

## FRANKLIN GROVE--HISTORY

The beginnings of Franklin Grove are tied in with the events that opened Northern Illinois to settlement. This would be the last part of the state to be settled. The land was acquired from the Indians by treaty in 1804, with the stipulation that they could remain until the land was surveyed and settlement began. In 1816 Fort Armstrong was built and garrisoned on Rock Island in the Mississippi River just above the mouth of the Rock River. There were few white people in the area. By the late 1820s, between Fort Clark (Peoria) and Galena there was a trail that crossed the Rock River at Ogee's Ferry which became Dixon's Ferry by 1830. Along this trail at approximately twenty mile intervals were small settlements such as at Boyd's Grove and Dad Joe Smith's (near Ohio) where the occasional traveler could stay overnight and have his horse cared for.

1832 and the Black Hawk War changed the face of Northern Illinois. Illinois volunteers from the Southern part of the state as well as Federal troops were impressed with the potential of this fertile land. By the 1833 treaty with the Indians, all the natives were to be permanently moved West of the Mississippi River. The Erie Canal had opened in 1825 and things were in place for the first land rush in the young nation. Prior to 1834 not a single county had been formed in Northwest Illinois. Eight counties were organized by 1840 with a combined population of 21,500. By 1850 the population had nearly trebled to 66,200. The first settlements were along the Rock River--Dixon, Sterling, Prophetstown, Oregon, Rockford. Away from the River, settlements were most often situated near groves of trees--as the early hamlets of Squaw Grove, Paw Paw Grove, Buffalo Grove (Polo), and Franklin Grove would incorporate "grove" into their names. These were primarily small settlements, as the number of people coming up until 1843 was relatively few. What was lacking was transportation. The Rock River was not suitable for commercial transportation. The few trails that crossed the vast prairie were best suited for horse travel, and even stagecoaches took several days to make the trip from Chicago to Dixon's Ferry and on to Galena. The rich prairie soil was almost impossible for a wagon to traverse except in dry times and during the winter when the ground was frozen over.

Cummings Noe built the first cabin in China Township in 1834 (1835 or 36 by other accounts) in the grove along Franklin Creek. As early as 1840 Whipple's mill, on Franklin Creek, was sawing logs cut from the nearby woods and selling lumber. Nathan Whitney, having come into the area in 1835, established a nursery in 1843. Later it was run by his son Alexis Randolph. About 1842 the village of Chaplin was laid out. In 1848 Reverend Christian Lahman laid out ten acres for the site of a town in the Franklin Grove area. The township was called Fremont, and the town Chaplin. The Minor Hotel, Charles Ambrose's store, and a blacksmith shop were all the buildings "recollected" as standing at this time (Stevens: History of Lee County, Vol. I, p.310). A post office was established in 1848-9 with Abram Brown as postmaster. On April 2, 1850, the township of Fremont was organized in China township. July 19, 1850, the organization was completed. George Russel Lynn named the township for China, Maine, on May 14, 1850. Charles Bill established the first shoe shop in 1852.

In 1853 Adrastus W. Tolman, F. D. Robertson, and Rev. Christian Lahman laid out the village of Franklin Grove. The name was given to the town by John Dixon in honor of his son, Franklin Dixon. Dixon, Franklin Grove, and Nachusa, are namesakes of the Dixon family (Stevens: p.313).

1854, and Franklin Grove began to hit its stride. Reuel Thorp began to buy grain. John D. Chambers built a small store north of the new railroad tracks on Elm street. William J. Leake started a harness shop. A grain elevator was built south of the tracks. A Mr. Williams opened a grocery store in one end of the elevator. Dr. George W. Hewitt opened an office in Franklin Grove on May 1, and later established a small drug business. Henry I. Lincoln purchased the store built by Charles Ambrose and went into the dry goods business. He brought a stock of merchandise with him from Kendall County.

The Dixon Air Line Railroad, as it was called locally, was completed in 1854. The first train ran through Franklin Grove on December 3, 1854. The railroad station was located in the new part of town, and it drew business in that direction and changed the Franklin Grove trade center. The Dixon Air Line would soon merge with the Galena and Chicago Union Railroad to form the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad.

1855 saw more additions to the Franklin Grove business community. Solomon Sunday and his sons opened a blacksmith shop and also sold agricultural implements. Joseph Winebrenner opened a tailor shop. Josiah Hughes put up a two story stone hotel in the old town of Chaplin.

A stone cutter, George Engel, came to town in 1856. Stones cut by him were used in many of the buildings that were being erected in Franklin Grove. Mr. Trottnow was a cabinet maker by trade and opened a

furniture store. Michael Eckhardt became the village shoemaker.

On May 11, 1857, the first village board was elected. President, Louis M. Blaisdell; clerk, S. J. Smith; trustees, A. W. Tolman, Josiah Hughes, Jonas Clisbee, Louis M. Blaisdell, S. J. Smith; street commissioner, Jonas Clisbee; Treasurer, Conrad Durkes.

In 1860, Henry I. Lincoln erected a large stone store on Elm street near the railroad tracks.

The Civil War had an impact on Franklin Grove. Company G, 75th Illinois Infantry, was raised in China township by Joseph Williams and Robert L. Irwin. It became part of the 13th Brigade, 9th Division, 3rd Army Corps of the Army of the Ohio. Patriotic gatherings assembled night after night in Lincoln's hall. Twenty-seven men were dead by the end of the war.

"The Franklin Grove Gazette" was the village newspaper until it was discontinued in the 1860s. "The Franklin Reporter" began publication in 1868. The first editor was John Blocker, 1868-1871. Dr. David H. Spickler was editor from 1871-1875; Thomas W. Scott, 1875-6, 1889-91; Rev. D. B. Senger, 1876-1886; E. E. Manning, 1886-9; T. W. Tuttle, 1899-4. It was the oldest weekly newspaper in the county when it went out of business.

### LINCOLN BUILDING--1860

1860 to 1995 is 135 years that the Lincoln Building has stood at the corner of Elm and Whitney Streets in downtown Franklin Grove. 135 years of Midwest climate has taken its toll on this two-story limestone structure. For 135 years it has stood as a silent observer of the comings and goings, ups and downs, good and bad, of Franklin Grove. A walk through this imposing building only gives a hint as to what once was. It opened in 1860 as a dry goods store, catering to the needs of people who were carving farms out of the rich prairie or working to build the new town of Franklin Grove. Through the years other businesses would occupy the building, including the post office and later the Franklin Grove Reporter newspaper. The last owner, Delbert Schafer, used the Lincoln building for storage. It would have been one of the cornerstones in an expanding business district. The main road through the area passed by the Lincoln building. Early in this century the newly designated Lincoln Highway went down Elm street (then renamed Lincoln way). The proprietors would have put in long hours at least six days a week to provide service to their customers.

The Lincoln building served its community well. Now it is perhaps time to give something back to this venerable old limestone building. It is a rarity in an age of increasing standardization of construction and the ways we live. If this would have been a Butler steel building would it have lasted this long--or would there be the desire to preserve it? The past quickly disappears in what we call "progress." We are quick to tear down old structures and create parking lots, fast food restaurants, etc. Preserving the past can help us appreciate what has been, what our forefathers went through to create the world that we live in. Tear down the old and it is gone for good. There is no going back once something is destroyed.

The Lincoln building is in "tough" shape. The immediate need is to put a cover of some sort over the roof to prevent further damage from moisture. The moisture must be eliminated before much reconstruction work can be done. The windows have been boarded over to prevent the curious from coming in and perhaps getting hurt. Walking around inside is hazardous with rubble and decayed wood littering what once was the main floor. In an upper back room is a pile of rotting newspapers left behind after the Franklin Grove Reporter ceased publication.

It is interesting to read through the abstracts and legal descriptions of the land that is now Franklin Grove. These documents are hand written in a beautiful and clear penmanship. The Lincoln Building is on lots number 1, 2, and 3 of block number eleven. The abstract is a history lesson in itself:

--- Abstract of Title ---

to Lots number One (1) and Two (2) in Block number Eleven (1) in the original Town of Franklin Grove, in the County of Lee and State of Illinois ---

1. The Town of Franklin Grove. Lee County Illinois was laid out, surveyed and platted by Joseph Crawford County Surveyor of said Lee County, on the 8th day of May 1854 upon the following described tract of land. = A part of the North West quarter of Section No. One (1) in Township No. Twenty One (21) North; Range No. Ten

(10) E. 4th P. M. described as follows viz: Commencing Eight (8) chains and Ninety eight and one half (98 1/2) links South of the North West corner of Section One (1) aforesaid. Thence East Five (5) chains and fifty six and one half (56 1/2) links. Thence North Seven (7) chains and ten (10) links. Thence East Twenty six (26) chains and fifty three and one half (53 1/2) links; Thence south Twenty Seven (27) chains and ten (10) links. Thence West Thirty two chains (32) and ten (10) links. Thence North Twenty (20) chains to the place of beginning.-- for and at the request of Thomas D. Robertson, John Dement, Adrastus W. Tolman and Christian Lahman owners of said premises. Blocks in said plat number from one to 24--both inclusive. Plat recorded May 3 1855 in Deed Record M at page 178 ---

(The survey was completed May 8, 1854).

Said Plat was acknowledged under seal May 20, 1854, by Thomas L. Robertson, Christian Lahman, Adrastus W. Tolman, and John Dement, before Timothy L. Minor, who signs as a Justice of the Peace in and for Lee County, Illinois, said proprietors acknowledging that they laid out said Town in manner and form as said Plat sets forth.

Reading through the Abstract of title, it is interesting to note the inflation of the price paid for lots 1 and 2 in block 11. Entry #19, dated January 24, 1856, is the first time that the lots were taken out of a larger plot of land--82.1 acres. John S. McClary was the buyer, having paid \$400. Entry #20, dated April 1, 1856, the lots passed on to Alexander Haldane and R. H. Scott for \$492.50. Entry #21, dated August 11, 1856, Haldane sold his undivided one half interest to Scott for \$800. Entry #22, also dated August 11, 1856, Scott sold the lots to Lewis Clapp for \$1625. Entry #23, dated December 10, 1856, Clapp conveyed an undivided one half interest to Ephram Ingals for \$1000.

Entry #24. Henry I. Lincoln bought the Lincoln Building lots on April 22, 1859. The land was conveyed from Lewis Clapp and wife Maria to Henry I. Lincoln. Warranty Deed. Dated April 22, 1859. Recorded October 13, 1859 in book W page 5. Consideration \$1430.00 conveys Lots 1 and 2 in Block 11 in Town of Franklin Grove, Lee Co. Ills (and other lots). Acknowledgment does not state Mrs Clapp to have been personally known to acknowledgment officer. (Note: no mention is made of Ephram Ingals in this transaction).

What happened between January 24, 1856 (entry #19) and April 22, 1859 (entry #24) is typical of what took place in many frontier towns where land speculation forced the prices of building lots to artificial heights only to plummet down when the reality of the prospects for the town set in. Most towns were sited and developed by one or several individuals who had taken title to the land, surveyed off lots, and then promoted the place. In many instances the prospects were exaggerated. Many individuals bought choice lots with the intent of quickly selling at a profit. Could this have been the case in Franklin Grove?

Entry #26. Lewis Clapp to Henry I. Lincoln. Release. Dated July 8, 1864. Recorded August 19, 1864 in book L of Mortgages page 621 releases Mortgage, Lincoln to Clapp, dated April 22, 1859, and recorded in book I page 515. Made to secure 6 notes for the sum of \$1430.00 and interest. \_\_\_\_\_  
Acknowledged according to the laws of the State of Illinois.

I do not find any judgments either in the County or Circuit Courts of said Lee County, against Henry I. Lincoln. \_\_\_

I do not find any tax sales of said Lots 1 and 2 in Block 11. Franklin Grove. \_\_\_\_\_

Entry #27.. Continuation of the foregoing Abstract of Title from July 2nd, 1890. Ephraim Ingals to Henry I. Lincoln--Quit Claim Deed, dated September 2nd 1890 filed for record November 10th 1890, and recorded in book "59" of deeds, page 266. Conveys all grantors' interest in Lots Number 1 and 2 in Block No. 11: and 4 and 5 in Block 10, in the Town of Franklin Grove, situated in the County of Lee and State of Illinois. Properly executed and acknowledged. (What happened? Was there an error in entry #24 and Ingals was omitted as a previous owner? It appears that now in 1890 entry #27 is for clarification purposes)

The abstract next deals with lot #3. Entry #30. The original developers, Robertson, Dement, Lahman, and Talman, sold this lot to Enoch Wood for \$150 on February 8, 1856. Entry #31, dated September 8, 1858, the lot was sold to Ruel Thorp and George H. Taylor for \$220. Entry #32, dated February 23, 1859, the lot was sold to George H. Taylor for \$450.

Entry #33 is a Sheriff's Certificate of Sale, dated September 17, 1859. LESTER HARDING, Sheriff of Lee County, Illinois--TO-- SOLON CUMMINS. Said Sheriff certified that by virtue of an execution to him directed dated May 27, 1859 in favor of Solon Cummins and George H. Taylor and against Ruel Thorp, he did in pursuance of the statute in such case made and provided, on September 17, 1859 between the hours of 10 o'clock A. M. and 5 o'clock P. M. offer at public sale the following described property, to-wit:- Lot Number Three (3) in Block Number Eleven (11) in the Town of Franklin Grove in the County of Lee and State of Illinois, and Solon Cummins having bid the sum of \$228.70, he being the highest \_\_\_\_\_ at sale, became the purchaser. Further recites that the aforesaid property shall not be redeemed within fifteen months from the date of this sale according to law, the said Solon Cummins will be entitled to a deed for the same.

Entry #34. WARRANTY DEED. George Taylor and Emily Taylor, his wife, on March 28, 1868, sold lot #3 to Henry I. Lincoln for \$800.

Entry #35, Mortgage dated May 1, 1893. Conveys lots number 1 and 2 in Block number 11 to secure payment of one promissory note executed by Henry I. Lincoln bearing even date and payable to the order of William Mulligan five years after date for the principal sum of Twelve Hundred Dollars (\$1200.00) with interest at the rate of 7% per annum payable annually.

Entries #36 and 37 have to do with the estate of Mr. Mulligan. Entry #37, RELEASE dated July 3, 1902, certified that the mortgage was "fully paid, satisfied, released and discharged."

Entry #38. IN THE COUNTY COURT OF LEE COUNTY, ILLINOIS, IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF HENRY I. LINCOLN, DECEASED. Petition of James H. Lincoln for probate of will and letters testamentary verified by affidavit was filed July 13, 1904. Said petition recites in part that Henry I. Lincoln who was at the time of his death a resident of Lee County, Illinois, died in said County June 25, 1904 leaving a last will which is presented for probate; that testator appointed James H. Lincoln the petitioner, executor thereof, and he is ready to undertake the Trust; that he died seized of real estate valued at \$4500.00 and personal property estimated to be worth \$300.00.

The abstract for the land that the Lincoln building stands on gives a hint of how well H. I. Lincoln did in business. In 1883 he wanted to sell out because of poor health. Son James became his co-partner in 1885. In 1893 he borrowed \$1200 using the land as collateral. He retired in 1896. The debt was not paid off until 1902, shortly before he died in 1904. In all probability, the Lincoln business provided a living with not much of a chance to build up a savings for retirement. Retirement was not in the picture for many at that time, and Henry Lincoln probably worked until he could not do so any longer.

Henry Lincoln's sons, Frank, Abe, and James H. inherited the Lincoln building from their father. On March 25, 1948, they sold the property to Don Hussey. On May 22, 1953, the heirs of Don Hussey sold the property to John Hayen. Delbert Schafer, the present owner of the Lincoln building, bought it in 1964.

The Lincoln building is truly unique, a substantial structure put up in a day when most buildings were flimsy wooden affairs quickly constructed so that merchants could open for business as soon as possible. We have all seen pictures of old main streets, but how many of the wooden buildings have survived? Even the stone and brick structures often disappear in an unplanned way. The Canterbury Block, built on main (Elm) Street in 1872 by Richard Archibald Canterbury, burned down in the late summer of 1995. It will probably never be replaced. The only other stone building, with a brick front, dating back to 1868, had a common wall with the Canterbury building and almost burned with it.

How many old limestone buildings exist in the area around Franklin Grove--or anywhere in the area? Very few. Many have stone sidewalls with brick fronts which give a more "finished" appearance. There is a stone barn on Stone Barn Road several miles Northwest of Franklin Grove. A few stone houses also exist. For the most part, limestone was used for foundations and basement walls. Dolomite limestone was a readily available building material. There were several quarries in the Franklin Grove area. St. Peter's limestone which is found throughout Illinois was not used much for building purposes. There is also Trenton limestone which is fine grained, compact, and better for building purposes. It frequently has a bluish tint or can be a dull buff. Fossils abound in Trenton limestone. A less common limestone is Galena. Much of the limestone was not hard enough for building purposes. Cutting limestone was a time-consuming task. Once the stone was broken into manageable pieces, it was either used rough on the side walls or finished off for the front side or corners. A wide chisel with teeth was used to smooth the sides. The stone is heavy and it would have been difficult to transport it via wagon or skid to the construction site--provided the crude roads were passable. This could also be a factor in that when you look at the sides of the Lincoln building it is evident that the better stone was used on the side facing Whitney street where it would be noticed by the public. The back wall has more small stones, or leftovers. Nothing was wasted and the rubble was used as fill between the dual walls. At a major construction site, such as the Lincoln Building, machinery of some sort who have had to have been used in getting the blocks up to the higher levels.

The outer walls are approximately eighteen inches thick. The walls bulged out over the years only to be gradually pulled back into shape by a series of cables that are periodically tightened so as to not put a sudden strain on the structure. The outer walls were tuck pointed up about six feet several years ago.

The interior of the limestone walls are plastered and at one time were lined with shelves.

The sill and lintel stones for the windows and doors are perhaps six feet long, a foot high, and six inches deep. On the front of the building there is a series of lintels going completely over the two large side windows and the front entrance. "Lincoln" and "1860" were cut into one of the front lintel stones. Unfortunately, this block of limestone has broken into several pieces. Most of the lintels have broken in two. The lintels were not load bearing, however. Above the lintels are limestone pieces forming an arch. These arches, called Jack arches, are load bearing.

The front corner facing Elm and Whitney streets is at an angle to the rest of the front and back. This is about five feet wide and has a doorway leading to the upstairs. The utilization of space under the stairs is unusual. This area would have been in the store, and has built-in drawers. There are shallow drawers at the front, with deeper ones farther back. In the center is a glass double door shallow display case. The rest of the wall around the cases and in back is plastered. The plaster has fallen off, revealing lathes that are hand hewn. These lathes are similar to those in the John Deere house in Grand Detour where an exposed area of lathes has been covered over with glass to show visitors early construction methods.

In the back of the building there are several second floor rooms that are still standing. In the far corner of one room the large ancient safe is still in place.

The wooden first floor has disappeared, revealing the earth underneath. The floor joists were approximately six inches above the ground. The cross beams that had supported the floor joists have virtually rotted away. There is a small basement area at the back third of the building.

The second floor was supported by three hand-hewn 12 inch square crossbeams. The beams rest on the inner section of the exterior walls. The crossbeams are anchored into the outer limestone walls by metal rods which go through the limestone and are held in place by S shaped metal pieces that are approximately ten inches long. There are two interior upright support beams that rest on the first floor beams. At one of these intersecting points a large boulder was positioned under the lower beam and second floor support beam to give it added strength. Only the crossbeams remain, the floor having collapsed some time ago.

Looking up through where the second floor once was you see sky as there are many holes in the roof. The rafters are single 12 inch by 2 inch boards (white pine?) that run the width of the building, twenty four feet. At the sides they rest on the outer walls. The stone at the top of the side walls consists of two layers of long, cut pieces about three inches thick and several feet long. The rafters are tapered to six inches on the outside, allowing for moisture to run into some sort of gutters at the sides and then off the roof. There is little if any roof slope from front to back. Lathes are still attached to much of the roof, but the plaster is gone.

Why did Henry Lincoln decide to build with limestone rather than using wood? The balloon frame method of construction had replaced the older system of load-bearing post and beam walls. This was also called the Chicago

frame method of construction because it originated in there in 1833. In the balloon frame method, a 2 x 4 framework was quickly put up and then sided. This method revolutionized construction on the wood-scarce plains. Vast tracts of virgin timber was cut in Northern Wisconsin and the logs were floated to Chicago where they were sawn into boards at the many sawmills that lined the Chicago River. Perhaps by this time logs were also coming out of the Chippewa Flowage in Northern Wisconsin and down the Wisconsin and Mississippi Rivers to sawmills such as the Weyerhaeuser and Denkman company operated at Rock Island, Illinois. The "Dixon Air Line" as the railroad was called locally, had been in operation through Franklin Grove since 1854, so the cost of lumber would have made it a very competitive building material as opposed to stone.

## COMMERCIAL OPERATIONS IN THE LINCOLN BUILDING

Henry Isaac Lincoln came to Illinois in 1847 from Genesee County, New York by way of Kendall County and then on to Lee County and the village of Chaplin in 1852 (Stevens "History of Lee County states that he came on May 1, 1853, another source says 1854). Henry's lineage goes back to Norfolk, England, with the first Lincoln coming to Hingham, Massachusetts in the 1630s. Abraham Lincoln, 16th President of the United States, was also a member of this family although the relationship to Henry was "shirttail" at best. Henry was born August 16, 1822 in Bethany, New York, and died June 25, 1904 in Franklin Grove. His wife died, leaving him a son, Frank. He then married Helen Nay, also of Genesee County, New York. Henry was father to four children. His son Abe was born on May 26, 1860, and was no doubt named after the Republican candidate for the Presidency from Illinois.

Henry I. Lincoln purchased the store built by Charles Ambrose and went into the dry goods business. This building had been built in 1851 by a Mr. Webster, and Charles Ambrose had operated a dry goods business in it since that time. In 1860 Lincoln built a two-story limestone building on main street at the corner of Elm and Whitney Streets. An early history of Lee County said that the Lincoln Building "was the first substantial building in the town." This prime location was near the new railroad. A booklet "A sketch of FRANKLIN GROVE, Lee County, Illinois. Its history and business in 1870," describes the Lincoln business like this:

H. I. LINCOLN, is the oldest dry goods establishment in the town. Mr. Lincoln, having been one of the early pioneers of the place, and one of those steady, patient men who always make success by sticking faithfully to their calling. His store is a fine stone building, an ornament to the town and a credit to the builder. He keeps a full stock and complete assortment in the dry goods and grocery lines, and is always on hand to serve customers and give them good bargains. Mr. Lincoln also deals in grain, buying and shipping.

Henry Lincoln remained active in his business until 1896. His son, James H., born in 1862, became a partner in the Lincoln enterprise when he reached adulthood and stayed on until the business was disposed of in 1896 when Henry retired.

In order to get an idea of Mr. Lincoln's business it is necessary to examine newspapers of that era. The newspaper was the eyes and ears of the community--no telephone or television or electronic devices intruded on the lives of the people of Franklin Grove. The paper printed news of the comings and goings of the residents, national and world news, serialized romance stories, as well as being the advertising medium for local businesses. The weekly (Saturday) **Franklin Reporter** was it! Scott & Senger, Editors and Proprietors. Its motto: "Independent in Everything---Neutral in Nothing." Subscription, \$1.50 in Advance.

**October 23, 1880**--only four years after Custer's defeat at the Battle of the Little Big Horn. The frontier was still a very real thing! Under the heading: Home news: --The Gypsies have left their camp near this place. --Mr. Whitney has shipped since, Aug. 28th, ten car loads of apples from this station. --The storm of last Saturday will cause the farmer innumerable back aches gathering his corn, as it is nearly all blown completely to the ground. --Henry Sheier, an employee of John Wagoner, broke his arm one day this week husking corn. He did it in the attempt to break off an ear of corn. --Travel in almost every direction seems to be unusually large, but more especially is this true of westward travel. Every western bound train seems filled to overflowing. Certainly the far west is being rapidly filled up by those enterprising spirits who conclude that it is not absolutely necessary to

always remain in the old domicile. --On last Saturday this section was visited by one of the severest wind-storms ever witnessed here at the same season of the year. It blew, blowed and "blizarded" all day long, scattering limbs and leaves in every direction. During the night a slight fall of snow took place, and with the abatement of the storm came increase of cold until a regular freeze set in forming ice of at least one half inch in thickness on exposed water. One of the effects of this sudden cold snap, was to remind all of the necessity of preparing for coming winter by putting up stoves and supplying their coal bins with fuel.

Ponder this thought as put forth by the editor: --We have often wondered, and no doubt others have, at the number of foreign cars passing over our road, with every train. The question would come up: How are they ever got home again, and why is not the rolling stock of roads scattered in time of need? One who understands this business answers the question in this manner. "To the car Accountant every conductor makes a daily return of every car composing his train. The Accountant has a table having on one side the numbers of every car, whether passenger or freight, belonging to the road, and at right angles with it the days of the month. By placing the numbers of the Stations against those of the cars and the date, a perfect picture is obtained of the distribution of the rolling stock, which the traffic manager can alter at pleasure. The names of foreign roads having connections are added to the number of stations, and indicate who is responsible for missing cars. If the connecting road has the same system and has sent the car over still another road, it transmits a demand of the owner; thus a car may be traced all round the United States."

H. I. Lincoln advertised in the Reporter. --WANTED:--H. I. Lincoln wants to stock up for Fall Trade--Wants to purchase hard and soft coal for his customers; consequently he wants those indebted to him to make payment so as to enable him to do these things.

The same Lincoln ad, approximately 2 by 3 inches, appeared in every issue of the paper: H. I. Lincoln, dealer in DRY GOODS, groceries and general merchandise. Ready made clothing a specialty. --SALT, COAL, CEMENT, LIME & HAIR. -- FARM MACHINERY, of all kinds in general use.

Some ads were humorous--or downright strange. John D. Stewart, fashionable barber & hair dresser, had a rhyming ad that read: "With water hot and razor keen, Walk in my friends, I'll shave you clean, I'll seat you in my easy chair. And trim in neatest style, your hair." -- Wm. Crawford, Undertaker: "Coffins. Ready made, or made to order on short notice. Hearse free."

The primary mode of transportation in and out of Franklin Grove was via rail. The Chicago & Northwestern Railroad advertised extensively in the Reporter. Four east bound and four west bound trains stopped in Franklin Grove. Also, two east bound and four west bound freight trains carried passengers.

**January 14, 1882.** This must have been a quiet week. Home News:--Birth notices hereafter will be numbered in the Reporter, with a view of seeing how they will foot up at the end of the year. So far they average two a week. --The Dixon Sun is now talking electric light to its readers, and if it continues to agitate the subject it will not be long until our county seat will be brilliantly lighted by this new system. --Not a pound of ice has yet been gathered, and if this weather continues we fear we will have to do without this article next summer. It is not a pleasant thought, but then it may be cold enough before next spring.

Business Locals: --Halloo! wife! How is this? (says Mr. \_\_\_\_\_ coming in to dinner,) instead of a cold bite you have a good warm meal and washing all out of the way? Well! I used Siddall's soap, (Lincoln keeps it) its nothing but fun to wash with it. No hard rubbing, no boiling, no scalding, no nothing hardly. My! I had by wash out at 9 o'clock.

**August 26, 1882.** Home News:--The street sprinkler which was improvised last Saturday did good work, and gave relief not only to those who attended the camp meeting but to all who lived on the street sprinkled leading to the grounds. --Mr. Whitney has our thanks for a box of No. 20 crabs. These apples are excellent for canning purposes, and have a flavor almost equal to the peach, in fact we would sooner have them than peaches, especially such as we get here. --Some young men who were foolishly running a race on the public road last Wednesday night, ran into Jos. Riddlesbarger's wagon and upset it throwing him and his wife out, by which Mrs. R. received some injuries. On Sunday we expected to see some accidents from fast driving. It is strange that people will be so reckless and endanger the lives of innocent people.

**April 7, 1883.** Home News:--The ground is again being covered again with the beautiful snow. It is a

regular Northeaster.

Business Locals: --CARPETS.--Lincoln has received his spring styles of carpets. He has 150 patterns on exhibition. --Customers that have not settled their last years accounts please favor me by doing so. H. I. Lincoln. --FOR SALE,--On account of age and ill health I wish to retire from active business. I therefore offer my store, buildings and stock of goods for sale at low figures. If goods are disposed of without real estate the store will be for rent. H. I. Lincoln. (Note: both of these ads appeared in several issues of the Reporter).

**December 1, 1883.** Business locals: --Just received.--New Fall Patterns of Carpets. One hundred patterns on exhibition at Lincoln's.

**December 22, 1883.** Business locals: Preparatory to a change in, or an entire closing out of my business in this place, I shall on and after Jan. 1st, 1884, reduce the price of my goods and sell only for cash or ready pay. As I shall keep no books after that date. I shall be pleased to have all owing me book accounts, call and balance them up to that date by either cash or note. H. I. Lincoln.

**January 5, 1884.** Home news. --Leap year is here and the girls are happy. --New Year's was ushered in in this section by a fearful snow storm. A damper was put on many a call, and the young people failed to have as good a time on account of the storm as they anticipated. --The weather is in good condition to harvest ice. --About twenty-five men are now employed at the Seeder factory. --The Great Western Seeder manufactory are now shipping three car loads of Seeders a week. Things are just booming up there. --Miss Alora Lahman still lingers, but is very low. She may pass away any day or in fact any hour. The wonder is that she has lived as long she has. (Note: Obituary in January 12, 1884 issue--30 years old). --It is said the comet, which has been advertised several months, can now be seen in the northern sky by the naked eye. It is too cold for even lovers to stop and gaze at it. --The passenger train due here at 11 o'clock has been from three to five hours late almost every day this week. They have, on account of the snow been compelled to use two engines on most of the trains, and nearly every one has been more or less behind time.

H. I. Lincoln ran his change of business advertisement for several months. During this time he also appealed to customers to pay up old bills. This "pleading" was a universal thing for merchants. During the first months of the year it was customary for many merchants to request payment of past accounts. Reading between the lines, so to speak, being a small town merchant was not an easy way to make a living. After this time, Lincoln confined his advertising to the large ad that appeared in back of each issue of the paper.

**January 3, 1885.** Home news. --A change in the business requires book accounts to be settled to this date, Jan. 1st, 1885. --Mr. Thompson has received his tax books and will now receive taxes at H. I. Lincoln's store..

CO-PARTNERSHIP. I this day associate my son James with one-half interest in the business as heretofore done under my name. The business after this date will be done under the firm name of H. I. Lincoln & Son. Dated this first day of Jan., 1885.

P.S. In retiring from the active part of the business so long done by me in this place, I wish to express my thanks for past favors and hope the new firm may merit and receive a continuance of your patronage.

**January 10, 1885.** Home News. ---H. I. Lincoln was called to Corfu, N. Y. by a telegram received on Tuesday evening announcing the death of his sister, Mrs. Waite. He left on Thursday.

Obviously Mr. Lincoln could not sell his business, and the next logical step was to take in his son as a partner. H. I. Lincoln remained with his son until 1896. The standard advertisement that appeared on the back pages of the newspaper was reformatted slightly, and the name changed to "H. I. Lincoln & Son." In 1898 James Lincoln was appointed by President McKinley to be postmaster of Franklin Grove. In the **February 16, 1928, Franklin Reporter**, George Spangler petitioned to move the post office to the Clark building. The Franklin Reporter later moved into the Lincoln building and remained there until some time in the 1950s.



The upper floor of the H. I. Lincoln building had a large open room that was used for plays, lectures, etc. In later years the hall would be rented out for things such as dancing instruction. Because there were no interior support posts, there was an unobstructed view from every point in the room. It was referred to as "Lincoln's Hall." Dramatic productions were most prevalent. **October 23, 1880** issue: The Garfield Guards are requested to meet at Lincoln's Hall on this, Saturday evening, for drill, and to perfect arrangements for going to Dixon next Tuesday to attend the Republican meeting at that place. **February 18, 1882** issue: On this, Saturday evening, the Arions' Swiss Bell Ringers will give an entertainment at Lincoln's hall. From the nature of their bills, we gather the idea that their entertainment will be amusing. **April 28, 1883** issue: --Amusements.--At Lincoln's hall by the New York Standard Comedy Company. Thursday, May 3rd, "Josh Whitcomb," F. H. Wheeler, as Josh. Friday, May 4th, "Hazel Kirke," Vina Stewart as Hazel. Saturday, May 5th, "Rip Van Winkle," Fred H. Wheeler, as Rip. Reserved seats for sale at Post Office. **February 2, 1884** issue: Love and "cowld ham." Pic-nics and "peraties." Jealousy and "thaories." "Nerves and Sensibility." "Picker'l stickin' and Persimmons." "Larceny, felony, heresy and lots of divelment at Lincoln's Hall, Feb 9th.

Written by Duane Paulsen, November, 1995