

Height

DRAWER

3A

APPEARANCE

11 2009 085 03471



# Abraham Lincoln's Appearance

## Height

Excerpts from newspapers and other  
sources

From the files of the  
Lincoln Financial Foundation Collection

#### Lincoln on Sumner.

A gentleman tells the following anecdote of Lincoln:

As I rose to leave, Mr. Lincoln picked up and handed me a note to look at. I recognized Senator Sumner's handwriting as I took it, and was not, therefore, surprised to find alarming and mysterious in tone, bidding. Mr. Lincoln for particular reasons, to be very careful how he went out alone at night. I saw that Mr. Lincoln watched me while I read the note, and I perhaps may have expressed in my countenance an opinion of the communication which I did not think it civil to put into words, merely reiterating, as I laid it back on the table, my own conviction that there was nothing to fear in Washington, and no occasion for measures likely to influence the public unfavorably in other parts of the country. As I rose to go, Mr. Lincoln pulled himself together up out of the rockingchair in which he had packed himself, and, scanning me good-naturedly for a moment, said very abruptly: "You never put backs with Sumner, did you?" I suppose I looked as much surprised as I felt, but I laughed and said that I did not think I had ever done so. "Well, I suppose not," he said, and then hesitating a moment went on: "While he was in here I asked him to measure with me; and do you know he made a little speech about it." I tried to look civil serious, and Mr. Lincoln, with indescribable glimmer all over his face, continued: "Yes," he said, "he told me he thought 'this was a time for uniting our fronts and not our backs before the enemies of the country,' or something like that. It was very fine. But I reckon the truth was," and at this point I was compelled against my will to laugh out loud, "I reckon the truth was he was afraid to measure!" And with this he looked down with some complacency on his own really indescribable length of limb. "He is a good piece of man though—Sumner," he added half quizzically, half apologetically, "and a good man—I have never had much to do with bishops down where we live; but, do you know, Sumner is just my idea of a bishop!"—1880.

**A New Story of How the Martyred President Evaded a Bore's Talk.**

*M. M. Cass in New York Sun.*

Long Tom Davis, of Owego, New York, was a lawyer of unusual and conceded ability, an ardent Republican, an enthusiastic admirer of President Lincoln, and, during the latter years of the war, a valuable member of the New York state legislature. In 1864 he went to Washington, and while there called on the president with the intention of criticising a certain line of policy, the expediency of which was then questioned by many patriotic citizens.

Besides being tall enough to warrant the use of the phenomenal adjective by which he was distinguished from all shorter Tom Davises, he was a man of somber temperament and singular gravity of manner. Life for him was too short and serious for a smile, and being for this, among other reasons, quite incapable of understanding the character of Mr. Lincoln, he returned from the capital amazed and pained by the conviction, which he did not hesitate to express, that our illustrious president was little better than a buffoon.

"Why, you greatly astonish me, Mr. Davis," said a gentleman to whom he communicated the impressions of the president, "I thought you were one of his warmest supporters."

"Well, I'll tell you," was the reply, "just how he received me, and you can judge for yourself. Having been introduced to him in terms most flattering as a staunch Republican and efficient member of the legislature, I began to make the suggestions I had in mind, whereupon the president, eyeing me thoughtfully, inquired; 'Davis, how tall a man are you?'"

"I replied that I was six feet two inches, upon which he rejoined; 'Why, are you as tall as that? Come, let me see,' and backing me up against a door, he took a pencil, marked my height on the jamb and afterward his own, the two marks being close together."

"We're pretty nearly of size," said he. 'But, Davis, I think my foot is longer than yours.' So he insisted on measuring feet, after which he began to discuss our weights and the size of our chests and arms.

"In this way, with these trivial comparisons and conjectures, he took up all my time, fully fifteen minutes, until a man came in who applied for a clerical position in one of the departments on the strength of having lost a hand in the service of his country.

"'Oh, you go and see Seward,' said the president. 'I don't know anything about your hand; you may have lost it in a steel trap.'"

"Now," continued Mr. Davis, earnestly, "Do you think he has the requisite dignity for so high an office?"

The interview, of which the foregoing is a mere outline, seems deliciously amusing from the fact that Mr. Davis, patriot and statesman that he was, had not the remotest appreciation of the humor of the incident. The president, burdened and worn, bowed by his Atlantean load of responsibility, and wearied by a long day's work, was in no mood to go over with his visitor ground frequently traversed before, perhaps in protracted cabinet debates. Perceiving that Mr. Davis was a man of nearly his own build, he found in this topic an escape from a discussion which he dreaded. It was this ability to momentarily lay aside his dignity in a laugh or a boyish prank which enabled Mr. Lincoln to stand up under his weight of care, and it was this which rendered him such an enigma to the saturnine Mr. Davis.



# Lincoln Was the Tallest President

11-1-1929  
Middletown, N. Y. (P)—Congressman Hamilton Fish, jr., who is quite a tall fellow himself and was adept at picking forward passes out of the air for Harvard, has set his constituents right on tall presidents. Lincoln was the tallest, 6 feet 4. Washington was 6 feet 2. Madison was the shortest, 5 feet 4. Polk the leanest, Cleveland the stoutest, Van Buren the tidliest and Taylor the most careless in dress.

Who was the tallest President, who the shortest?  
Who was the oldest President, who the youngest?  
O. O. J.

Abraham Lincoln undoubtedly was the tallest President; he was 6 feet 4 inches in height. The shortest was probably Benjamin Harrison, although Van Buren and John Adams were very short men. The oldest President was William Henry Harrison, who was 68 years and 1 month old when inaugurated; the youngest was Grant, who was not quite 47 years old. 1884

—Abraham Lincoln undoubtedly was the tallest president; he was six feet four inches in height. The shortest was probably Benjamin Harrison, although Van Buren and John Adams were very short men. The oldest president was William Henry Harrison, who was sixty-eight years and one month old when inaugurated; the youngest was Grant, who was not quite forty-seven years old. 1884

## Lincoln's Height. 1857

Abraham Lincoln, six feet four inches in height hardy, muscular, and able in more than one kind of work to perform the labor of three common men, took a natural and manly pride in his size and strength. He liked, back to back, to measure inches with other tall men, and find that he surpassed them. He liked to measure lifting power with others who were strong, and find himself the stronger; nor was he averse in his younger days to the rougher measurement of a bout of vigorous wrestling, in which he was pretty certain to come off the victor. It is needless to add that when, in any point, he was occasionally *not* the victor his good nature never failed him, and the only result was some drolly turned compliment to the other fellow, or equally droll bit of philosophical consolation addressed to himself. In a recent number of *McClure's Magazine* several little incidents are related showing Lincoln's interest in the comparative physique of himself and men he chanced to meet long after his wrestling, rail-splitting and heavy-lifting days were over. When, in 1860, the committee called on him in Springfield to notify him of his nomination to the presidency, Governor Morgan, who was one of their number, and a man of great height and powerful build, at once caught the eye of the coming President, and his first question was: "Pray, governor, how tall may you be?"

Later, when he was in office, a poor man from some remote country place, a big but bashful fellow, had with great difficulty screwed his courage to the point of calling at the White House to ask of Lincoln some slight favor, and his errand done, was edging awkwardly toward the door when the President stopped him, and called him back to measure heights with him.

The countryman proved to be, as Lincoln had evidently guessed would be the case, a trifle the taller as they stood backed against each other before a glass; but he was so shy that instead of exulting in his extra fraction of an inch, he was more abashed than ever, and finally departed confused and blushing, apparently under the impression that it was an unpardonable breach of etiquette to dare to be taller than the President of the United States.

Once at a state fair, which he was visiting in company with Governor Hoyt at Milwaukee, Lincoln entered a side-show tent where a "strong man" was performing—going through the customary circus feats of tossing and catching great iron balls, and rolling them on his back and arms, apparently with the utmost ease.

It was a new spectacle to Lincoln, who was greatly interested, and watched his every motion with keen attention, ejaculating under his breath at each new achievement, "By George! by George!"

Seeing his interest, Governor Hoyt, when the performance was ended, asked him to come up and be introduced to the athlete. Lincoln at once complied, and stood for a moment looking down upon the man, who happened to be very short, in evident astonishment that such a little fellow could be so strong; then his amazement got the better of him, and he burst out into speech.

"Why," he exclaimed, still gazing downward from his elevation of a foot or so above the man's head, "why, I could lick salt off the top of your hat!"

With the earlier anecdotes of Lincoln's size and strength are linked always other anecdotes of his story-telling in the intervals between working hours, when his long, gaunt figure would be stretched at ease, and he would pour out stories, anecdotes and bits of mimicry till the crowd around him were helpless with laughter.

In one town, where he stopped four weeks to build a flatboat, there was preserved and pointed out for many years a peeled log called "Abe's log," whereon he and his listeners used to sit lounging and whittling in the summer evenings. So irresistibly funny were the yarns that Abe told there, that, said the narrator, who used to be one of "the boys," "whenever he'd end up in his unexpected way, the boys on the log would whoop and roll off."

The result of this appreciative friction, constantly repeated, was that "Abe's log," so long as it was in existence, displayed a polish like a mirror from one end to the other.

## PRESIDENT AND THE PRIVATE.

Veteran of Civil War Tells of a Meeting  
with Mr. Lincoln and Three  
Other Tall Men. 1901

When Mahlon Shaaber of the Ninety-third Pennsylvania Volunteers was passing through Washington with his regiment in 1862 he noticed standing on the pavement an unusually tall man in a group of tall men. As Shaaber marched on, this man extended a long arm and called out, "Bub! Bub!"

Captain Arthur of my company, says Mr. Shaaber, saw that the tall man was addressing me, and, without telling me who he was, ordered me to leave the ranks and go to him. With a friendly smile the stranger took my hand and said:

"Excuse my rudeness. It was jealousy on my part that made me call you out to size you up. How tall are you, and what is your age and weight?"

"I am 6 feet 8½ inches," I said, "in my 17th year, and weigh 135 pounds."

As he jotted these figures down in a black memorandum book it seemed to strike him that I didn't know who he was, so he said:

"I am old Abe. This gentleman, my son, is Vice President Hamlin."

The other members of the party were General Cameron and Governor Curtin.

"It will be a good while, I guess," went on the President, "before as small a party as this can show so great a total of inches." And he read out the entry as he put it down:

Mahlon Shaaber, Ninety-third	Pennsylvania Volunteers.....	6 ft. 8½ in.
Abraham Lincoln.....		6 ft. 4 in.
Hannibal Hamlin.....		6 ft. 2½ in.
Governor Curtin.....		6 ft. 2 in.
General Cameron.....		6 ft. 1 in.

The President gave me a good deal of advice. I remember that he cautioned me against ple and particularly warned me against liquor. He told me that when I lay down to sleep I should rest the head lower than the chest to expand my lungs, and he added: "I am afraid you won't stand the service." When he bade me good-by he put his hands on my shoulders and said, with the kindest tone:

"Good-by, my son. God bless you! Come soon and dine with me."

After I was wounded and had returned to Washington I remembered the President's invitation, and went to call on him. He knew me at once, gave me a cordial greeting, showed me around the building, presented me to the guests of the day, and invited me to dine. There I lost courage, but Mr. Lincoln insisted, and said:

"I will give you a seat on my right hand as my particular guest."

This frightened me the more, and I confessed that I was ashamed to sit in my shabby clothes with such elegantly dressed company. To this the President replied gravely:

"It's not the clothing that makes the man, my son, it's the heart. I think more of the man dressed in blue for the love of his country than of these gay visitors, whose chief business in these trying times is simply to dress for receptions."

But I still declined, and the President took both my hands in his, gave me a parting blessing, and said:

"If you lie around Washington in the future, call again."

It has been my lifelong regret, concludes Mr. Shaaber, that I did not dine with the President.—Youth's Companion.



## LINCOLN STORY

### A Small Man.

Lincoln never lost his interest in exhibitions of physical strength, and involuntarily he always compared the possessor of it with himself. On one occasion, says Mr. Francis F. Browne in "The Everyday Life of Abraham Lincoln"—it was in 1859—he was asked to make an address at the state fair of Wisconsin, which was held at Milwaukee. Among the attractions was a "strong man" who went through the usual performance of tossing iron balls and letting them roll back down his arms, lifting heavy weights and so on. 1876

Apparently Lincoln had never seen such a combination of strength and agility before. He was greatly interested. Every now and then he gave vent to the ejaculation, "By George! By George!" After Lincoln had made his speech, some one introduced him to the athlete; and as Lincoln stood looking down at him from his great height, evidently wondering that one so small could be so strong, he suddenly gave utterance to one of his quaint speeches.

"Why," he said, "I could lick salt off the top of your hat!"—Youth's Companion.

### HIS EQUAL IN HEIGHT.

#### Lincoln's Pleasant Little Interview With a Coal Heaver. 1906

When Lincoln was on his way to assume the office of president the train was delayed at Freedom, Pa., by an accident to a freight train that was a little way ahead. Lincoln was accompanied by Major Sumner and Colonel Elmer Ellsworth of the celebrated regiment of zouaves. Neither Major Sumner nor Colonel Ellsworth was tall, and as they stood beside Lincoln on the rear platform while he made his address they looked shorter than they really were. At the close of Lincoln's short speech a coal heaver called out, "Abe, they say you are the tallest man in the United States, but I don't believe you are any taller than I am." Lincoln replied, "Come up here and let us measure." The coal heaver pressed his way through the crowd and climbed on the platform, where Lincoln and he stood back to back. Turning to Colonel Ellsworth, Lincoln said, "Which is the taller?"

Colonel Ellsworth, being so much shorter, could not tell, so he climbed on the guard rail and, putting his hand across the top of the heads of the two men, said, "I believe they are exactly the same height." Then Lincoln and the coal heaver turned around and faced each other. The crowd shouted loudly when Lincoln took the black, sooty hand of the coal heaver in his and gave a hearty handshake to the man who was his equal—in height.—Thomas H. Tibbles in Success Magazine.

### Lincoln Hid His Whetstone.

Representative Burton Erwin Sweet, of Waverly, Iowa, gives it as his opinion that Lincoln's whetstone story has a stronger appeal for the farmers than any of the other stories that are told about the great president. The story goes that when Lincoln was a candidate for the state legislature he stopped to talk with a farmer who was mowing grass in his yard. As they stood chatting by the gate, Lincoln absent mindedly took the whetstone from the farmer's hand and toyed with it as they talked. In fifteen or twenty minutes Lincoln continued on his way. They did not see each other again for ten years. When they met, the farmer acted a bit distant, and when Lincoln asked what was wrong, he said: "Well, I never exactly liked the way my whetstone disappeared. I never saw it again after that day you stopped at my place to talk politics. I've often wondered what you did with it." Lincoln pondered a moment, and then a broad smile appeared on his face, and then he laughed heartily. "Friend," said he, "if your gate posts are still standing you will find that whetstone on the left post. The post, as I recollect it, is about eight foot high and very broad. I laid it on top of the post during our talk and forgot to hand it back."

When the farmer reached home he lifted his young son to the top of the post, and, sure enough, the whetstone was still there.

"That's what comes of being so pesky short," he grumbled, as he walked out to the barn. 1922

### Latitude and Longitude.

An old countrywoman called upon Lincoln to present him with a pair of stockings a yard long—she had knitted them herself. He was touched and held them up to be admired by all the officials present. "I thank you, ma'am," he said, with tears in his eyes, "I shall take them with me to Washington, where I am sure they have nothing like them."

George Boutwell, afterward secretary of the treasury, set everybody into a gale of laughter by declaring: "Well, this lady certainly made a very correct estimate of your latitude and longitude."

## **Mr. Lincoln Was the Tallest President. Says Representative Fish, Giving Author-**

### **Challenges Statement of Editor That George Wash- Led the Executives in Height**

Abraham Lincoln, and not George Washington, was the tallest President of the United States, Representative Fish (Rep.), of Garrison, N. Y., has just stated in a letter to the editor of the Middletown (N. Y.) Times-Herald.

In this letter, which was made public by Mr. Fish, numerous authorities were quoted as placing George Washington's height at 6 feet 2 inches and Abraham Lincoln's at from 6 feet 3 inches to 6 feet 4.

Mr. Fish's letter follows in full text:

Dear sir: I have just read with much interest an editorial in your issue of Oct. 24, 1929, entitled "Tallest President."

Your editorial states that "Washington was 6 feet, 3 inches. He was taller than Lincoln. Washington was the tallest of all men who have occupied the White House."

For the sake of historical accuracy I am obliged to differ with such a statement and to ask you to kindly refer me to the authority from which you have reached such an obviously erroneous conclusion. After reading the editorial referred to I immediately telephoned William Tyler Page, Clerk of the House of Representatives who is a recognized authority on George Washington. He at once referred me to the "Life of George Washington," by Henry Cabot Lodge, who said that "Washington in his youth was 6 feet tall and in later years 6 feet, 2 or 3 inches in height."

Senator Lodge in volume 2, page 380 of the same book quotes a letter by David Ackerson of Alexandria: "Washington's exact height was 6 feet 2 inches in his

boots \* \* \* At that time he weighed 2 and there was no surplus flesh about him."

In 1859 in a biographical sketch Lincoln said: "If any personal description is thought desirable I am in height 6 feet, 4 inches nearly, etc."

In response to my request the Congressional Library at Washington sent me the following references which are all well known: Abraham Lincoln, 1916, by W. H. Herndon, and J. W. Weik, page 394, Vol. 2 "Mr. Lincoln was six feet four inches high."

From Paul Lester Ford's George Washington, page 38, "The earliest known description of Washington was written in 1760 by his companion-in-arms and friend George Mercer, who attempted a 'portraiture' in the following words: 'He may be described as being as straight as an Indian, measuring six feet two inches in his stockings, and weighing 175 pounds when he took his seat in the House of Burgesses in 1759'."

From the World Almanac, 1929, page 226, Biographies of the Presidents: "He (Washington) was a man of powerful physique, six feet, two inches in height, with sandy hair, blue eyes, big hands and feet. He weighed 210 pounds when 40 years of age."

From Townsend's Handbook of United States Political History, Boston, 1908, page 361: "Lincoln was the tallest, six feet, four inches.—Madison was the shortest, five feet, four inches.—Polk was the leanest.—Cleveland was the stoutest.—Van Buren the tidiest in dress.—Taylor the most careless."



# LINCOLN LORE

Bulletin of the Lincoln National Life Foundation - - - - - Dr. Louis A. Warren, Editor.  
Published each week by The Lincoln National Life Insurance Company, of Fort Wayne, Indiana.

No. 377

FORT WAYNE, INDIANA

June 29, 1936

## THE POSTURE OF LINCOLN

The height of Lincoln and the size of his head, his hands, and his feet are questions which are discussed periodically with the appearance of each new feature article on any one of the above subjects. Not long ago a columnist made the statement that George Washington was the tallest of our presidents and that Lincoln's hat size was six and seven-eighths.

### *Stature*

The names of Washington and Lincoln are associated more often than the names of other presidents, and many debates have taken place on the subject of their respective contributions to the United States of America. There should be no difference of opinion, however, as to which one was the taller of the two, as Lincoln easily wins this crown.

Henry Cabot Lodge in his *Life of Washington* quotes a letter written by David Ackerson, of Alexandria, Virginia, in which Ackerson states that Washington's exact height was six feet, two inches in his boots. George Mercer, a close friend of Washington, claimed that he was "six feet, two inches in his stockings." There seems to be no description of Washington available which places his height at more than six feet, two inches.

Those contemporary with Abraham Lincoln who have written about him have consistently used six feet, four inches as his height. While some of his friends claim he was six feet four in his stocking feet, the claim has never been made that he was more than six feet four.

Five months before Lincoln was nominated for the presidency he was invited to prepare an autobiographical sketch. In the concluding paragraph he said, "If any personal description of me is thought desirable, it may be said I am, in height, six feet four inches, nearly, lean in flesh weighing on an average of one hundred and eighty pounds."

From the statements about Washington and Lincoln both before us, it is evident that the railsplitter was two inches taller than the father of the country.

Washington and Lincoln both changed very much in their physical appearance during the years; Washington grew heavier and Lincoln lost weight. When Washington took his seat in the House of Burgesses in 1759 at twenty-seven years of age, he is said to have weighed 175 pounds, but at forty years of age, he weighed 210 pounds. Herndon claimed that when Lincoln first came to Illinois at twenty-one years of age he must have weighed over two hundred pounds. By the time he was fifty his weight was reduced to 180 pounds and during the next five years he is said to have lost twenty pounds.

### *Head*

The size of Lincoln's head never came in for much discussion until the late Senator Beveridge measured a hat in Chicago said to have been worn by Lincoln and claimed that the size was but six and seven-eighths. This conclusion by Beveridge as to the size of the hat Lincoln wore was given further circulation by other writers.

Robert H. Hitt was one of the official stenographers during the Lincoln and Douglas debates. He had this to say about Lincoln's hat, "Yes, I remember that Mr. Lincoln's hat was very large. He was a man of large head, and the style at that time was to wear high and full crown silk hats. The one he wore towards the last of his life looks enormous as compared with the hats seen now days." Evidently Hitt was not under the impression that Lincoln's head was exceedingly small.

Nicolay, one of Lincoln's secretaries, in describing Lincoln's head, said it was "large with a high crown of skull"; and another contemporary said, "His forehead is high and full and swings out grandly."

Lamon, a close friend of Lincoln, who had access to the notes gathered by William Herndon, had this to say about Lincoln's head, "His head was long and tall from the base of the brain and the eyebrow, his forehead high and

narrow, but inclining backward as it rose. The diameter of his head from ear to ear was six and one-half inches and from front to back eight inches. The size of his hat was seven and one-eighth."

Henry C. Whitney in his reminiscences of Abraham Lincoln states, "His head was high, but not large; his forehead was broad at the base, but retreated, indicating marked perceptive qualities, but not great reflective ones and in this phrenology is sadly at fault. He wore a hat measuring seven and one-eighth."

The hat which Lincoln is said to have worn on the last day of his life was in the Oldroyd Collection at Washington some years ago. One who examined the hat at that time had this to say about it, "I tried it on recently and found it very heavy and cumbersome. It fitted me loosely, and was a good 7¼ in size. In addition to the heavy black band around it, there was another tiny band with a dainty buckle. This hat is in a remarkable state of preservation, and the maker's name on the lining inside shows it to have been manufactured by J. Y. Davis, of Washington, D. C."

### *Hands*

There has never been very much discussion over the size of Lincoln's hands, as we are fortunate in having casts of both the right and left hands made at Springfield, Illinois, the day after he was nominated for the presidency. The cast of the left hand is an excellent one, but the right hand was very much swollen, due to the congratulatory hand shaking which Lincoln had received during the day on account of his nomination.

While the left hand is closed normally, Volk advised Lincoln to secure something to hold in his right hand, so he cut off about five inches of his wife's broom stick which he clenched. His hands measure ten inches in circumference following the glove fitters process of determining size.

### *Feet*

In 1891 Dr. P. Kahler of New York published a small book on "Dress and Care of the Feet." In this book he presented drawings of both of Lincoln's feet showing the various measurements necessarily used for fitting. The right foot was twelve and one-quarter inches long and the left foot twelve inches. Lincoln's signature and the date December 13, 1864, appear on the diagram, evidently written by Lincoln.

Dr. Kahler made the following comments with reference to his contact with Lincoln:

"Abraham Lincoln was six feet and four inches in height, and had a very large foot. He knew the importance of proper clothing for the foot, and hearing Dr. P. Kahler, he sent for him and procured a pair of shoes made upon the Kahler last.

"At a recent session of the Health Association the original model of Mr. Lincoln's foot as drawn by Dr. Kahler was exhibited. Visitors to the establishment of P. Kahler & Sons, 813-815 Broadway, can see the original order given by Mr. Lincoln for the admission of Dr. Kahler to the White House in Washington, and the drawing of Mr. Lincoln's foot made from life by Dr. Kahler, from which his shoes were made."

Many years ago a newspaper in Lynn, Massachusetts, published an article in which it was claimed that the boots Lincoln wore at the time of his assassination were in that city, having come into possession of the owner through William Clark who occupied the room where Lincoln was taken after his assassination. This brief description of the boots was given:

"The boots are old-fashioned, long-legged affairs, with square toes. They are much narrower than one would suppose a man his height would wear. The upper part of the legs are made of a heavy reddish-brown leather, but the rest of the foot is of a fine black material. They show considerable wear, although not worn at any part."

WELLS GOODYKOONTZ  
LANT R. SLAVEN  
FRED KOPP

*Goodykoontz & Slaven,  
Attorneys at Law,  
Williamson, West Virginia.*

July 20, 1936.

Dr. Louis A. Warren, Editor,  
Lincoln Lore,  
Fort Wayne, Indiana.

Dear Sir:

Lincoln Lore No. 377 has as its title "The Posture of Lincoln." Incidentally, the height of General Washington is referred to. Some years ago my curiosity on this very subject was aroused. One author said that Washington was six feet one inch, another that he was about six feet, but to complicate matters Washington wrote to his London tailor for a suit "suitable for a gentleman six feet tall."

Recalling the fact that Houdon, the French sculptor, had spent two or three weeks at Mt. Vernon and had minutely measured the General in order to execute a fac-simile statue of him, I wrote to Mr. Williams, Clerk of the House of Delegates, at Richmond, Virginia, to measure the original statue (at the state capitol), which he did, advising me that Washington stood precisely six feet, two inches tall. I presume, but do not know definitely, that this measurement included the added height given by the General's boots.

With friendly greetings, I am,

Yours very truly,

*Wells Goodykoontz*  
WELLS GOODYKOONTZ.

WG:AP



July 24, 1936

Mr. Wells Goodykoontz  
Williamson, West Virginia

My dear Mr. Goodykoontz:

Thank you very much for the additional information about the height of George Washington which is quite often up for controversy and your letter will be very helpful.

Very truly yours

LAW:LH

Director



December 11, 1936

J. O. Dahl, Ed. Director  
Hotel Management  
222 East 42nd Street  
New York, New York

Dear Mr. Dahl:

My occupation keeps me traveling most of the time and I come in contact with a great many tall men. I have found that nearly all them are in some way interested in Abraham Lincoln.

In talking with them about the inconveniences from being tall, their first complaint is the inability to get a good nights rest in beds far to short.

The manuscript is especially prepared with the idea of encouraging if possible, some of our larger hotels to arrange suitable conditions for extra tall individuals.

Of course there will be no charge for the use of this manuscript if you feel like placing it in a February issue of your publication. I would be pleased to have your reaction to it however at your earliest convenience.

Yours very truly,

LAW/AD

Director

# Procrustean Beds for Tall Travelers

A Lincoln Room in Every Hotel.

Abraham Lincoln knew the inconveniences of a Procrustean bed by being obliged to conform <sup>his</sup> a 6 foot 4 inch frame to <sup>the standard size beds then in use.</sup> a bed 6 feet long and On one occasion he used the <sup>story of the</sup> famous bed of mythology as a point of illustration ~~in a letter to Dr. Thomas Cottman.~~

Statistics recently made in our universities prove that within the last ten or fifteen years the height of our American youth <sup>has</sup> ~~have~~ increased at least 1 inch. This fact means that there are more men 6 feet tall or over, today, than at any time in our history. But the length of the beds on which these men have to sleep remain the same.

Lincoln was the tallest of our presidents  
standing above Washington by at least two  
inches. Back in Illinois he was a member  
of a group called the "Long Nines" all of  
the men were members of the legislature  
from Sangamon and Lincoln was called  
the longest of the nine. Even after he  
arrived in Washington it gave him much  
pleasure to have tall men look up to him  
for the purpose of measuring heights.

Mahlon Shaaber

A civil war veteran living in Berks  
County, Pennsylvania "the ancestral home of  
the Quakers" used to tell an interesting  
story of Lincoln singing him out while he  
was marching ~~on~~ with his company in  
Washington. Shaaber said that while his  
regiment was passing in review in 1861  
~~he passed~~ they approached a small group of  
tall men one of whom was a very <sup>high</sup> ~~tall~~ silk  
hat. This gentleman singled him out and  
called "Bub! Bub!"

Mahlon's captian observed that the  
person who was calling ~~him~~ was the president  
and gave Mahlton permission to leave the  
ranks. what occurs there is best told by  
Mahlon's words

copy



Although <sup>usually</sup> severely few years being  
passed since <sup>we</sup> lived, and tall men have  
continued to get taller year by year most  
than who travel have to undergo the same  
inconvenience which <sup>we</sup> lived with when we  
traveled. The pulman berths are about  
the same length, ~~and~~ the hotel beds are  
just as short and ~~the covers of the tall~~  
~~man does not stop there. Still hoping the covers~~  
~~will at least~~ tall men continue to sleep  
the covers ~~than~~ now as then fall short at  
both extremities.

In honor of the most illustrious of  
America's tall men and to the great convenience  
of tall men today <sup>each one of</sup> our leading hotels should  
have a Lincoln Room especially equipped for  
the convenience of men who go over the  
six foot mark. What a boon it would be  
for the tall traveler to feel that <sup>a</sup> reservation  
for ~~the~~ a Lincoln Room would assure  
him that he no longer need sleep in a  
Procrustean Bed but could pull the  
covers up around his neck and still have  
~~his feet~~ his feet ~~reposing~~ <sup>reposing</sup> under the same comfort.

# When Lincoln Met His Match in Cleveland

By RUSSELL M. BACON

## Visitor

Abraham Lincoln met more than his match in stature, but he measured up to the tallest in popular human qualities when he came to Cleveland for a pre-inauguration parade 80 years ago Saturday.

This city saw him as a president-elect humble in triumph, unprovoked by rain and mud marring his Euclid Avenue drive in open carriage, smilingly responsive to the acclaim of tens of thousands, misty-eyed in acceptance of flowers or other tokens of admiration, blushing generously as a baby-kisser, unaffected and eloquent of speech, profound and yet jocular, appreciative of political support, tolerant and respectful toward oppositionists, hopeful for the best and determined to avert the calamity of national disunion, gracious and genial in the reception line and long-suffering to the point of exhaustion as a handshaker. All this, and yet more in traits that win public esteem, Lincoln showed himself to be in his few hours here.

## Welcomed

After cannon boomed a welcome at 4:10 p. m., Lincoln bowed and elbowed his way through the crowded Euclid Avenue station. When his carriage, drawn by four white horses driven by Henry Nottingham reached the home of John Shelley, 403 Euclid Avenue, the well known tailor handed up to the president-elect a little girl to pre-

sent a floral wreath. Lincoln took the child in his arms and kissed her.

A band was playing in a stand in front of the residence (317 Euclid) of J. G. Hussey, a commission man, and high amid patriotic banners was perched a live American eagle. Lincoln saluted it, then turned to receive another bouquet, this one from Hussey's little daughter who also was rewarded with a kiss amid resounding cheers. All the way to the Weddell House the rail splitter acknowledged northern Ohio's unrestrained hero worship.

From the hotel balcony Lincoln told a multitude: "Some of you didn't vote for him who now addresses you (Shouts of 'I did'), although quite enough of you did for all practical purposes, to be sure." (Laughter and cheers.) To his assertion that he would be sorry to see in such a demonstration as he had been witnessing "mere devotion to one man, or to any thousand men, or to any ten thousand men," a shouted response was, "We all love you," but he went on to interpret it as "devotion to the Union, to the Constitution and to perpetual liberty of the people of this country."

With such devotion, he hoped, "the Union can never be in danger \* \* \* I think the present crisis is altogether an artificial one \* \* \* It wasn't argued up and it can't be argued down, but before long it will die of itself." (Applause.) Praising his political opponents for participating in the reception, Lincoln said the Republicans should have done the same had Douglas

been elected and added what, for the security of America, might well be remembered by politicians today, "If we don't make common cause and save the good old ship, nobody will be pilot hereafter."

## Two Abes

It was at a levee in the Weddell House from 7 to 9 that "two tall Abes" contested for honors in height. The second "Abe" was Abner McIlrath, East Cleveland giant and father of other McIlraths, who towered above their fellows. Abner was keeper of a tavern which had been the rendezvous of Artemus Ward and kindred spirits. McIlrath's one disappointment in life had been that he never could persuade Artemus to hold the tame bear with which Abner was wont to wrestle to the delight of his patrons.

McIlrath—himself Lincolnesque in appearance, with full beard framing his angular face—was introduced to the man of the hour and challenged him:

"I am one of the rail-splitters of Cuyahoga County, and a taller Republican than you, sir!"

Instantly Lincoln replied, "Let us see," and stood so that the two were back to back. A shout went up as Abner reached back and down to pat the president-elect on the head.

With a ringing laugh McIlrath exulted, "I beat him." The six-foot-four Lincoln joined in the merriment and shook hands in defeat with "the champion" of whom courthouse records said, "height six feet six and a half inches; weight 242 pounds."

*Lincoln met his match in Cleveland* 2/11/41

## *Tall as Lincoln*

On his way from Springfield to Washington for the inauguration many men stepped up on the train platform to stand back to back with Lincoln and measure their height against his. Most of them were shorter. In Pittsburgh a husky coal heaver proved to be exactly as tall as Lincoln. Carl Sandburg tells about this in his monumental work "Abraham Lincoln, the War Years."

As tall as Lincoln! Here is a man who was as tall in character as he was physically. He stands out head and shoulders above the crowd, a measuring standard for manhood.

He was tall in humility. When one of his generals insulted him and kept him waiting for several hours, he said, "I would hold his horse, if he would only give us victories."

He was tall in tolerance. It was Lincoln who uttered those immortal words: "With malice toward

none, with charity for all."

He was tall in courage. He had the courage to stand up for his conviction that the nation could not continue to exist "half slave and half free."

He was tall in justice. He pardoned many soldiers. "A boy," he said, "should not be blamed if his legs are cowardly."

He was tall in humor. Lincoln was big enough to laugh at himself. When it was reported that one of his cabinet members had called him a fool, Lincoln retorted, "He must be right—he is a very smart man."

He was tall in faith. In the dark days of the war he said: "Let us have faith that right makes might, and in that faith let us to the end dare to do our duty as we understand it."

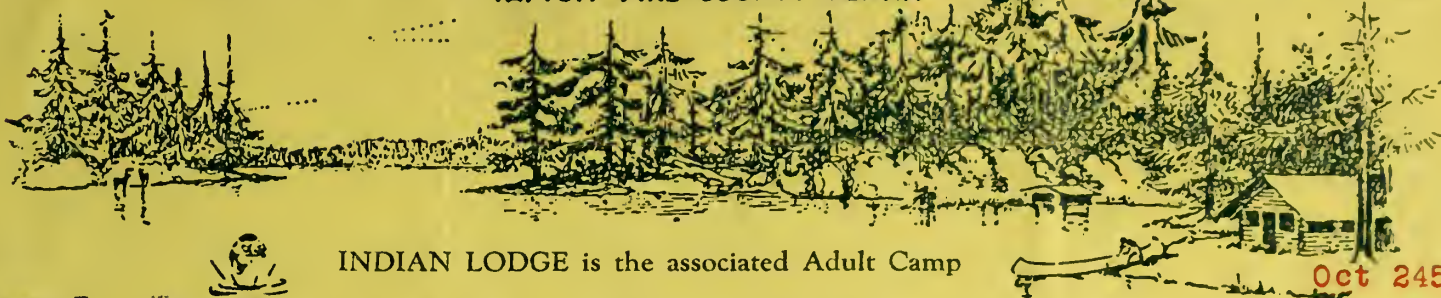
On the wall of history Lincoln has left us a mark to measure up to. He was one of God's tallest heroes.  
—*Wilfred Peterson.*



DAVID S KEISER

**CAMP LENAPE FOR BOYS**  
**POCONO MOUNTAINS**  
TAFTON - PIKE COUNTY - PENNA

Winter Address - Until late June  
7733 Mill Road  
Elkins Park,  
Philadelphia 17, Penna.



INDIAN LODGE is the associated Adult Camp

Oct 2453

Dear Dr. Warren,

I'm doing research into the Pa. ancestry of Lincoln - and spent a few hours with you in Reading 2 years ago. On your suggestion I looked up AL's grandfather deeds (in Berks or Lanc. Counties) in City Hall, Phila - and found nothing. I contend nobody ever discovered a shred of evidence to show that Lincoln had Quaker ancestors - tho I have records of various brothers, sisters, and cousins of his ancestors marrying Quakers in Oley Valley...I'm writing you because in a recent Lincoln Lore you stated something about the tall men of Indiana circa 1829. I personally knew the Mahlon Shaaber of Reading Pa - who may have easily been the tallest man Lincoln ever knew. He was 6'6 $\frac{1}{2}$ " tall when Lincoln knew him and was 6'7 $\frac{1}{2}$ " tall when I (as a little boy) knew him as a Civil War vet.

Mahlon Shaaber as a teen-age soldier was with the 93rd Regiment passing thru Washington & Georgetown in review on Pa. Ave and among the thousands who lined the pavement was a small group, among whom was a very tall gaunt man, with a pale looking countenance, dressed in a black frock coat, clinging somewhat indifferently to him, stooped shoulders, a black silk hat, with a thoughtful & serious cast of face, who called out, 'Bub!' 'Bub!' Capt. Arthur heard him & noticing that he was addressing me, informed me of it and gave me permission to leave the ranks. Then the gaunt looking gentleman with pleasing manner, grasped my hand and said 'Excuse my manners, it was jealousy on my part, that made me call you out to size you up'. He asked 'How tall are you and what is your age?' I replied 'I am six feet six and a half inches ~~and~~ and in my 17th year and weigh 140 pounds. He forthwith drew out of his pocket a black covered memorandum book and wrote down my answer. Then he introduced himself by saying 'I am Old Abe!' I was startled! Then he introduced me to Vice President Hamilton as 'My Son' & I noticed Gen. Cameron and Governor Curtin stood in the group. He then tabulated our heights with our full names

Mahlon Shaaber, B, 93rd P.V.....	6' 6 $\frac{1}{4}$ "
Abraham Lincoln, President.....	6' 4"
Hannibal Hamlin, Vice-president.....	6' 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ "
General Cameron .....	6' 1"
Governor Curtin, Pa. ....	6' 2"

Total 31' 4"

He said jokingly this incident, where so many tall men have met, will not occur again etc etc - I'll copy the rest for you if you want it. Lincoln gave him some advice and invited him to dinner - which he bashfully refused.

Sincerely

*David S Keiser*

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX



November 6, 1953

Mr. David S. Keiser  
7733 Mill Road  
Elkins Park  
Philadelphia 17, Pennsylvania

My dear Mr. Keiser:

Thank you very much for your interesting story about Mahlon Shaaber. His name was familiar to me but some of the incidents of the occasion of his meeting with Lincoln had been forgotten.

One fact has troubled me, how could Mordecai Lincoln be buried in a Quaker cemetery if he were not a Quaker. My own information seems to imply that he did marry into the Quaker Church. Will you set me straight on this?

Very truly yours,

LAW:PE

Director

New York Herald Tribune  
March 17, 1959

### Lincoln's Crossed Legs

To the N. Y. Herald Tribune:

Your publishing the story and picture of the new Lincoln picture showing him in a nightshirt will cause a second wave of criticism to be directed at the artist. It was interesting to know that the

artist consulted with scholars while he was painting the picture. I see in the picture that Abraham Lincoln has his legs crossed. It reminds me of what one eminent Lincoln scholar, Carl Sandburg, said about him:

" . . . M. A. McClellan later told his fellow Kansans, Victor Murdock and William Allen White, that he had seen Lincoln deliver his Cooper Union speech. 'When he sat in his chair before being introduced, I knew there was something unusual about the way he was sitting. I couldn't figure out what it was till finally I noticed that he had his legs crossed—and both feet flat on the floor!'" OTTO L. CAHL.

New York.

# Have we got something for you!

What's 6'4" tall, chock-full of history, and has great pictures? A big history book? Wrong, it's a 6'4", custom designed poster of our namesake, Abraham Lincoln, entitled, "How do you measure up to Abe?"

The Lincoln poster is 6'4" in height, as shown by a ruler marking its left side. It features a life-size caricature of Lincoln that appeared in *Harper's Weekly* just after his reelection to the Presidency. Entitled *Long Abraham a Little Longer*, this drawing by Frank Bellew exaggerates one of the President's physical characteristics, his great height. Also on the poster are 50 important, but little known anecdotes of our namesake. For instance, did you know it was Lincoln who proclaimed the First Annual National Thanksgiving Day? In addition there are six scenes depicting authentic situations in Lincoln's life, like the log cabin in which he was born.

This Lincoln poster, created by the Sales Promotion Department with the help of Dr. Mark Neely, Director of the Lincoln Library and Museum, goes on sale today to all LNL employees. It makes a nice Christmas gift for those special people who just seem to have everything. It is one of a kind and truly unique. For children, it's a fun poster and makes a great stocking stuffer. Not only is it attractive for their bedroom, but they can keep a record of their growth on it to see "how they measure up." At the same time, they can learn about one of our greatest presidents.

Grandparents, too, will appreciate the Lincoln poster. You can show them just how tall their grandchildren have grown in the past year. And of course, teachers, Lincoln scholars and educators will be delighted to have this poster. It's a most desirable piece of Lincolniana.

Made of high quality parchment paper with rust and brown printing, the poster measures 2' x 6'4" and comes neatly packaged in a tube for mailing along with a small facsimile of the poster and directions to hang it.

You can buy the poster for just \$2 starting today, December 1 through Friday, December 12 at the Treasurers' windows in the downtown office and LNL-Vest. Buy five or more and there's a special discount; the price is only \$1.75 each.



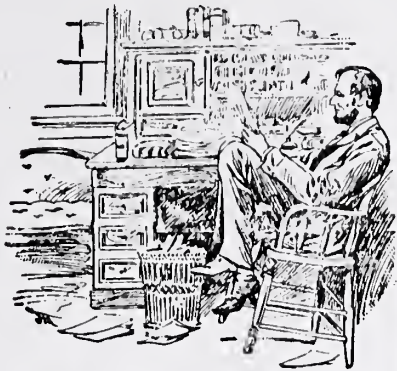
Christmas will be here before you know it, and you can't find this unique gift anywhere but at LNL. Buy one for your children or friends, or just for yourself; it'll measure up to everyone's expectations!



# A STUDY OF LINCOLN.

## PECULIARITIES OF HIS PHYSICAL AND MENTAL STRUCTURE.

An Extraordinary Combination of Unfitted Parts—Wherein His Greatness Lay—He Grew Like the Hickory and Ripened Like the Oak—His Place in History.



**A**BRAM LINCOLN was a man apart from his kind in mind, body, and fortune. Physically he was what would be called in biology a freak and in botany a sport—one of those abrupt departures from the morphological line for which science can as yet give no reason. No resemblance could ever be traced between him and any of his relatives near or remote. No two men of the same race could well be more unlike than he and his father, and of his three sons none showed any great likeness to him in form or features or any suggestion of the same mental or moral traits. From the social, domestic and physical standpoint alike he seemed indeed "the man without a model and without a shadow," a being sent into our sphere for a specific purpose, and, because of his mission, not permitted to become a part of the stock in which he was born or too deeply rooted in its social organism.

It is in his physical structure, I am persuaded, that the key is to be found to those amazing episodes which alarmed or disgusted his friends and have puzzled his biographers. Caricature during his life made the public familiar with some of his oddities, but measurements taken after his death and preserved in the public archives show that caricature, even when it was by the fiercest political strife, had fallen short of the reality. His physical structure was at war with itself. He was 6 feet 4 inches in height, yet all that length and more was in the upper part of his legs and chest, for his lower body was but average and his diaphragm less than average. His stomach was small and his appetite feeble. To borrow a phrase from mechanics, the boiler was too small to supply power to so large a machine, and there was necessarily a deficiency somewhere. He had scarcely an ounce of fat on his body. He was a small eater, disliked spirits and tobacco, cared not at all for fruit or sweetmeats, and even in the hottest weather or after the greatest exertion a moderate drink

of cold water satisfied his thirst. It was from no calculating prudence that he was thus abstemious. His system craved no more, and, though temperance could not bring him happiness, indulgence in stimulants would have brought.

The beautiful science of comparative anatomy has enabled the biologist to reconstruct an entire animal from the knowledge furnished by a single bone. The law of harmony of parts requires that a certain jaw should hold a certain kind of tooth and that a thigh bone of given length should be part of the framework of a body of corresponding size. But there are curious exceptions, and Abraham Lincoln was one. Had a Cuvier or an Agassiz pronounced upon the separate parts he might have assigned them thus: Thigh bone of a man 7 feet high; diaphragm of one 5 feet 6 inches high; foot that of an Indian, and a rather tall one, with an abnormality of the phalanges; stomach that of a small and weakly man; arms of a very large and powerful man, and chest that of a large man with a slight tendency to consumption. When Lincoln sat in his home office in his favorite position, his chair leaning against the wall and his feet on the lower round, his knees were on a level with his forehead, and a writer who saw him first in this position, noting also his very long feet, remarked that without the slightest exaggeration a silhouette of him would serve as the initial W for a comic illustrated paper.

One of his most marked peculiarities was in the feet. The normal man in walking touches with the heel first and gradually brings the pressure forward to the toes, from which there is a sort of spring to the next step, the feet thus describing successive arcs of circles, but Lincoln planted his whole foot evenly on the ground and lifted it in the same way, so that his track was like that which may be made by a heavy man on stilts, the bottom of the stilt being shaped like a perfectly flat foot. It would be wearisome repetition to give the many statements about the awkwardness of his movements due to this very peculiar structure. It may be noted once more, however, that, oddly as he appeared to strangers when standing or walking, this was greatly increased when he was lying down, as then his outline appeared in full relief. When the caricaturist of 1860 stated that he was "thin as a lath and cast a shadow like a lightning rod," it was but a moderate exaggeration for that heated campaign. Such was this odd combination—the legs of a giant, with the stomach of a dwarf; the arms of an athlete hung upon the chest of a consumptive; a man of immense physical strength who was never really well, and a born humorist with an intractable liver.

Extraordinary as this combination of unfitted parts was, it was no more extraordinary than the combination of warring temperaments which animated the whole. The basis was an extreme bilious temperament, and there is reason to believe that the bile duct ended too near the pylorus, as sometimes occurs, the result being that the secretion therefrom works backward into the stomach, producing the trouble popularly known as "chronic biliousness." He also possessed the encephalic temperament and another element which gave

to his mind in certain respects the dreamy softness of a poetical and delicate woman. In short, as Abraham Lincoln was not one man physically, but parts of three men awkwardly joined in one, so he had as many temperaments, and eye, hair and beard and vital organs seemed to have been designed for different men. With all these he had in an extraordinary degree that mysterious force called tenacity of life, often found in very weak men, a force which enabled the semi-invalid Voltaire to live to the age of 84 and often preserves an apparent consumptive for a long life.

A man composed of such discordant parts and animated by such warring temperaments may become wise or rich or great. In this world he never can be happy. Happiness consists in the harmonious action of the bodily organs, the reasonable satisfaction of natural desire, the just balance of impulse and judgment and the exercise without extreme fatigue of all the faculties of the mind. But in Lincoln some of the tenderest emotions never had healthful satisfaction, and others were most cruelly outraged. As to family pride, domestic love and the social cheer of home life, we need not accept the worst said by his latest biographer to know that these were not his, and, though we accept all that the most ardent eulogists have alleged in denial or palliation, we must still believe that the man never lived one day of real tranquil enjoyment. It is rare that a man is so humble or unfortunate as not to find something in his ancestry to which he may point with pride, but the uniform testimony is that on that point Lincoln "maintained a significant reserve." Few indeed are the men who do not confess a sentimental attachment to the place of their birth or childhood, but it was only under very strong political pressure that Lincoln mentioned that he was born in Kentucky, and all his Illinois intimates tell that his only references to his early life in Indiana were in connection with ague and poverty, hard struggles and "milk sickness."

A man thus constituted of discordant elements, as I said before, cannot develop normally or happily. He cannot escape the most depressing melancholy, and he is fortunate if he escapes an attack of insanity. And right here, in my



THE FIRST PORTRAIT OF LINCOLN.  
[By permission of S. S. McClure.]



opinion, is the key to the solution of those mysteries in his early life. His—shall I say unnatural?—love affairs; his grotesque and utterly unpardonable love letter, if such it may be called; his action at the time first set for his marriage, which it would seem that nothing but temporary insanity could excuse, and his fits of tenderness alternating with coarseness—all are explained by the fact that he had not yet grown into complete mastery of his peculiar make up. Whence then, the greatness of this, the greatest man of our time, if not of all time? It lies largely in the fact that he never ceased to grow. He grew like the hickory; he ripened like the hardy russet. He never made the same mistake twice, and to the last day of his life he was a persistent, patient and thoroughly honest learner.

The root of the matter was in him—thorough honesty and inherent love for his fellow men and a sincere desire to benefit them, with an immense fund of brain power, an intellect which only needed time to work itself clear and a charity for the errors of others so great that to his collaborators it often seemed excessive. It is the rule that when eulogists have unduly exalted a martyred hero there follow a reaction and a time when writers fail to do him justice, and so for awhile it threatened to be with Lincoln. A voluminous life of him appeared, in which every good thing done by his administration was credited to him, and to those who knew his cabinet officers it seemed that the laurels had been stripped from them to add—what was not needed—to the glory of the central figure. It was a rather dangerous proceeding. In the case of almost any other man there would have been a storm of protest, and the hero would have suffered for the unwisdom of his biographers. Even in the case of Lincoln it should be noted that this publication was followed soon by others, in which all the faults and follies of his early life were shown in the grossest detail. That the reaction was so slight is the final proof that Lincoln's place in the very zenith of the firmament is forever fixed.

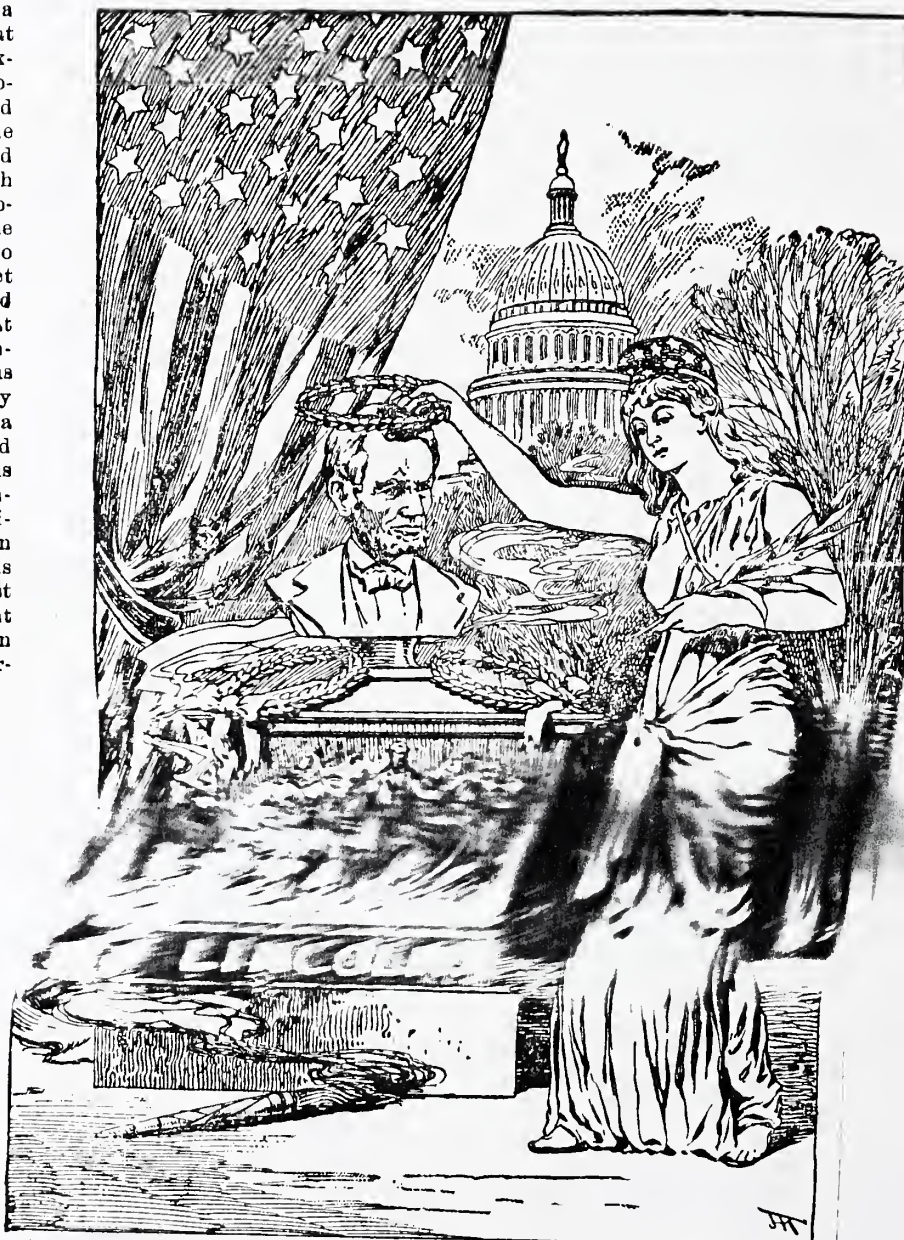
The world read those personal details and smiled, but it was a rather sad smile, and the Lincoln of 1830-50 was ignored. For those eccentricities which, as I believe, resulted entirely from his unfortunate physical structure, the world has shown even more charity than for the frailties of George Washington. The last great trial of his fame has been most triumphantly passed, and all mankind now accept and even heighten the most florid eulogy passed soon after his death upon the great emancipator and martyred president, Abraham Lincoln.

J. H. BEADLE.

*38c Union Union  
Beadle Vt 2-12-97*



FIRST PORTRAIT OF LINCOLN WITH A BEARD.  
[By permission of S. S. McClure.]





## AN ANECDOTE OF LINCOLN

### He Measured Height With a Miner in a Pennsylvania Town.

IN THE course of an article in St. Nicholas, Mary Lillau Herr relates the following characteristic anecdote of Lincoln:

Once, while on his way to Washington as President, the train stopped a little time in the town of Allegheny, Pennsylvania. Around the station a great crowd gathered, eager to see the new President. They shouted and cheered until Lincoln had to appear on the rear platform of his car. He bowed and smiled; but the crowd was so noisy that he did not try to speak to them.

Very near the platform stood a miner, wearing a red shirt and blue overalls, and carrying a dinner-pail. Like the rest, he had stopped, hoping to see Mr. Lincoln. The workman was almost a giant in size, and towered head and shoulders above the crowd.

No doubt he had heard that Lincoln also was very tall; and, encouraged by the friendly face, the workman suddenly waved his bare arm above his head, and called out:

"Hi, there, Abe Lincoln!—I'm taller than you—yes, a sight taller!"

This loud speech silenced the crowd by its boldness, and a laugh arose. But Mr. Lincoln, leaning forward with a good-humored smile, said quietly:

"My man, I doubt it; in fact, I'm sure I am the taller. However, come up, and let's measure."

The crowd made way, the workman climbed to the platform, and stood back to back with the President-elect. Each put up a hand to see whose head overtopped. Evidently Mr. Lincoln was the victor; for with a smile of satisfaction, he turned and offered his hand to his beaten rival, saying cordially:

"I thought you were mistaken and I was right; but I wished to be sure and to have you satisfied. However, we are friends anyway, aren't we?"

Grasping the outstretched hand in a vigorous grip, the workman replied:

"Yes, Abe Lincoln; as long as I live!"

#### A Fine Picture of Lincoln.

[From Prof. Goldwin Smith's History of the United States.]

Abraham Lincoln is assuredly one of the marvels of history. No land but America has produced his like. This destined chief of a nation in its most perilous hour was the son of a thriftless and wandering settler, bred in the most stolid poverty. He had received only the rudiments of education, and though he afterward read eagerly such works as were within his reach, it is wonderful that he should have attained as a speaker and writer a mastery of language and a pure as well as effective style. He could look back smiling on the day when his long shanks appeared bare below the shrunken leather breeches which were his only nether garment. His frame was gaunt and grotesque, but mighty. He stood 6 feet 4, and was said to have lifted a cask full of beer and to have drunk out of the bung-hole. This made him a hero with the Clary Grove boys. He had a strong and eminently fair understanding, with great powers of patient thought, which he cultivated by the study of Euclid. In all his views there was a simplicity which had its source in the simplicity of his character. His local popularity was due largely to his humor and the stock of good stories, always pointed, though not always delicate, which through life it was his delight to collect and repeat. At the same time he was melancholy, touched with the pathos of human life, fond of mournful poetry, religious though not orthodox, with a strong sense of an overruling Providence, which, when he was out of spirits, sometimes took the shape of fatalism. His melancholy was probably deepened by his gloomy surroundings and by misadventures in love.

## LINCOLN JEALOUS OF READING GIANT

Mahlon Shaaber Tells of Interesting  
Experience with President Dur-  
ing Civil War.

Special Despatch to "The Press."

Reading, Pa., Feb. 10.—Among the six hundred soldiers who fought in the Civil War from Berks County, who are still surviving, there is none other who has a better recollection of Abraham Lincoln than Ex-Chief of Police Mahlon Shaaber, of this city, who is not only the tallest ex-policeman in the United States, but one of the tallest, if not the tallest, G. A. R. member in the Union.

While his regiment was passing through Washington in review, in 1861, it passed a small group, one of whom was a very tall, gaunt man. "His shoulders were stooped," said Shaaber, "and he wore a high silk hat. I heard him call out 'Bub! Bub!' and Captain Arthur noticed that he was addressing me.

"The officer gave me permission to leave the ranks. I did not expect to meet President Lincoln, when the tall gentleman grasped me by the hand and said: 'Excuse my manners. It was jealousy on my part that made me call you out to size you up.'

"He then asked me how tall I was, and inquired my age. I informed him that I was six feet six and a half inches tall (which was my height at that time); that I was in my seventeenth year, and weighed 140 pounds. President Lincoln drew out of his pocket a memorandum book, and with a stub pencil noted down my answers.

"He then introduced himself in this characteristic manner: 'I'm old Abe.' The President next introduced me to Vice-President Hamlin as 'my son,' and I noticed General Simon Cameron and Governor Curtin, of Pennsylvania, in the rear.

"A memorandum made by the President read:—

" 'Abraham Lincoln, 6 feet, 4 inches.

" 'Vice-President Hamlin, 6 feet, 2 1-2 inches.

" 'General Cameron, 6 feet, 1 inch.

" 'Governor Curtin, 6 feet, 2 inches.

" 'Mahlon Shaaber, 6 feet, 6 1-2 inches.

"Total, 31 feet, 4 inches."

"The President remarked, jokingly, that it was rarely so many tall men met at one time, and that it would probably never occur again. I have never met another crowd so tall."

Mr. Shaaber later met President Lincoln again, and was invited to dine at the White House. He persistently declined, however, much to his later regret.



MAHLON SHAABER

---

*Six Inches Taller . . .  
and How a Man Stands Out!*



***Does your Newspaper Stand Out?***

*Making a good newspaper, giving thorough news and advertising coverage of its field, is the first part of a publisher's job. But lots of other newspapers are doing good jobs in their localities.*

*First-class promotion adds the extra stature that makes a newspaper stand out in the minds of national advertisers and agents.*

*And the newspapers that are doing first-class promotion almost invariably advertise in*

**EDITOR & PUBLISHER**

(A modest appropriation has a chance to do a real job in EDITOR & PUBLISHER. For only \$60 every second week (26 insertions), you can have a quarter-page in which to tell why your paper is a good buy for the advertiser. Better still, take a quarter-page every week (52 insertions) at only \$55 each.)

---



"The tall, lank body, set on loose, long legs, with powerful arms swinging by his side, is inclined ~~to stoop~~ with a slight stoop forward, and in his movements, if there be not much grace, there is no lack of vigor."

Russell's letter to Funder Jones  
Delco Washington July 12 1861



"Abraham Lincoln is a giant more  
than six feet ~~to~~ high, strong and long limbed.  
He walks slow, and like many thoughtful men  
keeps his head inclined forward and downward,  
~~He~~ Once a week <sup>(London)</sup> 1861 January

" Mr Lincoln stands six feet four inches  
high in his stockings. His frame is gaunt and  
wiry, his arms are long. His lower limbs  
are not as proportional to his body. He steps with  
his head inclined forward. His head sits well on his  
shoulders."

George Bliss and Tribune

May 1860







