

THE ALMA RECORD

BABCOCK & GROSSKOPF, Publishers

Published Every Thursday Afternoon at Alma, Gratiot County, Michigan

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The Record is entered at the postoffice at Alma, Michigan, for transmission through the mail to second class matter.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

What was it that made Lincoln great? He was a great statesman. A statesman is one who clearly sees the needs of the country and the means by which those needs are to be supplied.

Some men wanted to compromise with the South. Mr. Lincoln saw that there could be no compromise, that the Union must be preserved or it must be destroyed.

But this is not the chief thing for which we honor Lincoln and call him great. Other Presidents have seen clearly the needs of the country and have resisted opposition in securing them.

When the campaign for the re-election of Lincoln was at its height, the leading men of the party were quite discouraged and gave up hope of his re-election.

At one time there was a large and influential party who desired to have the President proclaim freedom to the slaves.

Still they urged him. Finally he said, "There is one thing that I can do. I will resign my position as President and let Mr. Hamlin, the vice-president, take my place.

The Senators were shocked at such a proposition. They would not listen to it for a moment, but they had not the least doubt of his sincerity.

In the afternoon before his death he took a ride with his wife and during the ride he said, "Well, we shall have four years more here, then we will return to Springfield.

And that hold was accentuated by his compassionate kindness to the soldiers. He could not bear to sign the death warrant of a soldier except in a most aggravated case.

Mr. Lincoln said, "I suppose you know that this is a very serious offense."

"Yes sir," said the boy. "How did it happen?"

"A friend of mine from the same town was taken sick and I went on picket for him the night before.

"I will pardon you," said the President.

"When can I go back to the ranks?"

"In a few days."

"Can't I go back for the battle tomorrow?"

"Yes, if you wish."

He did and was killed in that battle.

Mr. Lincoln was known as the soldiers' friend. The common soldiers adored him.

When Washington's officers came to him to suggest, after final victory, if I remember rightly, that he should accept the crown and become the king instead of the Father of his country.

It was the moral elevation of these men that made them great. Hamilton was the superior of Washington in intellectual gifts.

FORD-NEWBERRY RECOUNT

The Senate committee has completed the recount of the ballots in the Ford-Newberry election contest, and has decided that Ford was defeated by Newberry.

Several things about this contest are of interest to the people. First and foremost amongst these is the fact that the committee, which was non-partisan and reviewed the votes township by township and ward by ward, reports that it found no evidence of fraud.

The Ford forces charged wholesale fraud, but a careful review failed to reveal anything of the kind. Several whole townships were thrown out because the election inspectors failed to put their initials on the ballot, as required by law.

It is a source of pride to the people of Michigan that the record of something over four hundred thirty thousand ballots, shows not a single sign of attempted fraud or crookedness.

Ford's actual gain was only two hundred sixty four ballots or about three-fifths of one per cent, but it happened that in the precincts thrown out, Newberry lost more than Ford.

From this contest we may learn some useful lessons. First and foremost amongst these is not to make wholesale charges of fraud without the facts.

Many people have had the impression that there was all kinds of dishonesty in the Michigan senatorial election in 1918 and that impression has gone broadcast over the United States.

COMMITTEE IS RE-ORGANIZED

(Continued from page one) Bethany—George Hursh, Lillian Hastings.

Elba, precinct No. 1—A. E. Fuller, Miss Gertrude A. Lewis.

Elba, precinct No. 2—C. D. Wood-ey, Martha Ryder.

Emerson—E. Muscott, Mrs. Andrew Dill.

Lafayette—E. M. Becker, Mrs. Jessie Snow.

Ithaca—C. J. Chambers, Mrs. Lulu Sawyer.

North Star—Warren Mellinger, Mrs. Sylvia Pankhurst.

Fulton—Dr. B. C. Hall, Mrs. Maynard Dodge.

Hamilton—L. G. Hull, Mrs. C. H. Putnam.

Newark—Vern Tracy.

North Shade—Chas. Coryell, Mrs. Chas. Coryell.

Wheeler, precinct No. 1—Newell Bradford, Mrs. Clara Folkert.

Wheeler, precinct No. 2—Charles Watson, Mrs. Stanley Green.

St. Louis, 1st ward—David E. Ack-er, Mrs. John Henry.

St. Louis, 2nd ward—Fred H. Ber-nard, Lovilla Giddings.

St. Louis, 3rd ward—Ross Miller, Janet Branch.

St. Louis, 4th ward—Dr. A. R. Wheel-er, E. Grace Phillips.

Washington—Will Stone-man, Mrs. Ben Gillett.

Pine River—Don Hays, Mrs. Elmer Post.

Seville—Henry Miller, Mrs. Marie Klinghoff.

Sumner—Arthur Murphy, Mrs. Harry Fisher.

The Committee on Resolutions re-ports as follows:

Resolved, that we, the Republicans of Gratiot county, in convention as-ssembled, hereby congratulate our-selves and the people generally of these great United States, in the change of spirit which resulted in the overwhelming victory at the polls last November, in favor of the Republican party.

Resolved, that we have the utmost confidence in our standard bearer, the Hon. Warren G. Harding. We admire his common sense and sim-plicity of character as evidenced by his expressions since his nomination and election on all great questions of state; and we confidently look to him as our chief executive to bring order out of chaos, and once more, with the aid of a Republican congress, place our governmental affairs on a sound and sane basis, so much needed after eight years of Democratic dom-ination.

Resolved, that we hereby heartily endorse the administration of Gov-ernor Groesbeck. We believe that in him we have a real governor, one who has nothing but the interests of the entire state at heart and is bringing to the high office of gov-ernor the same devotion to duty, the same high ideals of service and the same unyielding determination to carry his convictions to accomplish-ment which has always characterized him as a state officer.

Resolved, that we particularly commend his plan of changes in state government by which the num-ber of state commissions and boards will be diminished, all such boards and commissions held to strict ac-countability for their acts, their ef-ficiency increased, and state ex-penses reduced to the lowest possi-ble amount consistent with efficient government and the necessities of our various state institutions.

Whereas, Michigan, realizing the need of improved highways provided for a state highway department to meet that need and conferred upon that department the general super-vision of the principal highways of the state; and

Whereas, wonderful progress has been made in bettering the high-ways of our commonwealth until today we have one of the most efficient high-way departments in any state in the Union; and

Whereas, this department has en-or-mously increased in importance until today it is charged with the ex-penditure of more money than any other office in the state, and

Whereas, the present commis-sion-er, Frank F. Rogers, has by his sterling honesty, sound judgment and complete knowledge of the needs of every county, proven himself em-inently qualified for the position he now holds, therefore be it

Resolved, by the Republican Coun-cil Convention now here assembled, that the delegates to the State Con-vention be and are hereby instructed to use every honorable means to se-cure the nomination of Frank F. Rogers to succeed himself as State Highway Commissioner.

(Signed) J. N. McCall, C. W. Gid-dings, Herbert Smith.

TO THE VOTERS OF ALMA

A few weeks ago some of the busi-ness men of the city asked that they might see me at my home some evening. When they called I was very much surprised to find that they were not out on a drive for money, as I had supposed, but to ask if they might use my name in connection with the office of commis-sioner. I explained to them that I am not a politician and do not know what methods are used in working a political machine and that if they really wanted to elect some man to the office that they had bet-ter look elsewhere. However they continued to insist that I grant their request and I finally did.

I have some quite definite ideas as to what, in my opinion, a city should strive for. A city should have a character. Some cities are physical monstrosities, others have low ideals, while still others are uplifting in their effects. Men, make cities, but cities also make or unmake men. Anything that makes for permanent business is to be preferred to that which makes only for transient or temporary business. If this is true, we should encourage the farmers to

PEOPLE OF OUR TOWN



The Easy Talker is all warmed up and is going so good that he has for-gotten All About the Speaker of the Evening, whom he is introducing. Every town has a Self-Made Orator who can go to the Mat with the Dic-tionary on short notice and Comes in Handy when the Regular Speaker can't Get There.

come to Alma by giving them good roads. Just last week a man who is buying provisions for over one hun-dred people said to me, "I prefer to trade in Alma but because of the roads, I go to Howard City."

Some of the worst roads to be found anywhere are to be found within the city and within one-half block of our main streets. The editor of this paper told me he could not get into his own yard because of the condition of the road in front of his house and that he was com-pelled to drive to the next corner and drive back on the side of the street.

Alma should have more factories and industrial concerns but should not take everything that comes along for the sake of locating something.

We should not forget the asset that we have in our educational sys-tem. We have a high school that is second to none and a college of first rank, so that people who move here with families can start them in with the kindergarten and continue with their education until they have their degree from college.

Closely related to education is the matter of parks and playgrounds. We can not hope to raise healthy, red-blooded boys and girls on an 8 by 10 lot. A boy has the inherent right to ask the city for enough land so that he can bat his base ball with all his might without feeling that he is a criminal because he has broken a window in a nearby dwelling.

The moral and religious welfare of our children is a matter of vital im-portance. Neither the future homes of our country, its business, nor its perpetuity is assured unless we have a moral conscience on the part of the public. Why are there so many crimes being committed by boys and young men? The officers of the law tell us that it largely due to the fact that their minds are being poisoned by unwholesome amusements.

With an ever increasing tax rate and with business at low tide, the greatest care should be exercised in the use of public money. We are told in a general statement that from 10 to 20 per cent of the money raised by taxation is being wasted. We should not adopt a miserly program but a very conservative one. All leaks should be reduced to the min-imum.

There are times when the ex-penditure of a little money will prove a saving. For example, the city has recently purchased a sewer dredge at a cost of about \$9,000. To leave a machine—costing so much money out in the weather the year around would seem to be a mistake.

A farmer who would leave his farm machinery out during the winter would be criticised severely by any up-to-date farmer. Would it not be wise to build a cheap shed for the machinery belonging to the city? It is easy to think that "Jones pays the freight," in the matter of public money, but it must be remembered that in the end it comes from the pocket of the individual.

All propositions calling for the ex-penditure of public money should be very thoroughly investigated and thoroughly discussed from all angles and the general public should not be denied a part in the discussion. After a policy has once been adopted then it should rapidly be pushed to completion. The City Commission and the Chamber of Commerce should co-operate in the greatest possible degree as to matters of city needs and city expenditures.

(Pol. adv.) Francis E. West.

Today's Geography



WILL ALAND ISLANDS BECOME A BALTIC FIUME?

Caught in the swirl of the minor furries that disturb Europe are the remote Aland islands, where Swedes and Finns clashed in a manner sug-gestive of the dispute between Jug-o-Slavs and the Italians along the Ad-riatic, according to newspaper dis-patches.

For more than 200 years the Aland islands, which are situated like a cork in the wide mouth of the Gulf of Bothnia, have been a sort of Alsace-Lorraine question between the Swedes and the Russians. After having passed back and forth several times, they were finally ceded to Russia in 1809.

During the reign of Nicholas I. 1809. They were strongly fortified, a move most distasteful to Sweden, because the islands occupy a strong strategic position with respect to Stockholm, the Swedish capital, which is less than 100 miles to the southwest from the islands.

These fortifications were short-lived. In 1854, during the Crimean war, a Franco-British fleet, under Sir Charles Napier and Baryngary d'Hilliers, destroyed the works, and after that time the islands were left un-fortified, in accordance with an inter-national agreement.

The Aland group, which is separated from the Swedish mainland by Aland bay (Aland Haft) and from the Fin-land mainland by Skiffert sound, is composed of some 300 islands and rocky islets, the total area of which is not more than 550 square miles. The largest island, Aland, a name sig-nifying "land of streams," is almost as large as all the others combined, hav-ing an area of 247 square miles, about twice the size of Martha's Vineyard.

Cattle raising and fishing are the chief occupations of the 25,000 people who live on the islands. Some cereals (barley and oats) are grown on the thin soil, and there are a few forests of birch, spruce and fir.

Swedish troops recently were re-ported marching through the streets of Mariehamn. This attractive little bathing resort is the chief town of the islands, having a population of 1,400. In times of peace a daily steamer service is maintained between this port and Abo, the oldest and historically the most interesting city in Finland. The voyage from Abo to Mariehamn takes about 10 hours.

It was in the water adjacent to the Aland islands that Peter the Great's navy won its first important victory, defeating the Swedes in 1717.

Only about 90 of the 300 islands are inhabited, and the fish-herk, in the main, are of Swedish descent.

Sweden's desire to hold the islands arises in part from the fact that they control the entrance to the Gulf of Bothnia, through which most of that kingdom's internal trade is carried on.

LONDONDERRY: "MAIDEN CITY OF IRELAND"

Derry, or Londonderry, in Ulster, known in song and legend as the "Maiden City of Ireland," has the charm of the cheery, busy town and is truly characterized by the string marching song which these Irish sing on their days of celebration:

"Where Foyle his swelling waters rolls northward to the main. Here, Queen of Erin's daughters, fair Derry fixed her reign: A holy temple crowned her, and com-merce graced her street: A rampart wall was round her, the river at her feet."

These four lines briefly tell Lon-donderry's story. Although the two-mile quays of the River Irishmen jolly each other as they load and unload the foreign, colonial and coasting trade of the docking vessels. For the Foyle is wide and deep, and large tonnage ships flying the flags of France, Aus-tralia, Brazil, the United States, and India bring their wares to her port. Busy looms in the city make linen, and their laughing, twinkly-eyed Irish girls make the linen into shirts before it leaves Londonderry. The salmon fishery on the Foyle is important and the town has timber mills, grain mills, and shipyards.

But Derry has for the traveler a charm greater than his hustle and up-and-down atmosphere—the story of a past replete with romance, devotion to principle, and the exhibition of indomitable spirit. Columbia, the greatest of the Irish saints after Pat-rick and Brigit, in 546 looked on the oak-clad hills and coveted them. Here he founded his abbey, known as Dalre, Columbkille, or Columba's Oak Grove, within the shadow of the great fort on a neighboring hill, the stronghold of the lord of Tyrone, in order that his sanctuary might have the protection of the fort. But in vain did he reckon his chances against the Danes and Saxons who, time and again, pushed their boats against his shores. Despite their plundering and burnings, the settlement, of which he had made the nucleus, grew and maintained its independence until 1609.

Derry was then given to the cor-poration of London, which took on the prefix London. Three years later the Irish society, to which Lon-donderry and much of the surrounding country had been given, pledged itself to enclose Derry within walls, and these walls, wide enough for a coach and four, are excellently preserved today, perhaps to the inconvenience of the inhabitants, but certainly in accordance with their sentiments and wishes. Any one who expressed a desire that they be taken down would be treated as a traitor. Long ago

they grew too small to encompass all the inhabitants of the bustling port, but they stand like a stiff belt around the waistline of the hill on which the city is built. The most incon-venient thing about them is that, though they are more than a mile in circumference, there are only seven gates leading through them. Because the walls defended the city in the siege begun by James II, a busy man must make quite a jaunt out of his way to find a passageway through them, but, true to Irish sentiment, he does it without a murmur. On one of the bastions of the wall an old gun, affectionately known as "Roaring Meg," points her nose over the city.

Here, too, on the hill in the center of a crowded old graveyard stands the quaint, squat cathedral with its queer pinnacled tower. It is called after St. Columba, although it is not on the site of the old abbey built by the saint fourteen centuries ago.

On a high, inaccessible hill in the distance, looms the stronghold of the lords of Tyrone. It is said that St. Patrick came to the fort to baptize Owen, who first set himself up to rule over the province of Tyrone, and St. Columba visited it before his exile.

Here, too, captive Danes who had threatened the peace of the city were dragged in triumph.

Though every trace of the old cas-tle has been obliterated, the massive stone wall fourteen feet thick and eighteen feet high, resembling the han-dwork of a cyclone, has stood out grimly against the centuries. A small iron safe hangs across a two-foot door-way, the only entrance to its huge labyrinthine interior, which reveals further devices designed for the protection of the inmates.

OLD LETTERS REVEAL LOST CHAPTER IN WORLD HISTORY

Lava preserved the secrets of Roman civilization in Pompeii; tombs protected the records of ancient Egypt's culture; and now there is pro-spect that some long neglected letters may reveal one of the most fascinat-ing chapters in the historic trail of the Jewish people, and incidentally show that Africa loomed larger in the middle ages than modern historians have realized.

Hitherto Africa has figured not at all in medieval history. It still was a "dark continent" when Stanley and Livingstone penetrated it less than a century ago. Yet, in view of a remark-able documentary discovery made by Charles de la Ronciere, librarian of the national library in France, it would seem Jews of the fifteenth cen-tury had trading posts in northwest Africa, and carried on a vast com-merce with the natives from the Sa-hara to the Atlantic and from Algeria to the Niger.

Antonio Malfante, a Genoese citizen, traversed this region and wrote his descriptive letters, in 1447, from Tim-buktu and Touat. Timbuktu was the Chicago of the west African plains; and Touat the center of the camel caravan traffic that exchanged the wheat and barley of Egypt for the powdered gold of Timbuktu and the precious salt from Teghazza.

All the places visited by Malfante were so well known to the Jews of his time that they were listed in a Catalan atlas prepared three-quarters of a century earlier for Charles V, according to M. Ronciere. But shortly after Malfante's visit the Jews were driven out of Spain, and since the Jews were the only ones in Europe who knew of the Nigeria country and apparently permitted no Christian to enter there except Malfante the Jew-ish knowledge was lost in Europe. Not until Dr. Gerhard Rohlfs began his explorations in Algeria and Morocco in 1860 did the rest of the world again form a contact with the extensive re-gions of Malfante's travels.

Landing at a point west of Algiers, Malfante worked his way south to Touat, which Rohlfs believed himself to have been the first European to visit. Yet Malfante dated his first letter from there four centuries earlier.

Touat was an oasis, containing from 150 to 200 villages, which together formed a vast commercial center. Each had a chief. Travelers became the guests of these chiefs and Mal-fante reported their protection su-perior to that in states like Timen and Tunis. One of these towns was Tametit, now a decayed village, whose people still recall the Jewish epoch.

Arabian invaders earlier had routed the Jews, who were masters of the Sahara, and whose empire extended south to the Niger. Tametit, Malfante wrote, sheltered both Jews and Mus-ulmans, who lived in harmony.

The native negroes valued copper highly, Malfante stated, and used it for money. Profiteering, apparently, is not a modern vice. Malfante com-plaind, "The people here do not want to transact any business if they do not make a commission of 100 per cent."

And their business was on a big scale. At that, half a million head of cattle, to mention but one item, were brought to market in the caravan season.

Pushing on to Timbuktu, Malfante's host was the brother of a captain of desert industry, a man of great wealth and possessed of trade information concerning all of north Africa. From him Malfante learned of such flourish-ing places as Teghazza, famous for its salt mines and unique for its archi-tecture. The houses were made of rock salt. Malfante noted that it never rained there, or the houses would have melted away.

GUNNING FOR PROFITEERS AN ANCIENT PRACTICE

Profiteering in foods and high wage demands by labor are far from being ultra-modern problems.

Ancient Egypt flogged its profiteers in the market places and medieval England passed maximum wage laws, according to a communication by Ralph A. Graves to the National Geo-graphic society, which says:

"Following the devastation of the Black Death in England in 1348-1349, cultivation of the fields was utterly impossible and there were not even enough able-bodied laborers to gather the crops which had matured. Cattle

roamed through the corn unmolested and the harvest rotted where it stood.

"Out of the situation which resulted from the impoverishment of the labor resources of the kingdom grew the first great clash in England between capital and labor. The peasants be-came masters of the situation. In some instances they demanded double wages, and whereas formerly land-owners had paid one-twelfth of every quarter of wheat as the harvesting wage they were now forced to pay one-eighth.

"Parliament hurriedly passed drastic laws in an effort to meet the new condition. Statutes provided that 'every man or woman, bond or free, able in body and within the age of three-score years, not having his own whereof he may live, nor land of his own about which he may occupy him-self, and not serving any other, shall be bound to serve the employer who shall require him to do so, provided that the lords of any bondman or land-servant shall be preferred before others for his service; that such ser-vants shall take only the wages which were customarily given in 1347 (the year prior to the first appearance of the plague).

"The first ordinance in English his-tory, designed to curb the greed of the middleman, was passed nearly a century earlier (in 1258) when there was a bonifant harvest, but destruc-tive rains caused the heavy crops to rot in the fields.

"By England did not originate food control measures. A low Nile in 967 A. D. resulted in a famine the follow-ing year, which swept away 600,000 people in the vicinity of the city of Fustat, G'ashbar, a Mohammedan To-sophi, founded a new city (the Cairo of today) a short distance from the stricken town and immediately organ-ized relief measures.

"The Caliph Mo'izz lent every assis-tance to his lieutenant, sending many ships laden with grain; but price of bread still remained high and G'ashbar, being a food controller who had no patience with persuasive methods, or-dered his soldiers to seize all the mil-lers and grain dealers and flog them in the public market place. The ad-ministrator then established central grain depots and corn was sold throughout the two years of the famine under the eyes of a government in-spector."

MINSK: AN INCUBATOR OF BOLSHEVISM

One of the least interesting among Russian cities is its physical aspect. Minsk has an economic history that helps in understanding how bolshevism spread so readily among the Russian people.

The industrial history of Minsk, where the Poles and the bolsheviks met to discuss peace terms, is es-pecially significant in view of present conditions in Russia. It was one of the centers where ideas long germi-nated into bolshevism under the hot-house influences of war distress.

There, in the early nineties of the last century, a group of dilettantes formed a Working Man's union, later more accurately termed the Union for Struggle. Promotion of literature, smuggled into the country or printed in secret, was a major activity of this group in Minsk. Few workmen be-longed to it.

In the course of five years these groups, working in Moscow, St. Pe-tersburg and Minsk, had accumulated a number of followers, few of whom agreed. They gave wide publicity to the doctrines of Marx, mixed indis-criminately with every variety of rad-icalism, native and imported. With such a diversity of aims little was accomplished, and it was with the hope of formulating a definite pro-gram that the Union for Struggle and a committee of the Jewish bund held their notable convention at Minsk in 1898. From that meeting arose the Social Democratic Working Men's party.

Minsk is built upon the Svislotek river, nearly 500 miles southwest of Moscow by rail, and has a population of 105,000, fully half of whom are Jews. It was the capital of the old Russian government of Minsk, which included some of the least fertile and least developed regions of the fallen empire.

The annual fair, held in March, fur-nished the chief event in the town's life. Its trade, mainly in corn, lumber and leather, gained perceptibly when it became the intersection point of the railway from Moscow to War-saw and that from Libau to Kharkov. Formerly it maintained a municipal pawnshop.

Making a Precious Shawl.

The process of making a cashmere shawl occupies three men for six months and calls for the fleece of ten goats.

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