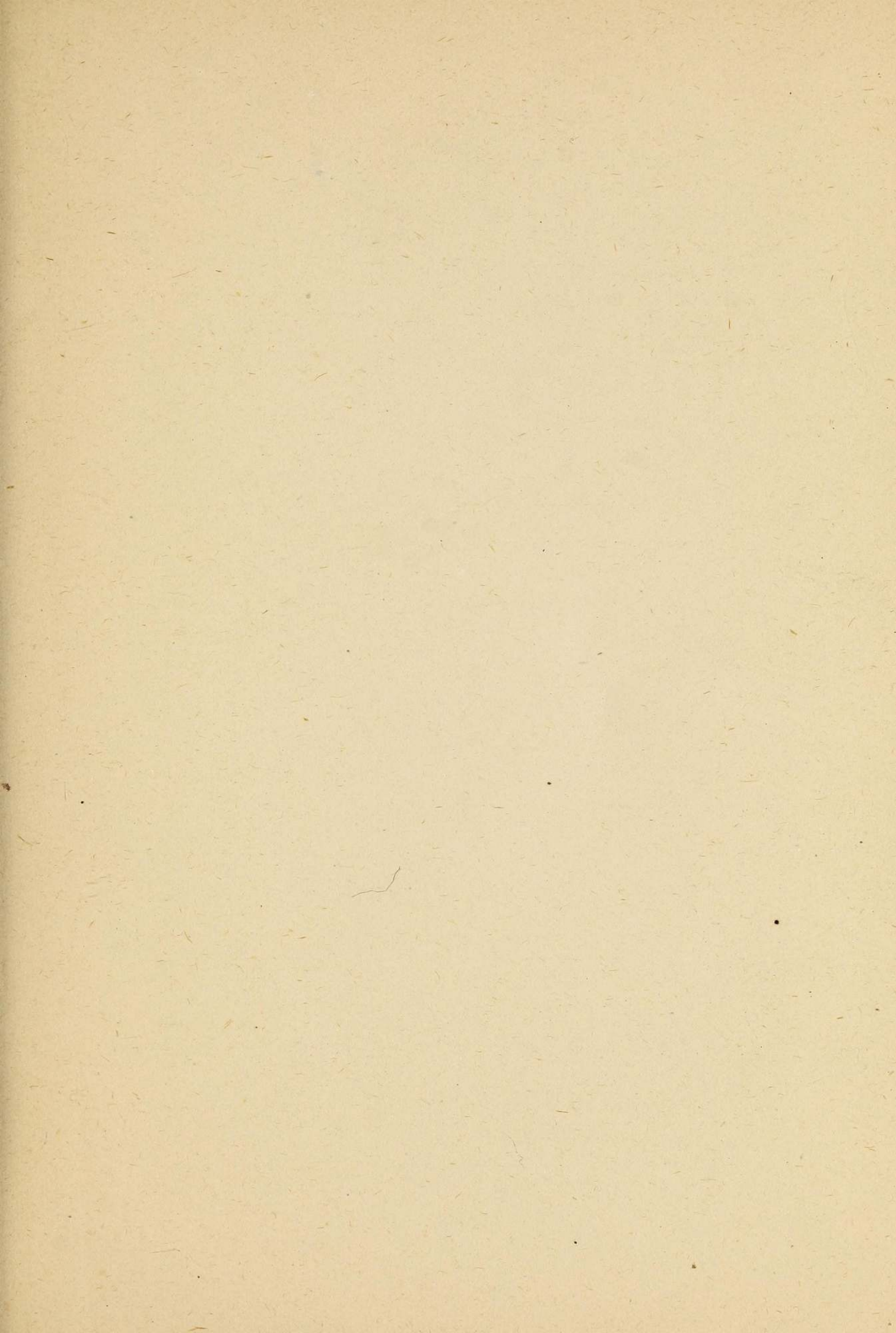




Nancy
Hanks
Lincoln
Public
Library



THE LOVE AFFAIRS OF WASHINGTON AND LINCOLN

THE LOVE AFFAIRS OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN

THE BOYHOOD AND LOVE AFFAIRS OF
WASHINGTON

BY
ELTON RAYMOND SHAW, M. A.



SHAW PUBLISHING COMPANY
BERWYN, ILLINOIS
(CHICAGO SUBURB)

THE LOVE AFFAIR OF
WASHINGTON AND LINCOLN
BY ELTON RAYMOND SHAW

Copyright, 1923
By
Elton Raymond Shaw

Printed in the United States of America

973.7L63

B3sh 22

11/23/53
Bloom

OTHER BOOKS BY THE SAME AUTHOR

The Curse of Drink or Stories of
Hell's Commerce

At the Parting of the Ways (Pro-
hibition)

Patriotic Temperance Songs

Prohibition: Going or Coming?

The Man of Galilee

Brains, Dollars and Progress

The Conquest of the Southwest.

INTRODUCTION

Each year the coming of the shortest month carries our thots back to Washington and Lincoln and their times. Most people are interested in American history. All of us should be. As a nation we are becoming students of history more and more each year. Our great problem is how to study it. School text books are not always the most interesting or most instructive. We should study history thru biography. What is more fascinating than to read the lives of great men? All the important events of history surround the lives of such men, but biography is not always what it

INTRODUCTION

should be. We cannot get away from our prejudices. We are too prone to idealize. Human interest stories of our great characters are often more fiction than real biography. Many of the traits which are dealt with as important would be more easily understood if we gave more thot to some of the phases which are usually omitted.

The tendency to idealize our great characters has led us to leave out many of the human frailties, erring decisions, and the peculiarities and eccentricities that go to show that our leaders have been men of like passions as we are, and that they were altogether human.

There are many books on Wash-

INTRODUCTION

ington and Lincoln. Some writers have said nothing about their love affairs, others have said little, and yet nothing is more interesting than love. It is the greatest thing in the world. The Sunday editor of The Chicago Tribune says people are always interested in two things—Love and Money. Of course we cannot define Love. We do not try. Someone had this in mind in writing the verse:

*“Here’s to Love, a thing divine,
Description doth but make it less.
'Tis what we feel but can’t define,
'Tis what we know but can’t
express.”*

And yet nothing is simpler. It is elemental. The most learned

INTRODUCTION

scholars cannot analyze it, yet all of us can apprehend it. After all, the profoundest mysteries are the things most familiar to us. What does Psychology know about Love? In analyzing the mind we find that in reality there are two minds, the objective and the subjective. The objective mind is the reasoning mind—the mind which makes use of the five senses. The subjective is the *seat* of the emotions and the finer sensibilities—the abiding place of the soul. The subjective mind can only reason deductively while the objective mind reasons both inductively and deductively. The subjective mind is the seat of joy, ambition, intuition patriotism, religion

INTRODUCTION

and *love*. There is only deductive reasoning in love! It is an emotion. But we feel emotions and think about emotions and talk and write stories about emotions. What would the world be without emotions?

*“May those now love who’ve never
loved before
And those who’ve loved now love
the more.”*

* * *

*“Folks need a lot of loving in the
morning;
The day is all before with cares
beset,
The cares we know and that they give
no warning,
For love is God’s own antidote
for fret.*

INTRODUCTION

*“Folks need a heap of loving at the
noon-tide,
In the battle lull, the moment
snatched from strife,
Half between the waking and the
croon-time,
While bickering and worrying are
rife.*

*“Folks hunger so for loving at the
night-time,
When wearily they take them
home to rest;
At slumber-song-and-turning-out-the-
light-time,
Of all the times for loving that’s
the best.*

INTRODUCTION

*“Folks want a lot of loving every
minute,
The sympathy of others, and their
smile,
Till life end; from the minute they
begin it,
Folks need a lot of loving all the
while.”*

*—Strickland Gilliland,
In “Including You and Me.”*

THE LOVE AFFAIRS OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Abraham Lincoln was a man of sorrow. He was born in a degradation, very far below respectable poverty, in Hardin (now LaRue) County, Kentucky, three miles from Hodgenville. He lived in that poverty thru the whole of his childhood. When he was in his eighth year, the family removed to the state of Indiana. Before he was ten years of age, his mother died—the first great crushing grief and sorrow of his life. When he was nineteen, his only sister died, under very distressing circumstances. No joy or pleas-

THE LOVE AFFAIRS OF

ure of childhood entered into his young life. It is not necessary to enter into the old controversies about Thomas Lincoln in order to appreciate the fact, that, when Lincoln was grown into manhood, he wanted to get away from the thot of his childhood. Whether the father was ignorant, worthless, shiftless or illiterate and not in sympathy with Abraham's eagerness for learning to write and read or whether he was industrious, saving, and feeling keenly his own deficiency, was disposed to give his son every possible advantage in the way of gaining an education, the fact remains that the boy, Abraham, passed thru hard experiences for one his age. He did

WASHINGTON AND LINCOLN

not want to live his childhood over again. Undoubtedly his childhood experiences had a great deal to do with his melancholy disposition.

The first of the sweethearts was Polly Richardson, a Kentucky girl who, with her parents went to Gentryville, Spencer County, Indiana, in the boyhood of Lincoln, and he was not only the first youth of the neighborhood with whom she became acquainted, but he became the beau who escorted her to many of the parties and other social fetes. When the Lincolns abandoned their Indiana farm and went on to Illinois, Polly Richardson disappeared from the pages of Lincoln history.

When Lincoln was twenty-one

THE LOVE AFFAIRS OF

years of age, he moved with the family to Illinois and, leaving the parental home, went to the village of New Salem, twenty miles northwest of Springfield, a place of fifteen log houses. It was while there that he made the acquaintance of Ann Rutledge; Ann was the daughter of the first citizen of New Salem, who was also one of its founders—James Rutledge. Says Herndon, who knew her: “She was a beautiful girl—the most popular young lady in the village. One of her strong points was her dexterity in the use of the needle. At every quilting Ann was a necessary adjunct, and her nimble fingers drove the needle swifter than anyone’s else. Lincoln used to escort

her to and from these quilting bees, and on one occasion even went into the house.”

But Ann was already engaged to a successful young merchant of New Salem, who went under the name of McNeall, but whose real name was McNamar. He had left New Salem in 1834, with the intention of returning soon; but he delayed and soon stopped writing to his betrothed. Nobody knew what had become of him or what his purposes really were. Ann especially was in doubt; had he deserted her? Anyhow at this juncture, Lincoln gradually became her suitor. And the Rutledges and all New Salem encouraged his suit as he pleaded and pressed his cause.

THE LOVE AFFAIRS OF

McNamar's unexplained absence encouraged Lincoln and convinced Ann. The attachment was growing and becoming an intense and mutual passion, but Ann remained firm and almost inflexible. She was passing thru another fire. She could not dismiss the haunting memory of her old lover. Ann had a strongly religious element in her nature. This intensified her conflict. Perhaps she had wronged McNamar; perhaps he loved her still and she was loving another. Yet in another way her religious nature gave her great consolation. Lincoln had become engaged to her shortly after he returned from his first session of the legislature at Vandalia. Yet within Ann's bosom raged

the conflict which finally undermined her health. The ghost of McNamar would often rise unbidden before her. A fever was burning in her head. She called for Lincoln continuously. Her physician had prescribed absolute quiet and had forbidden visitors, but Lincoln was finally received. On his arrival at her bedside, the door was closed. They were alone and what was said was known only to Lincoln and the dying girl. She died Aug. 25, 1835, of typhoid fever.

The death of Ann Rutledge drove Lincoln into a condition verging toward insanity. His friendship for Ann had meant everything to his life. It was his first contact with

THE LOVE AFFAIRS OF

real Christian civilization. She had helped him in grammar and to study the Bible and Shakespeare. His first earthly joy seemed to be within his grasp and then it was gone. "He had fits of great mental depression," says Herndon, "and wandered up and down the river and into the woods woefully abstracted—at times in the deepest distress. His condition finally became so alarming that his friends consulted together and sent him to the house of a kind friend who lived in a secluded spot hidden by the hills a mile south of town, and who after some weeks brought him back to reason, or at least a realization of his true condition."

It was at this time that Lincoln made the greatest spiritual transition of his life, under the most severe mental and emotional strain. He endured the strain and he came forth a purified soul from the discipline of love, but he carried the mark all his life. It was Herndon who said, "The memory of Ann Rutledge was the saddest chapter in Mr. Lincoln's life." And Herndon told of how Dr. Jason Duncan had placed in Lincoln's hands the poem called "Immortality." The poem starts with the line, "Oh, why should the spirit of mortal be proud?" He committed these lines to memory and any reference to or suggestion of Miss Rutledge would suggest them. As late

THE LOVE AFFAIRS OF

as March, 1864, not many days before his death, he repeated the lines with a strange premonitory pathos. The poem was for him "an ever-singing dirge of the soul over the vanished loved one with the melancholy note of which his deepest emotions became concordant to the end of his days." Thus Lincoln reveals an immortal love which will attune all the throbbing of his heart, however profound and intense.

Ann Rutledge was gone but the love remained and would not depart. It could not be eradicated for his heart could not be torn from him. It was transformed or transfigured and thus preserved. It was elevated into universality, a love for all humanity

and that endured. Lincoln was called of God to administer a national discipline as severe as his own personal sorrow and he did it with a heart free from revenge. And, after all those years, he confessed to a friend, speaking of Ann Rutledge, "I think often, often of her now."

While a member of the legislature, Lincoln removed to Springfield, April 13, 1837, which was in his district, and began the practice of law, having been admitted to the bar in 1836. He soon made the acquaintance of Mary Todd. She was a Kentuckian of aristocratic blood, and when she and Lincoln became acquainted, in November, 1842, he was thirty-three years of age and she

THE LOVE AFFAIRS OF

was twenty-one. She came from a long and distinguished ancestral line, was herself well educated and a social leader. She was a bright, pretty, vivacious girl, could speak French, was aristocratic, ambitious, haughty, alert and gay. She had recently come from her Kentucky home to live with her sister, Mrs. Ninian W. Edwards. She soon became a belle of the Illinois capital and for a time led the young men of the town "a merry dance."

The hospitalities of the house were naturally extended by Mr. Edwards, one of the "Long Nine," the delegation which had worked so vigorously to have the capital moved from Vandalia to Springfield, to Lincoln, the

WASHINGTON AND LINCOLN

leader of that delegation. So Lincoln was a frequent visitor. He soon became the accepted suitor to the fascinating little girl from Kentucky. Stephen A. Douglass, the little Vermonter, dashing and comely, already a rival along other lines, stepped in to contest with Lincoln for the possession of the trophy. Unfortunately for the romance of the story, we cannot tell with exactness just how the contest was conducted. Says one old resident of Springfield:

“As a society man, Douglass was infinitely more accomplished, more attractive and influential than Lincoln; and that he should supplant the latter in the affections of the proud and aristocratic Miss Todd is

THE LOVE AFFAIRS OF

not to be marveled at. He was unremitting in his attentions to the lady, promenaded the streets arm in arm with her, frequently passing Lincoln, and, in every way, made plain his intention to become the latter's rival."

Some said this was merely a flirtation on the part of Miss Todd to tease her lover. Others said Douglass made a proposal of marriage and was refused on account of his bad morals. Others said she grew to prefer him, and would have accepted his offer if she had not given her promise to Lincoln. "The unfortunate attitude she felt bound to maintain between these two young men," relates the writer of this version,

WASHINGTON AND LINCOLN

“ended in a spell of sickness. Douglass, still hopeful, was warm in the race; but Miss Todd’s physician, her brother-in-law, Dr. William Wallace, to whom she confided the real cause of her sickness, saw Douglass and induced him to end his pursuit, which he did with great reluctance.”

But the withdrawal of Douglass did not end Lincoln’s trouble. On the day fixed for the marriage, Jan. 1, 1841, Lincoln did not appear, and of course there was no wedding. Lincoln’s conscience would not quite allow him to marry her, and he could not face it, and he did not, and ran away from it. On January 23, 1841, he wrote John T. Stewart, then in Washington, as follows:

THE LOVE AFFAIRS OF

“For not giving you a general summary of news, you must pardon me; it is not in my power to do so. I am now the most miserable man living. If what I feel were equally distributed to the whole human family there would not be one cheerful face on the earth. Whether I shall ever be better I cannot tell; I awfully forbode I shall not. To remain as I am is impossible; I must die or be better it appears to me. The matter you speak of on my account you may attend to as you say, unless you shall hear of my condition forbidding it. I say this because I fear I shall be unable to attend to any business here, and a change of scene might help me. If I could be

WASHINGTON AND LINCOLN

myself I would rather remain at home with Judge Logan. I can write no more.”

About a year and ten months afterwards, friends of Lincoln and Miss Todd entered into negotiations and got them to speaking together and one Thursday, they agreed to be married the next day, Friday, Nov. 4, 1842.

Mrs. Lincoln loved show and power and claimed early to have had a premonition that she was to marry a President. And in Lincoln she found one who was no less ambitious than herself. “I mean to make him President of the United States,” she said to her Springfield friends. “You will see that as I have always told

THE LOVE AFFAIRS OF

you, I will be the President's wife."

Some writers have given the impression that Lincoln's marriage was always unhappy. One says the days he courted Miss Todd were among the most unhappy of his life—except after he got her. To illustrate how they enjoyed married life, one writer tells this story: Lincoln came home one day very tired. He laid himself on the couch and Mrs. Lincoln started, as they say out West, "blazing away" at him. One of the neighbors came in and said to him, "Why don't you jaw back, Abe?" He said, "That did Mary a great deal of good and did me no harm." He was a real philosopher. He decided to be true to the vow he had taken and

WASHINGTON AND LINCOLN

take her for better or for worse.

Some years ago it was my pleasure to have correspondence with Major J. B. Merwin, an intimate friend of President Lincoln, with whom he was intimately known from 1852 on until the day of his assassination in Washington. In one of these letters, Major Merwin told a story which gives a vivid picture of one of the most exciting moments in the White House. I quote from Mr. Merwin's letter to give the complete setting for the story.

“My last interview with the great and good Lincoln is a long story. I knew him from 1852 on to the day he was assassinated. Dined with him that day.

THE LOVE AFFAIRS OF

“The cabinet meeting ended early, a little before 12 o’clock. I left him after dinner, about 2:30, for New York, on a special mission, to see Horace Greely and submit to him a paper Mr. Lincoln had written. Lee had surrendered. Jefferson Davis was a fugitive. The great heart of President Lincoln was burdened with the problem as to how best to dispose of the 180,000 colored troops with arms in their hands. Major General Ben Butler said, “Mr. President, I can help you solve that problem. The terms of enlistment of these troops will not expire for a year and a half. As a military measure take them to Panama and build the canal with them. Make me a Major General,

put me in command and we will take them over and build and own the canal. As fast as possible we will take their families, the climate is about the same as they are used to, give them some land and we will dig and own the canal. 'What does Seward say? What does or what will Congress say? All favorable, what will Greely say?' He was more afraid of Greely than of Jefferson Davis. I had known Greely well, had been on several missions to Mr. Greely for him. I could and did go many times where and when his secretaries could not go, for they were known.

"I was not especially known. I was on General Dix's Staff in New

THE LOVE AFFAIRS OF

York. Had charge of the sick and wounded soldiers passing to hospitals through the city. He telegraphed General Dix to send me to Washington by first train. I left New York Tuesday night, reached Washington, Wednesday a. m. Ten thousand people were around the White House. I held the telegram up. He saw it, and said, 'Come at 10 tonight.' It was 12 at night before he could get away and lock up. We worked until 3 a. m. and then retired. Thursday night we worked on the proposition until 3 a. m. and still it did not quite suit him. Friday was 'Cabinet Meeting.' He locked all the doors at its close and ordered our dinner brought up. He

finished the paper. We ate dinner and he read it over. One door was not locked. Mrs. Lincoln came and said, 'Abe, the Ford's Theater people have tendered us a box for this eve and I have accepted it. The Grants are going with us and make no other engagement.' Mr. Lincoln said, 'Mary, I don't think we ought to go to the Theater. Do you remember it is "Good Friday," a religious day with a great many people, and I don't think we ought to go to the Theater tonight.' Mrs. Lincoln said, 'We are going,' and with that she slammed the door enough to take it off the hinges. 'You see how it is,' he said, 'We must not have a scene today.' "

THE LOVE AFFAIRS OF

To relate such dramatic instances and say nothing of the other side of Mr. Lincoln's home life would be to give a wrong impression, yet little is said of the quiet family life of the President. Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln did enjoy their home and their four boys. One died in infancy and one died in the White House when the great Civil War was on the heart of the President, and he was brought down almost to the point of being crushed by the death of "Little Willie." And it was Major Merwin who spoke of President Lincoln's love of home and family, and above all, love of God: "For he came to be a profoundly religious man so that one who knew him and looked

WASHINGTON AND LINCOLN

into his face and soul, as I did, saw the loveliest, the loftiest, the noblest, the most sublime character that has ever been known in the world since the Nazarene left it.”

**THE BOYHOOD
AND
LOVE AFFAIRS
OF
GEORGE
WASHINGTON**

THE BOYHOOD AND LOVE AFFAIRS OF GEORGE WASHINGTON

George Washington was born February 22, 1732, at Bridges Creek, Virginia. The home was one of the primitive farmhouses of Virginia and commanded a view over many miles of the Potomac. Not long after the birth of George, the family removed to an estate in Stafford County opposite Fredericksburg. The house stood on a rising ground overlooking a meadow which bordered the Rappahannock. This was the home of George's boyhood; the meadow was his playground and the scene of his early athletic sports.

THE LOVE AFFAIRS OF

In those days the means of instruction in Virginia were limited, and it was the custom among the wealthy planters to send their sons to England to complete their education. Augustine Washington sent his oldest son, Lawrence, then about fifteen years of age. George was yet in early childhood, being fourteen years younger. He attended the old field school house, humble in its pretensions and kept by one of his father's tenants named Hobby, who was also sexton of the parish. His instruction was simple, consisting of reading, writing and ciphering. But George had an excellent father and mother and thus had the benefit of mental and moral culture at home.

WASHINGTON AND LINCOLN

He was taught high maxims of religion and virtue and imbued with a spirit of justice and generosity and love of truth.

When George was about seven or eight years of age, his brother Lawrence returned from England, a well-educated and accomplished young man. Lawrence was fond of George, whose dawning intelligence and perfect rectitude won his regard and George looked up to the older brother as a model. This interchange of affection had a great influence on George's later life. It helps us understand the martial spirit of George in his boyish days. Spanish depredations on British commerce had recently provoked reprisals; Admiral

Vernon had, as commander-in-chief of the West Indies, captured Porto Bello on the Isthmus of Darien. The Spaniards were preparing a revenge and the French were fitting out ships to aid them. Lawrence secured a captain's commission in one of the regiments of four battalions which was raised in the colonies and sent to join the British troops at Jamaica. Lawrence served in the joint expeditions of Admiral Vernon and General Wentworth and won the friendship of both officers and, after returning home, it was his intention to rejoin his regiment in England and seek promotion in the army. Circumstances changed his plan. He fell in love with Anne, the eldest

daughter of the Honorable William Fairfax. They became engaged but their marriage was delayed by the death of Augustine Washington, who died at forty-nine years of age. George had been away on a visit and just returned in time to receive a parting look of affection.

Augustine Washington left large possessions, distributed by will among the children. Lawrence received the estate on the Potomac with other real property and shares in iron works. Augustine, Jr., the second son by the father's first marriage, received the old homestead and estate in Westmoreland. The children by the second marriage were severally well provided for, and George, when he

THE LOVE AFFAIRS OF

became of age, was to have the house and lands on the Rappahannock.

Three months after the father's death, Lawrence and Miss Fairfax were married. Augustine, Jr., married Anne Aylett of Westmoreland County. Lawrence gave up all that of foreign service and settled on his estate on the Potomac, which he named Mount Vernon, in honor of the Admiral. Augustine moved to his homestead on Bridges Creek.

George was now eleven years old and was under the guardianship of his mother, who governed the family strictly, but kindly. She taught him to control his temper and to conduct himself equitably and justly. In order that George could have the ad-

vantage of a superior school, he was sent to live with Augustine at Bridges Creek. His education there was plain and practical. He did not study the learned languages nor show any inclination for such things as rhetoric or literature. The object of his training seemed to be for business and his manuscript school books still exist, and are models of neatness and accuracy. Of course, he was a real boy. One of his ciphering-books, preserved in the library at Mount Vernon, included pictures of birds and profiles of faces, probably intended for those of some of his schoolmates. Before he was thirteen years of age, he had copied into a volume, forms for all kinds of mercantile and legal

papers, bills of exchange, notes, deeds, bonds and the like. This training gave him a lawyer's skill in drafting documents and a merchant's exactness in handling accounts—all valuable later in handling his estates, in making accounts with the government and in all of his other transactions.

George gave attention to physical as well as mental matters. He practiced all kinds of athletic exercises, such as running, leaping, wrestling, pitching quoits and tossing bars. His frame had, from infancy, been large and powerful and he excelled most of his playmates in contests of strength. He was a leader and was usually the umpire in disputes.

Lawrence continued to take a paternal interest in George's affairs and had him frequently as a guest at Mount Vernon. These visits brought George into familiar intercourse with the family of William Fairfax, Lawrence's father-in-law, who lived just a few miles below Mount Vernon. Mr. Fairfax was a man of liberal education and intrinsic worth. He had seen the world and had enjoyed varied and adventurous experiences. The intimacy with such a family meant much to George. Here were united the simplicity of rural and colonial life and European refinement, and this had a beneficial effect in building the character and manners of the home-bred school boy.

THE LOVE AFFAIRS OF

No doubt it was his intercourse with the Fairfax family and his desire to be well behaved in their society that set him to compiling a code of morals and manners which still exists in a manuscript in his own handwriting, entitled, "Rules for Behavior in Company and Conversation." Some of the rules for personal deportment extend to such trivial matters and are so quaint and formal as to make one smile. In the main, however, a better manual of conduct could not be given to young people. The book evinces that rigid propriety and self control to which he subjected himself.

But there were also other influences that worked on George during his visit at Mount Vernon. His

brother Lawrence was Adjutant-General of the district, with the rank of Major, and a regular salary, and he retained some of his military inclinations. It was natural, therefore, that some of Lawrence's comrades who had served with him in the West Indies were visitors at Mount Vernon. An occasional ship of war would anchor in the Potomac. The officers would be entertained by Lawrence and Mr. Fairfax.

Thus George heard the conversation about scenes on sea and shore, and stories of cruising in the East and West Indies, and campaigns against the pirates. It is probable that in this way there was produced the desire to enter the navy at four-

THE LOVE AFFAIRS OF

teen years of age. Lawrence and Mr. Fairfax encouraged the inclination, for they considered the naval service a popular path to fame and fortune. George was old enough to enter the navy, but the great difficulty was to procure the assent of his mother. Finally, however, she agreed. A midshipman warrant was obtained and it is even said that the luggage of George was actually on board of a warship, anchored in the river below Mount Vernon. At the last hour the mother wavered. George was her eldest born. He was a son who promised, by his strong and steadfast character, to be a support to her and the younger children. She could not endure the thought of his being

WASHINGTON AND LINCOLN

severed from her and exposed to all the hardships and perils of such a dangerous profession. Finally, at her remonstrances, the scheme was given up and George returned to school and continued his studies for two more years. He gave especial attention to mathematics and other branches calculated to fit him for civil or military service. One of these subjects was surveying, and he trained himself in the work by making surveys about the neighborhood and keeping regular field books in which the boundaries and measurements of the fields surveyed were carefully entered. Diagrams were made with neatness and exactness, and one would judge that the whole

THE LOVE AFFAIRS OF

related to important land transactions, instead of being mere school exercises. One is greatly impressed with the perseverance and completeness in all his undertakings. Nothing was left half done or done hurriedly. He later went to his complicated and difficult tasks and found time to do his work and do it well.

In one of these manuscript memorials of his practical studies and exercises were found some documents quite different than his regular studies. These are evidences, in his own handwriting, that, before he was fifteen years of age, he had conceived a passion for some unknown beauty. This so disturbed his mind that he expressed himself as being really un-

happy. We do not know why this juvenile attachment was a source of unhappiness. Perhaps the girl looked upon George as a mere schoolboy and treated him as such; or his own shyness may have been the cause of his trouble. Perhaps his "rules for behavior and conversation" made him feel formal and ungainly when he most desired to please. Contemporaries said that in later years he was apt to be silent and embarrassed in female society. "He was a very bashful young man," said an old lady, whom he used to visit when they were both in their non-age. "I used often to wish that he would talk more."

Whatever may have been the

THE LOVE AFFAIRS OF

cause, this early affair seems to have been a source of great discomfort to him. He could not forget even after he left to go to school in 1747 and went to reside with his brother Lawrence at Mount Vernon. There he studied and practiced surveying, but he was disturbed by the memories of the unknown beauty. The waste pages of his journal show several attempts to force out his sorrows in verse. He was not of a poetical temperament and he wrote commonplace rhymes, such as boy lovers of that age are apt to write. He bewailed his "poor, restless heart, wounded by Cupid's dart," and he said, "I am bleeding for one who remains pitiless of my grief and woes."

WASHINGTON AND LINCOLN

Some of the verses indicate that he never told of his love, being prevented by bashfulness.

*“Ah, woe is me, that I should love
and conceal,
Long have I wished and never dare
reveal.”*

Indeed, it is very difficult for us to think of the cool and dignified Washington, the champion of American liberty, a woe-worn lover in the days of his youth—“Sighing like a furnace,” and inditing plaintive verses about the groves of Mount Vernon. Yet how this does show his deeper feelings and show his reserve even while his heart throbbed with

the impulses of human nature known so well to all of us.

When George was sixteen years of age, he no longer seemed a boy. His merits were known and appreciated by the Fairfax family. He was tall, athletic and manly for his age. He was grave, frank and modest. About this time, George William Fairfax, twenty-two years of age and educated in England, married a daughter of Colonel Carey, of Hampton, on James River. He had brought home his bride and her sister to his father's house. The charms of Miss Carey, sister of the bride, caused a fluttering in George's bosom. This was, however, constantly rebuked by the memory of his former passion. This, at

least, is the inference that one gathers from letters to his youthful confidants, rough drafts of which appeared in his journal.

To one whom he addressed as his dear friend Robin, he wrote:

“My residence is at present at his lordship’s, where I might, was my heart disengaged, pass my time very pleasantly, as there’s a very agreeable young lady lives in the same house (Col. Geo. Fairfax’s wife’s sister); but as that’s only adding fuel to the fire, it makes me the more uneasy, for by often and unavoidably being in company with her, revives my former passion for your Lowland Beauty; whereas was I to live more retired from young women, I might

THE LOVE AFFAIRS OF

in some measure alleviate my sorrows, by burying that chaste and troublesome passion in the grave of oblivion," etc.

Similar avowals he made to another of his young correspondents, whom he styled "Dear friend John," as also to a female confidant styled "Dear Sally," to whom he acknowledged that the company of the "very agreeable young lady, sister-in-law of Colonel George Fairfax," in a great measure cheered his sorrow and dejectedness.

The object of this early passion is not positively known. Tradition states that the "Lowland Beauty" was a Miss Grimes of Westmoreland, afterwards Mrs. Lee, and mother of

General Henry Lee, who was known as Light Horse Harry, and who was always a favorite with Washington, perhaps from the recollections of his early tenderness for the mother.

It was February 4, 1756, that Colonel Washington, now Commander-in-Chief of Virginia's troops, left Colonel Adam Stephen in command of the troops and set out in company with Captain Mercer and Captain Stewart on a mission to see Major General Shirley, who had succeeded Braddock in the general command of the colonies. The journey of five hundred miles was made on horseback in the depth of winter. Philadelphia, New York and Boston were visited. After remaining in Boston

THE LOVE AFFAIRS OF

for ten days, Colonel Washington returned to New York. Tradition gives very different motives from those of business for his two sojourns in New York. He found there an old friend and schoolmate, Beverly Robinson, who was happily and prosperously living with a young and wealthy bride, a niece and heiress of Adolphus Philipse, a wealthy land owner living on the Hudson. Colonel Washington, an honored guest in Mr. Robinson's home, met Miss Mary Philipse, Mrs. Robinson's sister, a young lady of great personal attraction as well as reputed wealth.

That Washington was an open admirer of Miss Philipse is an historical fact. Tradition is that he

sought her hand and was refused, but that is hardly probable. It is true that Washington had been living a life of activity and care. His time had been spent, for the most part, in the wilderness and on the frontier, far from feminine society, but he was cultured and refined and his military rank, his early laurels and distinguished presence were all calculated to win favor in feminine eyes. Perhaps he hesitated to urge suit with a lady in high society and surrounded by admirers. At any rate, he was probably called away by public duties before he had sufficient opportunity to really press his case. While attending the opening of the legislature at Williamsburg, where he was

urging protection of the frontier and capture of Fort Duquesne, he received a letter from a friend and confidant in New York, warning him to hurry to New York before it was too late, as Captain Morris, who had been his fellow aide-de-camp under Braddock, was winning favor with Miss Philipse. Duty called Washington elsewhere and, in the moment of urgency, the claim of the heart was forgotten or at least ignored. Washington hastened to Winchester and Captain Morris won the prize.

Operations in preparation for the expedition against Fort Duquesne went slowly on. Brigadier-General Forbes, who was commander-in-chief, was detained in Philadelphia. Wash-

ington in the meantime gathered together his scattered regiments at Winchester, some from a distance of two hundred miles, and he there disciplined his recruits. He had a total of nineteen hundred men besides about seven hundred Indians who had joined his camp in prospect of a successful campaign. Washington was in great need of arms, tents, field equipage and other requisites. Repeated letters stating the desperate needs of the Virginia troops had availed nothing. He was, therefore, ordered by the quarter-master general of the forces under General Forbes to hurry to Williamsburg to lay the case before the council. He set off promptly on horseback, attended by

THE LOVE AFFAIRS OF

Bishop, his military servant. It certainly proved an eventful journey, though not in a military point of view. He met a Mr. Chamberlayne while he was crossing a ferry and, in the spirit of Virginia hospitality, Mr. Chamberlayne claimed Colonel Washington as his guest. Washington was impatient to reach Williamsburg and accomplish his mission and Mr. Chamberlayne had great difficulty in holding him even long enough for dinner.

At Mr. Chamberlayne's one of the guests was a young widow, Mrs. Martha Custis. Her husband, John Parke Custis, had been dead about three years and he had left her two young children and a large fortune.

Mrs. Custis was a small woman of agreeable and captivating manners, and again Washington proved to be quickly susceptible to feminine charms. Whether he had ever met her before, we do not know; probably not during her widowhood, as he had been on the frontier almost continually. His heart seems to have been taken unawares and the dinner was all too short. The afternoon melted away like a dream. Bishop followed orders Washington had given when they stopped and the horses waited at the door.

The Colonel, for once in his life, was loitering in the path of duty! It was not until the next morning that Washington was again in the

THE LOVE AFFAIRS OF

saddle on the way to Williamsburg. Fortunately Mrs. Custis' home was not far from that city, so Washington was able to visit her on frequent intervals of affairs. However, he did not have much time for courtship. He was soon called back to Winchester and he hesitated to leave things in suspense. Some more enterprising or less busy rival might supplant him as in his previous experience. He made the most of this opportunity. When he left they were engaged. The marriage was to take place as soon as the Fort Duquesne campaign was ended.

For three months after the marriage, Washington lived at the home of Mrs. Washington. During the

period, he took a seat in the House of Burgesses. Mr. Custis, the first husband of Mrs. Washington, had left large landed property and forty-five thousand pounds sterling in money. One-third fell to the widow in her own right. The other two-thirds went equally to the two children—a boy of six and a girl of four years of age.

The Court made Washington guardian, and he fulfilled the sacred trust in a faithful manner. He became a parent as well as guardian to them. The marriage caused Washington to give up all traveling inclinations. He had long had a desire to visit England. His military services would have insured him a

THE LOVE AFFAIRS OF

hearty reception. Some have suggested that the favor of the English government on such an occasion might have changed his career, but he was a true patriot and had at heart the true interests of his country. The happy home was a new joy in his life. In a letter from Mount Vernon he wrote: "I am now, I believe, fixed in this seat, with an agreeable partner for life, and I hope to build more happiness in retirement than ever experienced in the wide and bustling world."



Nancy
Hanks
Lincoln
Public
Library