

*Informant Testimony Reported in Herndon's  
Lincoln: The True Story of a Great Life (1889)*

The following letters, interviews, and statement are taken from the first edition of Herndon and Weik's biography. They appear to be based on existing documents, the originals of which have not been located.

604. *William L. Wilson to WHH*<sup>1</sup>

February 3, 1882

I have during that time had much fun with the afterwards President of the United States, Abraham Lincoln. I remember one time of wrestling with him, two best in three, and ditched him. He was not satisfied, and we tried it in a foot-race for a five-dollar bill. I won the money, and 'tis spent long ago. And many more reminiscences could I give, but am of the Quaker persuasion, and not much given to writing.

*H&W (1889), 97n*

605. *George W. Minier (statement)*<sup>1</sup>

Apr. 10, 1882.

In the spring term of the Tazewell County Court in 1847, which at that time was held in the village of Tremont, I was detained as a witness an entire week. Lincoln was employed in several suits, and among them was one of *Case vs. Snow Bros.* The Snow Bros., as appeared in evidence (who were both minors), had purchased from an old Mr. Case what was then called a "prairie team," consisting of

---

1. A portion of a letter, prefaced in the biography: "William L. Wilson, a survivor of the [Black Hawk] war, in a letter under date of February 3, 1882, after detailing reminiscences of Stillman's defeat, says. . . ." No original has been found.

---

1. This was printed in the appendix with the heading "AN INCIDENT ON THE CIRCUIT." It may have been borrowed from Oldroyd, where it appears with only minor differences (187–89), but the presence of a date in H&W (1889) (absent in Oldroyd) suggests it may have been supplied independently to WHH.