Note sent by
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Major John H. Widmer, the veteran
head of the Ottawa bar, says:

"I first saw Lincoln in May, 1859.
I had come to Ottawa to look around a few
days to see if I could get a chance to read
in some law office. Senator Frank Crawford of
Chicago was, then, a young fellow just starting
out to practice law in Ottawa. I dropped in
to see Frank. 'Say John' said he 'there's a big
case being heard before the Supreme Court
and Abe Lincoln is up from Springfield to
argue it. Let's go over!' we walked up
to the building and up stairs to the large
room where the case was being heard before
the solemn row of judges. A man with
a lank, gaunt figure sat near a table
and was thoughtfully studying the floor.
I knew in a moment the man was
Abe Lincoln. I did not take my eyes off
of him during the short time I was in
the room. I studied every thing about the man,
I noticed that he had a very pale, long face,
big hands and feet, but the thing that impressed
me most of all in regard to Abraham
Lincoln was the extreme sadness of his eyes.
Lincoln had the saddest eyes of any human
being that I have ever seen. As I recollect
now, the color was a rather deep, greyish-
blue. Lincoln sat there some minutes and
his melancholy expression had so impressed
me that I should not have felt more solemn
if I had been at a funeral. ¶

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- ¶ Presently, Lincoln arose and when he had gotten all of his great length stretched out, he began to address the court. I saw then that his clothes were an awful fit. His black, long skirted coat seemed just thrown on to him. His appearance had at once a suggestion of the comic and the pathetic. His words were spoken slowly and with great deliberation. The court gave him close attention. There was that something present among all who were listening that seemed to say 'we are hearing an able man!' ¶

¶ Soon, the expression on Lincoln's face changed. It lighted up, his sad eyes brightened, then a faint smile spread over his features as he told a funny story. I remember how the court, itself, had to laugh and when Lincoln chanced to partly turn around, I noticed

that his countenance was entirely different. There was a smile and a twinkle about his eyes that made every body feel good. ¶

¶ Lincoln finished his short speech and sat down. It was but a few minutes until that old, sorrowful look came over him. I put on my hat and walked out."

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