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1444 St. James Court,
Louisville, Ky.

Oct. 23, 1922

My dear Mr. Phillips:-

I think my last report was sent from Staunton Va. Since I left there I have not had a moment to write up my notes and now I am afraid that what I give you will be only the bones of what I've been seeing and hearing. If only I could put into it the enthusiasm and emotion which has run along thru almost every thing, I should have a real piece of literature; but I cant do that, you must read between the lines.

I reached Alice's at noon of the 16th - Mr. Fortume and his daughter arrived that afternoon and we all dined together. Well you were right - he certainly is a brick. He never showed by the lifting of an eyebrow that I had been guilty of a most dis-reputable indiscretion - So far as he is concerned the things never happened. I honestly think he believes that I dont know that it did happen and he is so kind a gentleman that he is going to take pains that I will never suspect that it happened. He is a man of most interesting experience in life - very genuine accomplishments - a fine dis-interested spirit - a psychic too - perhaps the most curious thing about him was he told us a tale of a medium and his communication which is the most surprising thing I have ever heard. Besides this he had a Pierce Arrow car which was a wonder and a chauffeur that conducted it a good deal like it was a high-class airplane and if you would have seen the roads that we travelled over you would understand how desirable it is to fly rather than drive over them. Why we were not all killed dozens of times - still dont realize.

We spent Monday evening over our maps, laying out the itinerary and eyeing one another. I think the prospect of spending a week in each others company, strangers as we were scared us all a little Mr. Fortume had his ideas of what we should do - so did Cale Young Rice and so did I - You can understand the possibilities of friction, but Alice Rice is a wonderful lubricant and tho' we all went to bed a little dubious we all started out in the morning with a fine sense of adventure and before we reached Bardstown our first objective we had rubbed out every wrinkle and were beginning to be wonderfully keen on one another. Bardstown is an old world place - it has the kind of cultivation that comes from a Catholic Cathedral and Seminary - something like a 100 years old. It has traditions of Louis Phillipe and it has had a couple of amazing Arch-bishops then too the Hardins lived here and just out of town is the wonderful old estate where Stephen Foster wrote the Old Kentucky Home, Sewanee River, etc. and where now the women of the State who have bought it for a memorial are busy as a bee restoring the whole place - it makes you green with envy to see the chance they have.

But of course all of this is in a dide - simply a setting - the others were mighty nice to gather up every possible intersting thing - while I was at my records and interviews and to have them ready for me when my work was done.

Here at Bardstown is the will of Joseph Hanks that I am more and more convinced is the best proof we have of Nancy Hanks parentage. Mrs. Hitchock has it in her book - it is one of the show records in B - they brought it out immediately. I found slight discrepancies in the original and her printing and have of course taken a certified copy. This will being here I hoped to locate the Hanks farm, but found nothing about it in the records - nor any other land transactions in their name.

I did find, however, something most interesting when I came to go over the Court proceedings - luckily for me these proceedings were all indexed - indeed I find all the records practically in these Court Houses are fully indexed which makes research mighty easy. The Lincoln name comes in at 6 different times and I am having a certified copy made, of course, of these items. I struck material here on the man I am beginning to call the lost Lincoln - his name was Hanniah, tho' sometimes it is spelt Hannah - he must have been a good deal of a person for he took up between 8 and 90000 acres of land - paid for it and these records here at Bardstown throw some light on him new to me.

It is one of the matters that I am going to try and work. Do you remember in our early life of Lincoln that we published an inventory of the estate of A. L. Grandfather, who was also an A L this is at Bardstown and Cale and I compared our printing with the original to the damage of our rendering, so I am getting a certified copy of this so when I come to write my history - my new book - I will be in position of criticising "Tarbell's Early Life".

We had a letter of introduction - or at least Mr. Fortune had - to an old-timer - Wickliffe, who so Mr. Fortune said knew more than anybody in the country about Lincoln and when I began to question said - "Bless your heart all that I learned from your Life" which was gallant, but not quite sure. For the old fellow had gone to Southern Illinois to hear Lincoln speak in 1858 at the time of the debate - He heard none of the formal debates, but heard Lincoln at Carbondale - quite a famous speech. He was impressed by his dignity and particularly his sincerity - said he knew and felt all he said - that he was simple and plain, but moved you profoundly. He dismissed Douglas by saying "Oh! Douglas was an orator" - Wickliffe was one of the few Republicans in Kentucky at this time - he says there was no interest in Lincoln in the State, that there were practically no republicans here and that the great fight that came between the Democrats themselves, between the Douglas and Bell wing of the party - this is a new idea to me, but of course it is the fact. He says that people knew

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of the humble origin of Lincoln and that in Hodgenville in the campaign he saw Austin Gollaher, who had been a playmate of A. L. when the family lived on Knob Creek. Col. Wickliffe has the impression that Tom Lincoln never amounted to much. Mr. Fortume and Cale have both insisted that he was no account, but it is putting it too strong I am convinced and I have got more proof that he was doing his best to get a foothold in the world on this trip than I ever had before. Two of the witnesses who knew A. L. and N. H. were acquaintances of Col. W. - that is witnesses that I have always banked on. One of these was Samuel Haycroft of Elizabethtown and the other that old man Christopher Columbus Graham that we played up so in our early life. Col. W. says that S. H. was thoroughly reliable - that CCG was alright, but that he was the kind that always knew everything and liked to talk about it, still he was an honest man.

I would like really to draw a picture of Col.W. and of his reminiscences of Bardstown society. I must not forget to describe a dual that was fought on the square there some 70 years ago between 2 leading citizens of that day - one a farmer. They were great friends and periodically had beautiful times getting drunk together, but on one occasion quarrelled and the quarrel lasted until they were sober. One challenged the other - the man challenged was the farmer so he selected the weapons - black snakes, you know that kind of a whip to be used on horse back. And they really fought it out - He told me this story when I had started to talk about the Lincolns shields dual - he broke in, Saying - "We had a dual down here that beat A. L. or anybody else ever fought" Col. W. was a dear old man - he ate supper with us and stayed and stayed - could not bear to give us up. Living at all means self denial to him - he cant smoke and he saved the cigar that Mr. Fortume gave himself for the one cigar that he allows himself on his birthday, which comes in November.

Oct. 18

7;30 was our breakfast hour all thru the trip and it was very interesting to see how almost unvariably every body was out before that time taking a turn to see the town. Mrs. Lilly and I took our turn as we were room-mates in the fresh air - a most beautiful golden morning with a sky as fleckless as you ever saw. Bardstown has a really old world square, courthouse in the center, but we had hardly started on our run when we met Mr. Fortume full of enthusiasm collected at the old cemetery. We ran around locating old houses, getting the views. It was so like experiences of years ago in France. By this time we were perfectly adjusted and started out for Springfield, the county seat of Washington County after a look at the Cathedral, in splendid spirits. I t was here near Springfield that Nancy Hanks' guardian lived and where the marriage bond and the marriage return documents which we published long ago are to be found. It is an old court house and the court of records are in an outside building. They were putting in their winter coal and we had to climb over the chutes to get into the room. Here various old men drifted in to see what we were doing. One of the amusing things that has happened all the way is that at every stop we were

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immediately the center of the curious. The first question - is where we came from and then what were we doing in these parts. The car has been a wonder and small joy to the boys who dont often see one like it I fancy. Well in the ~~county~~ record room when I said Lincoln they immediately brought out framed the 2 documents mentioned above. It was good to really see them and get the feel of their genuineness. I never had the same sense of conviction about them from handling photographs as I had before. Then I started on the deeds to see if there were any Lincolns in this County. I found that A. L. uncle Mordicar, as well as his uncle Josiah had land in this neighborhood, adjoining farms. The first buying his in 1779 - the second in 1809. Now this land as nearly as I can make out touched on the land of the man who was Nancy Hanks' guardian and where she ~~was~~ undoubtedly was living after her father's death, which was in ? This is what I have been anxious to know, some reason for putting Tom Lincoln down here at the time when Nancy was living here and here I have it for the lad surely spent more or less time with his oldest brother M. L. after the indians got his father.

It is here in Springfield that you run in into what to me is one of the most interesting contemparies of Lincoln exhibits. Springfield believes that Abraham Lincoln was born down here. It believes it knows the house in which he was born, or rather the location. It is tremendously jealous of Hodgenville and every where you meet old timers and some young people too, they present their claim. These claims are the Lincoln land of which I have spoken, the fact that on a certain sight was a house known as the Lincoln House.

Undoubtedly this was Mordicar's house. Springfield also points out that it has in its records the marriage bond and marriage return of T. L. and N. H. Here is the proof of land then- of a house, proof of marriage; also in the tax records at Springfield you find this entry April 6, 1811 - Thomas Lincoln taxed as a"white male" also an assessment under "Horses Mare". This is an interesting set of documents and if you did'nt have what exists in Hardin County would pretty well establish their claim. People that we talked with said - "Oh sure he was born here - they have the memorial in the wrong place - we ought to have it" and as soon as they knew that I hoped to write something they begged me to correct the injustice, help them to get the credit they deserve. I dont wonder at all that the poor things want what Hodgenville has got, simply as a matter of income and good roads. Of course, we were keen to see the site of the Lincoln cabin where undoubtedly Tom had spent more or less time and undoubtedly too, where A. L. had visited as a little boy, for he remembered his uncle Mordicar well - use to say he had all the brains in the Lincoln family.

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It took me until lunch time to get thru the records. As I have said the marriage records are framed and saved. There is an interesting story of their finding told in a little printed sheet they give you called Lincoln Memorial. There old deed books are in good shape and indexed; but I was surprised at their important assessment list in 1811 - it took them a long time to find it. They finally brought down a round tin can - lard can I should think, in this was stuck a lot of papers. The cripp old assessment records 111 years old were carelessly folded up and stuck in the receptacle along with a lot of other things, stuff I should call it, the sheet on which the Lincoln entries were found had been detached from the book. The binding if it ever had any has disappeared - almost impossible to handle it without tearing. Samuel Haycroft in his Memories of Elizabethtown speaks of the family, of the county records being deposited in a bread basket. There is a touch of this same kind of thing in Springfield. What these ardent Springfield Lincolnites ought to do is to immediately make a systematic search of every old paper in their Court House and rebind such a document as this assess - ment roll.

There are several points about the care of records that should be insisted on - these old Lincoln deeds from frequent consultation are sometimes cracked, that is the paper is cracked. There ought to be a papier calce put over them. also, there should certainly be some method of keeping the records clean; that is the old books dusted. I handled books in Staunton Va that I dont believe had been dusted in 20 years. It would be a worthy occupation for the Women's Club if the Court authorities cant manage to do it themselves.

After I had arranged to have my copies of the old Lincoln deeds made and paid for them we had lunch in an old and rather ordinary hotel, which could easily be modernized to be most comfortable and interesting and then started for the Lincoln Berry farms. It was a rough and dangerous ride, ending up with fording of rolling fork? It was along this stream at this point that the Lincoln and Berry lands lay. We had been so directed that we easily located the cabin, or rather its site. The old house is gone, or at least most of it and in the present building a negro family is living. A right nice intelligent darkey who left his mules and came to tell us just where the house stood. It was half way up the hill perhaps and looked down into a very lovely valley, which seemed to good lowlands, hill on each side, those to the left rather abrupt. In the yard was one of the old mill stones, exactly like the one in the picture of a Kentucky hand mill page 41 - Early Life. Our friend assured us that this was where Abraham Lincoln was born and they all felt that it was very wrong that Hodgenville was getting the credit that belonged to them. What I was really interested in here, being perfectly certain that these Washington County people are wrong in their claim was the house where Nancy's guardian had lived and where she was married. What I wanted to know/how near it was to this cabin we had just seen where I feel

was

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confident Tom Lincoln stayed as a boy and young man working with his brothers. So down the hill we start - by there was a straggling little village strung along the creek to our left from the point where we had forded the stream and in the corner house we found collected a half dozen women, all of them young, nice as they could be, such as nice faces you see in this part of the world - 2 or 3 with babies in their arms. The spokeswoman in a boudoir cap, evidently they had all come out to talk to us if we had stopped. As a matter of fact we had to stop to inquire the way. Yes, they said that was T L. birthplace and the Berry house was over the hill above. They were sure that not only had T. L. had been born there but that Nancy Hanks had been buried there which took my breath away for they said there was a tombstone that had been picked up on the place - had Nancy Hanks marked on it - may be it was the tombstone of a child, but they thought it was Lincoln's mother. Aunt Jane Gerton had it they said under her stove in her cabin up the hill; but that where she were'nt there now that she was taking care of a lady down the street who was sick. You can imagine how we raced to find Aunt Jane.

Mr. Fortume was the most prominent and eager conductor and he, Cale and I raced across the deep lawn to the house where we had been directed - a modest, but clean little white house. There was no answer to the knock and Mr.F. opened the door - a little square room hall on each side and there to the left in a big bed lay a sick woman. Mr. Fortume was a little dashed, but asked for Aunt Jane the woman immediately called her - the men retired and I went in to find out whether we had committed an unpardonable indiscretion in bolting into the sick room - not a bit of it. A find looking fresh face woman lay there - I asked - Are you very ill ? look here she said and turned back the covers - he is just 2 days old . I tried to apologize, but there was no need of it she was full of the exhalation of a son, of a third son. When I told her why we were there - she said Oh I am so glad we ought to have the credit of Lincoln's birthplace I hope you will do your best for us. It would mean so much to us. I want my boys to have been born near him and to be men like thim. She had a nice name - Mrs. Davidson Reed. By this time Aunt Jane had appeared a tall, dignified corking darkey woman with white blood in her if I am any judge. Yes she had that stone - it werent under the stove it was somewhere upstairs - yest we could see it, but there were'nt nobody to home - then the question was whether under the circumstances if we dared asked Jane go back with us. One of the group at the corner saved the situation - she had followed us down, A pretty woman with a beautiful baby in her arms, her little niece - she would stay with Mrs. Reed and Aunt Jane could go with us. So it was arranged and back we went back up the hill, passed the recruited Lincoln's birthplace to the second cabin. After a good deal of fumbling Aunt Jane found the key and went in to get the stun - Nany Hanks' grave stone - the name on it. Mr. F. by this time was so excited he was going to buy it cost what it would and I certainly backed him up in this ambition. Hopes were blighted when Aunt Jane arrived - it was a head stone in 2 pieces. It had a mark but it was'nt Nancy Hanks. It was M M R and there are no MMRs in the group we were after.

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We then began to question Aunt Jane about the Berrys - she told us the farm belonged to the Polins - these are lawyers in Springfield, whose names I have taken for a correspondence. Joseph Polin, being the historian. It may not be the same one. There was a Berry graveyard over the hill and the old house beyond her man was working over there - took care of the crops. So we started a long rough tramp, only Mr. F. and I held out to the end. I climbed wire fences and raced thru fields of burrs and finally came around to the deserted house admirably placed on a hillside - a fine uplands and woods behind. The rolling fork creek in the valley below, only glimpses of it could be caught, the mill in the picture. The house had started with a one room log cabin. It had an addition of hewn logs, a third addition was two-stories, with a pretty good stone foundation There were 2 big stone chimneys, one for the first cabin, a larger for the two story addition - could not get in. The building had been sealed over the log with oak clapboards. This I believe to be the house in which Thomas Lincoln was married. I have not the picture we published of the spot. It must compare and verify. Mr. F. took photographs of which I hope I will have copies. We dashed down hill into the Valley for information. A woman had been watching us, came out quickly to the gate, flat chested, sallow, chewing a snuff stick Who be ye? Where did you come from? Wont you come in and sit awhile? Again and again on this trip I could have wept at the wistful desire of the people that we met to have us sit awhile; they so wanted to talk and learn about things outside. As she could tell us nothing Mr. Fortune decided that he had better go back over the hill for the car and I go on to the mill which was near by and there they would meet me. Of course, the stream from the mill was a little well painted house in a large and rather straggling yard. I went in and wrapped and a pretty little child wife came out - would'nt I come in? I asked for the toilet room - she took me out around various half kept buildings and came into the primitive place with me - she could not leave me for a moment so much did she want to talk - what I wanted why I was there and then she had heard about our call on Mrs. Davidson Reed - you have seen the baby she said - I told her Yes and asked her if she had any - She had only been married 10 months - I do want one I just love them so - My folks dont want me to have any, but I do want them - the Dr. say it would be alright and you had better believe I backed her up. I believe she thought I had a dozen from the way I talked to her. Such a pathetic little creature - - - something they all have an inward courtesy and gentleness - something that no foreign education that we have just devised can be produced - well the car and we had to run to see the mill and take the pictures; but I shall never forget that little woman in a sunbonnet and her graciousness. One thing she told me that they were wrapping up apples for Christmas.

#8

There is probably nothing of the old mill except part of the foundation and the stone banks to the mill race.

So we raced away, waiving good-by to Aunt Jane as we passed, making the ford gingerly for it looked like rather dangerous business so much mud and water was there in the stream. We got out alright and raced for our night quarters, which were Hodgenville. A ride of perhaps 30? miles, part of it very bad road. The rides at evening have been wonderful for us all - we talked incessantly of tasting the experiences of the day and at times coming very nearly telling each other the secrets of our souls - such a state of enthuisam were we in. The beauty of the landscape with its rich coloring the light from the evening of the Sun shifting thru the trees, the sky with its rose glow - all of this has been a profund joy. I have been pleased to think that my Lincolns have always selected such lovely places to live in. We were making for Hodgenville and about 7 arrived. A smallish square, courthouse in the center, rather quaint. Some oldish buildings, not very old, around. My first thought was that we were in for a bad night and I was not encouraged when we got into the lobby of the little hotel with its rather run-dOwn looking lounges and second class keeper. Nor was I much encouraged when I saw our rooms Miss Lilly and I shared one, a bed apiece - no wash stand - a common bath room outside and each of us a towel about 6" square. We were mighty hugry - one of the things the trip did for us all was to give us prodigious appetites. We brushed off the dust and went down into the dining room and we will always remember Hodgenville dining room - Such a supper we had. There was a big round glass dish of blackberry jam on the table that the moment I looked at it I knew it came from a master hand - there is much to remember about the food we had in Hodgenville - salt rising bread, wonderful vegetables; they think down in this country they are not serving a meal unless there are 6 vegetables, but the thing I will always remember when you say Hodgenville and hotel is that blackberry jam. I confess I was tired that night; but I had to stay up to get a communication to a Mr. John Barry - the editor and owner of a paper once called a Rolling Fork Echo - now the New Haven Echo. In dashing for Hodgenville we passed thru New Haven and looked at its hotel, thinking that possibly we could spend the night there and see Mr. Barry, whose name had been given us at ? and the name of whose paper ~~XXX~~ R F E had capitavated me - also the report that he knew all about the birthplace and life of Lincoln on ~~the Rolling Fo~~ Knob Creek He had not dared tried the New Haven hotel and had gone some 15 miles to Hodgenville - what I wanted was to get hold of Mr. Barry and find out what he knew and whether or not we could see him the next day. I could'nt get him that night - had no 'phone in his house so I went to bed. The next day was to be our great day - Oct. 19th, for this day we were to go to Lincoln's birthplace.

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#9

We were out early - I made a dash for the record office as soon as the it was open and the clerk of course with dignity informed me that Larue County was not formed until 1845. I must say I was relieved. We then rushed to see the statue - very good - not great. We also looked for postal cards and found Mr. Warren's excellent little book on the memorial.
To go to Hodgenville we had to retrace our road for perhaps 12 miles and to go up over Muldauh's Hill - the long hill mentioned in the record appointing Tom Lincoln Road Surveyor in 1816, the document I unearthed in Elizabethtown 25 years ago and first published. We knew it was a dangerous hill that night when we came down it, but not so well as we realized it as we came to go up it to the Memorial. We found the farm without trouble. I have not been very keen to see this Memorial, tho' I did want to see the land on which Lincoln was born, the kind of land Tom Lincoln had chosen for his first home, chosen it and paid for it - I have the proof of it - 3 years before he was married. I had a quarrel with a classic momunent on the spot I did not know what I wanted But I had an idea of a sublimated log structure to which encloses the precious cabin; but I have been so wrong. This perfectly proportioned simply elegant little bleak temple with its long flight of gracious steps leading to it and a perfectly designed approach all enclosed in a hedge carefully trimmed, a great flagstaff in the middle of the round - why it is all so right - so as it should be - so perfectly prepares you for that little log thing inside - something seems to meet in the two - I dont know what. I praised God that there was no one there but our party - that the sky was perfect and all the lovely landscape with the old trees under which Abraham and his sister surely played were floodd with golden light. We stood on the stone base - on the generous stone base - in the round at the foot of the stairs and wathhed and talkèd and watched and talked and all of us arose to the seventh heaven. And then we went up and in - the cabin stands exactly on the place on which it originally stood and my pet notion that at the fireside and on the door step with his mother and Tom Lincoln and his sister looking out over this lovely land Abraham Lincoln got those things which are the greatest for making a man were intensified - it maddens me that that people only see a rough cabin when they look on this thing.

Everything about it - the inscriptions on the walls of the enclosing memorial, the inscriptions outside in which I saw with great humility my own name - the splendid type of caretaker - I would'nt have a thing changed.

Then and there I resolved that some how I must write something about Rob Collier connecting him with this place. It was his backing that made it possible and that wonderful wrong boy ought to have commemoration in connection with this. I am going to do it if the Lord permits.

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#10

Well little by little we came down out of the 7th heaven - we went to see the spring - and such a wonderful place for children to play - itis a cave - a wonderful, trully cave, with a narrow dark passage running in somewhere. Think of those 2 little people haxaxsxxx having such a place to bring water from.

And the oak - a third larger in girth than my best one at the farm - a beautiful tree . Here they played and gathered acorns - We all filled our pockets and are going to try and start crops of Lincoln oaks at our various homes. Little by little, not hastily, but slowly, tenderly we let our enthuisasm cool down to a point where we could go away. Of course we lingered; but it is alright a perfect experience.

I forgot to say that in the morning I did get Mr. John Barry. What I wanted him to help me to do was to locate the second farm; the one to which Lincoln went when he was 4 years old from the place we had just been and which he says was the first home he remembered It lay on Nolin's Rarkx Creek. Mr. Berry had been very eager to accomodate me and I had arranged that he take a taxi and meet me at the foot of Bigg Hill. And when we got down there he was. You knew he was a story himself the moment you looked at him - a little elderly man, whose one business in life is keeping alive the R F A - he gathers his news - puts it in type, runs it off, mails it, roots for his subscription list. A brave person. His one object now is to get proper roads from New Haven to the Memorial. New Haven has it in for Hodgenville just as Springfiled had it for Elizabethtown. Hodgenville is getting everything and they are on the road - no body is paying any attention to the only home Lincoln ever remembers in Kentucky - to the hill of which his father was Road Surveyor. Well Mr. Barry had met us at the foot of this hill at a place of Ruffs Hollow because he believed that when the Lincolns had moved from the first farm to where the Memorial is they had come down this Hollow following the creek that ran thru it - the distance is shorter - only 4 or 5 miles and it was the custom in those days to follow the creek bottom. This seems very reasonabl to me - they travelled then just as they do today in the Kentucky and Tenn. Mountains. I believe he is right. I was much interested in his tirades and exhortations about Muldaugh Hill - it was an everlasting proposition.

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#11

After looking over the scene at the foot of the Hollow we drove perhaps 2 ? miles along the banks of the rolling fork to a point where the hill to our left was cut by the Valley of Knob Creek. The land on both streams at each side of the road broadens out here into fine level flats - flats which may have been cleared and cultivated by the indians , old corn fields, flats too which are constantly enriched by the wash from the hills and by the overflowing of the streams. One sees immediately why to a farmer, wanting cleared land, without the hard work of clearing it, this was an improvement on the lovely rolling land that Tom Lincoln had first taken up. My notion of the lay of this land had been formed from the photographs which we published, but and they were deceptive. We drove down to a point on the road where Knob Creek crosses it, or the other way around. Here stood the cabin into which Thomas Lincoln moved. There are no remants of it now - that is the logs have disappeared. I dont know where they have gone. What interested me very much was that the bluff on the furtherest side of the creek was percipitious,, rocky, woody - a typical limestone bluff of this region. We could see from the road the steep trail that feet had made to the top. Up this trail little Abraham must have climbed many a time to visit Austin Gallaher who lived on the highland. It was out of this creek that flowed close by the Lincoln cabin that A G fished A L (See Tarbell's life) It made the thing very vivid to me. I was particularly interested in seeing the fields of which Mr. Lincoln tells the story of his dropping corn and having it washed out by a big flood. I think he says 7 acres. Here we could see vividly how the travel followed the creek bottom, trails being worked out along the banks when the streams were full of water. There are remains of an old road along the rolling fork which we followed to Knob Creek but on the opposite side. From the sight of the cabin Mr. Barry led us perhaps 2 miles, the bluffs to our left, fine bottom lands, with corn crops to the right between us and the rolling fork to a house one room of which, was the old school house. Evidently these early log cabins particularly xhenx of hewn logs, solidly chincked , have been used almost invariably for the starting point of houses, some of which are now like this one, 2 story, well finished and painted, really commodious. The old school house is used by the present owners of the farm as a living room. The old chimney is used for the stove - it has been sealed outside and in, plastered, painted. I suppose it was 16' square, but this I must verify. I loved its location, for it looked down the Valley of rolling fork, which turns at about this point. A broad valley to the left, as we looked out we could see 3 peaks, not Mountains, but high hills which had been playing hide and seek in our landscape for 2 days. Some where over beyond on the road to New Haven lay Gethsemane - a place which Mr. Fortume was keen to take us too for here is a great Catholic Institution, whnsmanagensisnsnsnsben with a man at the head who must be one of the most unsophisticated men of the world alive which Alice and Mr. F. led me to believe. Mr. Barry told us some tales at the school house of Zachairy Riney, who he thinks had more to do with giving Lincoln fine ideas than anybody else in the world.

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#12

He made a point of teaching ~~af~~ manners according to Barry. ~~Talked~~ Taught them all to lift their hats.

I am not quite sure, but I think this episode of the school house came afterwards rather than before ~~amusing~~ and I am inclined to think it valuable episode of our trip. I am sure it is an episode that helps me to visualize the life of the litte people almost more than anything that happened. As I said Knob Creek on the banks of which the cabin stood flows into rolling Fork about 1/2 mile (?) down the Valley. It was at the mouth of this ~~fork~~ creek that Tom Lincoln in 1816 when he decided to move into Indiana built his flat boat. I cant think of anything more exciting than that for the children, but it was hard for us to get to the mouth of Knob Creek. There are corn fields lying between that looked mighty unpleasant for walking. We came down the long way until we reached the point where Mr. Barry said that was the Rolling Fork. We climbed down, looked at the stream, but it was not the real thing. The scene of action was at least a half mile above, but could we get to it. These streams wear down the level strata of the limestone rock, making deep banks on either side, banks in some places 20' high here. These banks are overgrown with more kinds of burrs and Spanish needles and what Cale called Lincoln cooties ~~[illegible]~~. The walking is rough and there are places on our side of the stream where you have not foothold it is so precipitous. Here came out the greatness of Wm. Fortune, he was evidently determined that every wish I had on this trip should be gratified. I dont know whether it was the generous part of the man or whether he must know that the awful thing I had done and that he heap coal of fires upon my head - he is not exqatly what you would call a humorous man, tho' he has a lot of fun in him and I suspect that he was giving me a treatment that I deserved. He came out strong here - saying we shall see the mouth of Knobs Creek so up the stream he forged I after him. The chauffeur in the rear - we stumbled over stones - we accumulated more stickers than could be counted - we were entangled in wire fence that had fallen on the ground. At one point we were blocked and the chauffeur pulled down part of an old fence and made a bridge for us to cross. We reached the spot and really after the Memorial it is one of the highest lights of the trip. Knob Creek which is something of a stream after all comes in here straight - it must have had a big volume of waters at times to the rolling Fork. The result has been the cutting out at this point where the flat boat was built, a big round pool, with banks 5 or 6' high. You look up the rolling fork over which old sycamores and elms hang, along the slopes are heavy tangles of willows, a wonderful pool when the water was high. It must have edded and boiled in a way to stir the children to the bottom. You can see still the little boat landing, at least there is a boat landing there - very primitive. These were tumbling, tumultuous streams in high water, carrying down tons of deposits from the hills above to enrich the valley. There was considerable water and lovely long shadows were cast over it. I would'nt

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ask a better place for children to play. Mr. F. took a lot of pictures, I made my notes , and we started home tremendously excited. On the way down I picked up large muscle shells beautifully tinted inside. Cant you see little A L and S L gathering them? Cant you see them at the door? and on the mantle inside. Dont you tell me they did not have a life with a big L. Here as I say the flat boat was built and T L sailed away to a home which he would find in Indiana. Mr.Barry believes and I would really like to agree with him, that when the family moved later they went by flat boat down into the Ohio and acress into Indiana - instead of on horse back or in a wagon. But I doubt it for it was in the Fall of 1816 they left, probably a little earlier than our visit and there' is'nt water enough in the rolling valley to float a canoe - it would be principally portage. But at allevents they left the rolling Fork, the bbig fields A G. the school house from which we saw the great high peaks and made their to me wonderful journey of discovery.

After this exciting morning bidding Mr. Barry goodby here we raced full tilt for Hodgenville. I dont know how we got there I dont know whether we went back of Muldaugh Hill, yes I think we must have done so. We made the hotel of good food of which I have already spoken between 1 and 2 - and such a dinner as we had. 2 days later we lunched at French Lick and we all took great satisfaction in saying that the meal in Hodgenville was at least 50% more satisfactory. Fried chicken, Southern style, scalloped oysters, black berry rolly polly - lunch over we raced for Elizabethtown. I must say it seemed like a desecration for E town, but it could not be helped. Here we were Thursday afternoon and only 2 days more and I felt as if I should ought to have 2 days at E town - It was very interesting to see how the town has grown and improved since I dropped in there 25 years ago - a scared,tired,fumbling creature and hunted up old gentelemen, the Helms, the records. We parked on the Square and I plunged into the Courthouse where I found a full clerk of court, utterly uninterested flirting with his Secretary and very much worried because there seemed to be a rival hanging aroud. But I to this gentleman mind there is only 1 Lincoln record in E town and that is the one they have all been exploiting recently. The record of the marriage of T L and S B J "Both of age and married before" This was made in Dec. 1819, but all of this I have in the excellent little book which the Womans Club has recently published. Just as this point let me say that this Womans Club of E Town under the direction of a Minister Louis A Warren who has just left there for Morganfield and also with the help of Dr. Pusey of Chicago and his wife who was a Eligzbethtown woman as I understand it have done one of the best pieces of historical work that I know of. Republishing not only the documents I have just mentioned, but also one of the most amusing and illuminating journals of this part of the world A. H. Histories of E town. Well, I rushed into the courthouse, clerk tells me that the above record is all they have - he actually does not know anything about the road order that I dug out so long ago and republished. Insists that it must be at Hodgenville ar La Rue County when La

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#14

Rue County was'nt formed until 1820 (?) I never interrupt with the occupations of anybody flirtations unless it gets in the way of my work and then I can be very preemptory and I bossed that young man in a way that I dont often venture on. Well I found some things which if his head is'nt too badly turned I shall have copies of sometime - at least I paid him $6. making a mistake of giving cash instead of check. Now that I come to the point of checking up what I have done I realize I have paid for these records every where without taking a receipt, tho the sums were not large. I find my record and I have a moment of great excitment when I discover that this part of the road of which T L was to be Surveyor includes Muldaugh's Hill. Is'nt it amazing how much one does not understand in the things that pass thru their hands. There are a lot of interesting things in these record books, throwing light on the people associated with Tom Lincoln - Here is Calev Hazel , his teacher, selling land in 1802. In 1800, and so on. In 1806 we have Wm. Hanks selling 700 acres to Joseph Hanks in Breckinridge County. We have W H in 1811 buying land and selling same in 1815. I find Hanniah turns up here again selling 2 lots in the town of Hartford wherever that is. A most interesting thing that I find is that the land T L bought in 1803 could not be deed to him until he had paid for it. Of course this deed I am having copied as well as the Hanniah. I find proof here in a dded that in 1829 both Thomas and Sarah came back to Elizabethtown where they sold some land. When I finally had been able to collar the clerk long enough to make him take exact notes of the things I wanted copied I went out to the car, very much chagrin I had been afraid they would have been bored, but the dear things had been holding a town reception, the Mayor had called on them and taken them to see the new bank, An interested lady had called on them and asked them to come in and sit awhile which they had done, their had been a delegation of the Womans Club for they had seen by the papers that I was on my way in this party and they had planned a lunch and reception. They were disconsolate because their leading historians, including Mr. Warren were gone on an expedition. I was highly excited when a gentleman whom I had interviewed 25 years ago came to renew acquaintance. A nice girl from the bank Miss English stirred up came to tell me that the only living relative Mrs. Jane Laskey 82 years old was in town - had been the chief figure of the unveiling of the Sarah Bush Lincoln tablet the week before. I must see her. So we finally run her down, visiting a neighbor - perfect joy - I dont know a thing about the Lincolns - yes my mother was Lucy Lincoln - I was born in Tenn. why Aunt Jane you were borh right there in that house - no they told me Tenn. After much discussion she agrees that she was born in Elizabeth town and that her mother was born in Tenn. She does not know whether this Lucy Lincoln was a bo daughter or Mordiah or Issac - but she does know that it was one of the brothers of Thomas Lincoln - that is Lucy Lincoln, Mrs. Laskey' mother was a niece of T L and therefore a cousin of A L

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She seems to be the nearest living relative of Robert Lincoln - I asked her if she had ever seen him - Yes I have and I never want to see him again. They had us both down to Hodgenville when they dedicated the monument and he was so drunk he had to be led off the platform. I have not and shall not take any method of verifying this. I talked it over with my friends and we agree that R L is so much of a snob that he may have snubbed Aunt Jane However, there may be something in it. Kentucky whiskey is good and it is strong. Aunt Jane, of course, is a great figure at all of these celebration, but she is no historical authority. I am to write her daughter who is a school teacher in E Town when I have time - her name is Miss Eliza Laskey - she told Mr. English that she would be glad to hear from me.

I think they are very much mixed up in E - over the home of T L - they were insisting to me that he had a 2nd house, 2 story, with a carved mantle in it that is now owned so we find, by the officers quarters at Camp Knox. It was too late for us to stop at Camp Knox when we came thru, but yesterday morning, the 24th, a delegation of E town ladies waited on me at Alice's - Mrs. Pusey among them, they tell me that this mantle was made by T L for one of the best houses of the time, built in E town. I am to have a picture of this mantle with the affidavits. Some how I scarely know how we got out of E town - I feeling very guilty of rushing away, but felt immensely gratified by what I had found and the leads established.

We reached Louisville somewhere before 8 o'clock and dined with the Rices at the Pendennis the Fs going to the Seelbach for the night and we home. At 8;30 the next morning Arthur was at the door - we piled in, picked up the Fs and started for Indiana. Mr. Fortume was determined that we should see something besides documents that day and I was never more amazed in my life when we struck West Baden - after log cabins it certainly was a change. It is one of the fantasies of the world and I would give much to have an inside room at West Baden at the height of the season - I should want to have a good pair of field glasses with me. I dont know believe I would leave the window - that great rotunda must be a center of riotous life - not too skillfully concealed, which to a student of human beings as they are would be a mine of interest and perhaps of pain. We walked about, drank the water and then in a moments ride to my great amazement were at French Lick. Mr. F. whose talk is most interesting covering a variety of experience and been telling us all about Tom Taggert who must be a man of great materialistic imagination. He says that TT holds all this part of Indiana in his hands, that he plays fair- people trust him and that it is he that has built French Lick. After hearing him talk I was greatly disappointed that TT was not there. One interesting thing Mr. Fortume told was that Taggert was convinced that he and Murphy who had agreed could nonimate Hoover at the Democratic convention - I shall rub this into Herbert some of these days. He did not dare run the risk of defeat and he had too much confidence in the sentimental business man of large success.

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We lunched at French Lick and then started for Troy, the point at which Tom Lincoln had landed when he crossed from Kentucky and where at the mouth of Anderson's Creek A L had run his flat boat a few years later. I dont know how we got there - Arthur was a wizard - there were stretches of road that made your hair stand on end - luckily it was so dark that we could not see clearly; but under our very wheels canons yawned and we took bunker after bunker which made our teeth rattle. Nothing fased Arthur but the bridges then he was afraid we would go down under us. We went thru Troy but did not like the looks of the hotel. As a matter of fact Mr. F. had no intention of stopping at Troy he knew a place farther along the river - Tell City - a Swiss town with which he had boyhodd reminiscences and where he had been but 2 years ago - a place where the citizens had been intelligent enough that a good hotel would be a assess and where they have combined to convert a fine old building, close to the banks of the river into a really modern hotel - Here we each had a room to ourselves a bath room - plenty of light and joys of joy plenty of towels. The next time I motor in this part of the world I will carry my towels along and we had food in a most attractive dining room - food that rivaled that at Hodgenville - I was served by a young girl, whose eyes became were luminous, gentle, we learned next morning to our delight that she was the daughter of the hotel keeper and that they had been short of help and tho' they did not often allow her to go into the dining room they had asked her to serve our party so that everything would be right. I shall never forget that child's eyes. In the morning we all met burried in the street before breakfast and walked again to the point where I forgot to say we walked the night before in the dark. It was a place where Mr. F. as a boy used to take horses to drink and he told us how once his pet mare lay down in the water with him and forever planted in his heart a mistrust of her which spoiled his affection . To see this great silent river by starshine coming out of the distance, going into the distance,. mysterious, wonderful; what that must have been to the A L of 18 - starred by all the dreams of youth. How night after night he must have lain on the bank at the mouth of Anderson Creek and watched the river and now and then he must have seen a lighted steam boat go down, lights from stem to stern, music, song, perhaps something of revelry. We saw one from our windows at the hotel in Evansville the next night and turned out our lights that we would more perfectly catch the allurment and mystery in it. If we could feel that what must it not have been to that boy - and there were many such steamers that went up and down, very much like those that passe today. They came from a world of which he knew nothing and went to a world of which he knew less and they pulled his head and his heart and all the young passion in it. Dont tell me that A L had no education or opportunity - well after breakfast we started farther along the river, down I suppose it, tho' it may be up to a place called Cannelltown - which was away from Troy. This was the point where as Mr. F. said he was going to see that I realized one of the dreams of my life - that of crossing the Ohio on an old time ferry boat.

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#17

That is the old time steamer on ferry boat with a stern wheel we had been talking about it all of the trip. The boat was on the far side, loading. The mate a much battered specimen full of shrewdness and tobacco was there, overwhelmed with curiosity and after finding out where we each had come from he tried to find out why we wanted to go across. We told him we were in a great hurry - could'nt we arrange to take the boat and come immediately back. Sure he said, we'll just have to load up this side and tother but you can see the town - well we are doing that.

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