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INCIDENT ILLUSTRATING THE BREADTH OF LINCOLN'S SYMPATHY.

Narrated by Hon. William Brown, ~~General Counsel~~ for ~~Chicago & Alton R'y Co.~~, as told him by O. H. Browning.

In 1864, when the period of enlistment of the three years men was expiring, many of them stopped short in the service on the day when they believed their three years term was finished without waiting for the formalities of being mustered out, or for any official verification of their term. Necessarily many of them made mistakes, and some quit the service under circumstances amounting technically, to desertion. Strenuous measures became necessary to check this evil. Mr. Stanton, Secretary of War, directed court martial proceedings to be held over the next case in which the retiring soldier could be retaken, and ordered that the law be strongly enforced. These directions were carried out in a case occurring shortly thereafter, and the court martial found the retaken soldier guilty of desertion. The anecdote states that Stanton took the order for the execution of the defendant to Lincoln for his signature and approval, and related practically the circumstance rendering it of the greatest necessity to make an

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example of one of these deserters to retain discipline in the ranks and hold the men in line until their mustering out could be had and their places filled, and secured Lincoln's signature. And while retiring from the room he incidentally remarked that this was just the case in which to make the example as the man had no friends anyway. Lincoln detained Stanton for a moment making general inquiries as to progress of affairs, and then said "Let me see that order you have there", and taking it and retaining it, remarked, "Well, since he has no friends I will be his friend", and cancelled the order, and directed the man reprieved.

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