

children well, very well. There seemed to be nothing unusual in his love for animals or his own kind, though he treated everybody and everything kindly, humanely. Abe didn't care much for crowds of people; he chose his own company, which was always good. He was not very fond of girls, as he seemed to me. He sometimes attended church. He would repeat

the sermon over again to the children. The sight of such a thing amused all and did especially tickle the children. When Abe was reading, my husband took particular care not to disturb him, would let him read on and on till Abe quit of his own accord. He was dutiful to me always; he loved me truly, I think.

MRS. THOMAS LINCOLN'S STATEMENT TO HERNDON,
SEPTEMBER 8, 1865.

36. MR. HERNDON'S LINCOLN

William H. Herndon was born in Greensburg, Ky., December 28, 1816. His father moved to Troy, Madison County, Ill., 2 years later, and in 1821 to a farm in Sangamon County, 5 miles northeast of Springfield. This was 9 years before Lincoln came to Illinois. Herndon first saw Lincoln in 1832. At that time Lincoln was serving as a pilot of a small steamer on the Sangamon River, working as an assistant to Rowan Herndon, William's cousin. Herndon took up the study of law, and in 1844 Lincoln took the younger man into his office in Springfield. Thus the law firm of Lincoln and Herndon was established. It lasted until Lincoln's death. On his last visit to the office, on February 10, 1861, the day before he left Springfield for Washington, Lincoln asked that the firm signboard at the foot of the stairs remain unchanged. "Let it hang there undisturbed," he said.

For more than 16 years prior to Lincoln's departure from Springfield to take up his duties as President, Herndon was the almost constant companion and observer of this remarkable man. Henry C. Whitney, a close friend of both men, has said that Herndon was Lincoln's political mentor; that he was Lincoln's closest political and personal friend; and that he had more to do with influencing Lincoln's political career than any other 10 men. Certain it is that no history of Lincoln's life before 1860 could be written without the Herndon manuscripts. Beginning shortly after the President's assassination, Herndon devoted the remainder of his life, or rather that part of it which could be spared from the task of earning a precarious livelihood, to the task of gathering source material on Lincoln. The following description of Lincoln is from a lecture prepared by Herndon and first given by him at Springfield, Ill., December 12, 1865.

It is now the time to describe the person of Mr. Lincoln: he was about six feet four inches high, and when he left the city, was fifty-one years old, having good health and no gray hairs or but few on his head; he was thin, wiry, sinewy, raw and big heavy-boned, thin through the breast to the back and narrow across the shoulders, standing he leaned forward; was what may be called stoop-shouldered, inclining to the consumptively built, his usual weight being about one hundred and sixty or eighty pounds. . . . His organism and structure were loose and leathery; his body was well shrunk, cadaverous and shriveled, having very dark skin, dry and tough,

wrinkled and lying somewhat in flabby folds; dark hair, the man looking woe-struck. The whole man, body and mind, worked slowly, creakingly, as if it needed oiling. Physically he was a very powerful man, lifting, as said, with ease four or six hundred pounds. . . . When this man moved and walked along he moved and walked cautiously, but firmly, his long and big bony arms and hands on them, hanging like giant hands on them, swung by his side; he walked with even tread, the inner sides of his feet being parallel; he put his whole foot down flat at once, not landing on his heel; he likewise lifted his foot all at once, not rising from the toe, and hence he had no