

Lincoln and the Hankses in the Campaign of 1860.

It seems that John Hanks, in his ardent support of his illustrious relative, was not backed up by the whole Hanks family. The Illinois State Register of July 14, 1860, contains a letter signed "Charles Hanks", reproduced from the Decatur "Magnet", in reply to John Hanks, whose letter advocating the election of Lincoln had been previously published in the Decatur "Chronicle". In this letter, Charles Hanks says: "John Hanks is my younger brother and Abe Lincoln is my cousin." He declares that John did not write the letter attributed to him; that Lincoln did not make the rails referred to in the letter signed by John; that the rails Lincoln really did make were burned up; that the "Lincoln rails" then so much exploited "were made by poor Bill Strickland, who is now poor, blind, helpless and in the Macon county poor house." He makes the absurd statement that Lincoln, when first coming to the state, was a Democrat, but "became a Whig because he settled in a Whig district"; and he denies that Lincoln ever had any flat-boating experience.

I have never heard that John Hanks had a brother Charles. If he had, it is very evident that Charles did not do his own letter writing. The whole letter reads very much like a fake.--J. McC.D.