

When Lincoln was first being settled, ravenous and dangerous animals were frequently seen in the forests. Wolves sometimes came down from the north in great packs and attacked and killed sheep and cattle. They were also very destructive to the deer, which at that time lived here in vast numbers.

I can remember my grandmother telling us children stories about the wolves in her earlier days. After the sun had gone down on a cold, frosty night it was a common thing to hear an old wolf howling on some near-by hill top. He would keep this up for hours, sending shivers down the backs of all who heard him. Then, as the moon rose higher and objects could be seen more distinctly, other wolves could be heard answering the howls of their lonely companion. Sneaking cautiously and stealthily they would creep from the hillside down through the woods, across the field and pasture until at last they reached the sheep barn. Barns for keeping sheep and cattle in those days were made of logs and were very seldom chinked. This left cracks between the logs and made the wolves all the more ferocious. They would circle around the barn making fierce mourns. Occasionally, one or two would advance to the open cracks and gnash their teeth madly in apprehension of the nice fat sheep - secured within. All night long, they would keep up their savage cries, but they always went away with the first signs of dawn.

Black bears, some of which weighed three or four hundred pounds, were quite common in those times. They were very fond of honey and would climb trees and gnaw into them and feed upon the honey, comb and all. Their flesh was very palatable, and their skins, with their thick coverings of hair, were highly prized.

Wild cats were very common in the town until within a few years ago. The catamount was the king of wild beasts and the terror of the settlers. It would sometimes kill twenty sheep in one night. After sucking the blood of its prey it would sneak off into the woods.

Beavers were once very numerous around Lincoln. The remains of their dams may still be seen in various parts of the town. Otters, minks and muskrat were found in abundance. Woodchucks, racoons and skunks are found at present, though not in so great numbers as formerly. Weasels, gray, red striped squirrels were once very common in the town-

Many huge snakes have been seen in the south part of the town and stories concerning them vary greatly. Some farmers claim to have found snakes on their farms, measuring from four to six feet in length. Some of these snakes were black in color, some spotted and some striped. It is a well known rumor that several rattle snakes have been found from time to time. It has been said that one of the large circuses that came here, lost some of their snakes and went away without them, this was a good many years ago. It seems unreasonable to believe that rattle snakes (of any variety whatsoever) could survive our winters. This winter of 1936 is, of course, an exception. Butterflies have been found, mayflowers picked in January and it is possible that even a rattle snake could live until spring - if the weather continues.

THE BEAR AND THE JUG OF RUM

There was an old settler by the name of Mose,
From whence he came nobody knows.
He landed in Lincoln one stormy night,
Cold and hungry and ready to fight.
His whiskers hung a foot from his chin,
And they swished and swayed in the north east wind
A good Lincoln farmer gave him a home
Until he could make a place of his own.
Now, because he seldom talked and such,
Folks thought he didn't amount to much.
One day, when the sap was running good,
He went into the forest to cut some wood.
He carried, besides his axe and gun,
A goodly lunch and a jug of rum.
Of course, he got thirsty very soon
And decided he couldn't wait 'till noon;
So, just as he started to take a drink,
He heard a noise that scared him pink
And, when he turned around to stare,
He saw the biggest, blackest bear.
He must have weighed four hundred pounds,
For when he walked he shook the ground.
Then Mose, with arms raised in the air,
Walked right up to that ugly bear
And smashed the jug right on his head;
And with a groan the bear fell dead.
Mose got more thirsty as time wore on,
But the jug was smashed and the rum was gone.
So he gathered up his remaining goods
And decided hereafter to keep out of the woods.
At first folks thought he was only lazy,
But when told of the bear they said he was crazy.
Now this is the story of old settler Mose,
From whence he came nobody knows.
The merit of the tale you may fail to see,
But I've told it to you as it was told to me.

LINCOLN INDIANS WERE ALWAYS FRIENDLY

In 1834 the women of the south part of the town came to the village, by means of a spotted path through the woods, to the raising of the Methodist Church. This was over a hundred years ago and there were many wild animals in the woods as well as Indians roaming about.

To the writer's knowledge, there were no Indian Massacres in Lincoln but the settlers who came to Lincoln during the first part of 1800 told hair raising tales of Indian murders which took place in the towns from which they came. Many friends and relatives had been lost and sometimes entire families were wiped out by the Indians. These stories frightened some of the Lincoln people and caused them to become suspicious of all Indians wherever seen.

One day my grandmother was working about her kitchen singing softly to herself. The men of the neighborhood had all gone into town to a muster and she believed the time would pass more quickly if she kept busy. Presently she looked up to behold a large Indian with feathers in his hair and his face well painted. He was sitting in a chair by the window watching her do her work. She tried not to show any excitement and kept on singing and working the best she could, casting occasional glances at the flint lock gun over the door. The Indian stayed for some time and after he had tired of his visit he left in the same quiet manner in which he had come. He next visited the barn and shed and examined everything carefully. After he had gone away, my grandmother ran to the neighbors to spread the news. The women stayed very close together for the remaining part of the day fearing the Indians

might plan some harm as they knew the men were away. But no mischief was done and the men returned home that night to find their women folk safe.

It was a very common sound in the morning to go out and hear the Indians pounding ash, across the lake, to get material to make baskets.

One day Peter Beaulieu and a man were cutting wood on Hedgehog Mountain near Folsom pond and they came upon four brass kettles stored away in kind of a shack. When they returned to town they reported their find. Stephen Stanislaus happened to be standing near and exclaimed, "Kettles belong to Indian. I go get them." His promise was as good as his word for sure enough the next day he took a team of oxen and broke through the snow and brought the kettles back to town. These kettles had been used by the Indians for boiling down sap and have been seen within recent years on the Stanislaus property.

Nearly every one is familiar with the story regarding Joe Dana. It seems that a citizen of a near-by town met him one exceptionally cold winter's day and was surprised to find him so scantily clad and exposed to the weather.

When asked if he was cold he replied, "No, is your face cold?"

The inquirer assured him that it was not.

Then Joe said, "Me all face."



The Present Lisle Littlefield Place
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THE ROAD TO HOME, SWEET HOME

There are roads that lead north,
And roads that lead south,
And roads that lead down to the sea;
There are roads that cost millions,
And roads that cost billions,
But they do not appeal to me.
The road I like best,
Aside from the rest,
Is narrow, and covered with stones,
And each night in dreams
I am traveling, it seems,
Down that road to Home, Sweet Home.
And mother is there, and father is there,
And the old house looks just the same.
And the wild flowers bloom, and the bees hum a tune,
And the air smells sweetly of rain.
There is quiet and peace to be found in the east,
There is real contentment and rest;
And there are soft songs the whole evening long,
While the sun sinks low in the west.
Oh! these memories I cherish,
Down deep in my heart,
And I live them all over each day.
They're better than gold,
Or riches untold,
For no one can take them away.
And when I'm discouraged and lonesome, and blue,
And sitting alone, with nothing to do,
Why, I just close my eyes and let my thoughts roam.
I find myself walking, I hear old friends talking;
I see those dear dim lights, the gleam of my home lights
As I walk down the trail nights, down that beautiful road;
The road of my gay days, the road of my play days,
The road that leads back to my HOME, SWEET HOME.

EARLY FARMING DAYS

During the early part of 1800 beans, corn and potatoes were planted much differently from today. Burnt land was almost essential for good crops. The planter usually wore a kind of apron with a large pocket across the front which contained the seed to be planted. He would walk along with his spud, which was generally made from the limb of a hemlock tree, make two or three holes and insert his seed and so on until all the seed had been planted.

Boys and girls of olden time were taught to milk at the age of eight or ten. It usually happened that the cow would put her foot into a twelve quart pail of milk or kick the pail over as a protest to the new milker.

Haying was usually started soon after the fourth of July. A few patches of grass around the house was mowed first and then next the red top and clover fields were attacked. Before mowing machines came into use haying was very hard work. The farmers often went to the fields soon after sunrise and mowed by hand until after seven o'clock when breakfast was served. At noon the dinner horns could be heard on a clear day sounding first from one place and then another. It always caused a happy feeling to hear the dinner horn and men and horses alike stopped work immediately and prepared for dinner. These old horns have been done away with, but they will never be completely forgotten by those who have been summoned by their melodious call. The afternoons were devoted to raking and getting in hay and five o'clock was the usual hour for supper and then work would be continued until dark. Then the whip-poor-wills sang their lonesome songs.

Farmers were often seen driving them away from their premises because they believed they brought bad luck and death warnings. Night hawks swooped down from the sky and the lightening bugs filled the night air with glittering sparks of fire.

The old settlers, for the greater part, looked forward to the winter months with pleasant anticipation. They would have their homes made warm and cozy and plenty of food stored away in their cellars. There was always a happy excitement that came with the first snow and the first tinkle of sleigh bells. These old strings of bells, consisted of eight or ten in number and were of different sizes. Some of the larger ones weighed three fourths of a pound or more. The bells on different sleighs had different tones and the owners could be told some distance away by the sound of their particular bells.

When the great storms came in winter and the roads were blocked with snow all the oxen and steers in the highway districts were hitched together to an ox-sled with a log chained in front of the runners. The sled was covered with men and boys, while a few went ahead to shovel through the larger drifts to enable the team to pass along. The weight upon the sled pressed it down into the snow instead of plowing it out as is the custom at the present time.

NOTABLE DATES

Winters of 1836 and 1846 were intensely cold in Lincoln and surrounding vicinities.

Boston Harbor was reported covered with ice more than an inch thick for four or five weeks. The British Mail Steamer Brittana which was advertised to sail for Liverpool on Feb. 18, 1845 was completely hemmed in at her berth at East Boston ten days before that date. During the last three or four days of January a great gang of men, with cutting machines attached to horses, opened a wide channel for the ship to pass out to the ocean. The ice was sawed and cut into great blocks each of which was drawn under the remaining ice at the sides of the channel. The great vessel sailed promptly on time in the presence of a great multitude of people who gathered on the ice and loudly cheered the passengers and crew. Many of the young men followed the vessel two or three miles but found it impossible to keep up with her.

In 1854 there was a big drought in Maine and the other northern parts of the United States east of the Mississippi river. People prayed eagerly for rain and when it finally did rain the water came in abundance.

There were droughts also in 1885 and 1891. The farmers suffered much inconvenience and they had to go a long distance sometimes to get water for their cattle.

In 1862 Black Diphtheria was prevalent in the south part of the town. Victims were buried generally during the night of the day death occurred. In some cases, two or three from one family would be buried at one time.

Winters of 1874-1875 will be remembered for the unusual amount of snow. Roads were often blocked and travel impossible in some of the outer sections of the town.