

"ABE" LINCOLN'S YARNS AND STORIES

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PRESIDENT LINCOLN

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THE "SECRET PASSAGE" TO WASHINGTON.

Throughout his entire life, Abraham Lincoln's physical courage was as great and superb as his moral courage. When Mr. Pinkerton and Mr. Judd urged the President-elect to leave for Washington that night, he positively refused to do it. He said he had made an engagement to assist at a flag-raising in the forenoon of the next day and to show himself to the people of Harrisburg in the afternoon, and that he intended to keep both engagements.

At Philadelphia the Presidential party was met by Mr. Seward's son, Frederick, who had been sent to warn Mr. Lincoln of the plot against his life. Mr. Judd, Mr. Pinkerton and Mr. Lamon figured out a plan to take Mr. Lincoln through Baltimore between midnight and daybreak, when the would-be assassins would not be expecting him, and this plan was carried out so thoroughly that even the conductor on the train did not know the President-elect was on board.

Mr. Lincoln was put into his berth and the curtains drawn. He was supposed to be a sick man. When the conductor came around, Mr. Pinkerton handed him the "sick man's" ticket and he passed on without question.

When the train reached Baltimore, at half-past three o'clock in the morning, it was met by one of Mr. Pinkerton's detectives, who reported that everything was "all right," and in a short time the party was speeding on to the national capital, where rooms had been engaged for Mr. Lincoln and his guard at Willard's Hotel.

Mr. Lincoln always regretted this "secret passage" to Washington, for it was repugnant to a man of his high courage. He had agreed to the plan simply because all of his friends urged it as the best thing to do.

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WARNINGS OF HIS TRAGIC DEATH

From early youth, Mr. Lincoln had presentiments that he would die a violent death, or, rather, that his final days would be marked by some great tragic event. From the time of his first election to the Presidency, his closest friends had tried to make him understand that he was in constant danger of assassination, but, notwithstanding his presentiments, he had such splendid courage that he only laughed at their fears.

During the summer months he lived at the Soldier's Home, some miles from Washington, and frequently made the trip between the White House and the Home without a guard or escort. Secretary of War Stanton and Ward Lamon, Marshal of the District, were almost constantly alarmed over Mr. Lincoln's carelessness in exposing himself to the danger of assassination.

They warned him time and again, and provided suitable bodyguards to attend him. But Mr. Lincoln would often give the guards the slip, and, mounting his favorite riding horse, "Old Abe," would set out alone after dark from the White House for the Soldiers' Home.

While riding to the Home one night, he was fired upon by some one in ambush, the bullet passing through his high hat. Mr. Lincoln would not admit that the man who fired the shot had tried to kill him. He always attributed it to an accident, and begged his friends to say nothing about it.

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LAMON'S REMARKABLE REQUEST.

Probably one reason why Mr. Lincoln did not particularly care to go to the theatre that night was a sort of half promise he had made to his friend and bodyguard, Marshal Lamon. Two days previous he had sent Lamon to Richmond on business connected with a call of a Convention for reconstruction. Before leaving, Mr. Lamon saw Mr. Usher, the Secretary of the Interior, and asked him to persuade Mr. Lincoln to use more caution about his personal safety, and to go out as little as possible while Lamon was absent. Together they went to see Mr. Lincoln, and Lamon asked the President if he would make him a promise.

"I think I can venture to say I will," said Mr. Lincoln. "What is it?"

"Promise me that you will not go out after night while I am gone," said Mr. Lamon, "particularly to the theatre."

Mr. Lincoln turned to Mr. Usher and said: "Usher, this boy is a monomaniac on the subject of my safety. I can hear him or hear of his being around at all times in the night, to prevent somebody from murdering me. He thinks I shall be killed, and we think he is going crazy. What does any one want to assassinate me for? If any one wants to do so, he can do it any day or night if he is ready to give his life for mine. It is nonsense."

Mr. Usher said to Mr. Lincoln that it was well to heed Lamon's warning, as he was thrown among people from whom he had better opportunities

to know about such matters than almost any one.

"Well," said Mr. Lincoln to Lamon, "I promise to do the best
I can."