address Stoddard says that "after leaving Washington,

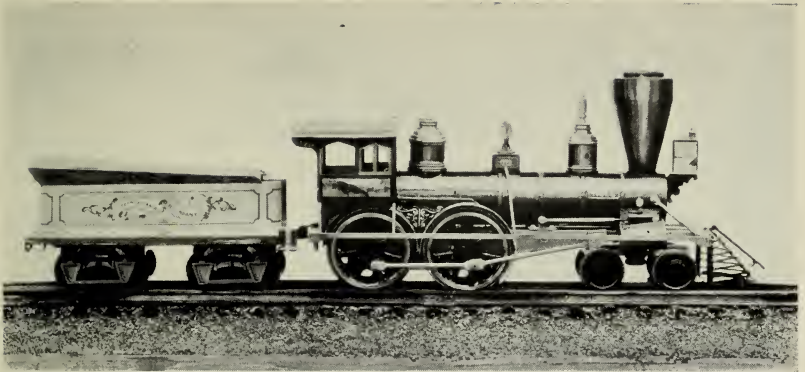
while on the way, he wrote a few sentences which have found a lasting place in the hearts and memories of men."

Charles Carleton Coffin, a noted war correspondent during the Civil War, and an interesting investigator, in his biography of the Martyr President, on the authority of Edward McPherson of Gettysburg, relates that just before retiring Lincoln asked his host, David Wills, what the order of exercises for the morrow would be. On being told that the President of the United States would be called on for some remarks, Lincoln is reported to have said that then he would have "to put some stray thoughts together." And Coffin adds, "In his chamber, after the fatiguing journey from Washington, after an evening reception, he wrote out his 'stray thoughts.'"

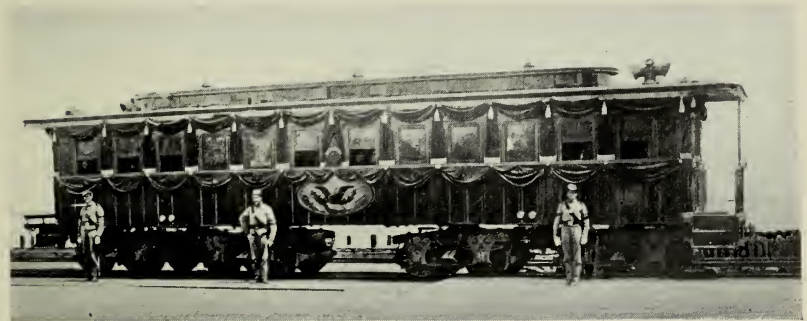
These statements are fair samples of what other authorities have said of like import. It is now pretty generally agreed upon by those who have given careful study to the matter, that Lincoln worked on a draft of his intended speech before he left Washington, at least a week or two before the dedication. It is also conceded that after his arrival in Gettysburg, in the privacy of his room in Judge Will's home, he got out his draft and finished it.

As to whether he did any work upon it while on the train from Washington to Gettysburg, there is no unanimity of opinion. That point we will consider in its proper place in tracing the movements of Lincoln upon this historic occasion.

We are informed by John G. Nicolay, secretary to the President, that up to within two days of the date



*Courtesy, Pennsylvania Railroad*



*Courtesy, Union Pacific Railroad*

LOCOMOTIVE USED IN 1855 AND THE LINCOLN "FUNERAL CAR"

1. The locomotive, "Tiger," used by the Pennsylvania Railroad between 1855 and 1865. 2. Photograph of the "Funeral Car" taken at Chicago, May 1, 1865.





assigned for the ceremonies, the President was uncertain whether he really should take the time away from his pressing official duties to attend. On that date it was apparently decided at a Cabinet meeting that he and those of the Cabinet who could conveniently get away should go. To Secretary of the Treasury Chase, who had not been present, Lincoln addressed the following note:

“My Dear Sir: I expected to see you here at Cabinet meeting, and to say something about going to Gettysburg. There will be a train to take and return us. The time for starting is not yet fixed, but when it shall be I will notify you.

Yours truly,  
A. LINCOLN.”

Later in the day, Secretary Stanton, to whom had been assigned the task of making the necessary transportation arrangements, sent this note to his Executive officer:

“Mr. President:

“It is proposed by the Baltimore and Ohio road—

“First, To leave Washington Thursday morning at 6 A. M.; and

“Second, To leave Baltimore at 8 A. M., arriving at Gettysburg at 12 noon, thus giving two hours to view the ground before the dedication services commence.

“Third, To leave Gettysburg at 6 P. M., and arrive in Washington, midnight; thus doing all in one day.

“Mr. Smith says the Northern Central road agrees to this arrangement.

“Please consider it, and if any change is desired, let me know, so that it can be made.

Yours truly,

EDWIN M. STANTON.”

This arrangement, however, did not suit the President, and he returned Stanton’s communication with the following notation :

“I do not like this arrangement. I do not wish to so go that by the slightest accident we fail entirely, and, at the best, the whole to be a mere breathless running of the gauntlet. But, any way.

A. LINCOLN.”

Lincoln’s objection to the “time-table” of Stanton convinced the latter that the schedule needed remodeling, so instead of leaving Washington the morning of the ceremonies, the time of leaving was changed to noon of the day before, Wednesday the 18th.

Wayne MacVeagh, a rising young lawyer of Pennsylvania at that time, and later known as a statesman and diplomat, happening to be in Washington a day or two before the dedicatory exercises in consultation with President Lincoln and Secretary Stanton, was asked by the former to accompany the party to Gettysburg as his guest on the special train. MacVeagh had been serving on the staff of General Couch during the summer, and replied that the General had kindly offered to take him along as his aide. But Lincoln told MacVeagh that there were certain matters he wished to talk over with him, which could be done more conveniently on the road to Gettysburg than at some other

time. The attorney then said that he would accept the invitation with pleasure. On the morning of the 18th MacVeagh arrived in Washington and took breakfast with Stanton. The Secretary, who had expected to accompany the party to Gettysburg, then informed him that an unexpected emergency arising in the War Department would keep him in Washington, but that he had made arrangements with President Lincoln for his son to go in his stead. He asked his visitor if he would not look after young Stanton on the journey, which request was gladly acceded to.

Provost-Marshal General James B. Fry was selected by Stanton as a sort of special escort to accompany the President, and at the hour appointed went to the White House. There he found Lincoln's carriage at the door waiting to take him to the station, but the President was not ready. After a while he appeared, and General Fry, remarking on the lateness of the hour, said that they had no time to lose in getting to the train.

"Well," Lincoln replied, "I feel about that as the convict in one of our Illinois towns felt when he was going to the gallows. As he passed along the road in custody of the sheriff, the people, eager to see the execution, kept crowding and pushing past him. At last he called out: "'Boys, you needn't be in such a hurry to get ahead; there won't be any fun till I get there.'"

When the President and General Fry arrived at the Baltimore and Ohio station, they found the train awaiting them. It consisted of a locomotive and four coaches. The locomotive was gaily decorated with flags and streamers. The rear coach was a directors' car, the back of which, occupying about one-third of the coach,

was partitioned off into a kind of room with seats around the walls.

The train was soon in motion. But three members of the President's Cabinet accompanied him: Secretary of State Seward, Secretary of the Interior Usher, and Postmaster-General Blair. Two of his secretaries were present, John G. Nicolay and John Hay. Several foreign embassies were represented. There was the French Minister M. Mercier, and Admiral Renaud of the French Navy; Chevalier Bertinatti, the Italian Minister, and Signor Cora, his Secretary of Legation, as well as Chevalier Isola and Lieutenant Martinez, of the Italian Navy; Mr. McDougall represented the Canadian Ministry. Colonel George W. Burton, and Captain Alan Ramsay of the Marine Corps were there, as was the Marine Band, Lieutenant Henry C. Cochrane in charge. There was also an escort from the First Regiment of the Invalids' Corps. Captain H. A. Wise of the Navy and his wife, the daughter of Edward Everett the orator of the day, were also present. In addition, there were several newspaper correspondents and a military Guard of Honor which was to take part in the procession at Gettysburg; as well as young Stanton and MacVeagh. On the way, at different points, various military officers joined the Presidential train.

Lieutenant Cochrane found himself seated opposite President Lincoln, and noticing that the Executive had no newspaper, handed him a copy of the *New York Herald* which he had brought along. Lincoln took the paper and thanked Cochrane.

"I like to see what they say about us," he remarked.

This particular issue contained nothing of an espe-

cially exciting nature, the most important news pertaining to Burnside at Knoxville, Sherman at Chattanooga, and Meade on the Rapidan. These generals, however, were expecting imminent trouble.

After reading for a short while, President Lincoln indulged in a laugh at some of the wild guesses the paper made concerning future movements of the armies. Cochrane says that it was a pleasure to see the President's sad face light up, for he thought that at this time the Executive was looking very bad physically, sunken-eyed, and careworn.

Lincoln handed back the paper, and commenced a conversation with his companion. Glancing out of the window as they passed over the road, a new line of thought was suggested. He remarked on a certain change which he had noticed in the craft that plied the Chesapeake. When he had first passed over the road on his way to Congress in 1847, he had observed square-rigged vessels up the Patapsco River as far as the Relay House, while now there seemed to be only small vessels.

As the special train neared Baltimore, Secretary Seward became uneasy. This was the first time that the President had gone toward Baltimore since he had arrived there in February, 1861, and Seward could not help but think of Lincoln's journey at that time when he had to pass secretly through Baltimore for fear of an attack upon his life. As the western edge of the city was reached, the locomotive was detached from the train. The cars were then dragged by horses to the Northern Central Railway tracks, at Calvert Street Station. Thence to Hanover Junction the train would

travel over the Northern Central, where they could connect with the Western Maryland running into Gettysburg.

Everything was peaceful as the train was hauled through Baltimore, and when Calvert station was reached less than two hundred people were found there. The crowd in an orderly manner clamored for the President, and at the suggestion of Seward, he stepped out on the platform when the train was about ready to move.

Several women with children in their arms were in the crowd, and Lincoln took two or three of them in his arms and kissed them, to the delight of the mothers.

At this Junction the size of the party was augmented by the arrival of several more army officers, and the Second United States Artillery Band, one of the oldest and best bands in the army. General Robert C. Schenck, commandant of the Military Department in which Gettysburg was situated, and staff, which included Lieutenant-Colonel J. W. Scully of the staff of the Military Governor of Tennessee; Assistant Adjutant-General E. W. Andrews, of the staff of General W. W. Morris, in command of the defenses of Baltimore; and two other members of Morris' staff, as well as others of whom we have no record, joined the special here.

General Morris, on account of suffering from boils, was unable to be present himself, and General Andrews offered apologies for his chief's absence. The President cordially greeted Andrews and the other officers, and then with a quizzical expression turned to the Postmaster-General.

"Blair," he said, "did you ever know that fright has sometimes proved a sure cure for boils?"

"No, Mr. President. How is that?" Blair asked.

"I'll tell you. Not long ago, when Colonel ——, with his cavalry, was at the front, and the 'rebs' were making things rather lively for us, the Colonel was ordered out on a reconnaissance. He was troubled at the time with a big boil where it made horseback riding decidedly uncomfortable. He hadn't gone more than two or three miles when he declared he couldn't stand it any longer, and dismounted and ordered the troops forward without him. He had just settled down to enjoy his relief from change of position when he was startled by the rapid reports of pistols and the helter-skelter approach of his troops in full retreat before a yelling rebel force. He forgot everything but the yells, sprang into his saddle, and made capital time over fences and ditches till safe within the lines. The pain from his boil was gone, and the boil too, and the colonel swore that there was no cure for boils so sure as fright from rebel yells, and that the secession had rendered to loyalty one valuable service at any rate."

At Baltimore a baggage-car had been attached to the train, in which luncheon had been prepared. As the train left the city, those members of the party who had come from Washington were invited into this car for luncheon.

At this juncture the train was going through a deep cut and the baggage-car was consequently darker than usual. Likewise the noise of the train was greater. President Lincoln sat at the head of the table.

“This situation,” he said, “reminds me of a friend of mine in southern Illinois, who, riding over a corduroy road where the logs were not sufficiently close together, was frightened by a thunderstorm. In the glimpse of light afforded by the lightning, his horse would endeavor to reach another log, but too frequently missed it, and fell with his rider. As a result of several such mishaps, the traveler, although not accustomed to prayer, thought that the time had come to address his Maker, and said: ‘Oh, Lord, if it would suit you equally well, it would suit me better if I had a little more light and a little less noise.’”

As Lincoln concluded the story, the train passed out into the open, where the noise was less and the light greater.

After luncheon, the President became one of a group of kindred spirits, and they whiled away about an hour telling stories, Lincoln doing his turn and deriving much pleasure from the association. As the train neared Hanover Junction, the President arose.

“Gentlemen,” he said, “this is all very pleasant, but the people will expect me to say something to-morrow, and I must give the matter some thought.”

The story-telling party occupied the fore-part of the directors’ coach, and Lincoln retired to the private compartment in the rear.

The above is on the authority of Lieutenant Cochran, who heard the President make the remark as he retired to his compartment.

Lieutenant-Colonel Scully, one of the party who joined the train at Baltimore, says in referring to the charge that Lincoln did no writing on the train, that



“while a hundred or more did not see him write it, their testimony is altogether negative. But I know that at least half a dozen did see him write it, and of whom I was one. I saw him take a pad from the hand of some one; sit down in his ‘state room’; and write *something that he held in his hand while delivering that speech.*”

Major-General Julius H. Stahel, who was on the train, said in a letter to Isaac Markens, in 1911: “I escorted President Lincoln from Washington to Gettysburg, and was with him in the same car when he wrote something on his knee, which I fully believe was the famous address which he delivered at the battlefield.”

From the foregoing, we have the direct evidence of two gentlemen who saw President Lincoln write something in his private compartment, one of whom claims to have seen him hold the same set of notes while delivering the speech. Concerning the latter statement, however, in view of the evidence presented by Nicolay and Lambert in their papers on the Gettysburg address, there seems to be room for doubt, although it is possible that one of the two sheets held by Lincoln at the time of its delivery was either the one upon which he did some writing on the train, or a similar sheet upon which the address was finished at the home of Mr. Wills.

To the mind of the writer, the fact of Lincoln’s retiring to his “state room,” as Scully calls it, to put his thoughts on paper, explains why so many members of the party say they saw him write nothing. As Scully further states, there were only a half dozen saw him. This is accounted for by the fact that the compartment held a limited number of persons.

Furthermore, again to quote Scully, the testimony of certain members of the party to the effect that they *did not* see Lincoln write anything, is "altogether negative." There were three other passenger cars on the train, whose occupants naturally would not be in a position to note what was going on in the fourth coach. Cornelius Cole, Representative from California, who was a member of the party said in a communication to the writer that he was not in Lincoln's car, and "of course I did not see him writing anything."

The President was probably only a short while considering his address on the train, yet nevertheless in view of the direct testimony we have, there is no doubt but that he devoted at least a small portion of the time on the road to Gettysburg in going over certain thoughts which he wished to express on the field of battle the next day. It is the conviction of the writer that the work done on the speech enroute was on the second or last page of the manuscript, about one-third of the address, but whether this was on account of accidentally or purposely leaving this portion back in Washington, or because it had not been thought out, is a matter of conjecture.

On the train was a gentleman who stated that he had lost his only son on "Little Round Top" at Gettysburg, and he was on his way to look at the spot. This touched Lincoln deeply.

"You have been called upon," he said, to the bereaved father, "to make a terrible sacrifice for the Union, and a visit to that spot, I fear, will open your wounds afresh. But oh! my dear sir, if we had reached the end of such sacrifices, and had nothing left for

us to do but place garlands on the graves of those who have already fallen, we could give thanks even amidst our tears; but when I think of the sacrifices of life yet to be offered and the hearts and homes yet to be made desolate before this dreadful war, so wickedly forced upon us, is over, my heart is like lead within me, and I feel, at times, like hiding in deep darkness."

At one of the stopping places, a beautiful little girl, with a bouquet of roses in her hand, was lifted up to a window in Lincoln's car. "Flowerth for the Prethident," she lisped. Lincoln went over to the window, and took the rose-buds. Then he bent down and kissed her.

"You're a sweet little rose-bud yourself," he said, "I hope your life will open into perpetual beauty and goodness."

Every time the train stopped, the President would make a few remarks from the rear platform to the people who had assembled to pay their respects to him, but said nothing particularly noteworthy.

At Hanover Junction, the President's special was scheduled to meet another special train which was due to leave Harrisburg at 1:30 P. M. This train was to contain several governors, as well as other civil dignitaries and military officers. But on the arrival of the Washington special at the Junction, forty-six miles from Baltimore, it was found that the other train had been delayed by an accident. The President's train was then ready to proceed alone, but was delayed here, as at various other points along the line, by military trains, "which always claimed the right-of-way," as stated by Cornelius Cole, who is our authority for this.

As the special neared Gettysburg, the President

found time for a short talk with Wayne MacVeagh. The nature of their conversation is not disclosed by MacVeagh in his reminiscences of the event, but according to Secretary Hay, who heard the colloquy, it related to affairs in Missouri at that time. Hay says that MacVeagh talked radicalism, and talked it rather recklessly, but when he realized that he was going too far, he ceased.

No accident occurred enroute, yet for the reason stated, the train was somewhat late in arriving at Gettysburg. Lincoln's wisdom in not adhering to Stanton's close schedule is apparent.

A large crowd awaited the arrival of the distinguished visitors at the little depot on Carlisle Street. Among them was Edward Everett, who had spent the day in going over the battlefield, and who now lost no time in greeting his distinguished fellow-speaker.

President Lincoln was entertained overnight, as we have said, at the home of David Wills. On the following morning, a gray November day, the battlefield was inspected and final arrangements made for the exercises. They began in the afternoon with a large chorus of well-trained voices, and selections by the fine military bands. Edward Everett, the speaker of the day, was introduced, and for two hours he held the attention of the throng with his polished sentences and rounded periods. It was an excellent example of sustained oratory. His hearers applauded, and the chorus sang another selection.

Fresh applause greeted the tall form which next arose. On account of the chilly day, Lincoln wore a long scarf around his shoulders over his long coat, and his

familiar "stove-pipe" hat. Referring casually to the notes held in his hand, he began the now immortal lines, "Fourscore and seven years ago." Hardly had the audience sensed that he had begun his speech, when he had ended it and sat down again. In a period of about three minutes—contrasting sharply with Everett's long address—Lincoln had reached his concluding phrase, "and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

"Is that all he has to say?" asked more than one hearer; and it is said that Secretary Seward was no less disappointed. But Everett was more generous. He wrote Lincoln as follows:

"I should be glad if I could flatter myself that I came as near the central idea of the occasion in two hours, as you did in two minutes."

After the dedicatory exercises were over, the presidential party repaired to their train, which had been held in waiting, and which left the village about six o'clock. As the train pulled out, Lincoln stood on the rear platform, and waved his farewell until he was lost to sight in the gathering twilight.

The entire party was fatigued with the strenuous exercises of the day and preceding night, and the President was no exception. He had acquired a severe headache, and lay down in the private compartment of the directors' car, bathing his head in cold water at intervals.

Remembering that he had not finished his talk of the day before with MacVeagh, he sent for him, as he recalled that the attorney had told him on the way to Gettysburg that in order to keep a professional en-

gagement in Philadelphia, he would have to leave the train at Hanover Junction.

MacVeagh, after Lincoln had delivered his speech in the afternoon, had complimented him on it very enthusiastically. But the President had thought him extravagant. He himself had a feeling of inadequacy if not failure. Now in the privacy of the compartment, MacVeagh again referred to it.

"You did not like what I said this afternoon about your address," he said, "and I have thought it carefully over, and I can only say that the words you spoke will live with the land's language."

"You are more extravagant than ever," Lincoln replied, "and you are the only person who has such a misconception of what I said; but I did not send for you to talk about my address, but about more important matters."

The conferees discussed at some length the matter they wished to talk over, until Hanover Junction was reached. The train arrived in Washington about midnight.

As a sequel to this journey, we learn from Secretary Welles that the President "returned ill, and in a few days it was ascertained he had the varioloid. . . . It was in a light form, but yet held on longer than was expected."

## CHAPTER XXII

### THE LAST JOURNEY

President Lincoln was assassinated on Good Friday, April 14, 1865. While the deepest sorrow was naturally felt in the North, there were many also in the South who realized that now the struggle was over, their best friend was gone.

With the political and other aspects of this tragedy the present study has nothing to do. We can only chronicle the details and itinerary of the last journey of all—from Washington back to the home town in Illinois.

Preparations for the funeral were immediately undertaken by Secretary Stanton, and under his directions all plans were made, including the schedule and itinerary for the series of trains which were to convey Abraham Lincoln's body back to Springfield, there to lie among his townspeople.

The route as planned differed from that over which the President-elect had passed in 1861 to assume the reins of government, in that it omitted Pittsburgh and Cincinnati and detoured by way of Chicago, instead of going direct to Springfield from Indianapolis.

From the beginning it had been decided that the remains of the late President should be interred in Springfield, and at Mrs. Lincoln's request the body of their son Willie, who had died in the White House in 1862, was to accompany them.

When it was learned that Lincoln's body was to be

taken to Illinois, it seemed that every hamlet, town and city asked that the train be stopped within their limits, if only for short periods, in order that the inhabitants might pay their homage to one whom they had loved.

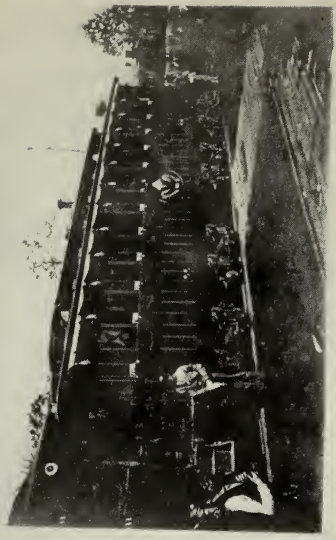
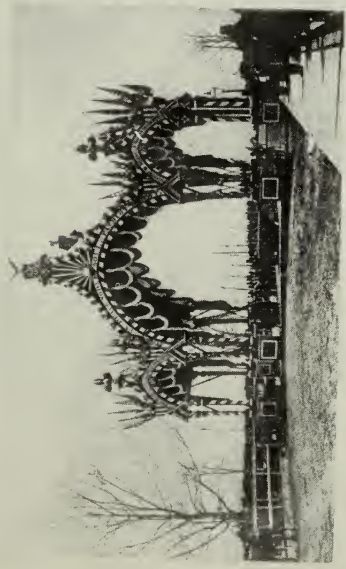
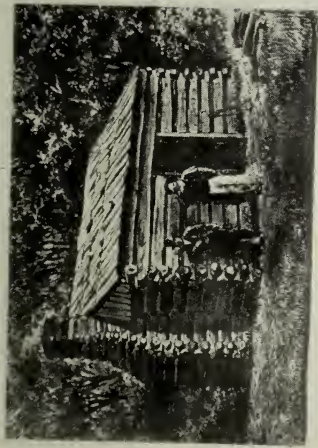
On Tuesday the 18th, the mortal remains of President Lincoln were placed in the East Room of the White House, where the funeral services were conducted the next day. At two o'clock that afternoon they were taken to the Capitol, where they lay until the morning of the 21st, when according to schedule they were to be placed on board the funeral car awaiting them.

Between six and seven A. M. of the latter date, the body was removed from the rotunda and escorted to the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad station. Here a large assemblage of people had gathered, but only those holding tickets authorizing them to accompany the funeral party were allowed to enter the depot buildings, except those passengers taking the regular 7:30 train for Baltimore.

The special train provided by the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad to be used at the commencement of the long journey as far as Baltimore, was due to leave at eight o'clock. It consisted of nine cars, including the funeral coach and the one occupied by the Guard of Honor. The engine and cars composing the train were all new, and draped in mourning. As was the case during the entire journey, a pilot engine preceded the special.

Governor John Brough of Ohio, and John W. Garrett, President of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, who had been appointed a Committee of Arrangements





*Courtesy, Illinois Central Railroad*

BACK IN ILLINOIS

1. Lincoln's first home—a typical log cabin—in Illinois. 2. His home in Springfield; scene shows it draped for his funeral. 3. Arch at Springfield erected at the time of his funeral. 4. Arrival of the "Funeral Car" at Springfield.



by Stanton to regulate all transportation incident to the conveyance of the remains of the late President, had general charge of the entire journey. Brigadier-General D. C. McCallum, in charge of Military Railroads, had oversight of the transportation facilities.

The Secretary of War was represented by Assistant Adjutant General E. D. Townsend, while Secretary Welles of the Navy was represented by Rear-Admiral C. H. Davis. A special Guard of Honor consisting of other officers of high rank representing both departments also accompanied the party. The military guard directly in charge of the body was composed of officers from the Invalid Corps.

In addition to these there was a large delegation representing both branches of Congress, many governors, a delegation from the state of Illinois, newspaper men, and others. Aside from Mrs. Lincoln, her two sons, and the private secretaries, there were three members of the party who had also accompanied the special which carried the President-elect to Washington: Judge David Davis and Marshal Ward Hill Lamon, two old Illinois friends, and Major-General David Hunter.

Promptly at eight o'clock the train started slowly from the station, with the engine bell tolling. The crowd of onlookers stood with uncovered heads. The rate of speed was purposely limited, to avoid accidents. No stops were made between Washington and Baltimore, but all along the line groups of people had gathered, and these stood with bared heads and sorrowful faces while the train passed.

At ten o'clock the train pulled into the Camden Street Station, Baltimore, preceded a few minutes by

the pilot engine. Here a large concourse of people was gathered, blocking all traffic near the depot. The remains were taken to the rotunda of the Exchange Building, where they were viewed by tens of thousands until the time came for the removal.

As Harrisburg was the next destination, the body was then borne to the Northern Central Railway station where a new train had been made up. Three o'clock was the time scheduled for leaving, but it was a few minutes after that time when the train got in motion.

Though not scheduled to stop at York, on their arrival at that point a delegation of ladies from that community was allowed to place a beautiful wreath on the coffin.

About eight p. m. the train arrived at Harrisburg. At Baltimore the weather had been inclement, and upon the arrival at Harrisburg the rainfall was so heavy that it was found necessary to dispense with the intended civic and military display. The remains were taken to the House of Representatives in the State Capitol, through an immense throng which had braved the elements. From nine to twelve o'clock that night the people were permitted to view the body, when it was locked from view until seven o'clock the next morning.

At ten under escort Lincoln's body was taken to the station of the Pennsylvania Railroad, and at eleven o'clock the special pulled out bound for Philadelphia. At various points crowds were observed lining the tracks, and it has been estimated that not less than twenty thousand people were congregated at Lancaster.

The engineer of the Pennsylvania Railroad train on

this run often related in later years how the school children along the line had strewn flowers over the tracks in such profusion at different stations that it was with difficulty the engine passed through, as the wheels in crushing the flowers became so slippery that the train almost stalled more than once.

Philadelphia was reached at half-past four o'clock that afternoon. Here the body was taken to Independence Hall. It was now Saturday the 22nd, and until the following Monday the remains lay in state. During this time it is said that they were viewed by three hundred thousand people. The engineer quoted above further states that the sidewalks in front of the old Hall were littered with crushed hoop-skirts and bustles, then in vogue, that had become disarranged and broken in the congestion.

Leaving Philadelphia at four o'clock in the morning, bound for New York, a brief stop was made at Trenton. At Jersey City, the terminus of the road, a fitting reception was given the funeral party. The casket was removed to a ferry-boat which arrived on the New York side of the Hudson River at the foot of Desbrosses Street, between ten and eleven o'clock, an hour later than the schedule called for. The funeral car and that occupied by the Guard of Honor were ferried across on another boat.

At New York the body lay in state in the City Hall until the following afternoon, viewed by full half a million mourners, including the venerable General Winfield Scott, retired Commander-in-Chief of the Army.

A few minutes past four o'clock on the 25th, the funeral train provided by the Hudson River Railroad

pulled out of the depot enroute to Albany. This journey up the Hudson must have been most impressive, as testified by several who accompanied the party.

“The train went up the Hudson River by night,” say secretaries Nicolay and Hay, “and at every town and village on the way vast crowds were revealed in waiting by the fitful glare of torches; dirges and hymns were sung as the train moved by. Midnight had passed when the coffin was borne to the Capitol at Albany, yet the multitude rushed in as if it were day, and for twelve hours the long line of people from northern New York and the neighboring states poured through the room.”

At the larger stations along the railroad, such as Yonkers, Peekskill, and Poughkeepsie, thousands had assembled to watch the train pass through.

The special reached East Albany, the northern terminus of the Hudson River road at eleven P. M., and under escort the casket was conveyed across the river. Meanwhile the funeral and Guard of Honor cars were detached from the train and gotten ready for movement to Albany proper by the way of Troy, the same detour used by the Lincoln party in 1861.

At Albany the body was placed in the Assembly Chamber in the Capitol, where it was viewed by a multitude of people, not only from Albany and the surrounding country, but even from distant parts of the state, as well as Vermont and Massachusetts. Every train, boat and omnibus leading into the city was crowded with people wishing to pay their last tribute of respect to him who until recently had been their leader. This opportunity was afforded until the afternoon of the 26th when at four the special train furnished by

the New York Central Railroad left for Buffalo, the next important stop.

They were now passing through the most populous and central part of the state, and the scenes enacted as the train passed through the larger cities, as well as the smaller towns, were but a repetition of those observed along the Hudson. Chauncey M. Depew, then a leading politician and later Senator from New York, also president of the New York Central, in speaking of the journey forty-four years later said:

“I was one of the Committee in charge of the funeral train which was bearing his body to his home, while on its way through the state of New York. The hostile hosts of four years before were now standing about the roadway with bared heads, weeping. As we sped over the rails at night, the scene was the most pathetic ever witnessed. At every cross-roads the glare of innumerable torches illuminated the whole population from age to infancy, kneeling on the ground, and their clergymen leading in prayers and hymns.”

Buffalo was reached at seven o'clock the following morning. Here the body was taken to St. James Hall where it remained until a late hour that night, viewed by a never-ending procession of people, after which the journey was resumed.

Leaving Buffalo at ten the special arrived at Euclid Street Station, Cleveland, Friday morning at seven o'clock. The casket was conveyed to the City Park and placed in a building erected especially for the purpose. Despite a heavy rainfall the well-loved features were viewed during the entire day at the estimated rate of one hundred and eighty persons per minute. At a

late hour that night the journey was resumed on a special train destined for Columbus, the state capital.

The status of the railroads used as far as Cleveland by the funeral party was exactly the same as in 1861, but from this point, due to the different route traveled from Cleveland to Indianapolis by way of Columbus, and the detour via Chicago, it is essential that additional information be given.

From Cleveland to Columbus the Cleveland, Columbus and Cincinnati Railroad was used. This is now a part of the Cleveland, Cincinnati, Chicago and St. Louis Railway, commonly called the "Big Four." Departing from Cleveland at twelve o'clock midnight, Columbus was reached at half past seven the next morning. Here the body of President Lincoln was placed in the rotunda of the Capitol, where it was again viewed by countless mourners, and at eight o'clock that night the party left for Indianapolis on what was then the Columbus and Indianapolis Central Railway, now a part of the Pennsylvania.

They reached Indianapolis at seven o'clock the following morning, Sunday the 30th. The body of Lincoln was placed in the State House, and as Indiana had been his home from the time he was seven years old until he attained his majority, the affection displayed here was, if anything, more pronounced than before, the falling rain undetering the multitude from turning out en masse as a mark of respect to the martyred President. To this point also came a delegation from Kentucky, the state of his birth, headed by Governor Bramlette.

Shortly before midnight the body was removed to the special provided for the party's use to Chicago, and at



the hour of twelve the train left the station. Three different railroads were used in reaching the new destination: the Lafayette and Indianapolis to Lafayette; the Louisville, New Albany and Chicago from Lafayette to Michigan City; and thence the Michigan Central into Chicago. The first named road is now a part of the "Big Four"; the next a part of the Chicago, Indianapolis and Louisville Railway; while the latter is still operated under the same name.

The following morning at eleven o'clock Chicago was reached and the remains were conveyed to the rotunda of the Court House. All Chicago and its environs knew Lincoln and loved him. He had been a frequent visitor to this city before his country called him away to Washington. Here he had received his first nomination for president, in 1860; here also in the courts he had been called upon to display his great legal talents.

So it is not to be wondered at that "taken all in all," as the Chicago and Alton management say in a recent statement, "Chicago made a deeper impression upon those who had been with the funeral from the first than any one of the ten cities passed through before had done. It was to be expected that such would be the case, yet, seeing how other cities had honored the funeral, there seemed to be no room for more, and the eastern members of the cortege could not repress surprise when they saw how Chicago and the Northwest came, with one accord, with tears and with offerings, to bury 'this Duncan' who had 'been so clear in his great office.'"

The body remained in Chicago two days, the special train provided by the Chicago and Alton Railroad leaving the city at half past nine Tuesday night for

Springfield. And at nine o'clock the following morning, an hour after the scheduled time, Lincoln's home town was reached, and the journey, so far as the railroad was concerned, was over. It was now Wednesday, May the 3rd.

This had been a most remarkable journey. The distance traveled was almost seventeen hundred miles. Miss Tarbell has well said of the "outpouring at villages, country cross-roads and farms" that "from Washington to Springfield the train entered scarcely a town that the bells were not tolling, the minute guns firing, the stations draped, and all the spaces beside the tracks crowded with people with uncovered heads.

"At many points arches were erected over the tracks; at others the bridges were wreathed from end to end in crape and evergreens and flags. And this was not in the towns alone; every farmhouse by which the train passed became for the time a funeral house; the plow was left in the furrow, crape was on the door, the neighbors were gathered and those who watched from the train as it flew by could see groups of weeping women, of men with uncovered heads, sometimes a minister among them, his arms raised in prayer.

"Night did not hinder them. Great bonfires were built in lonely country-sides, around which the farmers waited patiently to salute their dead. At the towns the length of the train was lit by blazing torches. Storm as well as darkness was unheeded. Much of the journey was made through the rain, in fact, but the people seemed to have forgotten all things but Abraham Lincoln, the man they loved and trusted, was passing by for the last time."

# Chicago and Alton Railroad Company.

## TIME TABLE

FOR THE SPECIAL TRAIN, CONVEYING THE FUNERAL CORTEGE WITH THE REMAINS OF THE LATE

### PRESIDENT

FROM

### CHICAGO TO SPRINGFIELD,

Tuesday, May 2, 1865.

Total Distance	Dist. bet'n Stations		Leave	
1.7	1.7	CHICAGO.....	9:30	P. M.
3.5	1.8	FORT WAYNE JUNCTION.....	9:45	"
12.0	8.5	BRIDGEPORT.....	9:55	"
17.6	5.0	STAMM.....	10:21	"
25.5	8.0	JOY'S.....	10:34	"
32.5	7.0	LEMONT.....	10:58	"
37.7	5.2	LOCKPORT.....	11:18	"
46.4	8.7	JOLIET.....	11:33	"
48.6	2.3	ELWOOD.....	11:58	"
53.0	4.5	HAMPTON.....	12:01	A. M.
58.0	4.8	WILMINGTON.....	12:16	"
61.4	3.5	STEWART'S GROVE.....	12:30	"
65.0	3.8	BRACEVILLE.....	12:40	"
74.0	9.0	GARDNER.....	12:51	"
82.0	8.0	DWIGHT.....	1:16	"
87.4	5.2	ODELL.....	1:38	"
92.3	5.0	CAYUGA.....	1:53	"
97.8	5.6	PONTIAC.....	2:07	"
102.6	4.7	OCOYA.....	2:22	"
110.6	8.0	CHENOA.....	2:37	"
118.5	7.9	LEXINGTON.....	2:58	"
124.0	5.7	TOWANDA.....	3:20	"
126.0	2.0	ILL. CENTRAL R. R. JUNCTION.....	3:36	"
133.0	6.8	BLOOMINGTON.....	3:42	"
136.5	3.6	SHIRLEY.....	4:05	"
141.4	4.8	FUNK'S GROVE.....	4:15	"
146.0	4.8	MCLEAN.....	4:28	"
150.0	4.0	ATLANTA.....	4:42	"
156.8	6.7	LAWN DALE.....	4:53	"
164.0	7.1	LINCOLN.....	5:12	"
167.6	3.7	BROADWELL.....	5:32	"
173.5	5.9	ELKHART.....	5:43	"
178.3	4.8	WILLIAMSVILLE.....	5:58	"
180.0	2.1	SHERMAN.....	6:12	"
185.0	5.0	SANGAMON.....	6:18	"
		SPRINGFIELD.....	6:30	Arrive

The following instructions are to be observed for the above train:

1. All other Trains on this Road must be kept thirty minutes out of the way of the time of this Train.
2. All Telegraph Stations must be kept open during the passage of this Train.
3. A Guard with one red and one white light will be stationed at all road crossings by night; and with a white flag draped by day, or after day-light, on Wednesday morning.
4. A Pilot Engine will run upon this time, which is to be followed by the Funeral Train, ten minutes behind.
5. Pilot Engine must not pass any Telegraph Station, unless a white flag by day, or one red and one white light by night, shall be exhibited, which will signify that the Funeral Train has passed the nearest Telegraph Station. In the absence of said signals, the Pilot Engine will stop until definite information is received in regard to the Funeral Train.
6. The Funeral Train will pass all Stations slowly, at which time the bell of the Locomotive must be tolled.

By order of BREVET BRIGADIER GENERAL D. C. McCULLUM, 2d Div., in charge of Military Railroads.

**ROBERT HALE,**

General Superintendent.

Courtesy, Chicago & Alton Railroad

### THE TIME TABLE OF THE "FUNERAL TRAIN"

On its run from Chicago to Springfield, May 2, 1865. The slow time and extraordinary precautions taken may be noted on the above card.



Gobright, a Washington newspaper correspondent who accompanied the party, says: "Much of our traveling was at night, throughout which, no matter at what hour, crowds gathered on the roads to see the train on its onward progress; and whenever we halted, flowers were brought into the funeral car, and placed upon the coffin by the delicate hands which had culled them for this purpose. It would have been impossible to render greater honors to any mortal remains. The funeral was continuous from Washington to Oak Ridge Cemetery, near Springfield, Illinois."

Concerning the funeral car many mistaken ideas have been widely circulated. The following excerpt, taken from *Success Magazine*, June, 1900, summarizes the popular and mistaken notion:

"In the city of Omaha, in the yards of the Union Pacific Railroad Company, is lying a relic which should be dear to the heart of every American, even as 'Old Ironsides' itself. -

"This is nothing less than the remains of the car designed by himself, in which President Lincoln used to go to the front during the latter part of the Civil War, and which was afterwards used as a funeral coach for his murdered remains. Though now but a mass of decayed wood and rusted iron, when constructed by the military shops at Alexandria, Va., in 1864, it was the marvel of the railroad, and the most elaborate piece of workmanship on wheels.

"To make the mahogany framework proof against the bullets of the Confederates, or assassins, the car was iron-clad, armored plate being set beneath its upholstered sides. One of its largest compartments, the

President's study, contained a sofa fifteen feet long, on which he rested and slept on his journeys to and fro.

"To Booker T. Washington belongs the honor of starting a project for the restoration and preservation to the nation of this most interesting relic of the last chapter of the life of the great martyred President. Mr. Washington heard of the car when in Omaha, and, with Dr. O. M. Ricketts, set the ball rolling.

"Just what terms can be made for its purchase from the railroad company has not yet been ascertained, but it is thought that it will donate the car to the city, provided an agreement is made to have it preserved and a building furnished for that purpose."

Miss Antoinette L. King, Librarian of the Public Library at Pittston, Pennsylvania, has furnished the writer with the following subjoined statement signed by her father, Sidney D. King, in 1903, three years before his death, which is self-explanatory:

"An item has been going the rounds of the newspapers lately to the effect that what was called 'President Lincoln's coach' is lying in a state of dilapidation in the yards of the Union Pacific Railroad at Omaha, Nebraska, and that Booker T. Washington has started a plan for its restoration and preservation as a relic of the Civil War. It is described as a car 'designed by himself, in which President Lincoln used to go to the front the latter part of the war,' and that it was 'iron-clad—armored plate being set beneath its upholstered sides.'

"*This is a mistake.* The car was built by the authorities of the United States Military Railroad—a name which covered parts of the 'Manassas Gap,' the 'Loudon

and Hampshire,' and the 'Orange and Alexandria' Railroads, which were confiscated by the Government. The headquarters, roundhouse, car shops and machine shops were inside the stockade at Alexandria, Virginia, and under charge of Colonel D. C. McCallum.

"I was Assistant Master Car Builder at that time, was in the shops constantly while the car was being built, and am certain that no armor was used in its construction. Any one who knew the habits of Mr. Lincoln would scout the idea of his designing an armored car of such luxurious appointments for his own use in going to the front. Just when the fact of its being built came to his knowledge I do not know, but as I recollect it, some of the New York newspapers opposed to his administration took up the matter and presented it in a very unfavorable light. How much this influenced him is, of course, conjectural, but in point of fact he utterly refused to accept the car or ride in it during his lifetime. It stood in the shops for some months at least, after making one trial trip. It was really magnificent for those days, and every available convenience was used, but present-day travelers would consider it very common. The woodwork was of black walnut, the upholstery dark green plush, with curtains of light green silk; the ceiling was paneled with crimson silk, gathered into a rosette in the center of each panel. The American eagle with the national colors appeared in a large medallion on each side of the exterior. As first built it was mounted on four trucks, but later two were taken out.

"When the car made its first real journey, that from Washington to Springfield, Illinois, bearing the dead

body of the President to its final resting place, it was elaborately draped in black cloth, with silver bullion fringe, silver spangled stars and large silver tassels about nine inches long and three inches in diameter. There were also many black tassels used about the biers on which rested the two coffins—that of the President and his son.

“These ‘funeral trappings’ were removed on the return of the car to Alexandria and divided up as relics. I got one of the large tassels, and some of each of the other decorations and put them in a case made of the same materials as the trimming of the car.

“What disposal was made of the car when the confiscated roads were given back and the U. S. Military Railroad was only a name, I do not know, for, of course, we Northern men were ‘out of a job’ and came home.

“It is to be hoped the plan for preserving the car may be carried out, for it is a genuine relic of war times, even if it did not go to the front, and it seems to me the resolute self-denial of the President, in not using it during his lifetime, and his one journey in it, when his wearied body was past the need of earthly luxury, are striking incidents in even such a notable career as that of Lincoln.”

Let us conclude this review of Lincoln the traveler with a glimpse of the final scene at Springfield. He is at home again among his own folks, the neighbors who were wont to hail him familiarly with “Howdy, Abe!” Now as the casket lies in state in the Capitol, the ones who pass by are the most sincere mourners of all. They look for a last time at the homely features, and more



than one mutters, "Good-by, Abe!" under his breath.

Then the coffin-lid is screwed down for the last time. A simple funeral service is held, and the minister chooses as part of his eulogy the reading of Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address. The President is viewing the War as a *fait accompli*. The struggle is at an end. But there is no hatred of the vanquished in his soul. He views a reunited country—the Union that he loved.

"With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow and for his orphan; to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations."



## NOTES



## NOTES

### CHAPTER I

Compiled in the main from accounts of HUNGERFORD, 3-12; MEYER, 308-318; RIDPATH II, 1571, and III, 2143-2144; and data furnished by Mr. E. L. Bangs, Historian of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Company.

### CHAPTER IV

Account of the Tenth General Assembly of the Illinois Legislature and Abraham Lincoln's relations thereto compiled from NICOLAY AND HAY I, 131-139; LINDER, 55-64; TARBELL I, 132-146; LAMON'S "LIFE," 193-201; ROTHSCHILD, 211-222; HERNDON'S "LINCOLN" I, 172-177; ARNOLD'S "LIFE," 50-51; and WHITNEY'S "CITIZEN," 129-140.

For preliminaries leading up thereto as well as attendant results, we have drawn upon MILLION, 8-26; MEYER, 509; and PEASE, 191-203, and 212-229.

Edward D. Baker, later United States Representative from Illinois and Senator from Oregon, losing his life in 1861 at the battle of Ball's Bluff, has sometimes been mentioned as among the celebrities present at this notorious session of the state legislature. This is an error. At a special election held July 1, 1837, he was chosen to represent the County of Sangamon in place of Daniel Stone, resigned, and took his seat at the special session called by the Governor shortly thereafter.

### CHAPTER V

Facts in connection with the history, projection and operation of road compiled from McConnel; also HUNGERFORD, 26-

27, and memoranda furnished by President J. E. Taussig, of the Wabash Railway Company.

## CHAPTER VI

For history of road see MEYER, 518-547; Lincoln's activities before legislature quoted from DRENNAN; ANDERSON; and RANTOUL.

## CHAPTER VII

Rail and water transportation data compiled from information furnished by:

President W. L. Mapother, of the Louisville and Nashville Railroad Company.

Secretary C. W. Woolford, of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Company.

Chief Engineer A. C. Shand, of the Pennsylvania Railroad System.

President J. E. Pearson, of the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad Company.

President J. H. Hustis, of the Boston and Maine Railroad Company.

Treasurer F. H. Ratcliffe, of the Boston and Albany Railroad Company.

Mr. C. F. Smith, General Superintendent Passenger Transportation, and Secretary E. F. Stephenson, of the New York Central Railroad Company.

Itinerary and probable route used by Lincoln in attending first session of the Thirtieth Congress furnished by Dr. L. D. Carman, of Washington, D. C.

Itinerary of Lincoln's speechmaking tour in Massachusetts as given by HERNDON AND WEIK I, 281-294; and SCHOULER.

Original letter from Lincoln to Thaddeus Stevens on file in Library of Congress.

Facts in connection with Lincoln's visit to Cape May in 1849 given the writer by Senator Lewis T. Stevens, of Cape May, New Jersey. Senator Stevens says that "about twenty-five years ago as I was going over some old account books, in order to make room for more apparent valuable present things, I found the register of the Mansion House, kept by my grandfather from 1835 to 1851; and one day about twenty years ago ran across the name of Lincoln. . . . I met Senator Irick in 1908 in Trenton, and told him about the hotel register, and he said it was the real Lincoln, who was a friend of his father, and that he was twelve years old at the time and remembered it very well."

#### CHAPTER VIII

The cases cited in the order of their appearance before the Illinois Supreme Court reported in *ILLINOIS SUPREME COURT* xvii, 291-299; xviii, 570-577; xix, 136-141, and 166-167; and xxvii, 64-70.

For Illinois Central official publications see *DRENNAN*; *ANDERSON*; *ILLINOIS CENTRAL*.

Copies of letters from Lincoln and Judge Thomas to T. R. Webber furnished by Mrs. Mary E. Webber, daughter-in-law of Mr. Webber. Lincoln's letter also found in *UNCOLLECTED LETTERS*, 47.

Pages 67-68, quotation from Herriott in *HERRIOTT'S "IOWA,"* 91-92.

Account of President Lincoln's attitude towards Illinois Central gathered from data furnished by Generals H. L. Rogers and E. H. Agnew, of the Quartermaster General's Department, U. S. Army; and Mr. Marvin Hughitt, of the Chicago and Northwestern Railway, then holding position of

Master of Transportation of the Illinois Central, with headquarters at Centralia.

## CHAPTER IX

For various accounts of this case see HERNDON'S "LINCOLN" II, 351-353; HERNDON AND WEIK II, 20-22; WEIK, 152-155; LAMON'S "LIFE," 331-332; CURTIS, 72; TARBELL I, 259-260; BARRETT I, 118; WHITNEY'S "CITIZEN," 184-185; ROTHSCHILD, 166-171; RICHARDS, 70-72; HILL, 252-254, and 316-319; ILLINOIS CENTRAL, DRENNAN; ANDERSON; BARTON'S "LIFE" I, 308. For a very able recent discussion see TOWNSEND, 21-30.

## CHAPTER X

For the information used in this chapter dealing with Lincoln and the predecessors of the Chicago and Alton road, we are indebted to President W. G. Bierd, of the Chicago and Alton Railroad Company, and Vice-President Dwight C. Morgan of the Pittsburgh and Shawmut Railroad Company; cases cited reported in ILLINOIS SUPREME COURT XIII, 504-514, 514-516; XIV, 190-193, 211-213; and XXI, 96-98.

Data in connection with Ohio and Mississippi Railroad case furnished by the following officials of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Company: Secretary C. W. Woolford, Mr. Morison R. Waite, General Solicitor Western Lines, and Hon. James M. Graham, District Attorney at Springfield, Illinois; and Mr. S. T. Burnett, Clerk of the United States District Court at Springfield. Letter from Lincoln to Koerner, page 90, found in UNCOLLECTED LETTERS, 77.

## CHAPTER XI

For recital of events leading up to case, as well as the trial itself, the writer has drawn upon MEESE, 46-49; RICHARDS,



30-38; HERRIOTT'S "IOWA," 89-90; TARBELL I, 275-277; HILL 259-261; ROCK ISLAND, 16-18; PALIMPSEST; WHARTON, 3; and SALTONSTALL.

Hitt's report of Lincoln's argument found in TARBELL II, 324-330; COMPLETE WORKS II, 340-354; PALIMPSEST: copy also furnished by General Solicitor W. F. Dickinson, of the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railway Company.

For Mrs. Judd's recollections, see OLDROYD, 520-523; and more briefly WEIK, 73-75.

Closing paragraph, pages 115-116, quoted from "PEOPLE OF ILLINOIS," 606.

#### CHAPTER XII

For data in connection with two suits against predecessors of Wabash Railway, pages 117-121, we are indebted to Mr. Jesse W. Weik, of Greencastle, Indiana.

The four cases cited carried before the state's highest tribunal reported in ILLINOIS SUPREME COURT XVII, 123-131; XIX, 174-183, and 353-376; and XXI, 292-294; additional data received from Mr. O. M. Spencer, General Counsel of the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad Company; and Mr. H. A. Worcester, Vice President, and Mr. Alan Rogers, Publicity Manager, of the Cleveland, Cincinnati, Chicago and St. Louis Railway Company.

#### CHAPTER XIII

Account of Corning's offer transcribed from MERWIN.

Mr. Jesse W. Weik informs the writer that he is of the opinion that he heard the story long ago, but his recollection of it is vague. He adds, however, that he did not hear of it from Herndon nor other Springfield residents. This would not be surprising, for evidently Lincoln had no confidants in the

matter, as was his custom, and referred to it to Merwin only on account of the latter's knowledge of the offer.

## CHAPTER XIV

Carl Schurz's description of Lincoln as a passenger, pages 137-139, as given in SCHURZ'S "REMINISCENCES" and SCHURZ'S "DEBATE."

Howard White's reminiscence of his fellow-passenger, pages 139-141, found in WHITE, 24-25; and White in HERN-DON AND WEIK II, 111-112.

Henry Villard's interview in a box car, pages 141-143, quoted from VILLARD.

The account of B. F. Smith's impressions of the rival aspirants, pages 143-144, appears in STEVENS, 26.

The Chicago and Alton conductor's recollections of his distinguished passengers, pages 144-145, are to be found in COLLIER'S.

The reminiscences of the young and impressionable secretary of the Champaign County Republican Committee in 1858, pages 145-149, are taken from BROWNE'S "LINCOLN" II, 170-196.

## CHAPTER XV

Page 151: for Whitney's account of the circuit riding, see WHITNEY'S "CITIZEN," 192-193; and WHITNEY'S "CIRCUIT," 41.

Page 151: for account of Michigan trip, see BROWN, 487-488; CAMPBELL, 287-288; BANYON, 37; and Banyon to the writer. Concerning the alleged stop-off at Niles, Mr. Banyon writes: "All trains over the Michigan Central stopped at Niles, and Lincoln would want to get out and stretch his legs a bit while the train was taking on wood and water. Kalamazoo is only about forty miles from Niles, and Lincoln would

want to get a view of the place as the Carey Mission was close by and had brought Niles a more than state-wide fame and reputation."

Page 152: for Lincoln's invasion of Iowa see HERRIOTT'S "IOWA," 19-21; also communications to the writer from Dr. Russell H. Conwell and Prof. Herriott.

Page 152; see McCulloch in RICE, 414; HERRIOTT'S "IOWA," 91-96; RYAN, 35-101; and JACKSON, 134-135, for visits to Indiana, Kansas, Ohio and Wisconsin in proper sequence.

Page 153: for an extended account of Lincoln's trip to Kansas in November, 1859, see KANSAS, 536-552.

Page 153: see BARTON'S "INFLUENCE" for an admirable account of Chicago's influence upon Lincoln.

Page 154: for the statement concerning Lincoln's appearance before the St. Louis Courts, we are indebted to the late Mr. Charles W. Moores, of the Indianapolis Bar.

Page 155-156: story of Lincoln as a "hackman" given in TARBELL I, 235; and more briefly in PICKETT.

Pages 156-157: see EMERSON, 9, for Lincoln's bit of philosophy to his fellow-attorney in Cincinnati.

Pages 157-158: for Lincoln's visit to Evanston, see CURREY, 10-11.

Pages 158-159: see CANNON'S "REMINISCENCE," and CANNON'S "HOME STATE," for account of "Uncle Joe's" first meeting with Lincoln. Cannon gives the time as June, 1860. In this he is in error: the convention opened May 10th.

#### CHAPTER XVII

Compiled from WHITNEY'S "CIRCUIT," 494-496; WHITNEY'S "CITIZEN," 294; CANNON'S "REMINISCENCE"; CANNON'S "HOME STATE"; CANNON'S "LINCOLN"; LAMON'S "LIFE," 462-465; and WEIK, 293-297: railroad data from information in possession of the writer.

## CHAPTER XVIII

Itinerary, dates, etc., based on contemporary newspaper accounts as found in file of the Philadelphia *Public Ledger* for February, 1861, in Pennsylvania State Library at Harrisburg, Pa.; COGGESHALL, 24-80; POWER, 40-53, and map facing page 112; and RAYMOND, 131-158. The railroad itinerary as reconstructed back to that period compiled from data furnished by Dr. Carman and the following officials of the various lines under investigation:

Secretary C. W. Woolford, of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Company.

Mr. Alan Rogers, Publicity Manager of the Cleveland, Cincinnati, Chicago and St. Louis Railway Company.

President L. F. Loree, of the Delaware and Hudson Company.

Mr. C. F. Smith, General Superintendent Passenger Transportation, of the New York Central Railroad Company.

Mr. A. C. Shand, Chief Engineer of the Pennsylvania Railroad System.

President J. E. Taussig, of the Wabash Railway Company. Pages 176-177: excerpt from contemporary issue of *Springfield Journal* as preserved by WEIK, 314; and in part by TARBELL I, 410-411.

Pages 179-180: for reminiscences of brakeman Ross, see TARBELL I, 411-412.

Concerning the farewell address, we have used the version as given in NICOLAY AND HAY III, 291, written shortly after the train left Springfield, partly by Lincoln himself and partly by Nicolay at Lincoln's dictation. This we have from Mr. Weik, who in his "Real Lincoln" quotes at length from a conversation he once had with Nicolay, and it is this account which we have used in narrating the circumstances of the writing of the address. Aside from this fact, the version

rings more true to form than any of the others which bear the marks of reliability.

There seem to have been three authentic versions published, all of which claims must be recognized: the Nicolay and Hay version, accepted by Miss Tarbell, Rankin, Roberts, etc.; the version published in the current Springfield papers as given by Herndon, Weik, Lamon, Barrett, Stoddard, etc.; and the version which Henry Villard, the correspondent on the special train, wired from the first telegraph station he could reach east of Springfield, which is practically the same that Bateman claims to have noted down in the privacy of his own office from memory after the departure of the train, and accepted by Holland, Birch, etc.

A careful study of the scenes attending the departure of the President-elect at this time is profitable. See BATEMAN, 34-38; VILLARD; LAMON'S "RECOLLECTIONS," 30-32; LAMON'S "LIFE," 505-507; NICOLAY AND HAY III, 290-291; Birch in WARD, 232-233; RANKIN'S "RECOLLECTIONS," 221-224; RANKIN AND CLARK; and *Springfield Journal* as given in WEIK, 309-314, all narrators present on the occasion; also STODDARD, 198-199; HERNDON'S "LINCOLN" III, 485-487; BARRETT I, 260-261; ARNOLD'S "LIFE," 183; WHITNEY'S "CITIZEN," 294-295; HOLLAND, 253-255; TARBELL I, 410-411; ROBERTS, 104-107.

Several minor discrepancies have been noted, such as the condition of the weather. Nicolay and Hay, who were attentive spectators, say that during the course of the address "the bystanders bared their heads to the falling snow-flakes"; while correspondent Villard says that "it was a clear, crisp winter day"; whereas the preponderance of evidence, including the current newspaper accounts, clearly shows that a heavy rain was falling while Lincoln was speaking.

The size of the crowd has been variously estimated. Observe what those present had to say in later years. Bateman

speaks of the "immense crowd assembled," while Villard, with one of his memory lapses, says that "only about one hundred people, mostly personal friends," were there. On the other hand, Nicolay and Hay state that a "throng of at least a thousand of his neighbors . . . had come to bid him good-bye"; Lamont narrates that "long before eight o'clock a great mass of people had collected"; while Rankin says that "there were, I suppose, some two hundred people present." Lincoln's partner, who was not there himself, speaks of a "goodly throng," a safe statement to be accepted, for again turning to the local *Journal* we learn that "hundreds of his fellow-citizens" were there to tender him their respects.

## CHAPTER XIX

Abraham Lincoln's relations with General Dodge and the projection of the Union Pacific are compiled chiefly from DODGE'S "RECOLLECTIONS"; DODGE'S "LINCOLN"; DODGE'S "UNION PACIFIC"; DODGE'S "PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS": Dodge in HERRIOTT'S "MEMORIES," 21-24; HERRIOTT'S "IOWA," 93-96; and *Union Pacific Magazine*.

See ACTS OF CONGRESS for legislation relating thereto, with the exception of the law establishing the gauge of the road. Copy of the latter furnished by Mr. George Wickham, Assistant Commissioner, General Land Office, Department of the Interior; data dealing with the introduction, progress and final passage of this act furnished by Dr. Carman, from researches in the files of the Congressional Record in the Library of Congress.

For opinions of contemporary legislators quoted concerning act of 1864 see BLAINE I, 507-509; SHERMAN'S "RECOLLECTIONS" I, 334-335; and COLE, 178-179.

All presidential papers given in chapter on file in Office of

Commissioner of Railroads, Washington, and here published for first time, except the following:

Page 203: Order fixing eastern terminus, dated November 17, 1863, in DODGE'S "RECOLLECTIONS," 8; and extract from same in DODGE'S "UNION PACIFIC"; but not found in COMPLETE WORKS, nor supplementary UNCOLLECTED LETTERS. DODGE'S "RECOLLECTIONS" incorrectly give this as the second order.

Pages 203-204: Letter to General Dix, dated December 1, 1863; in COMPLETE WORKS IX, 214-215.

Pages 204-205; Order elaborating on eastern terminus, dated March 7, 1864; on file at Washington. Extract from same, in garbled form, in DODGE'S "UNION PACIFIC," 10 and 51.

Pages 205-206: Message to Senate, March 9, 1864; in COMPLETE WORKS X, 32-33.

In connection with the alleged incident of President Lincoln determining upon a certain western location, in accordance with the provisions of the original act, pages 214-216, we quote below from the latter part of section 9 of the Act of July 1, 1862:

"The Central Pacific Railroad Company of California, a corporation existing under the laws of the State of California, are hereby authorized to construct a railroad and telegraph line from the Pacific Coast, at or near San Francisco, or the navigable waters of the Sacramento River," etc.

#### CHAPTER XX

In the preparation of this chapter many authorities have been consulted for data concerning the journeyings of President Lincoln: VIELE; NICOLAY AND HAY; MCCLELLAN; HAUPT; NICOLAY'S "SHORT LIFE"; MCCLURE; TARBELL; Howard in

WARD; WELLES; BROOKS' "WASHINGTON"; BROOKS' "REMINISCENCES"; BATES; COMPLETE WORKS; PORTER'S "CAMPAIGNING"; LIVERMORE.

The incident at Annapolis, pages 234-235, is quoted from BATES, 340-342.

In account of the "vacation trip" we have quoted freely from WELLES; PORTER'S "LINCOLN"; PORTER'S "CAMPAIGNING"; BARNES; SIERMAN'S "MEMOIRS"; Coffin in RICE; and DE CHAMBRUN. The latter, although an entertaining writer, cannot be accused of undue accuracy.

For the railroad data we are indebted to President Eppa Hunton, Jr., of the Richmond, Fredricksburg and Potomac Railroad Company; Vice President J. J. Doyle of the Washington, Baltimore, and Annapolis Electric Railroad Company; President N. D. Maher, of the Norfolk and Western Railway Company; Assistant Secretary Guy E. Mauldin, of the Southern Railway Company; and President William A. Winburn, of the Central of Georgia Railway Company.

#### CHAPTER XXI

Chapter recast in proper sequence from accounts in NICOLAY; MACVEAGH; COCHRANE; CARMICHAEL; Fry and Andrews in RICE; JACOBS; BURRAGE; Scully in ATLANTA; Stahel in MARKENS; and Hay in THAYER. See also WILSON; and the admirable treatises of LAMBERT, and BARTON'S "LIFE" II, 185-226, and 485-493.

#### CHAPTER XXII

Itinerary, dates, etc., compiled in the main from contemporary accounts of COGGESHALL, 136-288; MORRIS, 155-219; and SHEA, 163-225; also POWER, 120-206, and map facing page 112.

Railroad data gathered from memoranda furnished by



President Bierd of the Chicago and Alton Railroad Company, and President H. R. Currie, of the Chicago, Indianapolis and Louisville Railway, in addition to the following officials to whom we are indebted for material used in the preparation of CHAPTER XVIII: Secretary Woolford of the Baltimore and Ohio; Publicity Manager Rogers of the "Big Four"; General Superintendent Smith of the New York Central; and Chief Engineer Shand of the Pennsylvania. Mention should also be made of Dr. Carman.

Mr. William E. Stevenson, of Philadelphia, is our authority for the reminiscences, page 268-269, of his uncle, John E. Miller, who as engineer of the Pennsylvania Railroad hauled the Lincoln funeral special on its memorable run from Harrisburg to Philadelphia.

Page 271: quotation from Chauncey M. Depew found in MACCHESNEY, 310.

Page 273: quotation from Chicago and Alton management taken from CHICAGO AND ALTON.

Page 274: excerpt from Miss Tarbell's account as given in TARBELL II, 258.

Page 275: for Gobright's reminiscences, see GOBRIGHT, 361-362.



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