

LINCOLN

By S. E. KISER.

New heroes rise above the toiling throng,
And daily come resplendent into view,
And pass again, remembered by a few,
To leave one form in bold relief and strong
That higher looms as ages march along;
One name that lingers in the memory, too,
And singers through all time shall raise the song
And keep it swelling loud and ringing true!
Lo, where the feet of Lincoln passed, the earth
Is sacred, where he knelt we set a shrine!
O to have pressed his hand! That had sufficed
To make my children wonder at my worth—
Yet, let them glory, since their land and mine
Hath reared the greatest martyr after Christ!

WRITTEN BY LINCOLN IN 1841

Letter Reveals Sense of Humor of Which This Great Man Was Possessed—"Tragedy" That Culminated in Joke on Springfield Citizens

Among legal records in the possession of Mr. John F. Geeting, prominent Chicago attorney and editor of American Criminal Reports, is the following letter written by Abraham Lincoln in 1841. It appeared originally in the Quincy Whig of April 9, 1846, and in that article, probably written by Lincoln himself (for it is known that he took much interest in the features of the case) the following lines appear: "On the next Monday Myers arrived at Springfield, bringing with him the now famed Fisher, in full life and proper person." Evidently the letter of Lincoln was written before Fisher had been found.

Springfield, June 19, 1841.—Dear Speed: We have had the highest state of excitement here for a week past that our community has ever witnessed; and although the public feeling is somewhat allayed, the curious affair which aroused it is very far from being over, yet cleared of mystery. It would take a quire of paper to give you anything like a full account of it, and I, therefore, only propose a brief outline.

The chief personages in the drama are Archibald Fisher, supposed to be murdered, and Archibald Traylor, Henry Traylor and William Traylor, supposed to have murdered him. The three Traylor are brothers. The first, Archibald, as you know, lives in town; the second, Henry, in Clary's Grove; and the third, William, in Warren county; and Fisher, the supposed murdered, being without a family, had made his home with William. On Saturday evening, being the 29th of May, Fisher and William came to Henry's in a one-horse dearborn, and there stayed over Sunday; and Monday all three came to Springfield (Henry on horseback), and joined Archibald at Myers', the Dutch carpenter. That evening at supper Fisher was missing, and so next morning some ineffectual search was made for him; and on Tuesday, at 1 o'clock p. m., William and Henry started home without him. In a day or two Henry and one or two of his Clary Grove neighbors came back for him again, and advertised his disappearance in the papers. The knowledge of the matter thus far had not been general, and here it dropped entirely till about the 10th

inst., when Keys received a letter from the postmaster in Warren county, that William had arrived at home and was telling a very mysterious and improbable story about the disappearance of Fisher, which induced the community there to suppose he had been disposed of unfairly. Keys made this letter public, which immediately set the whole town and adjoining country agog. And so it has continued until yesterday.

The mass of the people commenced a systematic search for the dead body, while Wickorsham was dispatched to arrest Henry Traylor at the Grove, and Jim Maxcy to Warren to arrest William. On Monday last, Henry was brought in, and showed an evident inclination to insinuate that he knew Fisher to be dead, and that Archibald and William had killed him. He said he guessed the body could be found in Spring creek, between the Beardstown road and Hickox's mill. Away the people swept like a herd of buffalo, and cut down Hickox's mill-dam poles volens, to draw the water out of the pond, and then went up and down, and down and up the creek, fishing and raking, and raking and ducking, and diving for two days; and, after all, no dead body found. In the meantime a sort of scuffling-ground had been found in the brush in the angle, or point, where the road leading into the woods past the brewery, and the one leading in past the brick grove met. From the scuffling-ground was the sign of something about the size of a man having been dragged to the edge of the thicket, where joined the track of some small wheeled carriage drawn by one horse, as shown by the road-track. The carriage track led off towards Spring creek. Near this drag-trail, Dr. Merryman found two hairs, which, after a long scientific examination, he pronounced to be triangular human hair, which term, he says, includes within it the whiskers, the hair growing under the arms, and on other parts of the body; and he judged that these two were of the whiskers, because the ends were cut, showing that they had flourished in the neighborhood of the razor's operations.

On Thursday last Jim Maxcy brought in William Traylor from War-

ren. On the same day Arch. was arrested, and put in jail. Yesterday (Friday) William was put upon his examining trial before May and Lavelly; Archibald and Henry were both present. Lamborn prosecuted, and Logan, Baker and your humble servant defended. A great many witnesses were introduced and examined, but I shall only mention those whose testimony seemed most important. The first of these was Capt. Ransdell. He swore that, when William and Henry left Springfield for home on Tuesday before mentioned, they did not take the direct route—which, you know, leads by the butcher shop; but that they followed the street north until they got opposite, or nearly opposite, May's house, after which he could not see them from where he stood; and it was afterwards proved, that, in about an hour after they started, they came into the street by the butcher's shop from towards the brick-yard. Dr. Merryman and others swore to what is stated about the scuffle-ground, drag-trail, whiskers and carriage tracks.

Henry was then introduced by the prosecution. He swore that, when they started for home, they went out north, as Ransdell stated, and turned down west by the brick-yard into the woods, and there met Archibald; that they proceeded a small distance further, when he was placed as a sentinel to watch for and announce the approach of anyone that might happen that way; that William and Arch. took the dearborn out of the road a small distance to the edge of the thicket, where they stopped, and he saw them lift the body of a man into it; that they moved off with the carriage in the direction of Hickox's mill, and he loitered about for something like an hour. When William returned with the carriage, but without Arch., and said they had put him in a safe place; that they went somehow, he did not know exactly how, into the road close to the brewery, and proceeded on to Clary's Grove. He also stated that some time during the day William told him that he and Arch. had killed Fisher the evening before; that the way they did it was by him (William) knocking him down with a club, and Archibald then choking him to death.

An old man from Warren, called Dr. Gilmore, was then introduced on the part of the defense. He swore that he had known Fisher for several years; that Fisher had resided at his house a long time at each of the different spells; once while he built a barn for him, and once while he was doctored for some chronic disease; that two or three years ago Fisher had a serious hurt in his head by the bursting of a gun, since which he had been subject to continued bad health and occasional aberration of mind. He also stated that on last Tuesday, being the same day that Maxcy arrested William Traylor, he (the doctor) was from home in the early part of the day, and on his return, about 11 o'clock, found Fisher at his house in bed, and appar-

ently very unwell; that he asked him how he had come from Springfield; that Fisher said he had come by Peoria, which showed that he at the time of speaking did not know where he had been wandering about in a state of derangement. He further stated that in about two hours he received a note from one of Traylor's friends advising him to go on to Springfield as a witness to testify as to the state of Fisher's health in former times; that he immediately set off, calling up two of his neighbors as company, and riding all evening and all night, overtook Maxcy and William at Lewiston in Fulton county. That Maxcy refusing to discharge Traylor upon his statement, his two neighbors returned, and he came on to Springfield. Some question being made as to whether the doctor's story was not a fabrication, several acquaintances of his (among whom was the same postmaster who wrote to Keys as before mentioned) were introduced as sort of compurgators, who swore that they knew the doctor to be a good character for truth and veracity, and generally of good character in every way.

Here the testimony ended, and the Traylor were discharged, Archibald and William expressing, both in word and manner, their entire confidence that Fisher would be found at the doctor's by Galloway, Mallory and Myers, who a day before had been dispatched for that purpose; while Henry still protested that no power on earth could ever show Fisher alive. Thus stands this curious affair.

When the doctor's story was first made public, it was amusing to scan and contemplate the countenances, and hear the remarks of those who had been actively engaged in the search for the dead body; some looked quizzical, some melancholy, and some furiously angry. Porter, who had been very active, swore he always knew the man was not dead, and that he had not stirred an inch to hunt for him. Langford, who had taken the lead in cutting down Hickox's mill-dam, and wanted to hang Hickox for objecting, looked most awfully woebegone; he seemed the "victim of unrequited affection," as represented in the comic almanacs we used to laugh over. And Hart, the little drayman that hauled Molly home once, said it was too damned bad to have so much trouble and no hanging after all.

I commenced this letter yesterday, since which I received yours of the 13th. I stick to my promise to come to Louisville. Nothing new here, except what I have written. I have not seen — since my last trip; and I am going out there as soon as I mail this letter. Yours forever,

LINCOLN.

Art Criticism.

"I don't like marble statues," said the fluffy young thing. "They always look as if they had a cataract or something of that kind the matter with their eyes."



CUPID, His Day



THEY were the neatest ladies on the entire street, Miss Lucinda Berry and her sister Alice, and they subsisted meagerly on a small pension that had been their late father's. In the same block lived the richest, slouchiest and most irritable bachelor in the city.

In February, when an unexpected mildness set in, Miss Alice turned the hose on her sidewalk to wash away the ashes. All night long, however, the wind rose, and the fourteenth of February dawned bitter cold, and the water used for washing off the ashes froze.

Miss Lucinda was in the kitchen sifting ashes to resprinkle the pavement, when she heard her sister shriek. Lucinda rushed to open the front door, and saw Alice on her knees in the street supporting the husky shoulders of Williams, who was shouting lustily: "This is your work! Nice, isn't it? Always knew your con-founded neatness would cost me my life."

Alice could only sob in reply. "I'll sue you for this, all right," he bellowed.

By this time Lucinda had approached, and now spoke authoritatively: "Well, it is plain you must be carried into your house and a doctor sent for at once." Beckoning to the bachelor's man servant, who hovered near, she instructed him how to assist the injured man without causing unnecessary pain.

When Williams had been laid on a disordered bed, Miss Lucinda made him as comfortable as possible before the arrival of the doctor. The Berry girls set to work preparing bandages. The doctor came, set the arm, ex-

pressed approval of all that had been done, and left.

Williams heard this commendation of the maiden sisters, and after some thought said:

"If you bring me through without crippling me, I will let you off as lightly as possible."

This unexpected generosity overjoyed the ladies. They took their regular turns, and the negro servant rued the day when they invaded his slouchy kingdom. Though the injured bachelor could not know of all the changes taking place, still he felt the influence of orderly domesticity.

They really enjoyed the nursing, and their patient particularly appreciated having Miss Alice near, for her touch was delightfully soft. So, even when the physician came, it was Miss Alice who bandaged the arm after it was dressed.

When able to be around again it was difficult to break an acquired habit, so it happened that Mr. Williams went over morning and evening for Miss Alice to attend to his arm.

One morning he did not come; instead the servant appeared with a note for Miss Alice, who read it with alarm:

"I shall call this evening to sue for my damages. If it is not removed, I am afraid I must proceed to extreme measures."

Miss Alice cried the better part of the day after the receipt of the note, and Miss Lucinda for once was not practical, so cried some also.

At seven that evening the door bell rang and Miss Lucinda admitted Mr. Williams and showed him into the parlor where Alice sat, openly tearful.

"Take a seat," she whispered. He sat down facing her, and took her limp hand.

"Blest, my soul," he cried; "what's the matter?"

"Nothing," she exclaimed, and burst into sobs.

"I wish you'd cry for me," said the bachelor huskily.

"Oh," she moaned, "we can't pay those damages, Mr. Williams."

"Well, if you can't," said he, "can you do something else? Can you accept the worn-out old valentine that was thrown at your gate about a month ago? Not worth picking up, perhaps, old-fashioned and full of flaws, but a most loving valentine."

With her cheek against the bandaged arm, Miss Alice cried some more—but there were smiles shining through.



The Saint's Day in Scotland

It seems to have been a custom in Scotland to choose one's valentine, if Sir Walter Scott is to be trusted in his account of the wedding of the Fair Maid of Perth and Hal of the Wynd in the novel. The always amusing and ubiquitous Pepys, in his diary, which neglects nothing under the sun apparently, mentions St. Valentine's day and its customs in several places, and gives an amusing account of his wife, fearing to open her eyes on St. Valentine's day while the painters and decorators were at work in her room, lest she should see one of these unsuitable persons first instead of a more comely valentine.

Whatever the origin of the custom, it has given rise to many quaint and pretty fancies, and both poets and lovers have employed the legend and the saint to good purpose. The send-

ing of letters and the more or less tawdry cut paper valentines, which the children of the last generation were so familiar with, undoubtedly gave rise to the modern fashion of Christmas cards in this country and in England, which has grown to such astonishing, not to say alarming, proportions, and the comic valentine, that hideous and dreadful creation, is presumably one of the evils resulting from the custom. However this may be, it is exceedingly agreeable to receive a gift of flowers, or fruit, or a dainty book upon this midwinter festival, and if it take the form of a more useful present there is a distinct authority for sending even these, as one of the oldest customs consisted in sending a veil of tissue or gauze to the fortunate valentine selected to be the recipient of the attention.