

**AMERICAN HISTORY IN
LITERATURE. NOTED SPEECHES
OF
ABRAHAM LINCOLN, INCLUDING
THE LINCOLN-DOUGLAS DEBATE**

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ABRAHAM LINCOLN



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FOREWORD

THIS series, *American History in Literature*, will include only the best-known American speeches,—those which commemorate the most important events in the history of our country.

The biographical sketches have been included for the convenience of the student and reader, and for the schoolboys and girls, who are constantly seeking concise accounts of the lives of our great Americans.

This present volume, the first of the series, gives to the student and reader Abraham Lincoln's most noted speeches in compact form, making a chronological anthology.

L. M. B.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

IN a little log-cabin in Hardin County, Kentucky, on the 12th of February, 1809, was born a future President of the United States, Abraham Lincoln.

When Abraham was seven years old, his father, Thomas Lincoln, moved with his family to Indiana. It was a cold, dreary winter for them in the rude shed which Abraham, knowing well how to handle an ax, had helped his father to build. The following autumn found them in a better cabin, but brought to Abraham the loss of his mother, Nancy Hanks Lincoln, leaving his sister Sarah, eleven years old, to care for the household. But the next year the little home was much changed; for a stepmother had come, a woman of energy and thrift, who provided the children with comforts before unknown to them. She became very fond of Abraham and encouraged his inclination for reading and study. One year would probably cover all the schooling he ever had, but

he set to work with a will to educate himself, sometimes walking miles to borrow a book.

In the spring of 1830 Thomas Lincoln sold his farm in Indiana and moved to Illinois. Abraham, though wishing to do something for himself, remained with his father about a year longer, to see him comfortably settled in his new home. Then, in April, he went on his second expedition to New Orleans in a flatboat. On his return his employer placed him in charge of a store at New Salem.

When he was twenty-three years old, he enlisted in what was called the Black Hawk War, and was chosen captain of his company. When the war was at an end and he returned home, he was told that the people wished to send him to the legislature. He agreed to be a candidate, but was not elected. All this time he did not give up the idea of becoming a lawyer, and soon after the next election, at which he received a large majority, he commenced the study of law.

In 1837 he left New Salem and removed to Springfield, which was ever after his home. He was elected to the Illinois legislature four times in succession and again in 1846, and the following year he was chosen to be a Representative in Congress. At the close of his two years in Congress, Mr. Lincoln returned to Springfield and applied himself to the practice of law. But very soon he was again taking an active part in the politics of

