

In the Virginia Inquirer of September 13, 1906, is a historical sketch of Dr. Charles Chandler, after whom Mr. C.C. Fraskelton - of Petersburg, is named.

Dr. Chandler came to Illinois in 1832. The Blackhawk War prevented his going to Fort Clark, (now Peoria) where he expected to locate. The result was that he stopped at Beardstown. Looking over the country in the vicinity of Beardstown, he decided to take up 160 acres between that place and Old Salem, which was land lying along the edge of the Sangamon bottom, next the bluff. He entered his claim and built a large log cabin.

He had been on his claim but a short time when a stranger named English came there with the intention, he said, of entering land and settling there. The Doctor fed him and his horse, exerting himself to his utmost to accomodate and assist him; telling him all he knew about the country and its prospects in order to aid him to select a suitable location. English looked around awhile, but could find no land that pleased him as well as the Doctor's claim did. Thereupon Dr. Chandler very generously offered to let him enter one of his eighty acre tracts, or half of the claim. That did not seem to entirely satisfy English, who, however, said he would go to Springfield next day and enter it, if he saw that he could do no better. On a map he carried were marked several tracts of land, from which he said he might make another selection. After dinner he left to go and pass the night with another settler near by, He was scarcely out of sight when a friend of the Doctor's hurriedly rode up to his cabin and told him that English had declared it his intention to go next day to the land office, at Springfield, and enter not only the eighty acres the Doctor had offered him, but his entire quarter section, and that he had plenty of money for that purpose. The Doctor, much surprised, did not relish the idea of being ousted from his home in such a summary manner, but did not have money enough in specie to pay the government for the land at the fixed price of two dollars per acre.

However, no time could be lost. None of his neighbors, so far as he knew, had the amount of "Land office money" (gold and silver) that he could borrow, and he would not have time to go to Beardstown and try to get it there. In that quandary he saddled his horse and rode away. No one he called on had any money until he came to the cabin of his friend, Wm. McCaulley, who happened to have the amount he needed, and when told by the Doctor in

what exigency English had placed him, cheerfully let him have it. It was long after the sun had set when he got to his home. His two horses were very tired from constant traveling; but after a late supper he was again in the saddle, and taking his course by the stars, started through the woods to Springfield. Compelled to travel slowly, he was yet about ten miles from his destination at sunrise next morning. Three or four miles farther on he was overtaken by two young men mounted on spirited horses, who were also on their way to Springfield. Noticing the jaded condition of the Doctor's horse, and his rider's evident desire to hasten on, they inquired the occasion of it. He told them who he was, and the predicament he was in; that he was trying to circumvent a "land shark", and thereby save his home and claim. One of the young men immediately dismounting, gave his horse to the Doctor, telling him to ride to town as fast as he pleased to go, and when there to leave it at a certain livery stable he named; and in the meantime, as he was himself in no hurry, he would follow slowly with the Doctor's tired horse, and they would "swop back" at their leisure.

Dr. Chandler gladly accepted the young stranger's generous offer, and arrived at the land office before it was opened for the day's business, on the 2d day of June, 1832. He beat English there about two hours, having the title to all his land secured before that worthy made his appearance. A few days later, on receiving a remittance from the east, he repaid the money borrowed of McCaulley, and going back to Springfield entered, on June the 14th the forty acres adjoining his west eighty acres on the south. Having acquired perfect title to the land, he concluded to have it surveyed and its metes and bounds accurately established. Making inquiries for a surveyor to do the work, he learned that a young man residing farther up the Sangamon bottom, at a place called Salem, had the reputation of a competent surveyor, and was in every respect thoroughly reliable. He sent for him by the first opportunity presented, and on his arrival at Panther Creek Dr. Chandler was surprised and much gratified to find that he was the same young fellow who had so kindly furnished him a fresh horse in his run to beat English to the land office. His name was Abraham Lincoln. From the date of that incident on through life the "immortal Emancipator" never had a truer friend than Dr. Chandler.

The bones of this story I have had before, but when I heard it told at Mr. F's dinner table, it took on an entirely new value.

Mr. Frackelton is one of the authorities for the sketch in the *Inquirer* and he vouches for the truth of the story.

In this same article is a paragraph on the Sangamon bottom, interesting to use in connection with the coming of the Lincolns into Macon County.

In those days the Sangamon bottom, from the bluffs to the timber along the river, was covered with a dense growth of native prairie grass from six to eight feet high, interspersed with clumps of wild rose bushes, blackberry briars, and thickets of crabapples and persimmons. The lower parts of it were subject to annual overflow by the river, and during the summer and fall it was all infested with swarms of ravenous mosquitoes and greenheaded flies that made life a burden to both man and beast. Added to those unpleasant features, the bottom, reeking with malaria, was reputed very unhealthy and prolific of ague and other forms of fever. It was also open to the prevailing objections to all prairie land, the difficulty of "breaking the sod" and putting it in cultivation, and the general belief that the sod was poor, and prairies unfit for anything but grazing stock in the spring after the grass had been burned off. For those reasons incoming settlers for a long time shunned the bottom, and laid their claims in the timber on higher ground.