

## The Lincoln File : From the Papers of John G. Nicolay

Lincoln file of material gathered by the Nicolays for their published works relating to Abraham Lincoln; memoranda, occasional correspondence, drafts of chapters and articles, newspaper and article clippings, printed matter and transcripts of diaries and notes of Lincoln's associates.

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Transcripts, 1860-1865.pdf



# Lincoln Ancestry

Mem.

For matter relating to the Lincoln ancestry see chapter LVIII of the "History of the manufacture of iron in all ages" by James M. Swank. There is also a little abstract in an editorial in "The Bulletin of Feb. 20 1895 published weekly for the "American Iron & Steel Association" at no. 261 South 4<sup>th</sup> St. Phila. Jas. M. Swank, editor and publisher.

(Mem. sent to Hay)

March 11, 1895.

ably meant Rockingham County and not Rockbridge



Extract from "Iron in All Ages" by  
James M. Swank - Chap. LVIII "Washington and Lincoln  
the descendants of Colonial Ironmasters" pp 504-508

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Abraham Lincoln's paternal ancestry was also  
identified with the manufacture of iron. It is not  
so generally known as it should be that his ancestors  
on his father's side were natives of Massachusetts and  
were among its pioneer ironmasters. In Johnson's  
Cyclopaedia there is preserved a biographical sketch  
of Abraham Lincoln, written in 1859 with his own  
hand, in which occurs the following reference to his  
father's family.

"My paternal grandfather, Abraham Lincoln,  
emigrated from Rockbridge County Virginia, to  
Kentucky about 1781 or 1782, where a year or two  
later he was killed by Indians - not in battle, but  
by stealth, when he was laboring to open a farm in  
the forest. His ancestors, who were Quakers, went  
to Virginia from Berks County Pennsylvania. An  
effort to identify them with the New England family  
of the same name ended in nothing more definite  
than a similarity of Christian names in both  
families, such as Enoch, Levi, Mordecai, Sal-  
omon, Abraham, and the like." Mr Lincoln pro-  
bably meant Rockingham County and not Rockbridge



County.

Researches which have been made since Abraham Lincoln became President, clearly establish the fact that the head of the American branch of his father's family, Samuel Lincoln, emigrated from Norwich England, to Massachusetts, whence two brothers, his grandsons, emigrated to Pennsylvania, one of whom was the President's great-great-grandfather.

A communication to the Hingham Journal of October 10, 1879, says that among the early settlers of Hingham Massachusetts, which was settled in 1635, were seven persons named Lincoln who became <sup>the</sup> heads of families. Four of these were named Thomas. Samuel Lincoln, who came to Hingham in 1637, had four sons, Samuel, Daniel, Mordecai, and Thomas. Mordecai Lincoln, born at Hingham on June 14, 1657, followed the trade of a blacksmith at Hull, from which he removed to Scituate, where "he built a spacious house and was a large contributor toward the erection of the iron works at Round Brook" in 1703. These Round Brook iron works comprised nothing more ambitious than a Catalan forge, which made wrought iron from the ore.

Mr George Lincoln, of Hingham, informed us in a letter dated on October 28, 1879, that the Round Brook iron works were located near



the line dividing Scituate from Cohasset at a place called Conahasset, and that Mordecai and Daniel Lincoln were owners of the works. Cohasset until 1770 was the easterly precinct of Hingham, and Scituate was also near the Hingham boundary line. Mr Lincoln also furnished us with abstracts of some deeds recorded in Plymouth and Suffolk counties proving the connection of Mordecai and Daniel Lincoln with the Round Brook iron works, which are styled "a forge or iron works." From one of these abstracts we take the following circumstantial statement: "Dec. 21, 1713 George Jackson of Marblehead, sells to Mordecai Lincoln of Scituate, 'blacksmith,' two parcels of salt-meadow land lying and being in Cohasset within the township of Hingham," one of which is bounded "east by a brook or river called Round Brook etc." Other abstracts show that Mordecai Lincoln was a prime mover in the erection of the Round Brook iron works, and that it was from him that Daniel Lincoln obtained a one-eighth interest in the works.

Mordecai Lincoln's first wife was Sarah Jones, the daughter of Abraham and Sarah Jones, of Hall. Their sons were Mordecai Jr., born April 24, 1686; Abraham, born January 13 1688-9; and Isaac, born October 24, 1691. The Hingham



Journal says that Mordecai Jr. and his brother Abraham removed from Scituate "it is supposed" to Pennsylvania, for their names afterwards appear among a list of taxables in Exeter township Berks County, Pennsylvania. But first at least one of the brothers emigrated to New Jersey.

Nicolay and Hay state in their life of Lincoln that Mordecai Lincoln removed from Massachusetts to Monmouth New Jersey, and thence to Amity township, Berks County, Pennsylvania.

He died there in 1736. His brother Abraham finally settled in Springfield township, Chester County Pennsylvania, as early as 1729. Like his father he was a blacksmith. He died in 1745. The townships of Oley, Amity, and Exeter, in Berks County, are contiguous, and in their early records the name of Lincoln often appears.

Monmouth County, New Jersey, was settled in part by a colony of Massachusetts people, who erected iron works at Tintern Falls in the township of Shrewsbury about 1676. It is probable that the Lincoln brothers emigrated to this County because Massachusetts people were there already and because they were themselves iron workers.

Mordecai Lincoln, who emigrated to Berks County, Pennsylvania, and died there in 1736, and who was a Quaker, left three sons,



John, Mordecai, and Thomas, and probably, as a communication in the Philadelphia American says, a posthumous son, named Abraham. A posthumous child was provided for in Mordecai Lincoln's will. John emigrated to Rockingham County Virginia, about 1750. He had a son Abraham, who emigrated to Kentucky and was killed by the Indians, as the President states. This Abraham was the grandfather of the President, his father being Thomas Lincoln. It will be remembered that there were many Thomas Lincolns at Hingham, and that the father-in-law of Mordecai Lincoln of Scituate was Abraham Jones. The frequent appearance of the names of Mordecai, Abraham, and Thomas at various periods in the history of the Massachusetts Lincolns and their descendants will be noticed by the reader.

An Abraham Lincoln of Berks County, who was either the posthumous son of Mordecai Lincoln or a grandson, was long prominent as a politician. He was one of the County Commissioners of Berks from 1773 to 1779, and from 1782 to 1786 he was a member of the General Assembly of Pennsylvania. A letter from Reading, published in the Philadelphia Press, says that after his service in the Assembly Abraham Lincoln was a justice of the peace



and ex-officio one of the justices of the quarter sessions. "His signature, which can be found attached to various ancient documents in the commissioners' office, indicates that he was a man of affairs, and it is not unlike that of his illustrious namesake which is attached to the proclamation of emancipation." He was a member of the State Convention of 1787 which ratified the Federal Constitution of that year, and which he voted against, and he was an influential member of the State Constitutional Convention of 1790. He died in 1806 in his 70<sup>th</sup> year, having been born in 1736.

The connection of the Lincoln family with the manufacture of iron does not entirely end with Mordecai and Abraham who emigrated from Massachusetts to Pennsylvania. About 1775 a furnace was built on Mossey Creek, Augusta county Virginia, by Henry Miller and Mark Bird of Berks county, Pennsylvania, Bird soon selling his interest to Miller. The furnace was called Miller's furnace. Jefferson mentions it in his Notes on the State of Virginia. J. Marshall McCue, Esq. of Fishersville, Augusta county, Virginia, writes us an interesting letter concerning the early history of this furnace. He says: "Miller married Hannah, the oldest of seven children of William Winter and Annie



Boone, the latter a cousin of Daniel Boone. Nancy, the second, married George Crawford, of this county, and Elizabeth, the fourth, married Abraham Lincoln, the grandfather of President Lincoln. Miller carried on the furnace successfully until some time in March or April 1796, when he died. He left four sons and four daughters. The oldest son, Captain Samuel Miller, carried on the furnace energetically up to his death, which occurred in 1830. He built a forge, called Mt. Vernon, on South river, near Weyer's Cave, and two miles from Port Republic, in 1810." It will be seen from this letter that the grandmother of President Lincoln on his father's side was Elizabeth Winter, the sister-in-law of Henry Miller, and that Captain Samuel Miller was a cousin of President Lincoln's father. The Boones were Quaker neighbors of the Lincoln's residing in Berks county Pennsylvania. The communication in the Philadelphia American from which we have already quoted says that George Boone was one of the trustees named in Mordecai Lincoln's will, and was the uncle of Daniel Boone.

A communication in a recent issue of the Philadelphia Ledger says that there is an Abraham Lincoln still living in Pennsylvania. He lives in Caernarvon township, Lancaster county, about fourteen miles from Reading, and is



about 80 years old. "He lives on a large and productive farm, has a family, never had any ambition for office, and in general appearance he is not unlike President Lincoln, having the same large, erect, gaunt form, and retaining to a remarkable degree some of the general characteristics of his famous relative and namesake." Other Lincolns are still living in Berks county.

It may not be inappropriate to mention, as an additional historical link, that Nancy Hanks, the mother of President Lincoln, was also descended from a Berks County family which emigrated first to Virginia, and afterwards to Kentucky.



Department of Labor,  
Washington.

May 16<sup>th</sup>, 1892.

Hon. J. G. Nicolay:

Sir:

Referring to President Lincoln's earliest ancestor mentioned in your great work, I wish to say that today I came upon an authentic record of the migration of that ancestor, Samuel Lincoln, from England to New England: - his age, condition, companions, birth-place, date and place of embarkation, and name of the ship and captain.

I presume it has all been in your hands; but thinking it might possess some possible newness or interest, I drop you this note with address.

Respectfully,

A. W. Barber.

Dept. of Labor.



The book is in possession of  
Hon Allen-Ralph Bushnell  
of Madison Iowa (Representative  
3d District in Congress)

## The Original Lists

### Persons of Quality

Emigrants; Religious Exiles; Political Rebels;  
Serving Men sold for a Term of Years; Apprentices;  
Children Stolen; Maidens Pressed; and Others,  
who went from Great Britain to the  
American ~~Plantations~~ Plantations

1600 - 1700

With their ages, the localities where they formerly  
lived in the Mother Country, the Names of the Ships in which they  
embarked, and other interesting Particulars.

From MSS preserved in the State Paper Department of Her  
Majesty's Public Record Office, England

Edited by  
John Camden Hotten

London:

Chatto and Windus, Publishers.

1874



(Page 287)

A Register of the .....  
of such persons a .....  
and upwards and have t .....  
to passe into forraigne partes from .....  
march 1637 to the 29<sup>th</sup> \* day of [S]ept.  
by vertue of a commission granted to  
mr thomas mayhew gentleman.

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\* [The list does not go beyond the 19<sup>th</sup> day of September 1637;  
the above date must therefore be an error. x x x The  
dots indicate parts of the endorsement eaten away by age]



(page 289)

[A Register of Persons About to Pass into Foreign  
Parts. 1637]

These people went to New England: with William  
Andrewes: of Ipswich Mr of the: John: and Dorothy:  
of Ipswich and With William Andrewes his Son.  
Mr of the Rose: of Yarmouth

\* \* \*  
x x x

(page 290)

Aprill the 18<sup>th</sup> / 1637.

\* \* \*  
\* \* \*

..... Rances Lawes: borne in Norwich in  
Norff (Norfolk) and their living Weanear / aged ...  
..... and Liddea: his Wife / aged / 49 yeares / With  
one Child Marey: and 2 servants. Samuell: ~~and~~  
Lincolne: aged 18 yeares / and Anne: Smith:  
aged. 19 yeares ar desirous to passe for New-  
England to inhabitt ///

[The dots here and after indicate parts of the original  
MS. eaten away by age or damp.]



1861  
Lincoln Genealogy

See in Chi. Trib. April 14, 1883  
a two column record  
by Mr. Samuel Shackford  
of Winnetka.



OMAHA, NEB.,

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of that branch of the family that was in the rebel army, and he was a son of one of the above named brothers and quite a young man.

He was a brave dashing officer and did scouting, skirmishing and picked duty at different times for Gen. Jackson, Rosser and Early and was in the battles of Bull Run, Antietam, Cross Keys, Port Republic and many minor engagements, but his was a sort of independent company and I think not regularly attached to any command.

Yours Truly

W. R. Homan



OMAHA, NEB.,

June 8<sup>th</sup> 1894

Mr. G. Nicolay Esq  
Washington

Sir: In foot note page 4 Vol. 1  
of your Lincoln history, I think  
Abraham Lincoln should read Albert  
Lincoln. At breaking out of war  
there lived at Lacey Spring Rocking-  
ham County Va, Abraham, Jacob  
and Frank Lincoln, three brothers  
who owned a large plantation and  
many slaves, My father Joseph W.  
Homan lived also at Lacey Spring  
and I was born there. Before  
the war my father was a Whig  
but in fall of 1861 he was drafted  
into infantry, but not wishing  
to serve in infantry he volunteer-  
ed into Cavalry and served 2 years  
and 4 months in Albert Lincoln's  
Company. This was the only Lincoln



Deerfield Mass June 13 1894

W. R. Homan Esq  
Omaha Neb.

Dear Sir: Accept the thanks of Col.  
Hay and myself for your kind letter of June  
8<sup>th</sup> and the information you send therein in  
relation to the name of one of the Virginia  
Lincolns who served in the Confederate Army.

Your obedient Servant



## Ancestry

Mr. John Bell Brownlow calls this Nov. 18<sup>th</sup> 1886 and relates that on a visit to Greeneville Tennessee he was shown a family Bible at the residence of Andrew Johnson in which is recorded that the marriage ceremony of Andrew Johnson and Miss McCardle was performed by a Justice of the Peace whose name was Mordecai Lincoln. Upon inquiry Mr Brownlow was informed that Mordecai Lincoln was himself a native of Virginia who had in the early days emigrated to East Tennessee.

This is a curious coincidence considering the relations which occurred afterwards between President Lincoln and Vice President Johnson.



## Lincoln's Ancestry

Papers relating thereto

1. Letter of Hon Gideon Weller to R. T. Lincoln
2. " " " " " " "
3. Obituary Notice (published in the Bellefontaine Pa. "Democratic Watchman") of Mrs. Wm Potter youngest child of Wm Winter, whose eldest daughter Hannah, by his first wife Ann Boone (sister of Daniel Boone) married Abraham Lincoln the grandfather of the late President.



Correspondence

Hon. Gideon Welles to Robert T. Lincoln Esq

Copy

Hartford, 25<sup>th</sup> June 1875.

Dear Sir: I, a few days since became acquainted with a piece of history connected with the Lincoln family, interesting to me, and more so to yourself, if not already acquainted with the facts.

Mrs. Potter, the wife of William Potter, a distinguished lawyer whom I well knew, in Central Pennsylvania, died on the 30th of May last, at a very advanced age. She was the great aunt of your father. Her maiden name was Winters, and she was the youngest child of William Winters, who had nineteen children.

The facts are these: William Winters originally of Berks County Penn<sup>a</sup>, but subsequently of Lycoming county, married in 1747, Ann Boone, a sister of Daniel Boone, famous in the early annals of



of Kentucky. She was his first wife and by her he had eleven children. His eldest daughter Hannah was married in Rockingham County Virginia, to Abraham Lincoln, the grandfather of the late President.

After the death of his first wife William Winter married in 1774 Ellen Campbell who bore him eight children, of whom Mrs. William Potter was the youngest. William Winter died in 1794 at Williamsport Penna., when his widow was licensed to keep a public house. One of the daughters, Mary, married Charles Huston, who for a number of years was an eminent Judge of the Supreme Court of Penna. Ellen, another daughter married Thomas Burnside, also a Judge of the Supreme Court, and had also been a member of Congress from Penna. One of his sons married a daughter of Simon Cameron, Senator. I need not name others, but Lucy, the youngest daughter recently deceased,



YEAS.	NAMES.	NAYS.
	Abbott.....	
	Bayard.....	
	Bradley.....	
	Clifford.....	
	Edmunds.....	
	Field.....	
	Frelinghuysen -	
	Garfield.....	
	Hoar.....	
	Huntton.....	
	Miller.....	
	Morton.....	
	Payne.....	
	Strong.....	
	Thurman.....	

These matters may all be known to you, though they were not to your father, with whom I had two or three conversations concerning his family history. His biographers also, were evidently ignorant of the facts here related. If unknown to you they should be communicated to Nicolay and Hay, who are preparing memoirs of your father's life.

The families of Huston, Burnside and Potter were well known to me as among the first and most respectable in Penn<sup>a</sup> — and I may say the same of the Harrisons and Alexanders with whom I was less acquainted. I



YEAS.	NAMES.	NAYS.
	Abbott . . . . .	
	Bayard . . . . .	
	Bradley . . . . .	
	Clifford . . . . .	
	Edmunds . . . . .	
	Field . . . . .	
	Frelinghuysen . . . . .	
	Garfield . . . . .	
	Hoar . . . . .	
	Hunton . . . . .	
	Miller . . . . .	
	Morton . . . . .	
	Payne . . . . .	
	Strong . . . . .	
	Thurman . . . . .	