

DALE CARNEGIE'S BEST BOOK

THE UNKNOWN LINCOLN

林肯传 (英文原版 插图珍藏版)



*An
inspiring story,
a startling story,
a story that Lowell Thomas calls
"the most amazing in American
history."*

DALE CARNEGIE

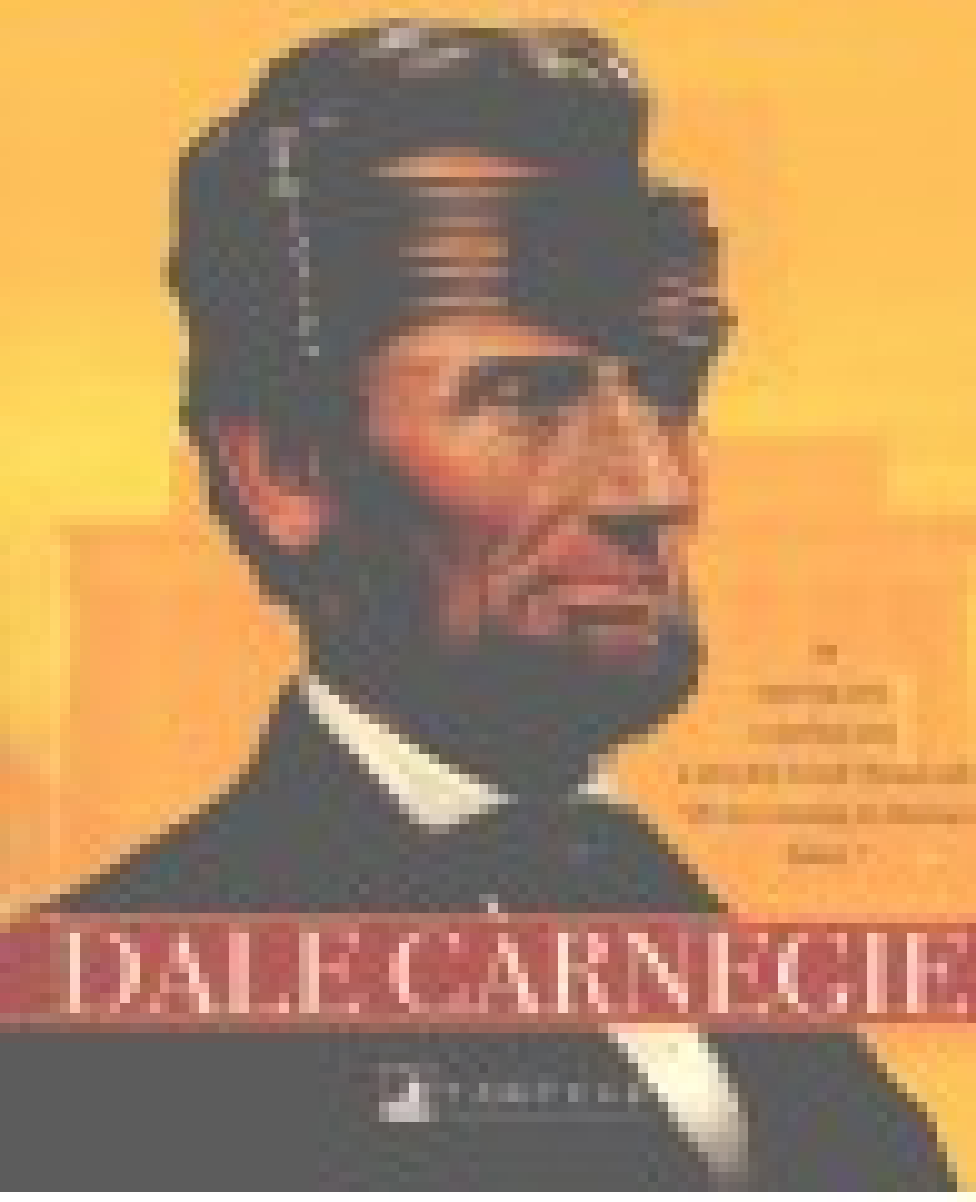


中央编译出版社
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DALE CARNEGIE'S BEST BOOK

THE UNKNOWN LINCOLN

HOW A LITTLE SPEAKER
BECAME A GREAT LEADER



THE
MARTIN LUTHER
KING, JR. BOOK
A DALE CARNEGIE PRODUCTION
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HOW THIS BOOK WAS WRITTEN—AND WHY

One spring day, some years ago, I was breakfasting in the Hotel Dysart, London; and, as usual, I was trying to winnow a bit of American news from the columns of the "Morning Post." Ordinarily I found none, but on that fortunate morning I made a strike rich and unexpected.

The late T. P. O'Connor, reputed "Father of the House of Commons," conducted in those days a column in the "Morning Post" entitled "Men and Memories." On that particular morning, and for several mornings following, "Tay Pay's" column was devoted to Abraham Lincoln—not to his political activities but to the personal side of his career: to his sorrows, his repeated failures, his poverty, his great love for Ann Rutledge, and his tragic marriage to Mary Todd.

I read the series with profound interest—and surprise. I had spent the first twenty years of my life in the Middle West, not far from the Lincoln country; and, in addition to that, I had always been keenly interested in United States history. I should have said that of course I knew Lincoln's life-story; but I soon discovered that I didn't. The fact is that I, an American, had had to come to London and read a series of articles written by an Irishman, in an English newspaper,

before I realized that the story of Lincoln's career was one of the most fascinating tales in all the annals of mankind.

Was this lamentable ignorance peculiar to me? I wondered. But I didn't wonder long, for I soon discussed the subject with a number of my fellow-countrymen, and I discovered that they were in the same boat, that about all they knew about Lincoln was this: that he had been born in a log cabin, had walked miles to borrow books and then read them at night, stretched out on the floor in front of the fireplace; that he split rails, became a lawyer, told funny stories, said that a man's legs ought to be long enough to reach the ground, was called "Honest Abe," debated with Judge Douglas, was elected President of the United States, wore a silk hat, freed the slaves, spoke at Gettysburg, declared that he wished he knew what brand of whisky Grant drank so he could send a barrel of it to his other generals, and was shot by Booth in a theater in Washington.

Aroused by these articles in the "Morning Post," I went over to the British Museum library and read a number of Lincoln books; and the more I read, the more fascinated I became. Finally I caught on fire and I determined to write a book about Lincoln, myself. I knew that I had not the urge, temperament, training, or ability necessary to produce a learned treatise for the benefit of scholars and historians. Besides, I felt there was little need for another book of that kind, for many excellent ones are already in existence. However, after reading many Lincoln volumes, I did feel that there was a genuine need for a short biography that would

tell the most interesting facts about his career briefly and tersely for the average busy and hurried citizen of today. I have tried to write such a book.

I began the work in Europe, and labored over it for a year there and then for two years in New York. Finally I tore up all that I had written and tossed it into the wastebasket. I then went out to Illinois, to write of Lincoln on the very ground where he himself had dreamed and toiled. For months I lived among people whose fathers had helped Lincoln survey land and build fences and drive hogs to market. For months I delved among old books and letters and speeches and half-forgotten newspapers and musty court records, trying to understand Lincoln.

I spent one summer in the little town of Petersburg. I went there because it is only a mile away from the restored village of New Salem, where Lincoln spent the happiest and most formative years of his life. There he ran a mill and a grocery store, studied law, worked as a blacksmith, refereed cock-fights and horse-races, fell in love, and had his heart broken.

Even in the heyday of its glory New Salem never had more than a hundred inhabitants, and its entire existence covered a span of about ten years. Shortly after Lincoln left the village it was abandoned; bats and swallows nested in the decaying cabins, and for more than half a century cows grazed over the spot.

A few years ago, however, the State of Illinois secured the site, made it a public park, and built replicas of the

log cabins that had stood there a hundred years before. So today the deserted village of New Salem looks much as it did in Lincoln's time.

The same white oaks under which Lincoln studied and wrestled and made love are still standing. Every morning I used to take my typewriter and motor up there from Petersburg, and half of the chapters of this book were written under those trees. What a lovely spot in which to work! In front of me flowed the winding Sangamon, and all about me the woods and the hay-fields were musical with the call of the bob-white; and through the trees flashed the color of the blue jay, the yellowhammer, and the redbird. I felt Lincoln there.

I often used to go there alone on summer nights when the whippoorwills were crying in the woods along the banks of the Sangamon, when the moonlight outlined Rutledge's tavern against the sky; and it stirred me to realize that on just such nights, about a hundred years ago, young Abe Lincoln and Ann Rutledge had walked over this same ground arm in arm in the moonlight, listening to the night-birds and dreaming ecstatic dreams that were destined never to come true. Yet I am convinced that Lincoln found here at New Salem the only supreme happiness that he ever knew.

When I came to write the chapter dealing with the death of Lincoln's sweetheart, I put a little folding table and a typewriter in a car and drove out over country roads and through a hog lot and a cow pasture until I reached the quiet,

secluded spot where Ann Rutledge lies buried. It is utterly abandoned now, and overgrown. To get near her grave, it was necessary to mow down the weeds and brush and vines. And there, where Lincoln came to weep, was set down the story of his grief.

Many of the chapters were written in Springfield. Some in the sitting-room of the old home where Lincoln lived for sixteen unhappy years, some at the desk where he composed his first inaugural address, and others above the spot where he came to court and quarrel with Mary Todd.

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PART ONE

I

There was a woman in harrodsburg—it was called Fort Harrod in those days—named Ann McGinty. The old histories record that Ann and her husband brought the first hogs into Kentucky, the first ducks and the first spinning-wheel; and they also declare that she was the first woman ever to make butter out there in the dark and bloody wilder-ness. But her real claim to fame rests upon the fact that she performed an economic and textile miracle. Cotton could be neither grown nor purchased there in the mysterious Indian country, and timber-wolves slaughtered the sheep. So it was well-nigh impossible to find any substance from which clothes could be made. Then the ingenious Ann McGinty found a way of spinning thread and making “McGinty cloth” from two substances that were both plentiful and cheap—nettle lint and buffalo wool.

It was a tremendous discovery, and housewives traveled as far as a hundred and fifty miles to sit in her cabin and learn the new art. And as they spun and wove they talked. And they didn’t always talk about nettle lint and buffalo wool. Frequently the conversation degenerated into gossip, and Ann McGinty’s cabin soon became the community’s acknowledged clearing-house for scandal.

In those days fornication was an indictable offense, and bastardy was a misdemeanor. And evidently there were few other activities in life that gave Ann's shriveled soul more deep and abiding satisfaction than uncovering the story of some suffering girl's error, and then running to the Grand Jury with the news. The records of the Court of Quarter Sessions in Fort Harrod repeatedly tell the pathetic story of some unfortunate girl indicted for fornication "on information of Ann McGinty." Seventeen cases were tried at Harrodsburg in the spring of 1783, and eight were for fornication.

Among these indictments, there is one brought by the Grand Jury on November 24, 1789, and reading as follows:

"Lucy Hanks for fornication."

This wasn't Lucy's first offense. The first had been years before, back in Virginia.

That was a long time ago, and the old records are meager: they give only a few bare facts and no setting for the facts. From them and from other sources, however, a probable story can be reconstructed. The essential elements, at any rate, are well established.

The Virginia home of the Hanks family had been on a narrow strip of land bounded on one side by the Rappahannock River, on the other by the Potomac. On this same narrow strip of land dwelt the Washingtons and the Lees, the Carters and the Fauntleroyes, and many another snuff-and-silk-breeches family. These aristocrats attended services at Christ Church, and so did the poor and illiterate families of the neighborhood such as the Hankses.

Lucy Hanks was present, as usual, on the second Sunday in November, 1781, when General Washington caused a great craning of necks by bringing General La Fayette to church, as his guest. Every one was eager to see the distinguished Frenchman who, only a month before, had helped Washington capture the army of Lord Cornwallis at Yorktown.

After the last hymn had been sung that morning and the benediction pronounced, the parishioners marched by in single file, shaking hands with the two military heroes.

But La Fayette had a predilection for other things besides military tactics and affairs of state. He took a profound interest in beautiful young ladies; and it was his custom, on being introduced to one that appealed to him, to pay her the compliment of a kiss. On this particular morning he kissed seven girls in front of Christ Church; and in doing so he caused more comment than had the third chapter of the Gospel according to St. Luke, which had been read so sonorously by the rector. One of the seven fortunate girls that he kissed was Lucy Hanks.

This kiss started a chain of events that did as much to modify the future of the United States as did all the battles La Fayette fought for us. Perhaps more.

There was a bachelor in the congregation that morning—a rich, aristocratic bachelor who for a long time had known vaguely of the Hanks family, an illiterate, poverty-stricken tribe that moved in a world far below his. But this

morning—of course it may have been pure imagination—he thought that La Fayette put just a trifle more ardor and enthusiasm into the kiss he gave Lucy Hanks than in those he bestowed upon the other girls.

This planter looked up to the French general, both as a military genius and as a connoisseur of beautiful women. So he fell to dreaming now of Lucy Hanks. And when he stopped to think of it, he knew that some of the world's most celebrated beauties had been bred in circumstances as poor as Lucy's—some in circumstances even more humble. There was Lady Hamilton, for example; and Madame DuBarry, the illegitimate child of a poverty-stricken dressmaker. DuBarry herself was almost illiterate, yet she all but ruled France under Louis XV. They were comforting, these historical precedents; and they helped to dignify the bachelor's desires.

This was Sunday. He turned the matter over in his mind all day Monday; and on Tuesday morning he rode over to the dirt-floor cabin that the Hanks tribe occupied and hired Lucy to be a servant in the farm-house on his plantation.

He already owned a number of slaves, and he didn't need another servant. Nevertheless he hired Lucy, gave her some light tasks about the house, and didn't ask her to associate with the slaves.

It was the custom of many of the wealthy families of Virginia at that time to educate their sons in England. Lucy's employer had attended Oxford, and he had brought

back to America a collection of books that he cherished. One day he drifted into the library and found Lucy seated, dust-cloth in hand, poring over the illustrations in a history book.

That was an odd thing for a servant to be doing. But, instead of censuring her, he closed the library door and sat down and read her the captions underneath the pictures, and told her something of what they meant.

She listened with very evident interest; and finally, to his surprise, she confessed that she wanted to learn to read and write.

Just how astonishing that aspiration was in a servant-girl in the year of our Lord 1781, it is difficult now to understand. Virginia at that time did not have any free schools; not half the property-owners of the State could sign their names to a deed, and virtually all of the women made their marks when transferring land.

Yet here was a servant-girl aspiring to read and write. The best people in Virginia would have called it dangerous, if not revolutionary. But the idea appealed to Lucy's employer, and he volunteered to be her tutor. That evening, after supper, he called her into the library and began teaching her the letters of the alphabet. A few evenings later he put his hand over hers as it grasped the quill, and showed her how to form the letters. For a long time after that he taught her, and to his credit let it be recorded that he did a very good job. There is one specimen of her handwriting still in existence, and it shows that she wrote with a bold, self-confident flourish.

There are spirit and personality and character in her handwriting; and she not only used the word "approbation," but spelled it correctly. That was no little achievement at a time when the orthography of men like George Washington was not always flawless.

And when the reading and spelling lessons were finished for the evening Lucy and her tutor sat side by side in the library, looking at the dancing flames in the fireplace, and watching the moon rise over the rim of the forest.

She fell in love with him, and trusted him; but she trusted him too far. . . . Then came weeks of anxiety. She couldn't eat. She hardly slept. She worried a haggard look into her face. When she could no longer deny the truth even to herself she told him. For a moment he considered marrying her. But only for a moment. Family. Friends. Social position. Complications. Unpleasant scenes. . . . No. Besides, he was beginning to tire of her. So he gave her some money and sent her away.

As the months went by people pointed at Lucy and shunned her.

One Sunday morning she created a sensation by shamelessly bringing her baby to church. The good women of the congregation were indignant, and one stood up in the meeting-house and demanded that "that slut be sent away."

That was enough. Lucy's father did not mean to have his daughter insulted any longer. So the Hanks tribe loaded their few earthly possessions into a wagon and traveled out over the Wilderness Road, through the Cumberland Gap,

and settled at Fort Harrod, Kentucky. No one knew them there: they could lie more effectively about the father of Lucy's child.

But in Fort Harrod Lucy was quite as pretty, quite as attractive to men as she had been back in Virginia. She was sought after, and flattered. She fell in love again. This time it was a little easier to stray. Somebody found it out. Somebody told somebody else. Then it was repeated at Ann Mc-Ginty's. And, as we have already recorded, the Grand Jury indicted Lucy for fornication. But the sheriff knew Lucy wasn't the kind of woman to have the law upon; so he stuck the summons in his pocket, and went off deer-hunting and left her alone.

That was in November. In March the court met again. And when it met, a certain woman appeared with further gossip and slander about Lucy and demanded that the hussy be haled into court and made to answer to the charges against her. So another summons was issued; but high-spirited Lucy tore it up and flung it into the face of the man who served it. In May the court would convene again; and Lucy would doubtless have been forced into court at that time, had not a remarkable young man appeared on the scene.

His name was Henry Sparrow. He rode into town, tied his horse in front of her cabin, and went in.

"Lucy," he probably said to her, "I don't give a damn about what these women are saying about you. I love you and want you to be my wife." At any rate, he did ask her to marry him.