Since before the nomination of Abraham Lincoln for President of the United States there has been a widespread belief that his origin was, to say the least, without a trace of distinction, and probably clouded by illegitimacy. Lincoln himself was partly responsible for this belief. He knew little of his ancestors. In one of the earliest responses which he made to the public demand to know something of himself and his family, he says that he was of an "undistinguished poor white" family. And who knew better than he, the public naturally concluded.

Those who study geneological records have for many years really known that Abraham Lincoln's ancestry, far from being clouded, was a clear line back to the beginnings of New England, across the seas to Norfolk, old England. Good honest yeomen there, with occasionally one that wrote "Gentleman" after his name. It is true that this line was not complete until about forty years ago. Three men deserve particular credit for establishing it. The first of these was a distant relative of Samuel Lincoln himself, one Solomon Lincoln, a well-to-do gentleman of Hingham, Mass., born.

Solomon Lincoln was a born genealogist, a great lover of his town and much disturbed because Hingham at that period was so neglectful of its own period and ancestry that it bordered on vandalism. Particularly had he been interested in his own family, the Lincoln.

There were two lines of Lincolns in Hingham, both dating back to the time of its settlement. This Solomon knew and had established. He himself belonged to the family established by one Samuel Lincoln, who had first arrived in Hingham in 1637, a boy about 17 years of age. When Abraham Lincoln was elected President of the United States, Solomon Lincoln naturally was
interested in discovering whether or not the president
might be a member of his own family or whether of the rival
Lincoln, the one come down from Thomas, the copper, as he was
called, and which prided itself on having the greatest Lincoln
so far, Gen. Benjamin Lincoln, to whom Cornwallis had surrendered.
Now, did Abraham Lincoln come from Samuel or from Thomas.

So he wrote to the president, asking him what he knew
of his family. All that he could tell him was that his father
was named Thomas, that his grandfather was named Abraham and
had come into Kentucky, where he had been killed by the Indians,
from West Virginia, that there was a tradition in the family
that his great grandfather had come to Virginia from Pennsylvania,
and a vague tradition that they were of Quaker ancestry. The
genealogical problem was then, with what Massachusetts Lincoln,
if any, was this great grandfather of Abraham Lincoln's, living
in Western Virginia at the end of the 18th century, connected?
Solomon Lincoln did not know at that time of any Lincoln who had
gone to Western Virginia. How was the line to be established.
It was not his happiness to establish it, or to see it established,
for in 1874, George Lincoln, who had taken up Solomon Lincoln's
work, did not know the line, as correspondence of his shows.

There were others interested in the matter, however,
beside the Lincoln family. (See Schafkildford)
That is the genealogists had connected, by proofs which satisfied
them, Abraham Lincoln, the President, with Samuel Lincoln, the
immigrant of 1637. How did they come to it?

Who was this Samuel Lincoln? What kind of a boy? Where
did he come from? Who were the sons, grandsons and great grand-
sons and great great grandsons that came down from him and approach
Abraham Lincoln? What kind of men were they? What were the lives
they led? Can we today, go over as observers the years from 1637?
to 1860 and see with our own eyes that what the genealogists
tells us is true?

Begin at the start, then. Go to Hingham, Mass. to-
day, and you, a layman, without genealogical skill, can convince
yourself that these learned men are right, that there was a
Samuel Lincoln. You will find the Hingham of today a delightful
place to go, one of the most beautiful of the shore towns of
New England, and one yet unspoiled by the invasion of factories,
of slums and tenements - choice, reserved, self-satisfied -
Hingham is a perfect type of what, undisturbed, its first
settlers would produce. There was very much of their day,
in spite of their reserve and raising their eyebrows and all,
at your interest in old settlers. It is not easy in Hingham
to get at the old settlers, unless you have unimpeachable
introductions and some reason more than curiosity, something
that they will recognize as a genuine historical reason, for
Hingham believes in history - history as it is written by Henry
Cabot Lodge. It also believes in its old history of Hingham
as produced by Solomon and George Lincoln, and resents a little
your desire to go back of their printed pages and find the
material on which they based their findings. But once you are
admitted, they bring out their documents - the documents which
tell you all that Hingham knows of Samuel Lincoln.

They are not many. Those first settlers in Hingham
did not have time to do much writing. There were only two of them,
outside of the town clerk, that took pains to put down anything
that was happening in these early days. One of them was the
minister of the parish, Peter Hobart by name, and the other the
keeper of Hingham's first general store, Daniel Cushing.

Peter Hobart kept a diary. It exists today, carefully
done up in red morocco, in the files of the Massachusetts
Historical Society - a book well worth looking at, bound in wisened leather - a home-made binding, I take it, from the way the leather is folded over the pasteboard cover and from the narrow leather thongs that bind it in, - a wonderful thing to get your hands on if you have any feel for that which is old and had endured - a wonderful thing, too, if you care for ink and paper and the way they act under time. I have seen two copies of Peter Hobart's diary - one in the Boston Public Library, one in the Massachusetts Historical Society, - the first perhaps 40 years old, the other 50, and both ink and paper are faded and old compared to this record of Peter Hobart's, begun in 1635 when, as he says at the head of his page, "I with my wife and four children came safely to New Hingham June ye 8 1635." Why, since Peter says this himself, the Daughters of the Revolution should have put on the tablet which they very properly have erected on the spot where Peter and his wife and four children got with their boat, that it was in September 1635, I cannot make out.

Now, on this very first page of Peter Hobart's diary, we are introduced to Lincolns - 1637, February, as you see in this facsimile, two Lincolns were baptized, Samuel and Thomas. Who were they? Had our Samuel already arrived? and had

If you will run on through the diary on almost every page you will find a record of a Lincoln, born, married, died. The diary gives you an impression of a populous growing line. And as a matter of fact that was true for Hingham in five years - 1633-37, counted among its settlers from Norfolk, old England, six men by the name of Lincoln - three of them brothers,
and if the three there were related to these brothers, it was not near enough for intermarriage to be banned by Peter Hobart and the community for we find them constantly intermarrying.

Now, one of these six Lincolns was Samuel in whom we are interested, and we know more of his actual coming from documents than of any other one of the six, and this because of our other chronicler, Daniel Cushing of the general store.

One would like to write a chapter on Daniel Cushing, and what he must have been. He was the town's chief journalist, I take it, as well as recorder, and there is no doubt that he and Samuel Lincoln were not only neighbors but friends. It is in this diary that we find when Samuel arrived. Under the date of 1637 is this entry: "John Tondie and Samuel Lincoln came from old Hingham and both gathered at new Himgham, Samuel living some time at Salem." Neither Daniel Cushing or Peter Hobart mention the fact that when Samuel Lincoln arrived he had already in the town two brothers, older than he, Daniel and Thomas. Nor do they tell us anything about how he happened to come or where he had come from. Nobody in Hingham itself has ever taken any pains, so far as I can find, to go back of Daniel Cushing's entry. It has remained for later people to do that, and they have certainly done it well.

When in 1909 the centenary of Abraham Lincoln's birth was celebrated by much printing, many publications, the most distinguished and important thing to come out was a beautiful volume under the title of "The Ancestry of Abraham Lincoln." The story of how its contents were gathered, and why, is an historical romance in itself, and an appealing tribute to the personal power of Abraham Lincoln himself to arouse
enthusiasm and reverence in the young.

    J. Henry Lea, with whom the book originated, had heard the last one of the seven Douglas debates at Alton, Ill., on Friday, October 15, 1858. Over-running with enthusiasm, he was taken by his father to the Franklin House in Alton to meet Lincoln. "The memory of that evening," he writes in his preface, "is as yesterday." 30 years after it, being in England, he was suddenly seized with the determination to find out where this Samuel Lincoln came from, who he was - not on account of Samuel, of course, but on account of his hero Abraham.

And what did he find about Samuel? In the first place that he came of a good English line which could be established for a clear one hundred years before his coming into the world. It could be shown that the father of this boy Samuel was one Edward Lincoln, and that had it not been for the marrying habit of his father, he would have been undoubtedly, for his time, a rich man, for he was the oldest living son of Richard Lincoln's first wife, she herself being of a very interesting family. But she died, and Richard became married again and again and again, the fourth wife bringing into the world daughters, to whom she contrived to divert the patrimony which would otherwise, under the existing laws, have gone to Edward. It is a long and not very savory story of family intrigue and greed, and while I myself do not see why Edward, in justice, should have had any more than the rest of the family, under the laws it was coming to him, and he did not get it. The result was that the big family which he brought into the world - a family of six sons besides several daughters, were largely obliged to shift for themselves.
The oldest one became a weaver, for Norfolk, England, was at that time the great cloth making center of old England; and if you had to earn your living, that was the quickest way.  In 1633 this Thomas Lincoln emigrated to America and the next year his brother Daniel, the fifth son, a mariner, had come; and both had settled in Hingham.

When these two men went to America they left behind the youngest boy of the family, Samuel. Just how old he was has never been discovered, but we know he was baptized on the 24th of August, 1622 in the old church at Hingham, for the record is still there, as here reproduced. We know now more what was his schooling, but that it was something, you can be sure, for Samuel was brought up under one of the best of the Puritans, a pastor, Robert Peck by name, who saw to it that not one of his parishioners was neglected. He no doubt went to school in one of the curious 17th century school houses (See illustration) and because he must earn his living, and weaving was as natural a thing to do for a boy who must go to work in Hingham at that time as it is today at Fall River and New Bedford, he was apprenticed - apprenticed to a man by the name of Francis Lawes.

When you were apprenticed in those days, you left your own family and became a member of your master's family, as he was called. You had something more to do, however, than, like a boy of today, learn to weave. The conditions of apprenticeship were not easy. Samuel was what was called an indentured apprentice, that is, he had a contract with this Francis Lawes, lasting, we don't know how long, the usual time was

Mr. Lawes was held by this contract to teach him his trade, to give him his keep and probably a small weekly or monthly sum - very small. He in turn must obey his master, and
and that meant not only that he must learn the trade but that he must wait on the family, and if the family was ungenerous and domineering, the apprentice had a bad time.

Samuel left England, however, before what may be called the apprentices' revolt, of which Daniel Defoe complains in his entertaining way on the behaviour of servants. "It is but a few years ago," he said, writing in 1724, "that apprentices submitted to the most servile employments in the families to which they served but their successors scorn so much as the name of now such as cleaning their master's shoes, bringing water into the house from the conduits in the street also waiting at table." "Now, Defoe goes on to complain," their masters are obliged to keep porters or fetch men to wait upon the apprentices."

But Samuel was gone, with whatever of his trade he had learned, before these good times arrived for in 1637 his master Samuel Lawes went to America, taking him along. How do we know this?

Mr. Lea has made it sure for us for it was he who has found under the "Register of persons about to pass into foreign parts" in the parish of Carbrooke this entry: (fac simile)

In what shop Samuel went with his master and when he landed in Salem, as we know from Daniel Cushing's record that he did land, how long the "some time" that he staid there was, we do not know. There is no record, so far as I know, which would tell us, nor do we know the time of year in which he put into Salem harbor. Nor do we know why Francis Lawes let him off. Quite possibly Lawes found it was difficult to feed his wife and two children in Salem so that he was glad enough not to have an apprentice.

X

And so Sam went on his own, probably taking passage
in one of the fishing boats that were beginning to establish a lively coastwise trade between the settlements of the Bay and Plymouth colonies. This is sure that in those days he could not have gone overland. No through trails had been established. There was no way to cross such great rivers as the Charles. The settlements were too far apart to protect the lone traveler so we may take it for granted that in some fishing vessel, Samuel sailed out one day from Salem harbor, following the outside course, turning in south of Boston light and around the curved finger of land where already on the high point now known as Hull, a few hardy settlers has taken root. A beautiful and varied sail, inviting enough to curious youth - islands, tongues of land and inlets of water, the forests running down to the sea, bald promontories - what a sight to see for the first time! the sail from Salem to Hull and then to sail into Hingham Bay.

The Bay of Hingham into which Samuel sailed and which he must have surveyed with a curious eye, is one of extraordinary interest and beauty. (See map)

Across the Bay to the south lies a cove, Bare Cove, the settlers called it, and into this one day - probably - it must have been late in 1637, Daniel Cushing did not give the date very closely when he made his entry, sailed the little boat. It followed up the cove much further than you could today, fully the distance of two city blocks as one will see who visits the tablet put up in by the Daughters of the Revolution to mark the spot Peter Hobart had landed. Peter had come in two years before. The Daughters of the Revolution say he came in September, though why they should say that, I do not understand as the Reverend Hobart put it down explicitly in his diary, as I have already pointed out, that he landed on
a 1000 ton steamship after having experienced that
so much in naval deserts. Also that
within a short time will upset
the peace. The time to
make this known is now for the
continuation. The late day about 9th
a broad despatch C. E. M. of just
with P. H. for address.

if you allow me to make
a short reference to a case
where a case
was made of
the
confiscated
intercepted
pamphlet...
June 8. The landing place of those days is now covered by an excellent asphalted street. Across this street is a row of shops and houses and beyond, in what was a good sized inlet, run the railroad tracks. The steep bluffs that rose in those days from the sides of the inlet - there was a brook which flowed through it into the Bare Cove - have been trimmed down by nearly three hundred years of building and excavating. Beside the landing place one now sees the beautiful Hingham cemetery, and rising above it on the heights, houses, some of them dating back to early days.

What Samuel Lincoln found when he reached new Hingham was plantation of 200 acres already the lawyer had settled, one of them his own brothers, Thomas the weaver and Daniel the mariner, though it is doubtful if Daniel was at home at the time, he being a bachelor. There could not have been many houses in Hingham, and probably most of them were of logs with thatched roofs, for although the sawmill had been started, it is doubtful if much timber had been cut in those four years. A beginning had been undoubtedly made, however.

The most important building in the town - the centre of its order and thought was the meeting house. As we know, all of the New England centres had their heart and brains in a meeting house. What they meant to the community depended very largely upon the character and the intelligence and the degree of tolerance or intolerance of the minister. Luckily for Hingham, the Reverend Hobart was not one of the worst of the Puritan ministers. He had a spirit vastly fairer, a mind more tolerant and liberal than the group around Boston and Salem - a fact which had undoubtedly no little influence upon Samuel Lincoln's life.

The lad had come empty-handed probably, but there was no lack of work. Already the first allotment of land had taken place,
TORN TREE 2 M L - DAVIDSON WORDS - 1879
P. W. CAMPBELL 1855 - 1883
CUSTODY OF E. N. B. PENN

Whick deat. Lee got his quit - col. See No. 1193
Presents was col. - W. B. PELLOE