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**The Strangely Parallel Careers of Lincoln and Douglas: Speech of
Hon. Henry T. Rainey, of Illinois, in the House of Representatives,
April 5, 1916.**

Henry Thomas Rainey

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JOHN J. EAGAN

Member of Congress,
11th Dist. New Jersey.

The Strangely Parallel Careers of
LINCOLN AND DOUGLAS.

SPEECH

OF

HON. HENRY T. RAINEY,

OF ILLINOIS,

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

Wednesday, April 5, 1916.

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H. R. 8351) to accept a deed of conveyance from the Lincoln Farm Association of the homestead in Kentucky where Lincoln was born.

Mr. RAINEY. Mr. Chairman, I am glad to have the opportunity to vote for this bill. It is appropriate that the birthplace of Abraham Lincoln in a Southern State shall be preserved by the National Government for all time to come. The long journey the boy Lincoln undertook when he left this Kentucky farm ended finally at the village of New Salem, Ill., in the congressional district I have the honor now to represent. To the boy Lincoln and to those who surrounded him and influenced his early career there came in the beginning of the last century the call which came to the South and to the East alike, the call of the West

To the West, to the West, to the land of the free,
Where the great Mississippi rolls down to the sea,
Where a man is a man if he is willing to toil,
And the humblest may share in the fruits of the soil.

Following this call of the West, Lincoln finally, after years of travel, in the early part of the year 1830 reached the frontier village of New Salem, on the Sangamon River, and he spent there the formative years of his life. The village disappeared long ago, but some time I hope to see established on the beautiful bluff along the river, where New Salem stood, another national park; and I hope to see a real Lincoln highway following the route he took, connecting the place of his birth, in the State of Kentucky, with the spot where he spent the formative years of his life, in the State of Illinois, and where his great career commenced.

At the time the call of the West came to the boy Lincoln the call of the West reached another boy living under the shadow of the spire of the village church in the village of Brandon, Vt., and a little while later Douglas started for the Illinois country. He came down the rivers and canals in flat boats, through the long forest avenues in oxcarts, pursuing the same method of travel that Lincoln pursued. And three years after the arrival of Lincoln at New Salem, Douglas reached the frontier village

of Winchester, 20 miles away in Illinois, also in the congressional district that I have the honor to represent. And there, separated by 20 miles of woodland, these two young men spent the formative years of their lives. One of them, frail of stature, acted as auctioneer's clerk, taught school, and studied law in the village of Winchester; the other, robust of body, clerked in a country store, conducted the village post office, fought the Clary's Grove boys, and studied law at the same time in the village of New Salem.

The strangely parallel career of these two young men commenced at that time. They were in the Legislature of Illinois at the same time. They were admitted to practice law at the same time. Lincoln's law partner was a candidate against Douglas for Congress. Lincoln would have been the candidate were it not for this fact. Both served in Congress at the same time, Lincoln following Douglas in this body. Douglas was promoted to the Senate and acquired an international reputation. Lincoln served only one term, and, discouraged, returned again to private life and to the practice of the law. He remained in the practice of the law until 1858, when the strangely parallel career of these two great leaders of men commenced again.

They were both opposing candidates for the United States Senate in the State of Illinois, representing different parties, and together canvassed the entire State. Their debates will remain in the history of debates of this character, famous as long as the English language is spoken. But the result of that campaign was again discouraging to Lincoln. The great Douglas was triumphantly elected.

Two years later they were opposing candidates for the Presidency. The result of that campaign left the towering form of Lincoln standing alone on the horizon. One, a cavalier of the Southland, became the leader of the party which was opposed to the South. The other, a Puritan of Puritans, became the leader of the party which found its greatest strength in the South. They were both loyal to the Union until the very last. One of them died just as the guns rang out along the longest battle line the world had ever known. The other died just at the close of that long war between the States.

In the city of Springfield, Ill., a granite column, the granite coming from the State where Douglas was born, marks the spot where Lincoln lies. In the city of Chicago, where the waters of Lake Michigan ripple on the shore, a white marble column marks the spot where Douglas lies. Some day we can honor Douglas in this country without detracting anything from the position Lincoln occupies and must always occupy. They will rank throughout time as two of our greatest citizens and statesmen. [Applause.]

The CHAIRMAN. The time of the gentleman has expired.

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