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J. M. HANKS,
FIRE & INSURANCE.

Florence, Colo.

North German of Hamburg.
FIREMAN'S FUND.
HARTFORD.
GERMAN.
\$45,000,000

March, 7th, 1896.

Ida M. Tarbell,

New York:

Dear Madam;

at the request of my mother, Mrs, E.S.Hanks, I answer your favor of a late date to her. The enclosed photograph is of my grandparents, Joseph and Mary Hanks, copied from an old picture, taken in 1855, in Quincy, Illinois.

To the best of our knowledge, he was the youngest child of a large family, and upon the death of his parents, after the custom of the period, he was bound to his oldest brother, a moody and austere man, whose treatment of Joseph was so harsh that at the age of about thirteen, he ran away from his brother's home, in Greenbrier County, Virginia, and falling in with some horse drovers bound for Kentucky, and ultimately reached the home of his sister, Nancy Hanks Lincoln, where he remained for several years. Joseph ever held her in grateful remembrance during his long life, never referring to her without deep emotion.

Of the pathetic history of this noble woman, for her life was crowded with care, want and sorrow, our family know all too little. As to the cruel story to which you refer, there is not the shadow of a doubt, and I can confidently assure you, that there is not a word of truth in it. so far as it relates to Mrs. Lincoln. In another branch of

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of the family the bar sinister was found; this was a cousin of hers of the name of Nancy Sparrow, whose descendant evolved this story from his brain, years after Mr. Lincoln's death, for the reason, I suppose, to cover his own irregular origin. My father, who had a rich store of traditional family history, indignantly denied the whole story as a fabrication, to one of the authors of a life of Lincoln, (Holland, as I remember), who thought it would be best to say nothing of the matter, but I think it would have been better to have set the story right while its unworthy author was still living.

Of personal recollections of Mr. Lincoln, we have but little to add to the list that is ~~xxx xxx~~ unfortunately so short: but I can well remember when he was an itinerant lawyer in Illinois, along about 1850, that whenever his business brought him to Quincy, he would visit father, who he called "Uncle Joe's Jake"; on these occasions, mirth and jollity abounded, for Mr. Lincoln indulged his bent of story telling to the utmost, until a late hour.

Upon the occasion of the joint debate between Mr. Lincoln and Judge Douglas at Quincy, in the fall of 1858, Mr. Lincoln made a few impressive remarks, which I never remember having seen in print. He had been met at the train by a Reception Committee, who conducted him to the residence of Hon. O. H. Browning, where he was to be entertained; he was met upon the walk in front of the building, by John Tillson, the

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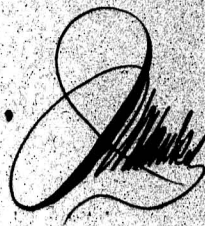
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Chairman of the Committee, who addressed a few words of welcome to him; Mr. Lincoln, with a gray duster upon his arm and the historical plug hat in his hand, began replying as soon as Mr. Tillson ceased speaking. He looked worn and sad, and his eyes were cast down to the walk in front of him. There were not over a dozen persons present, as I remember; boylike, I had crowded up and stood in front and a little to one side of him. Suddenly the stooped form straightened up, his voice rang out clear and strong as he said:- "In this conflict we will be successful, and in the greater one to follow, by the blessing of God, victory will perch upon the banner we are so feebly holding up to day."

In the light of subsequent events, what a wonderful prophecy that was, yet the listeners, I suppose, thought he referred to the Presidential election, two years in the future.

With great respect, your servant,





Fairbell Collection, 1890-1944, Milligan College Pellenc Library