

Collection #
M 0567

ABRAHAM LINCOLN PAPERS, 1840–1866

[Collection Information](#)

[Biographical Sketch](#)

[Scope and Content Note](#)

[Contents](#)

[Cataloging Information](#)

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19 December 1990

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29 July 2003

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COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF 1 document case
COLLECTION:

COLLECTION DATES:	1840–66
PROVENANCE:	Collection artificially created from several sources.
RESTRICTIONS:	Originals are stored in secure restricted area and are viewable by advance appointment only. Facsimiles are located on normal shelf location and are not restricted.
COPYRIGHT:	
REPRODUCTION RIGHTS:	Permission to reproduce or publish material in this collection must be obtained from the Indiana Historical Society.
ALTERNATE FORMATS:	None
RELATED HOLDINGS:	Lew Wallace Papers (M 0292); Arthur G. Mitten Collection (M 0211); Robert H. Milroy (M 0209); Lorenz Schumm (M 0249); Civil War Miscellany (M 0496).
ACCESSION NUMBERS:	1990.0556, 1990.0583
NOTES:	Original items are stored in secure storage. User needs to make an appointment to view. Photocopies of all items are housed in normal sequential order in vault and may be viewed at any time.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Abraham Lincoln (1809-65) was the 16th president of the United States. Born in Hardin (now Larue) County, Kentucky, he moved to Indiana in 1816 and to Macon County, Illinois, fourteen years later. With little formal education, Lincoln settled in New Salem, Illinois, where he clerked in a store, managed a mill, split rails, and studied law in his leisure hours.

He was elected to the Illinois state legislature in 1834 where he served for seven years. In 1837 he moved to Springfield, Illinois, where he practiced law with J. T. Stuart (1837-41) and with Stephen T. Logan and William H. Herndon (from 1844). Lincoln served one term in the U.S. House of Representatives (1847-49) after which time he was away from politics as a prominent Illinois circuit-riding attorney.

In 1854 Lincoln reentered political life as a member of the newly-formed Republican Party. He was a candidate for the party's nomination for vice-president in 1856 and was nominated for the U.S. Senate in 1858, opposing Stephen A. Douglas, at which time he took a stand against slavery. Lincoln was nominated for and elected president of the United States in 1860. With his election, slave states began seceding and Fort Sumter was fired upon. Lincoln then issued the call for volunteers and began a blockade of the Confederacy. Among the most noteworthy events of his Civil War presidency were the Emancipation Proclamation (1 January 1863) freeing slaves in the states in rebellion and the Gettysburg address (19 November 1863) dedicating the national cemetery in that town.

Reelected president in 1864, Lincoln was shot by John Wilkes Booth five days after Lee surrendered at Appomattox ending the Civil War. He died the next day, 15 April 1865.

Source:

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The collection includes a variety of Lincoln-related materials, most of them written by or addressed to Abraham Lincoln.

A leaf from Lincoln's sum book, although undated, possibly dates from 1824–26. After Lincoln's assassination, William Henry Herndon, Lincoln's law partner and biographer, met with Lincoln's stepmother, Sarah, in Coles County, Illinois. She mentioned that there was possibly two copybooks of Lincoln's left—one for mathematics and the other for literary works. The sum book was located and Herndon took the book and distributed its remaining pages. It is believed that the sum book once held fifty 9" by 12" leaves that were sewn with string along one of the edges of the book. This leaf is one of possibly ten leaves surviving in the U.S. today, and was possibly the second or fourth leaf in the sum book.

A legal document in Lincoln's hand discussing the case Trotter v. Thomas, dates from 1840. The document speaks of a case involving an Illinois circuit court's orator, George Trotter. Jesse B. Thomas, Jr. is the defendant to the bill of clemency who had two promissory notes in writing. The first note was made for the sum of \$700 and the second for \$94.08, at twelve percent interest. Thomas executed a mortgage deed on 12 October 1838 to secure the payment of the note. Lincoln writes that Trotter says that the notes remain unpaid. Lincoln requests that Trotter will grant Thomas relief for the payment. The case was filed on 1 July 1840.

On 9 July 1849, Lincoln wrote a letter to Thomas Ewing (1789–1871), then secretary of the interior. Lincoln discusses some papers that were in his file in Washington, D.C. Ewing had sent the sealed package of documents to Lincoln. When Lincoln received the package, he was to find letters from Richard W. Thompson and Elisha Embree, congressmen from the Wabash districts in Indiana. Lincoln could not find the letters, so in his letter to Ewing, he asks if he can get the original documents out of the file. He requests these letters because of the high standing of the writers and because they speak of his character and standing at home. A note at the end of the letter says Lincoln's request was answered on 18 July 1849.

In a short letter from Lincoln in Springfield, Illinois, to Schuyler Colfax (1823-85) dated 31 May 1860, Lincoln writes: "Yours of the 26th is received; and so far from regarding it as presumptuous, I should be right glad to have one from you every mail. Bear this in mind, and act accordingly. You will readily understand and appreciate why I write only very short letters."

Indiana governor O. P. Morton (1823–77) writes a letter on 23 April 1861 from Indianapolis to Lincoln. Morton recommends Will Cumback (1829–1905) as paymaster to the War Department. Morton relays that Cumback was a member of the 34th Congress from the Indiana 11th District. He had a high reputation for intelligence, a devotion to business, and a moral courage. Lincoln responds on 30 April 1861 on the back of the letter: "Let Mr. Cumback be appointed a Paymaster, when it can be done without violation of previous committals."

A letter from John J. Speed to Josh[ua] [Speed] dated 19 November 1861, from Louisville, Kentucky, states that General [Lew] Wallace has heard that the authorities may disregard the courtesy of allowing a brigadier general to appoint his staff. Wallace gave the job of confirming his appointments to John Speed, who is in turn giving the duty to Josh Speed. He writes that Wallace has good, well-disciplined troops. The letter was passed to Lincoln, who writes a note on the back: "Gen. Lew Wallace appreciation for appointments for his staff. Respectfully submitted to the War Department. A.Lincoln December 4, 1861."

In a letter of Nathan Kimball, brigadier general, to Lincoln, 13 October 1862, Kimball requests that Lincoln promote Colonel William Harrow, who entered the service as major of the 14th Indiana Volunteers. Kimball has the highest regards for Harrow as an officer and a gentleman. The regiment has always ranked among the first in the service

because of its effectiveness. On 16 October 1862, Lincoln endorses the letter and submits it to the secretary of war.

Governor O. P. Morton, writing in Indianapolis, 17 January 1864, brings to Lincoln's attention the promotions of several colonels from Indiana. Morton first mentions Colonel John L. Wilder of the 17th Indiana Regiment and Colonel Silas Calgrove of the 27th Indiana Regiment, who are recommended by the highest military authority. Morton also speaks of Colonel William Grose of the 36th Indiana and Colonel Benjamin F. Scribner of the 38th Indiana Regiment, who are both officers of great merit who have been highly recommended for their long and gallant service. Morton hopes that these officers will receive their entitled promotions. Lincoln then directs the secretary of war to promote the officers, should any vacancies arise.

A letter to Lincoln dated 8 July 1864 is signed by Thomas S. Crowe of Jeffersonville, Indiana; John L. McKee of Louisville, Kentucky; Robert J. L. Matthews; J. P. Safford of New Albany, Indiana; and A. H. Lackey. These men were all Presbyterian clergy, and they write to Lincoln to recommend the appointment of Reverend S. S. Potter of New Albany, Indiana, to the office of chaplain. They write that Potter is an ordained minister in good and regular standing who is sympathetic to the government. They also feel that Potter has an excellence of Christian character and a thorough conscientiousness. The men also note that he has already performed volunteer service in the hospitals in New Albany. On 8 July 1864, Lincoln endorses the letter, stating that Mr. Potter should be appointed.

An Unconditional Union Ticket, ca. 1864, encourages voters to back the President Lincoln in the upcoming elections. It lists Lincoln of Illinois and Andrew Johnson of Tennessee as running mates. David S. Gooding of Hancock and Richard W. Thompson of Vigo are running for Electors at large. It also lists those running for state electors: James C. Denny, 1st District; Cyrus T. Nixon, 2nd District; Henry R. Pritchard, 3rd District; Leonidas Sexton, 4th District; Benjamin F. Claypool, 5th District; J. J. Wright, 6th District; John Osborn, 7th District; R. P. Davidson, 8th District; James B. Belford, 9th District; Timothy R. Dickinson, 10th District; John M. Wallace, 11th District. The back reads: "Stand by the President! Rally once again!"

In a letter from January 1865, Alfred Blake writes a letter that is signed by O. P. Morton and Abraham Lincoln. Blake requests that Lincoln grant his release from a prisoner of war camp. The petitioner was born in Harrison County, Indiana, on 26 April 1842. Blake was conscribed on 27 February 1863 at DeWitt, Arkansas County, Arkansas and was placed in Company E, 18th Arkansas Regiment Infantry. He was captured at White River, Arkansas, on 12 January 1864 and was sent to Camp Morton, a U.S. military prison in Indiana. Blake writes that he has applied for the oath of allegiance several times but has failed to obtain it. He did not sympathize with the rebels or the government that the rebels are trying to establish. Blake says that if released, he will return to Harrison County, Indiana, and will remain a "good and loyal Citizen of the United States." Morton writes on the verso (Indianapolis, 13 January 1865) that he is acquainted with the friends and family of Blake and is satisfied that Blake does not sympathize with the rebels. Morton recommends that he be discharged. Lincoln writes on 19 January 1865: "Let this man take the oath of Dec. 8, 1863 and be discharged."

A memorial card, ca. 1866, shows a picture of Abraham Lincoln and George Washington in heaven; Washington is crowning Lincoln. The text below the picture states: "Entered according to the Act of Congress in the year 1866, by J. A. Arthur, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania. Washington & Lincoln. (Apotheosis.) S. J. Ferris, Pinxt. Photo and Pub. By Phil. Pho. Co., 730 Chesnut St."

Photocopies (and in the case of the sum book leaf, photographic copies) of the documents are part of the collection. Photocopies for researchers will be made from the copies instead of the originals.

CONTENTS (ALL ITEMS STORED IN SECURE STORAGE UNLESS NOTED)

CONTENTS

Sum book, n.d.

CONTAINER

Box 1, Folder 1

Trotter v. Thomas legal document, 1840	Box 1, Folder 2
Letter to Thomas Ewing, 9 July 1849	Box 1, Folder 3
Letter to Schuyler Colfax, 31 May 1860	Box 1, Folder 4
O. P. Morton letter, 23 April 1861	Box 1, Folder 5
Letter, 19 November 1861	Box 1, Folder 6
Nathan Kimball letter, 13 October 1862	Box 1, Folder 7
O. P. Morton letter, 17 January 1864	Box 1, Folder 8
Letter, 8 July 1864	Box 1, Folder 9
Unconditional Union Ticket, ca. 1864	Box 1, Folder 10
Alfred Blake letter, 19 January 1865	Box 1, Folder 11
Memorial card, ca. 1866	Box 1, Folder 12
Photocopies and photographs of documents including Sum Book	Stored in Regular Numerical Sequence

CATALOGING INFORMATION

For additional information on this collection, including a list of subject headings that may lead you to related materials:

1. Go to the Indiana Historical Society's online catalog: <http://157.91.92.2/>
2. Click on the "Basic Search" icon.
3. Select "Call Number" from the "Search In:" box.
4. Search for the collection by its basic call number (in this case, M 0567).
5. When you find the collection, go to the "Full Record" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.