

Abraham Lincoln In Cincinnati

Cincinnati Civil War Round Table, 24 October 2009

Long term CCWRT members are well versed in the lore of Lincoln's three documented trips to Cincinnati. It is the mystery of an alleged earlier trip to Cincinnati that put some of our membership in detective mode. During a recent CCWRT meeting, our president declared that Abraham Lincoln had also visited Cincinnati on December 24, 1849. This announcement was based on an article which appeared in the April, 1951 *Bulletin of the Historical and Philosophical Society of Ohio* (Volume 9, Number 2) titled "Cincinnati Reminiscences of Lincoln" by Michael G. Heintz. This article and a similar reference in Daniel J. Ryan's *Lincoln and Ohio* (1923, Ohio Historical Society) reference a letter written by Lincoln to Judge Peter Hitchcock of the Ohio Supreme Court on the status of the Linus Logan and the Steamboat *Clipper* case which had been forwarded to the Supreme Court of Ohio for review.

Since the article contained no source footnoting the Lincoln visit other than referencing this letter, doubt was cast on the veracity of the letter by CCWRT member Dan Reigle who led a search effort to see if the letter to Judge Hitchcock could be found. Assistance came by way of Roger Billings, also a CCWRT member. Mr. Billings referenced Volume VIII, page 447 of *The Collected Works of Lincoln* indicating that the letter sent to Judge Hitchcock is thought to be a forgery.

This finding has since been confirmed by The Lincoln Library in Springfield, IL. They referenced *Bulletin No. 21 of the Abraham Lincoln Association* from December, 1930. The second article of that publication is "Four Spurious Lincoln Letters." The article explains the letter sent to Hitchcock was not authored by Abraham Lincoln as was first thought, but was instead written by Timothy D. Lincoln, a famous admiralty lawyer from Cincinnati. To view the bulletin from the Abraham Lincoln Association in digital form, go to Google/search engine and type Issue No. 21 of the Bulletin of the Abraham Lincoln Association.

This is the missing piece of the puzzle our sleuths were looking for to either embrace or discard the often-told story of that fourth Lincoln visit to Cincinnati. A special thanks to Dan Reigle, Roger Billings, and Bob Limoseth for solving this mystery and putting this erroneous story to an end.

For the record, the only three visits Abraham Lincoln made to the Queen City, as documented by *The Lincoln Log: A Daily Chronology of the Life of Abraham Lincoln* (www.thelincolnlog.org) compiled by the Lincoln Sesquicentennial Commission with the cooperation and support of the Abraham Lincoln Association are as follows:

- (1) September 20-26, 1855 for the McCormick v. Manny trial;
- (2) September 17-18, 1859 for his Ohio campaign speech following up on the Lincoln-Douglas debates;
- (3) February 12-13, 1861 on his way to Washington to be sworn in as the nation's 16th President.