

(No. 2.)
Corrected copy

An Election Return by Lincoln.

(Photographed from the original now on file in the County Clerk's office, Springfield, Ill.)

The first civil office Lincoln ever held was that of election clerk, and the return made by him, of which a facsimile is here presented, was his first official document. The report of a survey made by Lincoln in 1834 had been cited by Nicolay and Hay, in their "Life of Lincoln", as his first official document extant; but this is clearly a mistake. The New Salem election of September 20, 1832, has the added interest of having been held at "the house of John McNeil", the young merchant who was then already in love with Ann Rutledge. Of the five candidates for constable, all are now dead except William McNeeley; and all the others whose names appear on this return are also dead except James White, now living at Greenview, Ill., at the age of eighty-seven years. John Clary lived at Clary's Grove; John R. Herndon was "Row" Herndon, whose store Berry & Lincoln purchased and at whose house Lincoln for a time boarded; Baxter Berry was a relative of Lincoln's partner in the grocery business, and Edmund Greer was a school teacher, ~~a justice of the peace~~ and afterwards a justice of the peace and surveyor. James Rutledge will be recognized as the keeper of the Rutledge tavern and the father of Ann Rutledge; Hugh Armstrong was the head of the numerous Armstrong family; William Green (spelled by the later members of the family ~~xxxxxxx~~ with a final "e") was father of William G. Greene, Lincoln's associate in Offut's store; and as to Bowling Green,

Digital Images, 2011. The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library.

2--Notes Election return.

more is said elsewhere. In the following three or four years, very few elections were held at which Lincoln was not a clerk. It is a somewhat singular fact that Lincoln, though clerk of this election, is not recorded as voting.