

470. *Chauncey F. Black to WHH*¹

York Apl 30. 1874

My dear Sir.

I send you herewith [a clip?] sent me by Mr Dana of the *New York Sun*. The writer is evidently on the wrong scent, or else given to much lying.

I met the other day in Washington Col Dick Wintersmith,² born and raised down there — His theory is that *Ben Hardin* was Mr Lincoln's father and gave facts and incidents which go far to support it. He says he will come here to see me and I shall then write down what he says. In the meantime I hope you will find out that fellow you heard about in Kentucky.

But have you heard nothing from Lamon or anybody else? Have you consulted with any publisher?³ Or making any progress? This letter of inquiry has been on my mind a long while, but I have been so very busy that I couldn't get it done. Mr. Dana offered me a large salary to go to New York and take charge of the *Sun* — I declined chiefly because I have some prospect of going to Congress from this District⁴ — and at all events can't abide the thought of living in a city — He then offered me a smaller salary for six articles a week & to remain at home — I have accepted that and it keeps me as busy as a [nailor?] But I shall never die happy unless we get something done about the *Life of Lincoln*. Do you see that John Hay and Nicolay are said to be preparing a *Life*?

Most truly / as ever

Chauncey F Black

[Enclosure]

471. *Newspaper Clipping*

The Question as to the Marriage of Abraham Lincoln's Father and Mother.

The following letter from an octogenarian to one of our citizens upon a mooted question as to the paternity and birth of the late President Lincoln, is not without interest:

DEAR SIR: In the Louisville Courier-Journal of February 20, 1874, is a communication about Mr. Lincoln's family, copied from the Indianapolis Journal, which bears the impress of truth. I knew Mordecai Lincoln, Thomas Lincoln and the Berry's. I will try to copy it for you:

To the editor of the Indianapolis Journal:

Some time since, by chance, there fell into my hands an Evening Journal containing a letter from the Louisville Commercial, in which it was hinted that there

1. Marginal note: *C.S.H.V. is Mr. C. S. Hobart Vawter of Indianapolis.*

2. Presumably Richard M. Wintersmith.

3. Black and WHH were contemplating collaborating on a revision of Ward H. Lamon's *Life of Lincoln*, which Black had ghostwritten.

4. Marginal note: *Confidential.*