

The Lincoln-Haycraft Letters

Springfield, Ill. May 28, 1860
 Hon. Saml. Haycraft
 Dear Sir:
 Your recent letter, with
 out date, is received. Also the copy
 of your speech on the contemplated
 Daniel Boone Monument, which I
 have not yet had time to read.
 In the main you are quite about
 my history. My father was Thomas
 Lincoln, and Mrs. Sally Johnston, was
 his second wife - You are mistaken
 about my mother - her maiden
 name was Nancy Barkin - I was not
 born at Elizabethtown, but my first
 child, a daughter, but
 years since then myself, and now
 long since deceased, was I was
 born Feb. 12, 1809, near where Booye
 village now is, then in Hardin County.
 I do not think I ever saw you,
 though I may well know who you
 are - so well that I recognize you
 your handwriting, or opening your let-
 ter, before I saw the signature. My
 recollection is that Ben. Nelson was
 first blunt, that you succeeded him
 that Jack Thomas and Williams;
~~and that your handwriting was all~~
~~my doubts - Am I right?~~
 My father has been dead near ten
 years, but my step-mother (Mrs. Johnson)
 is still living -
 I am really very glad of your letter,
 and shall be pleased to receive
~~any more from you~~
 Yours very truly
 A. Lincoln

Lincoln Letters Hold Answers To Early Life In Kentucky



Haycraft

Courtesy of Louis A. Warren Lincoln Library
 and Museum, Fort Wayne, Indiana

Samuel Haycraft, Jr., of Elizabethtown, received five letters from Abraham Lincoln in the year 1860 which hold great historical value in telling the story of the early family life of the sixteenth President. Lincoln established without question documentary evidence concerning his parents and the place as well as the date of his birth. His writings also had political significance attributed to certain statements made regarding a visit to Kentucky. Lincoln had already heard unfavorable reports concerning his chances in Kentucky in reference to his presidential bid. Lincoln's witty remarks on the subject of a likely reaction of a visit by him to the area came into public view during the campaign and Elizabethtown suddenly became a topic for pre-election campaign propaganda.

Springfield, Ill., Aug. 16, 1860

Hon. Samuel Haycraft
 Mr. Dear Sir:

A correspondent of the New York Herald, who was here a week writing to that paper represents me as saying I have been invited to visit Kentucky, but that I suspected it was a trap to inveigle me into Kentucky in order to do violence to me.

This is wholly a mistake. I said no such thing. I do not remember, but I did possibly mention my correspondence with you, but very certainly I was not guilty of stating or intimating a suspicion of any intended violence, deception, or other wrong against me by you or any other Kentuckian.

Thinking the HERALD correspondence must reach you, I think it due to myself to enter my protest against this part of it.

I scarcely think the correspondent was malicious, but rather that he misused what was said.

Yours very truly,
 A. LINCOLN

Springfield, Ill., Nov. 13, 1860

Hon. Samuel Haycraft
 Mr. Dear Sir:

Yours of the 9th is just received. I can only answer briefly. Rest assured fully that the good people of the South, who will put themselves in the same temper and mood toward me which you do, will find no cause to complain of me.

While I cannot, as yet, make any committal as to offices, I sincerely hope I may find it in my power to oblige the friends of Mr. Wintersmith.

Yours very truly,
 A. LINCOLN



Lincoln

Courtesy of Lincoln Memorial University at
 Harrogate, Tennessee

Springfield, Ill., Aug. 23, 1860

Hon. Samuel Haycraft
 Mr. Dear Sir:

Yours of the 19th just received. I now fear I may have given you some uneasiness by my last letter. I did not mean to intimate that I had, to any extent, been involved or embarrassed by you; nor yet to draw from you anything to relieve myself from difficulty. My only object was to assure you that I had not, as represented by the HERALD correspondent, charged you with an attempt to inveigle me into Kentucky to do me violence. I believe no such thing of you or of Kentuckians generally; and I dislike to be represented to them as slandering them in any way.

Yours very truly,
 A. LINCOLN

Haycraft's long public service started the year of Abraham Lincoln's birth when he began to write in the office of the County Court Clerk and the Circuit Court Clerk of Hardin County. In this office Haycraft became acquainted with Thomas Lincoln, who, due to numerous land suits and his positions with the county, frequented the court house on several occasions. It is possible that Haycraft, Jr., may have seen young Abraham when his father came to Elizabethtown on business; but Haycraft, a prolific writer, never recorded any such event.



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Private
 Springfield, Ill. June 4, 1860
 Hon. Saml. Haycraft.
 Dear Sir:
 Your recent letter, dated
 May 31st is received. Your suggestion that
 a visit to the place of my nativity
 might be pleasant to me - indeed
 it would - But would it be safe?
 Would not the people seize me?
 The place or those streets mentioned
 by Mr. Reed, I remember very well, but
 I was not born there - As my parents
 have told me, I was born on Nolin
 very much near Georgetown - (I will then
 the Knob Creek place in My earliest
 recollection, however, is of the Knob Creek
 place -
 Like you, I belonged to the Whig
 party from its origin to its close - I then
 belonged to the American party organization,
 but, nor even to a party called a
 party, though I hope I never see, or
 see have been, less devoted to the Union
 than you, or any other patriot man.
 It may not be altogether without
 interest to let you know that my wife
 is a daughter of the Robert S. Woods, of
 Lexington Ky - and that a half sister
 of hers is the wife of Ben. Hardin
 Nelson, born and raised in your town
 but residing at Louisville now, as I believe.
 Yours very truly,
 A. Lincoln.

LINCOLN - FAMILY and FRIENDS