"When Lincoln Went Flatboating From Rockport".

In a quaint old fashioned town in southern Indiana will occur rather an unique pageant on July the fourth, 1928.
The little town is Rockport on the Ohio River, the county seat ofSpencer County, where Abraham Lincoln lived the fourteen formative years of his life from seven to twenty one.
Here he lived, worked, played and studied, here his character was molded so that in 1830when he moved on to Illinois with his father, he was almost if not fully equipped for the great task before him.
The citizens of Spencer County are a loyal and patriotic group of people and proud that the great Lincoln grew up among their pioneerancestors.
These people want the world to know of Lincoln's life in their county, so are trying with earnest zeal and patriotic devotion to build an unusual memorial to his memory, not one of polished marble or granite but a living memorial , the history of his boyhood in Indiana as portrayed in pageant form.
With no outside help they do this , every thing is home made and every body making it.
Memorials to Abraham Lincoln take all shapes and forms and in more than thirty cities and towns in this country and at least three cities in Europe there have been erected costly monuments.
Agreat memorial of impressive beauty marks his birth place at Hodgenville Ky. , an oblisk of rare design surmounts the tomb of Lincoln at Springfield Ill. and now the citizens of Indiana are making plans for a wonderful shrine to his memory and that of his mother, Nancy Hanks Lincoln, at Lincoln City in Spencer County.
Kentucky gave him birth, Illinois gave him his political carreer, but Indiana molded the man.
To the citizens of Spencer County, where he grew to manhood is given the honor of creating this living memorial for him.
Thesecitizens are largely the descendants of the pioneers who lived there when the Lincolns were there and they have resented the fact that nearly all historians passed over the years that Lincoln lived in Indiana or if those years were mentioned the pioneers of southern Indiana were spoken of as mostly an illiterate common class of people.
There were some such, of course, but many of those first families whose decendants still live there had the bluest of blood in their veins and came of aristocratic lineage.
In 1925 a moving picture called "the Life of Abraham Lincoln" was sho shownall over the United States and the only mention of Indiana in the picture was a statement something like this "Thomas Lincoln hearing of the free state of Indiana, with his family , migrates there too".
Mr. Taylor C. Basye, of Rockport, President of the Spencer County Historical Society and a decendant of one of Indianas early settlers saw this picture and resented the omission of the fourteen years of Lincoln's life in Indiana.
Some time later in a public address he suggested the idea that Spencer County should produce a pageant showing the history of the Lincolns in Spencer County and particularly the flatboat trip to New Orleans with Allen Gentry.
The descendants of Allen Gentry live in Rockport and some of them on the site of AllenGentry's home near the old river landing , now in disuse, where the Gentrys flatboats were loaded for the

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southern market.
The Gentrys and the citizens of Rockport became interested and later people out through the county, and the result of this was that in 1926 a pageant was staged on the exact spot of the old river landing with towering bluffs as a background and the beautiful Ohio River and the Kentucky shore in the foreground.
Many visitors came from all over Indiana and nearby states to witness this event and the interest aroused was so great that some months later the Indiana Lincoln Memorial Association asked to sponsor the pageant and asked for a yearly presentation.
The Spencer County Historical Society decided that a biennial presentation would be best and so this year on July the fourth, 1928 the Lincoln history in Spencer County will be pictured again by the decendants of the people of pioneer days.
Rockport is seventeen miles from Lincoln's former home and being the county seat Thomas Lincoln often went there and Abe walked the distance many times to borrow books from John Pitcher one of Indiana's brilliant lawyers.
It was at Rockport the first great adventure of his life became possible when he was engaged to go on Allen Gentrys flatboat to New Orleans.
So the pageant title is "When Lincoln Went Flatboating From Rockport" and this year of 1928 is the one hundreth anniversery of the memorable trip.
For the benefit of pilgrims to the grave of Nancy Hanks Lincoln and to keep fresh in the minds of the young this bit of Indiana history, the pageant is given and will be given in years to come.

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