

**ABRAHAM LINCOLN:
HIS LIFE AND PUBLIC
SERVICES. PP. 18-216**

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Abraham Lincoln: His Life and Public Services. pp. 18-216 by Mrs. P. A. Hanaford

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A. Lincoln.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN:

His Life and Public Services.

BY

MRS. P. A. HANAFORD,

AUTHOR OF "OUR MARTYRED PRESIDENT," "THE YOUNG CAPTAIN," ETC.

"That life is long which answers life's great end."—YOUNG.

"God buries his workmen, but carries on the work."—CHARLES WESLEY.

"The righteous hath hope in his death."—PROV. xiv. 32.

BOSTON:
B. B. RUSSELL AND COMPANY.
1865.

TO
ALL LOYAL MEN AND WOMEN,
NORTH AND SOUTH, EAST AND WEST,
TO
THE UNION ARMY AND NAVY,
AND ESPECIALLY
TO THE LONG-OPPRESSED RACE FOR WHOM
President Lincoln
WROTE
THE EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION,
THE RECORD OF HIS STAINLESS LIFE AND
MARTYR'S DEATH IS NOW
INSCRIBED.

married, and died shortly after, leaving no children. His only brother died in infancy. Mrs. Lincoln, as has been intimated, was one of the most devoted of mothers, sparing no pains to insure the welfare of her beloved children. Abraham was always a dutiful son, and her counsel and example were not lost on him, but, as good seed sown on good ground, her instructions sprang forth into a life of good order and usefulness. The bereaved boy was almost inconsolable at her loss. No minister was near to pray with the survivors as they laid down the dear head of the wife and mother for the last, long sleep amid the shadows of the forest. Sympathizing neighbors gathered around; but the want of a minister to conduct the usual solemn rites of Christian burial was deeply felt. Some months afterward, Abraham had an opportunity of learning to write, which with characteristic energy and industry he faithfully improved. "After a few weeks of practice under the eye of his instructor, and also out of doors with a piece of chalk or charred stick, he was able to write his name, and in less than twelve months could and did write a letter."

One of the first letters he wrote was to an old friend of his mother, a travelling preacher, whom he desired to come and preach her funeral sermon. Parson Elkins did not receive the letter for some three months; but then he hastened to Indiana, and the neighbors again assembled — a year after her death — to pay a last tribute of respect to one universally beloved. Abraham's services as a letter-writer were thus known, and he soon found himself busied in writing letters for his neighbors.

President Lincoln never forgot his mother. It was very long before the loneliness and desolation of that sad bereavement passed away. Her lessons of divinest wisdom he kept stored in his heart, and all her hallowed

influence was eternally sealed upon his soul by her departure from earth. Who shall say that it was not deepened and intensified by that very change which gave her henceforth more intimate communion with spirits, and possibly with the spirit of her son? Her grave, to which hallowed spot the bereaved son was wont frequently to repair, and muse upon his great loss and her eternal gain, is still embowered amid the majestic forest-trees of that region. No tombstone yet denotes the sacred spot; and the place where the remains lie buried is an unfrequented locality, or nearly so. President Lincoln wrote a letter, shortly before his death, expressing his intention to visit the grave during the approaching summer, and cause a suitable monument to be erected; and in that letter, which was to an old friend, he expressed regret that care and business had so long hindered him from performing this duty.

He will never perform it. Instead of going to her grave, he has gone to her; and blissful beyond human computation must have been, ere this, the meeting of such a mother with such a son. Yet that humble grave should not be neglected. A nation owes it to the memory of a President martyred in its holy cause that his mother's tomb should be honorably distinguished.

During the next year after Mrs. Lincoln's death, Abraham's father married again, and secured in Mrs. Sally Johnston of Elizabethtown, Kentucky, a worthy step-mother for his children. She had three children, and seemed to have been one who could say with Mrs. Howe, —

"Then spoke the angel of mothers
To me in gentle tone,
'Be kind to the children of others,
And thus deserve thine own.'"

Between her and the son to whom she became a true

friend as well as a step-mother sprang up a devoted attachment; and she ever acted as if she said to him in tender tones of ardent sympathy, using the words of Mrs. Welby,—

"Child of the lost, the buried, and the sainted,
I call thee mine,
Till fairer still, with tears and sin unstained,
Her home be thine."

Step-mothers are not all heartless, and those who, like the writer of these pages, have known the devoted care and tender love of a *good step-mother*, do not like to hear them as a class condemned. This second mother of our late President still survives to remember his nobleness of soul, and to mourn his martyrdom. She resides at Goose Nest, Coles County, eight miles south of Charlestown, Illinois.

A few years after the death of his mother, a Mr. Crawford, one of the settlers, opened a school in his own cabin; and thither Abraham regularly repaired to add a knowledge of arithmetic to his reading and writing. His appearance was in keeping with his humble home. He was arrayed in buckskin clothes, with a raccoon-skin cap, and carried an *old* arithmetic, which had been industriously sought for his benefit. "His progress was rapid, and his perseverance and faithfulness won the interest and esteem of his teacher." His love of books continued, and he read all that he could obtain far and near. With the immortal dreamer of Bedford jail, he traced the pathway of the Christian pilgrim from the City of Destruction to his Celestial Home beyond the river; and no doubt he felt that he, too, would gladly follow such a path, sure as he was that his own dear mother would be one of the shining ones to greet him on the heavenly shore. He pored over such books as

the "Lives of Clay and Washington," till the fires of a noble emulation and true patriotism glowed in his heart; and he thus daily grew more and more to be of the very spirit of which heroic leaders and wise counsellors are made. God was fitting him, even in his childhood and his youth, for the very work which was before him. Bishop Simpson expressed this idea in his funeral sermon at Springfield, Illinois, on the 4th of May, 1865. He said, "Mr. Lincoln was no ordinary man. I believe the conviction has been growing on the nation's mind, as it certainly has been on my own, especially in the last years of his administration, that by the hand of God he was especially singled out to guide our Government in these troublesome times; and it seems to me that the hand of God may be traced in many of the events connected with his history. First, then, I recognize this in the physical education which he received, and which prepared him for enduring herculean labors. In the toils of his boyhood, and the labors of his manhood, God was giving him an iron frame. Next to this was his identification with the heart of this great people, understanding their feelings because he was one of them, and connected with them in their movements and life. His education was simple. A few months spent in the schoolhouse gave him the elements of education. He read few books, but mastered all he read. 'Pilgrim's Progress,' 'Æsop's Fables,' and the 'Life of Washington,' were his favorites. In these we recognize the works which gave the bias to his character, and which partly moulded his style. His early life, with its varied struggles, joined him indissolubly to the working masses; and no elevation in society diminished his respect for the sons of toil. He knew what it was to fell the tall trees of the forest, and to stem the current of the broad Mississippi.