Abraham's Poetical Genius

In all hearts the poetic inspiration purges, but not all the unlettered endeavor to voice the rhythmical sounds that are music to their days.

To my inquiry: "Did Abraham Lincoln write poetry?" The answer was always affirmative. ""Ah yes" answered Mrs. Huff. He wrote on any and everything. But I doubt if his funniest will ever be published. These were called "The Chronicles." Two of the Jugby boys married their mother gave a big baseball supper for them. Abe was not invited, but after hearing mother & the neighbors talk it all over he wrote a lot of rhymes about the people & the entire affair. These he called "The Chronicles." They were passed from house to house because they were so funny. Of course they made sport of a number of persons & when these got hold of the paper it disappeared." Capt. John Lamar finished the story thus. "Many years after the Chronicles had disappeared John Sweeney a carpenter & his son Tim were engaged to repair a house in the neighborhood. Soon after dinner Mr. Sweeney not hearing his son hammer, called out Tim, you young vagabond, go to work." Receiving no response from Tim, Mr. Sweeney
burned into ashes long ago, & all the hard feelings caused by them was burned with them. God, we were better off in world's good than the Lincoln's and Abe, my oldest brother, Aaron Grigsby, married Abe's only sister, but that don't make me him and him & Roy pretend to be any kin to Abe. We all loved Sally for a better girl & a truer woman never lived than Sally Ann Lincoln Grigsby.

When I meet her in the next world, I won't have the Chronicles between us." If the Redmond Grigsby was very difficult to interview, he always refused to talk about the Lincoln. He thinks reporters are: "Only just anxious to get what we folks have in our heads to give to the world & make fools of us." And with a pointed question, he looked at me & demanded, "Aint that right? You know it is, for I read your answer in your face." On every other subject he was loquacious but he would not allow any pencil notes, nor would he have his "picture took for any magazines.

He begged him to waive his former decision aside in favor of one who had come as far to see & talk to him, but he was inexorable; he would not pose, so a "snapshot" was the only alternative. He gave me permission to make up any story you wish & say I said, - because when I look in your face I know you won't write lies, & I won't tell
any Lincoln stories. "Yes," he came back to see us when he was making speeches for Henry Clay in 1844. You can ask Jed Smith all about that for I'll not talk. You see I was only a little shaver when the Lincolns left Ind. But I remem-
bered them well, and when I heard that the Lincoln was going to make a speech at the old Carter School House at the junction of the Dale & Buffaloville roads I just started.

But like all young men I was late getting there & I had to step at the edge of the cloud. Pretty soon, in spite of the lively hand shaking up in front, he saw me and call-
ed, "Well, if there ain't Ned Grigsby I don't know anybody. We shook hands & he whispered to me, "I'll go home with you." I said I heard the speech through. "Oh, yee, I had changed, I was only about nine years old when the Lincolns left here for Ill. I helped yoke their oxen & went halfway to Gentryville with them." "You must ask him, Uncle, because he's the big gun of this district. He was editor of our Rockport paper when the reports around here in 1844. He was one of the committee that nominated Abe for president. He can talk. I stacked." So I was forced to take my leave—but I returned to get facts sobrely.
treated by this sturdy man. He treated me far more cordially on my second visit than on my first. He it was who told me where I would find the grave, where people lived in out of the way places — therefore I know his heart is altogether even if he would not talk about Lincoln.