

October 3, 1924

Mrs. Myra Hank Rudolph,
564 Woodbine Avenue,
Warren, Ohio.

My dear Mr. Rudolph:

I have read your letter of September 25 and the copy of the will of John Hanks, with very genuine interest. So far as it goes, it is the clearest bit of Hanks genealogy which I have ever seen, and I certainly hope that you will go on with your studies.

Every point established by documents will help in the final solution of the question that I am interested in having cleared up, that is, the ancestry of Nancy Hanks Lincoln.

I have been convinced for some time that we would be substantially helped in doing this if the Berry and Shipley line could be established. Nancy's guardian, you remember, at the time of her marriage to Tom Lincoln was a Richard Berry. There are many traditions of her among the Mitchells and the Thompsons of Washington County, Ky., who intermarried with the Berrys. There are writers who refuse to consider these traditions, but I think it indisputable that in some way she was connected with the Berry family. Your reference to the marriage of William Hank and Susannah Berry in 1786 or '87 quickens my interest.

I doubt now what I once accepted as a fact, and that is that Abraham Lincoln, the grandfather of the President, ever married a Shipley. It seems clear from later investigations that the woman he married in 1770, according to the Augusta County records, was Bathsheba Herrin. In your further researches I hope you will keep your eye on the Berrys and the Shipleys.

Unfortunately I am very much occupied just now with pressing work and not able to give the attention which I would like to give to the Hanks genealogy, but I am filing my material and fitting it together as I can.

Mrs. Hitchcock is very anxious to go ahead with the genealogy which she undertook several years ago. Are you in communication with her? It seems to me it would be a useful connection, and, if it is not already established, are you willing that I should write her?

Thanking you again for your long and interesting letter