

Asa Gere Twisted Ox Tails With Abe Lincoln; Old Vet Recalls Boyhood in Urbana

*Aged Visitor Waded Through Snow to Tolono, When
15, to Enlist in the Civil War*

He twisted ox tails with Abraham Lincoln!

That's the interesting experience of a history-laden era which Asa Gere, 86-year-old Civil War veteran, and former resident of Urbana, likes to recall.

Mr. Gere came East from his farm near Stafford, Kan., last week for the national G. A. R. assembly in Springfield, and then came a bit further to spend the week-end with old friends in Urbana.

At the time of the ox-tail incident, Gere, whose parents operated the old Gere House in Urbana, was 10 years old, he said. Abraham Lincoln, riding the circuit as a struggling attorney, stopped for lodging at the old hostelry.

Trying to Break Ox Calves

"One day he and some other young fellows decided to take a walk and I begged to go along," Mr. Gere said. "We went a little ways into the country and came upon a farmer who was trying to break a pair of ox calves to work.

"You know an ox wears no har-

ness except a yoke. These calves would stand with their heads through the yoke and turn around so that they were facing the wagon.

"Don't you know how to make them work," Mr. Lincoln said to the farmer. "Here, I'll show you." And he took a hold of the ox calf's tail. "Catch ahold there, Asa," he said to me, and I grabbed the other calf by the tail.

"So we twisted knots in the tails and the ox calves bellered and pulled. But even when his tail is twisted, an ox doesn't go very fast, and I got tired of holding on to mine, so I let loose. The animal immediately swung around facing the wagon and pushed the other calf over into the ditch. The whole mess went on top of Lincoln and he got pretty badly mugged up. But he wasn't hurt and when we got him out he just laughed.

"When I was nine years old Lincoln took me on his knee and

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Gere Twisted Ox Tails With Abe Lincoln!

*Aged Visitor, Formerly
of Urbana, Recalls
Boyhood Days*

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asked me what I wanted to be when I grew up," Mr. Gere recalled. "He said: 'You don't want to be a lawyer like me, because they are no good. And you don't want to be a doctor because even if you were you couldn't help me any. I feel too bad. So what do you want to be.'

"I told him that I guessed I wanted to be a printer, because the boy that was going with my sister was a printer and I thought that he was the smartest man in the world. Mr. Lincoln laughed and said:

Walked to Tolono

"All right, if you want to be a printer, you get a job as apprentice next year when you are 10 years old. Then you can work up and be a great printer someday.' Sure enough I did get a job as printer the next year, but it wasn't long until Lincoln was elected President and the Civil War came. A bunch of us school boys ran away from home in Urbana and walked to Tolono the first winter of the war. We were only 15 years old but we waded snow to get to

800 More Workers to Be Put to Work in Michigan Factory

CHICAGO, Sept. 26.—(AP)—Eight hundred employes will be put back to work at the plants of the Reynolds Spring Company in Jackson, Mich., between now and Oct. 15, Charles G. Munn, president, announced today. Three hundred and fifty employes were re-hired during September. Since Aug. 26, the Reynolds Bakelite Plant has been operating seven days a week on a 24-hour basis each day, and the company expects to continue this rate.

Increased operations are a result of introduction of a new line of products manufactured in a wide variety of forms.

Tolono. We joined the army, and went clear through the war."

Soon after the war Mr. Gere went to Kansas where he set up a homestead claim on a large farm. He has made his headquarters on this farm since that time. But he has had other adventures.

He went west in the gold rush, made a good bit of money before he sold out his interest in a paying mine. During this time he had the opportunity to join up with a large party of plainsmen and settlers who were crossing the Indian country. He refused, and crossed the prairie with one companion. The large party was massacred, while he and his companion escaped.