SWAYNE, WILLIAM MARSHALL

DRAWER 22

Sculptors - S
(Busts)

71.2009.085.03013

Statues of Abraham Lincoln

William Marshall Swayne

Excerpts from newspapers and other sources

From the files of the
Lincoln Financial Foundation Collection

10

ARCHITECT OF THE CAPITOL

WASHINGTON, D. C.

May 16, 1940.

Dr. Louis A. Warren,
Director of the Lincoln National
Life Foundation,
Fort Wayne, Ind.

Dear Dr. Warren:

I am wondering whether you have heard of the sculptor William Marshall Swayne who was in the employ of the Government during the period of the Civil War and while in such employment made a portrait statue and a portrait buse of President Lincoln. I have photographs of the bust and the statue of Lincoln and also photographs of a marble bust of Secretary Seward and of Secretary Chase with an autograph endorsement of the work of Swayne signed by President Lincoln.

If you have not the above information, I shall be glad to send it to you in retribution for my claiming that Lot Flannery's statue of Lincoln in Washington was the first statue erected.

With kind regards, I am,

Sincerely yours,

Charles E. Fairman

(Charles E. Fairman),
Art Curator, U. S. Capitol.

CEF:S

See unpublished letter file for Lincoln
endorsement on chrome letter Feb 16, 1864

May 22, 1940

Mr. Charles E. Fairman
Art Curator, U. S. Capitol
Washington, D. C.

My dear Mr. Fairman:

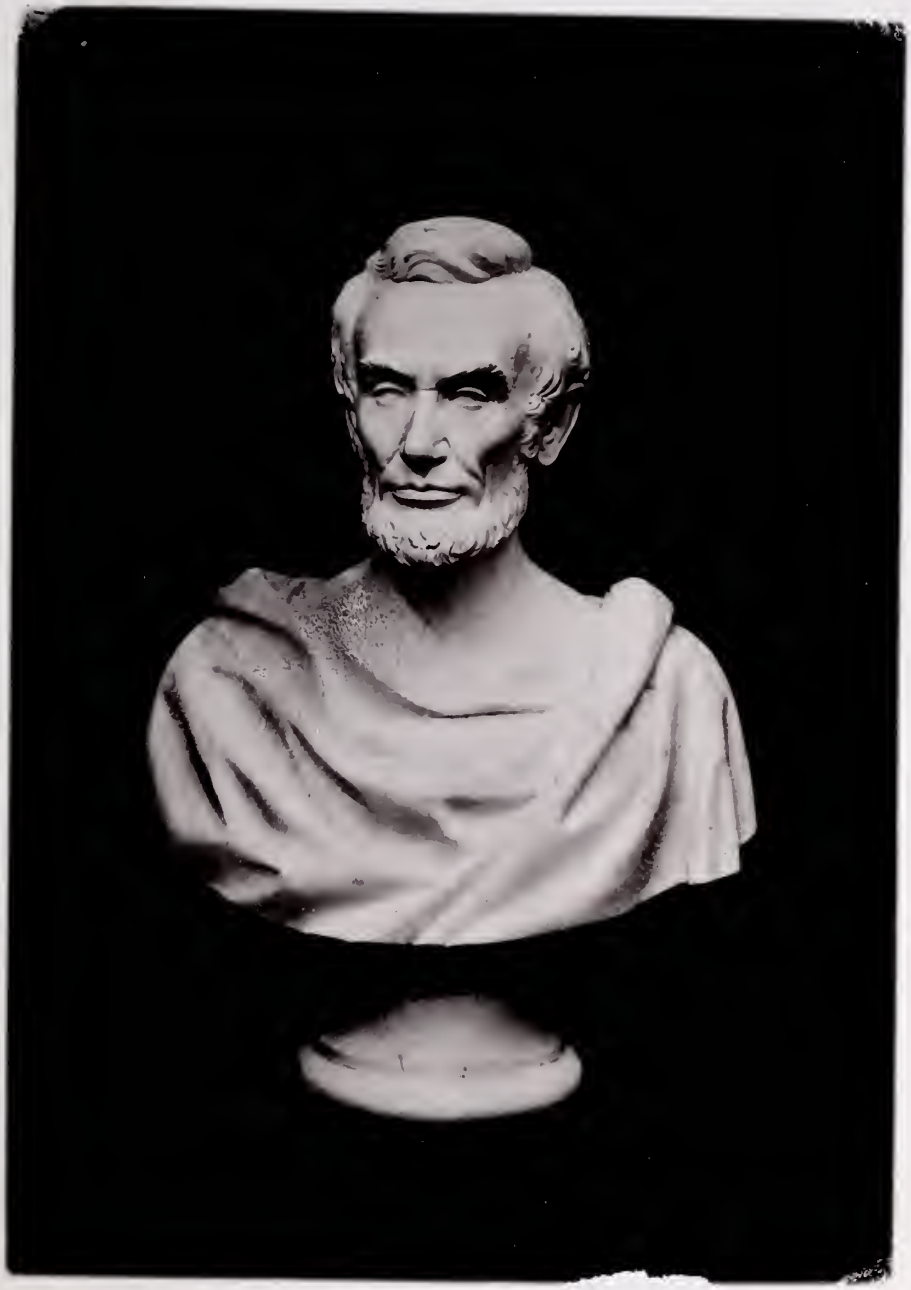
It was a pleasure indeed to see your signature on a letter and we are especially grateful for the photographs which you so kindly enclosed. We have heard of Mr. Swayne's Lincoln and are very glad to have a portrait of it.

Will you please accept our very sincere thanks for the many favors which we have received from your hand.

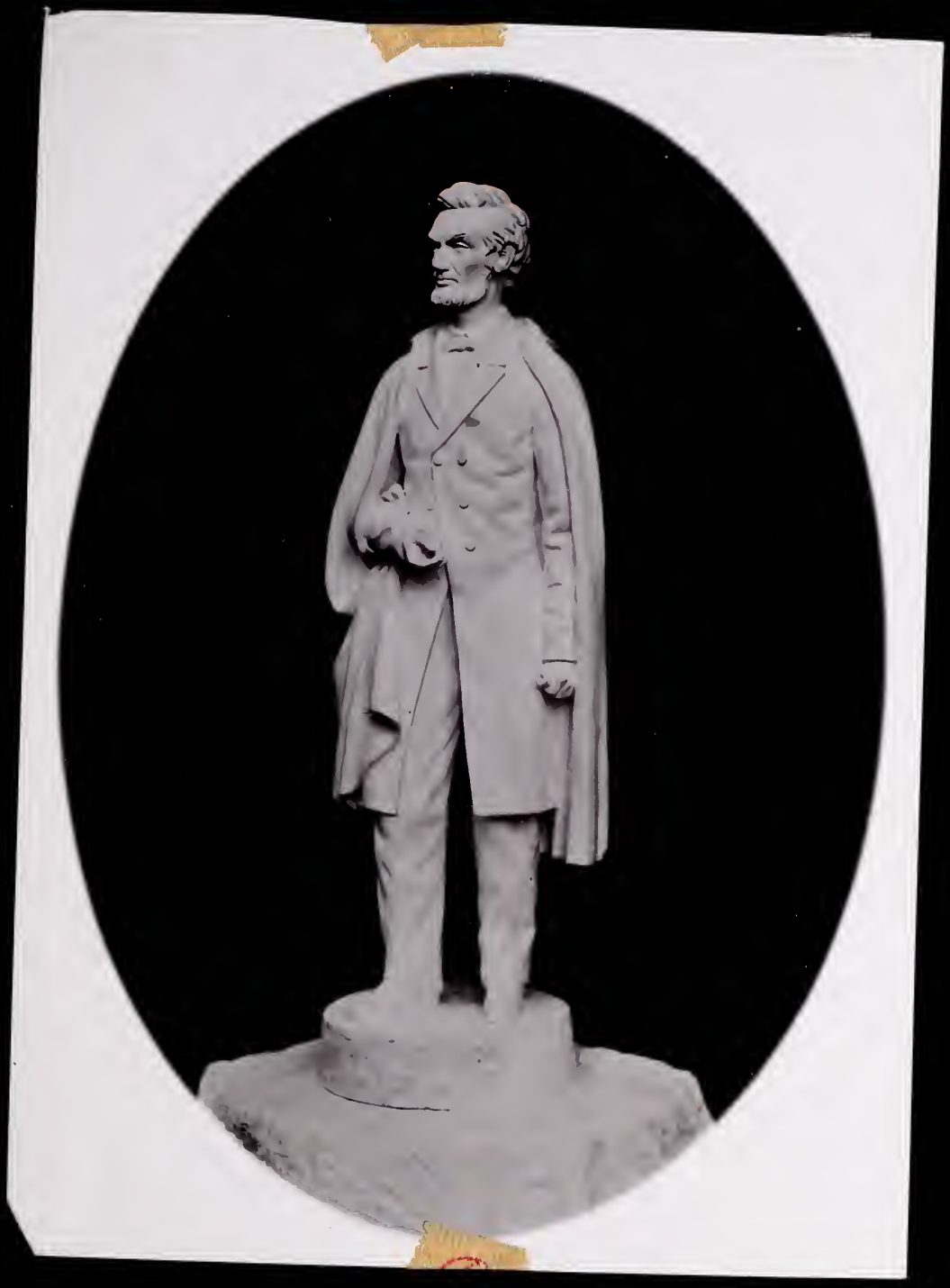
Very truly yours,

LAW:BS
L.A.Warren

Director



Bust by W Marshall Sewell



Given by W. Marshall Duncan

West Chester Daily News, Pa.
April 16, 1958

Historical Society Reviews Life of County Sculptor

"William Marshall Swayne, Sculptor of Lincoln and His Cabinet" was the paper read by Dr. Henry Pleasants Jr. at the annual meeting of the Chester County Historical Society last evening.

William Marshall Swayne, destined to chisel and mold some of the greatest faces in American History was born Dec. 1, 1828 on the Homestead Farm owned by his parents in Pennsbury twp. His education began at Westtown School and continued at the private school of Jonathan Gause, Unionville.

Upon the completion of his education he worked for a while in a country store and became very friendly with Dr. William Darlington, president of the National Bank, West Chester, who represented Chester County in Congress at that time.

Dr. Pleasants went on to mention that Darlington was very influential in seeing that Swayne received the proper introductions when he set out for Washington.

Swayne married Mary Barnard of Newlin twp. and several children were born of the union.

Farming became too much of a burden and he disposed of his inheritance.

At this time his interest in sculpture was ignited.

Dr. Pleasants brought out the fact that Swayne was not brought up in the strict atmosphere of art and it became very hard for him to grasp the importance of dedicated training.

Swayne's inspiration stemmed mainly from the works of the Italian master, Antonio Canova.

When Swayne decided to go to Washington, which was destined to give birth to his inward genius, his good friend Dr. William Darlington presented him with a letter of introduction to T. U. Walter, an architect, who at that time was engaged in designing several of the important government buildings in that city.

During the year of 1859, Swayne worked as a government clerk in one of the numerous offices. He had sincerely thought at one time to give up his job of clerk and concentrate on the artistic talents of which he possessed. Lack of funds to continue in his career ended this momentary dream.

The first sitter for Swayne was Secretary of the Treasury, Salmon P. Chase who had just been appointed by Lincoln.

In May, 1860, he made a bust of Simon P. Cameron, Secretary of War.

In Swayne's first encounter with President Lincoln, he tells of the homespun quality and the genuine sincerity of which the great man possessed.

The idea was proposed for Lincoln to sit for a bust and was met with great enthusiasm by the President.

On one occasion, the great emancipator came with his son, Tad. At this time Lincoln recited poetry and told humorous stories which had become a trademark with him.

By June the bust was finished.

President Abraham Lincoln expressed his great admiration of the work and his praise of Swayne was unbounding.

Dr. Pleasants mentioned that out of this mutual friendship between Lincoln and Swayne grew the warmth and understanding of two great men each devoted to the other's gift.

Upon Lincoln's tragic death, Swayne stood looking down at the lifeless figure of the man who had become one of his friends. With bowed head the great sculptor knew the world had lost one of the great men of all time.

Soon after Lincoln's death, William Marshall Swayne returned to his native Chester County and remained here to live out the rest of his life.

The sensitivity and power of the great man's sculpture stand today as a memorial and inspiration by one of Chester County's native sons.

Of great interest at last nights meeting was a four-sided case installed in the museum to display the society's collection of Swayne's sculpture. The case was a gift of the sculptor's daughter, Mrs. Isaac G. Roberts.

Dear Mr Haverlin:

My niece was visiting in Washington, D.C. during the final celebration of the 150th year since the birth of Abraham Lincoln. She was not at the meeting that last evening, but she read an interesting account of it in the newspaper; at one part she read "A small plaster bust held by Mr Haverlin (Lincoln Collector) is an old display piece in Ford's Theatre." The Sculptor's name was not given, but my niece was much impressed with the fact that the picture of the bust looked very much like one my father modeled, she told me about it, thinking I might like to write to thee.

My father - William Marshall Swayne - was a young sculptor and went to Washington, D.C. in 1858 in the hope of advancement in his chosen profession

and appears to have remained there the first time for some months before going home to West Chester, Penna. Returning later to Washington where he remained during most of the time through the years until sometime in 1867.

He was appointed to a clerkship in the Internal Revenue Office in 1863, he was promoted twice and in 1867 was appointed to the Office of Collector of Internal Revenue for the 7th Congressional District of Pennsylvania, composed of Chester and Delaware Counties.

Thee will see that he was in Washington during part of President James Buchanan's administration, all of President Lincoln's and part of President Andrew Johnson's administration.

He studied sculpture under H. K. Brown during his stay in Washington, and devoted his spare time to his art.

He had sittings from Mr Lincoln for a life sized bust and also for those

of the members of his Cabinet and of other celebrities.

When modelling Mr Lincoln's bust he had his temperary studio in the Treasury Building which adjoined the White House grounds and Mr Lincoln would walk across and sit and chat with my father while he was modelling.

There was no comfortable chair in the room and one day my father saw in the basement, an early Victorian upholstered (in red plush) arm chair, and he asked permission to have it brought up for the President's comfort, his request was granted, and after the bust was completed my father asked if he might buy the chair, he was told that the Public Buildings are refurnished when needed and the old furniture stored or given away, but not sold. The chair was given to him and has been a highly treasured possession in our family. Recently the chair with specimens of my fathers work have been

presented to our local Historical Society.

After my father's death one of his sons compiled letters received by my mother from my father during his stay in Washington and of newspaper clippings in reference to his art work &c. among them are many interesting anecdotes of my father's acquaintance with Mr Lincoln and thinking they might be interested I have copied some ~~extracts~~ extracts from these letters and some of the accounts of his work in the newspapers referring to his modelling of Mr Lincoln's bust and statuette.

My father made a number of small plaster busts of President Lincoln to sell at a Fair given in Philadelphia for the benefit of the Soldiers of the Civil War. Knowing of his great affection for the President, and that he had so many of these small busts cast, I cannot but wonder if the one exhibited in the Ford Theatre may be his work. He also made number of small models in bas relief of Mr Lincoln and his Cabinet,

for the Fair held in Washington for the benefit of the Christian Commission.

Some years ago the large plaster bust of Mr Lincoln was presented to the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D. C. and stands on the first floor of the United States History Building. I regret that it was bronzed before it was presented to the Institution.

I hope I can get a photograph of the small bust to enclose, so thee can tell whether the bust exhibited is my father's work.

Hoping that thee will pardon my writing to thee, I am —

Very Sincerely

Ella Swayne Roberts.

(Mrs Isaac G. Roberts)

139. E. Biddle Street,

West Chester,

Pennsylvania.

3-15-1960.

Mr Carl Haverlin,

My dear Mr Haverlin:

It was not until today that I was able to get the picture of the small bust modeled by my father, which I am enclosing.

My niece has recently sent me the clippings from the Washington newspaper, with the picture of the small Lincoln bust, they had on exhibition at the meeting. I see by it that it was not modeled by my father.

I wrote my letter before seeing the picture, and as long as I have it written, I will send it to thee, hoping it may add another artist to thy collection.

Very Sincerely

April 21, 1960. Ella Swayne Roberts.

The picture was taken on the porch as my friend's camera would not take indoor pictures.

April 25, 1960

Mrs. Isaac G. Roberts
139 East Biddle Street
West Chester, Pennsylvania

Dear Mrs. Roberts:

I am very grateful for your writing me as you have and greatly pleased that you decided to send me the first long letter even after you discovered a few days later that the bust I was holding in the photograph was the one by Volk.

I have read with deep interest the material you copied out for me and find it fascinating. With your permission, which I hope will be forthcoming, I would like to ask Dr. McMurtry, the editor of LINCOLN LORE, if he would not like to write something about your father and his connection with Mr. Lincoln for some forthcoming issue. Perhaps if he is interested we could have somebody take a photograph of the bust that would do it greater justice.

I remember having seen the large bust at the Smithsonian many years ago. The next time I have an opportunity to be in Washington, I shall go to it again and this time with deep interest because I know all of the facts you have given me.

By the way, did you ever know a sculptress named Clara Hill? She maintained a studio in New York, but considered Washington her home and she died in Washington in 1935. I recently bought a lovely bronze bust of Lincoln done by Clara Hill, but no one to whom I have spoken knows anything about her.

Once again, many thanks for writing to me.

Sincerely,

Carl Haverlin

139 E. Biddle St., West Chester, Pa.

April 30, 1960.

Mr Carl Haverlin, Broadcast Music, Inc.,
589 Fifth Avenue, New York 17, N. Y.

Dear Mr Haverlin:

I was deeply touched by thy kind letter of April 25th. My father's memory is very dear to me, and when I hear someone expressing

interest in him and his work it is a great happiness to me.

It is very kind of thee to think of asking Dr. McMurtry, the editor of Lincoln Lore, if he would like to write something about my father, and if he is at all interested I would be glad to give him any information.

he might care to have.

Some years ago a small book was published entitled "Four Great Artists of Chester County" the articles were written by our townsman Dr. Henry Pleasants Jr. I have wondered if thee might care to have a copy, it seems rather presumptuous but I am sending thee one of these little books. Sometime ago we

presented to our Chester Co. Historical Society, specimens of our father's work in a case for their museum, and recently I had photographs taken of it and I am sending thee pictures of the four sides of the case. The marble busts of General Anthony Wayne and Dr. William Darlington which are in the case were the property of the town, and eventually came to the

Historical Society for safe keeping

I am sorry that I am unable to give any information about Clara Hill, Sculptress. there was another sculptress in Washington of whom I have heard my father speak. by the name of Vinnie Reeve, I think that was the name, and. She modeled a statuette of Mr Lincoln.

Thanking thee again for thy much appreciated letter I am —

Very Sincerely,

Ella Swayne Roberts.

5-6.1960 — I have left mailing this letter hoping that the photographer would get the copies made of the case before this time, but he has been delayed with his work, so I will send the book and photos later. Sincerely E.S.R.

May 18, 1960

Mrs. Isaac G. Roberts
139 East Biddle Street
West Chester, Pennsylvania

Dear Mrs. Roberts:

I have just received the inscribed copy of "Four Great Artists of Chester County" by Henry Pleasants, Jr., as well as your permission to suggest to Mr. McMurtry that he might consider an article about your father's sculpture of Abraham Lincoln. I have had photostats made of our correspondence and will send them to Mr. McMurtry with the suggestion he contact you if he needs additional information.

I will write to you as soon as I have heard from Mr. McMurtry.

Sincerely,

Carl Haverlin

P. S. I realize I have not expressed my appreciation for your generous gift. It will be placed in my library with pride. Many thanks.

Broadcast Music, Inc. 

589 Fifth Avenue, New York 17, N. Y. *PLaza 9-1500*

May 18, 1960

Dr. Gerald R. McMurtry
Lincoln National Life Foundation
Fort Wayne, Indiana

Dear Gerald:

The enclosed correspondence is, I think, completely informative. If you do not have a copy of "Four Great Artists," please let me know and I will send it along for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Carl Haverlin

encs.

A Letter to President
Abraham Lincoln
from
The Secretary of the Treasury
Salmon P. Chase.

January 17, 1864.

Dear Sir:

Mr W. Marshall Swayne a clerk in the Internal Revenue Bureau, wishes to contribute to the Fair to be held in this City for the benefit of the Christian Commission a Series of bas relief heads of the President and the Heads of Departments.

Mr Swayne has modeled a head of myself and I think of Governor Seward, which are read to be good.

His object is certainly a good one, and if you will give him a sitting or two to enable him to accomplish it, you will help it

and at the same time gratify a very worthy gentleman.

He devotes only his spare hours to the work, not allowing it to interfere at all with his official duties.

Truly yours
S. P. Chase

Feb. 16, 1864 President Lincoln wrote at the bottom of this letter —

"I endorse what is said above of Mr Swayne — A. Lincoln."
— Signed —

I suppose he then gave the letter to my father, as it is in our possession.

Senate Stationary Room
Tuesday Morning.

Wm. Marshall Swayne, Esq.

My Dear Sir:

The enclosed letter was forwarded to me from West Chester by Hickman, telling me the subject matter, and it being unsealed, I took the liberty of reading it. I hope it may be in your power to create a model or drawings satisfactory to my friend H. C. Townsend Esq. who is a good fellow. I hoped you might be at my room last night.

Yours truly

Geo. W. Pearce.

Note - 3-20-1864

I will here explain that I had received a conditional commission to execute a marble Bust of President Lincoln from Henry C. Townsend of Philadelphia, the conditions were that it should be completed in that city - but from causes unforeseen then the model was not completed until near the close of the Fair. The following card

was placed on the exhibit—

Model.
of a bust of
Abraham Lincoln
now being executed in marble by
W. Marshall Swayne of Washington, D.C.
To be purchased by Subscription for the
Union League of Philadelphia as an
ornament for their new house.
Presented to the great Central Fair
By
Henry C. Townsend.

On account of illness my father was unable to get it done in time.

May 25, 1864—

I went this evening to ask the President to give me a sitting. No trouble in getting to see him. He said he would come in 15 minutes, so I went back to get ready for him. He came promptly but had not sat many minutes when Mrs Lincoln's messenger came over saying the "Madam" wished him to ride out with her. He proposed to stay a ½

hour, but I insisted on his going, knowing she would be disappointed. He promised to come again tomorrow evening at 4 - an hour earlier

May 29, 1864 -

I did not have a sitting on 7th day (Saturday) as I expected, but hope to be able to get two early in the week. When the President was last in on 5th day evening, he had evidently been thinking that slave property was a very uncertain commodity and very liable to depreciate. He said he had been thinking of the anecdote of the fellow who had bought his time and afterwards wanted to sell out because he thought that kind of property was likely to depreciate and he would not be able to get his money back. He told of a slave who had offended his mistress, and to punish him she put a burning coal of fire on his head. The fellow submitted quietly and then told her to "neva mine I'll jus lef it lay dar till massa comes home and see what he'll say" There is more in his manner of telling jokes

than in the joke itself, still they generally have a point.

June 2, 1864.

I have had two sittings this week, once 2nd day evening and once 3rd day morning at quarter of seven, Pretty early for the President, is it not? And then he had been at the War Department an hour before and brought me the latest news from the army. He had just heard the good news from Sherman which pleased him much.

June 10, 1864.

I doubt if Washington, while living, was ever venerated as father Abraham is now. I have met with several who were delegates to the convention and they all speak enthusiastically of him. By the way I had almost the whole of the New Jersey delegation in to see the bust yesterday

June 12, 1864.

Last evening I finished the cast and felt very much relieved by it. I will probably pack and send it off tomorrow. The opinion as far as I have heard is that it is a success.

June 17, 1864.

I got the bust of President Lincoln packed and sent off on Thursday evening ... I have sent thee a copy of the "Tribune" which has a short reference to it. It is literally true about the President doing as stated. He had been over unbidden on Saturday evening to see it, but I had gone out.

November 10, 1864

Mr Lincoln will probably be serenaded tonight and I want him to be on hand, there is no doubt of his reelection. I am only afraid he did not get every state as I had hoped he would.

November 14, 1964

In evening I went with all Washington to serenade the President and heard a very good speech from him.

January 12, 1865.

I went to the President's reception last Monday evening and was very much entertained looking at the people. There were a good many notables present.....

After the crowd had somewhat passed away I thought I would go and speak

to the President whom by the way, I had not spoken to since I finished the bust. He did not recognize me at first but seemed to be in a deep study, so I merely shook his hand and turned away quite chopp fallen. When I had got a few steps from him I heard him repeating something like my name several times, then instead of passing out the regular way I turned back to go out as I had come in. As I did so I glanced toward Mr Lincoln, He was looking intently at me and motioned me back to him. He had recalled my name and when I went to him he reached his head up and whispered "you're the man that made a mud head of me". He apologized for not recognizing me, and said "You saw I was trying to think". Then I understood why he looked so strange at first. He enquired about the bust - told me he had sats several times since, but that he liked mine better than any of them. His remarks were very gratefully received as there were

quite a number of persons collected around who seemed very much interested in our conversation.

I thought after, I would not have had the incident different in any way, as it was I shook hands three times with him, When he called me back he gave me his hand again, and again when I said good night.

April 15, 1865.

How can I tell you of the great calamity that has come upon us? I cannot realize it myself and could scarcely believe it had I not seen the City draped in mourning from one end to the other, and the hearse as it conveyed the precious remains of our beloved President to his now sad home. You will learn by the papers all the particulars of the terrible murder. I can give you no idea of the deep gloom that seems to overshadow everything and everybody, but saddened hearts and weeping eyes will not be confined to this City. The whole world will mourn him, will miss him.

Copied from a Washington Newspaper.

Among the designs offered in competition for the statue of Mr Lincoln to be placed in front of City Hall, that of Mr W. M. Swayne of this City commends itself most favorably as a truthful representation of our late lamented President.

Mr Swayne has seized upon that striking event in the life of Mr Lincoln which is sure to go down to posterity, ever embalming him in the hearts of succeeding generations. He has represented him as about to utter those memorable words which more than any others, show the character and spirit of the man: "With malice toward none, with charity for all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right let us strive on," &c. The position is that which beautifully harmonizes with these forthgivings of that great heart.

Instead of going into particular description I would recommend a view of the model, now to be seen at the jewelry store of M. W. Galt and Bro., 354 Pennsylvania Avenue.

Among the busts of Mr Lincoln, he, himself had a marked preference for that of Mr Swayne, as a true representation of him.

This artist had rare opportunities of studying the man, and it is only a matter of justice to him to state that in both the bust and the statuette now referred to he has been most successful in bringing before the eye and the mind the peculiar external and internal characteristics of Mr Lincoln.

An excellent judge of works of art, who attended the inauguration ball, forty days before the death of Mr Lincoln, thus writes afterward: "But this I know the scene all came back to me today, as I passed into the Old Hall of Representatives and stood before the bust of Lincoln, executed by Swayne. The very face that looked down upon us that

night is here; the sad eyes, the patient furrows set in marble, the "story on the lips told in everlasting silence." And in the model or statuette, no one can fail to recognize the true expression which would be most valued in a full statue.

Another exerpt from a paper

This sculptor was the last man to gaze upon the face of Abraham Lincoln as he lay in his casket just prior to his burial. He made the request that he be allowed to take the last look at the President as he lay in state in order that he might catch a new expression on the face of the martyred statesman. This final request was granted the man who had come to know the President as few had known him in his hours outside of his executive office.

I suppose this was before the body left Washington.

(1)

Dr Gerald McMurtry,
The Lincoln National Life Foundation,
Fort Wayne, Indiana;

May 27, 1960.

Dear Dr. McMurtry:

I received a letter from Mr Carl Haverlin yesterday, enclosing a copy of a letter he had received from thee. I deeply appreciate the interest that Mr Haverlin has taken in my father's work and his writing to thee in regard to it. If thee should care to use any of the data he gave thee for an article in "Lincoln Lore" and would wish any further information I would be glad to furnish it.

I am mailing to thee a copy of the "Four Great Artists of Chester County" and photographs we have had taken of a case we had made to display some of my father's work, and which we presented to the Chester County Historical Society, 225 North High Street, West Chester, Pennsylvania.

and I will ask thee to accept them with my compliments.

Nearly all of the sculpture of my father that was in our possession has been given to our Historical Society. Some years ago we had a copy made of his small bust of Lincoln, but it too is now in the collection, the statuette is also there, but the life sized plaster bust of Mr Lincoln was, several years ago, presented to the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D. C. and I hear is exhibited on the first floor of the United States History Building.

Thanking thee for thy interest in my father's work, I am —

Very Sincerely

Ella Swayne Roberts

(Mrs Isaac G. Roberts).

William Marshall Swayne.

PHOTOGRAPH BY
NED GOODE
West Chester, Pa.

William Henry Seward
Born-1801- Died 1872-
United States Secretary of State
1861-1869.
Lincoln's Cabinet.

Salmon Portland Chase
Born-1808- Died 1873
Elected States Secretary of Treasury
1861-1864
Lincoln's Cabinet.

5648/5

Edwin McMasters Stanton
Born-1814- Died-1869-
United States Secretary of War
1862-1868.
Lincoln's Cabinet.

It was difficult to get a full length photo. of this section of the case, so the Lincoln bust and section with statuette were taken separately.

From — Mrs J. E. Roberts,
139 E. Biddle St.,
West Chester, Pennsylvania.

5648/4

PHOTOGRAPH BY
NED GOODE
West Chester, Pa.

MAY 4 1960


goode Photography

General Anthony Wayne.

564

PHOTOGRAPH BY
NED GOODE
West Chester, Pa.

APR 6 1960


goode
Photography

Shade

Forward.

5648/1

Dr William Darlington
Botanist.
Marbles

June 2, 1960

Mrs. Isaac G. Roberts
139 East Biddle Street
West Chester, Pennsylvania

Dear Mrs. Roberts:

I was delighted to have your letter of May 27 and to get some additional information concerning your father's work as a sculptor.

I am looking forward to receiving a copy of "Four Great Artists of Chester County" along with photographs, etc. which you have suggested that you are sending to me. I shall look forward to the receipt of this material with a great deal of interest.

I am grateful to you for giving me the information as to the location of the life size plaster bust of Lincoln which was presented to the Smithsonian Institution and which is now exhibited on the first floor of the United States History Building.

In our files we have photographs of the statuette along with the life size plaster bust of Mr. Lincoln.

Perhaps at some future date I will be able to work up a short article concerning your father and his sculptural work pertaining to Abraham Lincoln.

Yours sincerely,

RGMcMurtry:pj

Director

Cotter Home North,
424 North Matlack Street,
West Chester, Pennsylvania.
June 14, 1962.

The Lincoln National Life Foundation,
Fort Wayne, Indiana,
Mr R. Gerald McMurtry,

Dear Friend:

I was much pleased to receive thy letter of June 7, 1962 stating that thee has written and article about my father William Marshall Swayne I shall look forward with much pleasure to receiving the July publication as I do each month and shall treasure it highly.

I have preserved all the copies of Lincoln Lore in a loose leaf binding with other articles pertaining to Mr Lincoln.

I think I did send thee a copy of the article my father wrote for a meeting held to commemorate the one hundredth anniversary of Abraham Lincolns birth. but if thee does not have one, will thee please let me know and I shall be glad to send thee one!

The painted portrait of my father that was ~~painted~~ donation of my brother A. Canova Savayne is now in the exhibit at the Chester County Historical Society.

About one year ago the sons and daughters, grandsons and daughters, great gaand sons and daughters, great great grand sons and daughters and great great, great, grandsons and daughters presented a case to the society in which to exhibit the plaster busts, statuettes, and marble busts of my fathers work.

Since I last wrote to Thee I have come to live at the Collier Home North, 424 North Matlack Street West Chester, Pa. and find it most satisfactory

I have given my antiques pictures and furniture to my nieces and nephews, and the antiques they felt they could not take and other furniture I am selling much has been sold and much is still to be sold:

With best wishes to Thee and again telling Thee how much I shall be interested in seeing what Thee has written about my father.

I am -

Very sincerely -

Ella Swayne Roberts

Invited Core 6/24/60
HCW

139. E. Biddle St., West Chester, Penna.

June 22, 1960.

Dr. R. Gerald McMurtry, Director,
Lincoln National Life Foundation,
Fort Wayne 1, Indiana;

Dear Dr. McMurtry:

Thank thee for thy kind letter stating that at some future date thee might be able to work up a short article concerning my father's sculptural

work pertaining to —
Abraham Lincoln.

If thee should be able to do so, I would greatly appreciate it if thee could let me know how I could obtain a copy of "Lincoln Lore". I am so very much interested in anything about Mr Lincoln, and my father honored him so highly.

Very Sincerely

Ella Swayne Roberts

work pertaining to
Abraham Lincoln.

If thee should be able to do so, I would greatly appreciate it if thee could let me know how I could obtain a copy of "Lincoln Lore". I am so very much interested in anything about Mr Lincoln, and my father honored him so highly.

Very Sincerely

Ella Swayne Roberts

June 18, 1962

Mrs. Ella Swayne Roberts
Cotter Home North
424 North Matlock Street
West Chester, Pennsylvania

Dear Mrs. Roberts:

I was delighted to have your letter of June 14. I am very much pleased with my article concerning your father. The title of the article follows:

William Marshall Swayne
The man who made a "mud head" of Lincoln.

I could never have written the article without your help. The notes you sent to me were invaluable. The article which will constitute the July issue of Lincoln Lore will go to the printer today. The bulletin should be off the press about July 15. I will send you several extra copies.

I did not receive from you the article your father wrote commemorationg the 100th anniversary of Lincoln's birth. I would very much like to have a copy.

Can you tell me who now owns the original letters your father wrote home telling of his experiences with Lincoln. These would be a valuable addition to any Lincoln library.

With the very best wishes to you, I remain

Yours sincerely,

R. Gerald McMurtry

RGM:md

Cotter Home North,
424 North Matlack Street,
West Chester, Pennsylvania.

July 11, 1962.

The Lincoln National Life Foundation,
Fort Wayne, Indiana,
Mr R. Gerald McMurtry.

Dear Friend:

I was much pleased to receive thy letter of June 7, 1962 stating that thee has written an article about my father William Marshall Swayne. I shall look forward with much pleasure to receiving the July publication of Lincoln Lore, as I do each month, and shall treasure it highly.

I have preserved all the copies of Lincoln Lore in a loose leaf binding with other articles of interest.

I think I did send thee a copy of the article my father wrote for a meeting held to commemorate the one hundredth anniversary of Mr Lincolns birth, but if thee does not have one, will thee please let me know and I shall be glad to send thee one.

The painted portrait of my father that was in position of my brother A. Canova Swayne is now in the exhibit of the Chester County Historical Society.

About one year ago the sons and daughters, great Grand sons and daughters, great, great,

grand sons and daughters, great great grand sons and grand and great great great grand sons and daughters had a photograph taken of the case.

I have told several people of thy article and they too are anxious to read it, so I am sure thee will be a demand for the copies thee said thee will send me.

Again thanking thee very much,

I am very Sincerely,

(Mrs) Ella Swayne Roberts,
Cottier Home North,
424 North Matlack Street,
West Chester,
Pennsylvania.

Excerpts From Letters To My Mother From My Father While In Washington, D.C.

March 4, 1861.

Well Abraham has today been Inaugurated President of the United States notwithstanding threats of some of the Southerners. The procession and ceremonies were very imposing. The Military were out in full force regular and volunteer companies, but the most attractive feature of the procession was a wagon beautifully decorated with flags &c., and containing, I think, 36 young ladies arranged in seats rising one above another. In the upper seat there were two representing North and South. The idea struck me, as I doubt not it did many another, that they were symbolic of the progress and prosperity of the two sections. North was facing the horses and going forward. South with her back to them was progressing backwards. I with Mr Smith, Sr. & Jr., nephew of the Rev. accompanied our ladies

to see the Inauguration, after we had seen the procession pass our house and returned in time to see them go back toward the White House.

Mr Lincoln and Mr Buchanan rode side by side in an open carriage.

January 17, 1864.

I am thinking to model heads in relief, small size, of the President and some of the members of his Cabinet. I expect to have a sitting from Seward tomorrow if I can be ready, he has promised to sit any time I want him. I propose to make the service for the Christian Commission Fair soon to be held here. If I succeed in the likeness with them, I think they will be able to sell quite a number. I propose to make two to match, that is make the head of Lincoln to mate with the Washington. I have already of the same size and face to face with it. The heads of Seward and Chase and those of Stanton and Wells if I can get them.

It will keep me very busy to get them ready in time but I will try for the sake of the poor suffering soldiers for whose benefit the Fair will be held.

January, 24, 1864.

I am getting on with the bas-reliefs pretty well having those of Chase and Seward nearly ready for casting.

January 29, 1869.

I have had Fontano working two days at the casting, making moulds &c. think he will finish the three moulds tomorrow, Washington Seward and Chase, the two latter are considered successes or at least spoken of as such.

February 3, 1864.

Fontanano has completed three of the moulds and today has been making copies, I have had two sittings from the President and think I have a recognizable likeness of him. Fontano will make the mould tomorrow for the President's bas-relief. It is generally considered the most of a success - I have yet to make those of the Secretary of the War and the Navy.

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Between February 3 and 14, 1864 -

Have had a third sitting by the President today, don't think another will be necessary.

The annexed letter from George W. Pearce undated may have reference to the subject matter of the note at bottom of this page written by my father in his later years

Senate Stationery Room,
Tuesday morning.

Wm. Marshall Swayne Esq.,

My dear Sir:

The enclosed letter was forwarded to me from West Chester by Hickman, telling me the subject matter, and it being unsealed I took the liberty of reading it. I hope it may be in your power to create a model or drawing satisfactory to my friend H. C. Townsend Esq., who is a good fellow. I hoped you might be at my room last night.

Yours truly
George W. Pearce.

Note 3-20-1864

I will here explain that I received a conditional commission to execute a marble Bust of President Lincoln from Henry C. Townsend of Philadelphia

the conditions were that it should be completed in that City, but from causes unforeseen then, the model was not completed until near the close of the Fair. The following card was placed on the Exhibit.

Model.
of a —
Bust
Abraham Lincoln
now being executed in marble by
W. Marshall Swayne.
of
Washington, D. C.
to be purchased by subscription for the
Union League
of
Philadelphia.
as an ornament for the new home of
Presented to this great
Central Fair
By
Henry C. Townsend

There were no letters 3-27-'64 and 5-25-'64.

I went this evening to ask the President to give me a sitting. No trouble to get to see him. He said he would come in fifteen minutes, so I went back to get ready for him, he came promptly but had not sat many minutes when Mrs Lincoln's messenger came over saying the "Madame" wished him to ride out with her. He proposed to stay a half hour, but I insisted on his going knowing she would be disapointed. He promised to come again tomorrow evening at 4, an hour earlier.

The following written in later years will apply somewhat at this point.

On the occasion as he was leaving I expressed regret giving him the trouble of coming to me for the sittings, his reply was "I like to come it rests me."

On another occasion when Mr Lincoln reached the top of the gangway a gentleman was trying to get admission to the building, and as visitors were not admitted after certain hours he could not pass the guard. Mr Lincoln greeted him warmly as Parson Brownlow and marched him inside....

I did not have a sitting on 7th day evening as I expected but hope to be able to get two early in the week.

When the President was last in on 5th day evening he had evidently been thinking that slave property was a very uncertain comidity and very likely to depreciate

and he would not be able to get his money back.

He told of a slave who had offended his mistress and to punish him she put a burning coal of fire on his head, the fellow submitted quietly and then told her to "Neva mine I'll jes lef it lay dar 'till Massa comes home and see what he'll say."

There is more in his manner of telling jokes than in the joke itself, still they usually have a point.

June 2, 1864.

I have had two sittings this week, one 2nd day evening and one 3rd day morning at quarter of seven, pretty early for the President is it not? and then he had been at the War department an hour before and brought me the latest news from the Army, he had just heard the good news from Sherman, which pleased him much.

June 10, 1864.

I doubt if Washington was ever venerated as father Abraham is now; I have met with several who were delegates to the Convention and they all speak enthusiastically of him. By the way I had about the whole of the New Jersey delegation in to see the bust yesterday.

June 12, 1864.

Last evening I finished the cast and felt very

much relieved by it. I will probibely, pack and send it off tomorrow, The opinion as far as I have heard, is that it is a success. I had it taken into the Commissioner's room who seemed pleased to have it there.

June 17, 1864.

I got the bust of President Lincoln packed and sent off on third day evening.

November 14, 1864.

In the evening I went with all Washington to serenade the President and heard a very good speech from him.

January 7, 1865.

The President will hold his first reception of the season this evening. I think I shall go, as I do not want him to forget me altogether.

January 12, 1865.

I went to the Presidents reception last Monday evening and was very much entertained looking at the people.....

After the crowd had somewhat passed away I thought I would go and speak to the President whom by the way, I had not spoken to since I finished the bust. He did not recognize me at first but seemed to be in a deep study, so I merely shook his hand and turned

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away quite crestfallen. When I had got a few steps from him I heard him repeating something like my name.
several times, then instead of passing out the regular way I turned back to go out as I had come in. As I did so I glanced toward Mr Lincoln, he was looking intently at me and motioned me back to him. He had recalled my name and when I went to him he raised his head up and whispered "You're the man that made a mud head of me".

He apologized for not recognizing me and said "You saw I was trying to think?" then I understood why he looked so strange at first. He enquired about the bust, told me he had sat several time since but that he liked mine better than any of them.
His remarks were very gratefully received as there were quite a number of persons collected around who seemed very much interested in our conversation.
He spoke of Mr Carpenter and his picture painted last winter and kept me by him several minutes. I thought after I would not have had the incident different in any way, as it was I shook hands three times, when he called me back he gave me his hand again, and again when he said good night.

April 15, 1865.

How can I tell you of the great calamity that has

come upon us? I cannot realize it myself and could scarcely believe it myself had I not seen the City draped in mourning from one end to the other, and the hearse as it conveyed the precious remains of our beloved President to his now sad home

This sculptor was the last man to gaze upon the face of Abraham Lincoln as he lay in his casket just prior to his burial. He made the request that he might be allowed to take the last look at the President as he lay in state in order that he might catch a new expression on the face of the martyred Statesman. This final request was granted the man who had come to know the President as few had known him in his hours outside his executive office.

Letters to President A. Lincoln

Treasury Department.
January 17, 1864.

Dear Sir:

Mr W. Marshall Swayne a clerk in the Internal Revenue Bureau, wishes to contribute to the Fair to be held in this City for the benefit of the Christian Commission, a Series of bas-relieves heads of the Presidents and the heads of Departments. Mr Swayne has modeled a head of myself and I think of Governor Seward, which are said to be good. His object is a good one and if you will give him a sitting or two to enable him to acplish it, you will help it and at the same time gratify a very worthy gentleman.

He devotes only his spare hours to the work, not allowing it to interfere at all with his official duties.

Very truly
S. P. Chase.

"My father said the President took the letter and holding it on his knee wrote — "I endorse what is said above of Mr Swayne;" "signed A. Lincoln."
He evidently gave the letter to my father as we have it in the book compiled by A. C. Swayne, and it is highly prized.

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From The Village Record, June 29, 1852.

Printed and Published by Henry S. Evans, New Series.
Number 20, Volumn XIX.

Sculptor - Mr Wm. Marshall Swayne.

Mr Evans:-

I observed in the exhibition at the Horticultural Hall of last week, a bust in plaster of Doctor Benjamin W. Pennock of this County, executed by Wm. Marshall Swayne who has on previous occasions deposited other specimens of his work, and which invariably elicited great admiration from the visitors attending these exhibitions. In a former communication I took occation to draw attention of our citizens to the efforts of Mr Swayne, and the promise he gave of future excellence in the rare and beautiful art of sculpture. There is such manifest improvement in this last specimen, that it would be unjust toward the developing genius of the artist to permit it to pass without a positive notice..... I had the pleasure of seeing it side by side with work of distinguished Sculptors ancient and modern in the late exhibition at the Accadmy of Fine Arts, in Philadelphia; and pointed to it with just pride as the production of a citizen of my native County. The likeness of Dr Pennock is wonderfully preserved and there is an absence of that heavy stolidity of feature that is frequently observable in works of that kind, the countenance being singularly animated and life like

Backward Glances In Kennett Square, Pa.

Excerpts from Daily Local News, West Chester, Pa.
September 22, 1921.

Knew Abraham Lincoln.

Another striking figure that our townspeople can never forget is W. Marshall Swayne Sculptor; the one and only representative of the plastic art, I believe, that our County has produced. Fifty busts and medalions, several of which were put in marble comprise the work of our late honored townsman. The plaster bust of Bayard Taylor in our Library the last sitting for which was given by the poet before sailing for Germany in 1878, is a striking likeness of the great man and has a touch of spirituality which called forth commendation from relatives and friends at the time of its execution.

Marshall Swayne's love of Art, his gentle and curious personality and his contact with the great men of his day, made him one of the most delightful men to meet personally. He looked like a patriark as he walked our streets in the closing years of his life, and no youth who saw him could fail to be impressed by his nobility.

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As children many will recall his kindness at the Centenial Exposition in Philadelphia in 1876, where as an inspector on special duty he pointed out the famous marbles and choice pieces exhibited there. Incidents related by him of his meeting with Abraham Lincoln in the work of making models of the martyred President for a bust and marble medalion. were eagerly heard by his townspeople.

Andrew Johnson.

President of the United States of America.

To all to whom these Presents shall come, Greetings:

Know Ye, that reposing special trust and confidence in the Integrity, Diligence, and Discretion of William M. Swayne, I have nominated, and by and with the consent of the Senate do appoint him Collector of Internal Revenue Seventh District of Pennsylvania, and do Authorize and empower him to execute and fulfil of that office with all the rights and emoluments thereunto legally apertaining unto him, the said W. M. Swayne until a successor shall have been appointed and duly qualified.

In Testimony Whereof I have caused these letters to be made Patent, and the Seal of the Treasury Department of the United States to be hereunto affixed.

Given under my hand, at the City of

Washington on the Ninth Day of March, in the year of our Lord One Thousand, Eight Hundred and Sixty Seven and of the Independence of the United States of America the Ninety-first.

By the President —

Andrew Johnson.

Secretary of the Treasury

Hugh McCulloch.

Clerk of Internal Revenue.

The office of Internal Revenue was in the Treasury Building, which adjoined the grounds of the White House, Washington, D.C. In 1863 William Marshall Swayne then of West Chester, Chester County, Pennsylvania, was appointed 4th Class clerk in that department at a salary of $1,200.00 a year; then was promoted to 2nd Class Clerk at 1400.00 a year and again promoted from there in the year 1867 to the Office of Collector of Internal Revenue for the 7th Congressional District of Pennsylvania, composed of Chester and Delaware Counties at a salary $1,500.00 a year with commissions of percentage which generally far exceeded the amount of salary. He held this position about three years, having his office in West Chester, Penna.

I am sending this data to thee thinking thee might be interested in comparing prices of 1867 and 1962.

July 16, 1962

Mrs. Ella Swayne Roberts
Cotter Home North
424 North Matlock Street
West Chester, Pennsylvania

Dear Mrs. Roberts:

I was pleased to have your letter of July 11. I have read it with interest and it will find a place in our permanent files.

A lot of this information you gave me about two years ago and I have incorporated it into my article.

The bulletin should be off the press this week. I will send you several copies.

Yours sincerely,

R. Gerald McMurtry

RGM:md

Sculptor - Swayne

1645 Grand Concourse

Bronx 52, New York

August 27, 1962

Dr. R. Gerald McMurtry

Lincoln Lore

Lincoln National Life Insurance Company

Fort Wayne, Indiana

Dear Sir,

In the July issue of the Lincoln Lore bulletin, there is the statement by William Marshall Swayne, "Instead of going into particular description I would recommend a view of the model (of a bust of Mr. Lincoln) now to be seen at the jewelry store of M.W. Galt and Bros., 354 Pennsylvania Avenue."

Could this jeweler be an ancestor of prominent Washington jeweler Norman Galt, who was the first husband to Mrs. Woodrow Wilson? If this is true, it might make an interesting footnote in your next issue.

I have enjoyed reading Lincoln Lore for five years now, and I hope to continue receiving it for many more years.

Yours truly,

Steven Lee Carson

Steven Lee Carson

August 30, 1962

Mr. Steven Lee Carson
1645 Grand Concourse
Bronx 52, New York

Dear Mr. Carson:

I was glad to have your letter regarding the July issue of Lincoln Lore.

It never occurred to me that N. W. Galt (whose jewelry store exhibited Swayne's Lincoln statuette) might be a relative of Mrs. Woodrow Wilson's first husband. Many thanks for bringing this matter to my attention.

Yours sincerely,

R. Gerald McMurtry

RGM:md

During emancipation painting by Carpenter.

"A few days afterward he asked me to accompany him to the studio of Mr Ingalls the sculptor, who was making a bust of him at the Treasury office."

F B Carpenter

Albany Evening Journal Apr 26, 1861

Lincoln Lore

Bulletin of The Lincoln National Life Foundation . . . Dr. R. Gerald McMurtry, Editor
Published each month by The Lincoln National Life Insurance Company, Fort Wayne, Indiana

Number 1493 FORT WAYNE, INDIANA July, 1962

WILLIAM MARSHALL SWAYNE

The Man Who Made A "Mud Head" of Lincoln

On Monday evening, January 9, 1865, William Marshall Swayne, a Pennsylvania artist in the employment of the government attended the president's reception. This was the first evening reception of the season at the executive mansion. Swayne was a welcome guest to this affair as he had executed a plaster bust of Abraham Lincoln from life during the early months of the year 1864.

Swayne sent his family the following account of the reception on January 12, 1865:

"I went to the president's reception last Monday evening and was very much entertained looking at the people. There were a good many notables present. After the crowd had somewhat passed away I thought I would go and speak to the president whom by the way, I had not spoken to since I finished the bust. He did not recognize me at first but seemed to be in a deep study, so I merely shook his hand and turned away quite crestfallen. When I heard his repeating something like my name several times, then instead of passing out the regular way I turned back to go out as I had come in. As I did so I glanced toward Mr. Lincoln. He was looking intently at me and motioned me back to him. He had recalled my name and when I went to him he reached his head up and whispered, 'You're the man that made a mud head of me.' He apologized for not recognizing me, and said, 'You saw I was trying to think.' Then I understood why he had looked so strange at first. He inquired about the bust—told me he had sat several times since, but he liked mine better than any of them. His remarks were very gratefully received as there were quite a number of persons collected around who seemed very much interested in our conversation.

"I thought after, I would not have the incident different in any way, as it was I shook hands three times with him. When he called me back he gave me his hand again, and again when I said goodnight."

From the Lincoln National Life Foundation

William Marshall Swayne

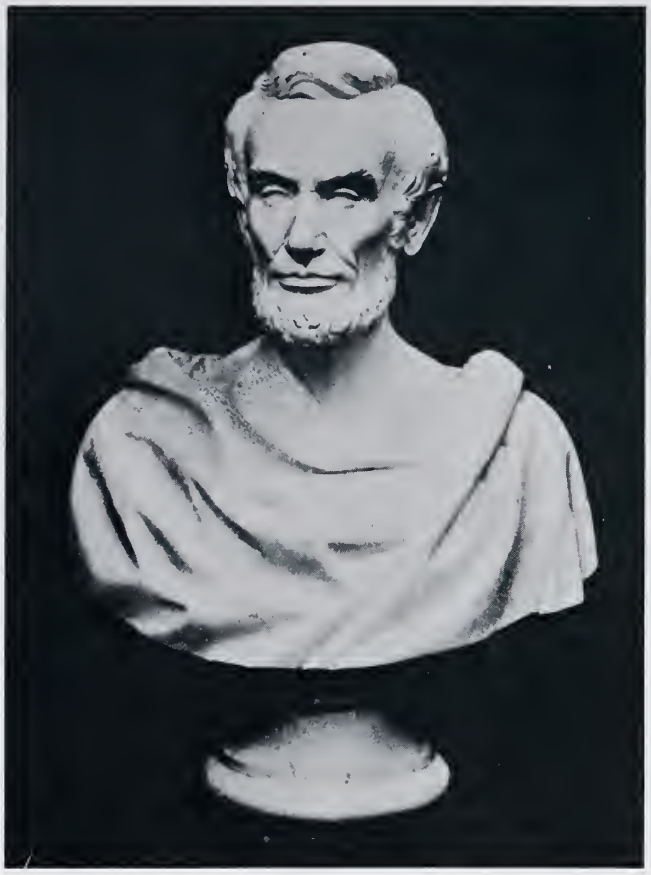
This portrait was made by Alonzo Chappel and the original is now exhibited in the West Chester Historical Society Museum.

Swayne, born December 1, 1828, was a native of Chester County, Pennsylvania. As a young man he demonstrated a talent for sculpture and in 1850 he modeled a bust of Dr. Worth of West Chester which was awarded a certificate of honorable mention in the exhibit of the Chester County Agricultural Society. His first important study was a plaster bust of Dr. William Darlington of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, executed in 1858.

The young artist took as his model the works of Antonio Canova the outstanding Italian sculptor, and was so taken with his art that he named his son A. Canova Swayne. Perhaps the greatest criticism of Swayne as an artist is that he was not brought up in the strict atmosphere of art and it became very hard for him to grasp the importance of dedicated training.

His plaster figure "Inez" attracted considerable attention and on June 30, 1858 George W. Pearce wrote Swayne indicating that he would like to purchase the figure for a friend who wished to present it to Thomas Buchanan Read, the artist-poet.

Having failed to successfully manage his father's farm and with a wife (he married Mary Barnard on November 14, 1850) and several children, he hoped to meet his increasing responsibilities by following his chosen profession in Washington, D.C. He remained in Washington, for several months in 1858 before returning to his home in West Chester. However in 1863 he was appointed to a clerkship in the Internal Revenue Office in the capital city. In addition to securing two promotions Swayne apparently was successful in making a favorable impression in art circles and he had a letter of introduction to the great architect, T. U. Walter, who was at that time designing several important Federal buildings in



From the Lincoln National Life Foundation

Plaster bust of Abraham Lincoln by William Marshall Swayne. The original is today coated with bronze and is in the Smithsonian Institution.

Washington. The letter of introduction written by Dr. Darlington mentioned that Swayne had made busts of himself, and John Hickman of the House of Representatives.

One of Swayne's first subjects was General Sam Houston of Texas. In March of 1859 he modeled a bust of Hon. Joshua R. Giddings of Ohio and Hon. James A. Bayard of Delaware. For awhile he was a pupil of H. K. Brown and was no doubt greatly influenced by this recognized artist who was appointed Art Commissioner. Swayne did not restrict his sculpture to portrait art, and in 1859 he did a beautiful study entitled "Autumn."

In May, 1860 Swayne made a bust of Simon Cameron, Lincoln's first Secretary of War. In June, 1860 the sculptor did a bust of General Anthony Wayne. Other commissions for prominent men of the day were received and executed, the most notable being that of Dr. William Darlington in marble which was sculptored for the Bank of Chester County, Pennsylvania.

One of Swayne's most important commissions was a bust of the Secretary of The Treasury, Salmon P. Chase, made shortly after his appointment to the Lincoln cabinet. As would be expected Swayne had an ambition to make a bust or statue of the sixteenth president and arrangements were made for a marble bust of Lincoln, to be commissioned by Henry C. Townsend for exhibition at a fair sponsored by the Christian Commission in Philadelphia in June, 1864. Accordingly Chase wrote Lincoln on January 17, 1864:

"Mr. W. Marshall Swayne a clerk in the Internal Revenue Bureau, wishes to contribute to the Fair to be held in this city for the benefit of the Christian Commission a series of bas relief heads of the President and the heads of Departments.

"Mr. Swayne has modeled a head of myself and I think of Governor Seward, which are said to be good.

"His object is certainly a good one, and if you will give him a sitting or two to enable him to accomplish it, you will help it and at the same time gratify a very worthy gentleman.

"He devotes only his spare hours to the work, not allowing it to interfere at all with his official duties."

Lincoln responded to Chase's letter on February 16, 1864. He wrote:

"I endorse what is said above of Mr. Swayne."

It is believed that Chase gave the Lincoln endorsement to Swayne as the original document is today owned by Mrs. Isaac G. Robert of West Chester, Pennsylvania, a daughter of the sculptor.

The first evidence available that Lincoln was to grant Swayne a sitting was incorporated into a letter addressed to the sculptor's wife, dated January 29, 1864:

". . . went this afternoon to the White House to have a sitting by the President, but he had gone to the funeral of the Swiss Consul, who was buried today."

Swayne set up a temporary studio in the Treasury Building which adjoined the White House grounds and "Mr. Lincoln would walk across and sit and chat . . . while he was modeling." There was no comfortable chair in the studio and one day Swayne discovered in the basement a Victorian red plush upholstered arm chair, and he asked that it be brought to the room for the president's comfort. The request was granted, and after the bust was completed Swayne inquired if he might purchase the chair. He was told that the public buildings were refurnished when necessary and the old furniture was either stored or given away, but never sold. Consequently the chair was given to Swayne and it became a highly treasured possession of the family. Today the chair along with many pieces of Swayne's sculpture are the property of the West Chester Historical Society.

From correspondence files and newspaper articles Swayne's account of his work on the Lincoln bust follow:

February 3, 1864

". . . I have had two sittings from the President, and think I have a recognizable likeness of him. The first thing I said to him, almost, had the usual affect to 'remind him of something.' He was sitting at his table writing when I went in; and, after the usual salutation, asked me if I could take him as he was at work. I remarked that I wished to model the left side of his face, and that the right was turned toward the light. He thought if the left side of his head was right, the other must be also. The analogy of words reminded him, he said, of the man who came to where the road forked, and was told that if he took the left, it was right; and if he took the right it was wrong."

A most intimate picture of Lincoln is revealed in Swayne's letter of March 27, 1864:

"Since I wrote last, I have commenced the bust of the President, and have had two sittings, two nights in succession, the first on Sixth Day evening (March 24). He came over to the Treasury through the rain to keep his appointment; and on last evening he came again, very unexpectedly, to me bringing Mr. Carpenter (the artist who is printing the large historical picture of the Reading of the Emancipation Proclamation) and Tad, saying he came to sit, if I wanted him. He stayed an hour and a quarter, and was withal, very entertaining, reminding me very much of Father in his most jovial domestic moods, telling stories and reciting poetry. Mr. C. (Carpenter) wished to copy or write the words of the poem 'Oh Why Should the Spirit of Mortal Be Proud?' Thee will recollect it came out in the paper, and was ascribed to his (Lincoln's) pen. He had come across it many years since, liked it much, and committed it to memory, and had frequently recited it, but was not the author of it or any other poem. I told him I had been thinking of it the evening before, and intended asking about the authorship. He seemed to think it quite a coincidence that he had been reciting it to Mr. C. the evening before, about 9 o'clock, at the time it occurred to me."

This visit was later mentioned by Carpenter in an article which appeared in the *Albany Evening Journal* of April 26, 1865:

"A few days afterwards he (Lincoln) asked me to accompany him to the studio of Mr. Swayne, the

sculptor, who was working on a bust of him at the Treasury office."

A calendar of dates can be compiled with reference to the bust or when Swayne had Lincoln as a visitor in his studio, or when visiting delegations came in to see the work in progress.

May 25, 1864

"I went this evening to ask the President to give me a sitting. No trouble in getting to see him. He said he would come in 15 minutes, so I went back to get ready for him. He came promptly but had not sat many minutes when Mrs. Lincoln's messenger came over saying the 'Madam' wishes him to ride out with her. He proposed to stay ½ hour, but I insisted on his going, knowing she would be disappointed. He promised to come again tomorrow evening at 4—an hour earlier."

May 29, 1864

"I did not have a sitting on 7th day (Saturday) as I expected, but hope to be able to get two early in the week. When the President was last in on 5th day evening, he had evidently been thinking that slave property was a very uncertain commodity and very liable to depreciate. He said he had been thinking of the anecdote of the fellow who had bought his time and afterwards wanted to sell out because he thought that kind of property was likely to depreciate and he would not be able to get his money back. He told of a slave who had offended his mistress, and to punish him she put a burning coal of fire on his head. The fellow submitted quietly and then told her to 'Neva mine I'll jus lef it lay dar till massa comes home and see what he'll say.' There is more in his manner of telling jokes than in the joke itself, still they generally have a point."

June 2, 1864

"I have had two sittings this week, one 2nd day evening and one 3rd day morning at quarter of seven. Pretty early for the President, is it not? And then he had been at the War Department an hour before and brought me the latest news from the Army. He had just heard the good news from Sherman which pleased him very much."

June 10, 1864

"I doubt if Washington, while living, was ever venerated as father Abraham is now. I have met with several who were delegates to the convention and they all speak enthusiastically of him. By the way I had almost the whole of the New Jersey delegation in to see the bust yesterday."

June 12, 1864

"Last evening I finished the cast and felt very much relieved by it. I will probably pack and send it off tomorrow. The opinion as far as I have heard is that it is a success."

June 17, 1864

"I got the bust of President Lincoln packed and sent off on Thursday evening. I have sent thee a copy of the "Tribune" which has a short reference to it. It is literally true about the President doing as stated. He had been over unbidden on Seventh day evening to see it, but I had gone out."

While Swayne's project was a success the bust was not completed due to his illness until near the close of the Great Central Fair at Philadelphia which was sponsored for the benefit of the Christian Commission. A note in Swayne's handwriting provides this information.

"I will here explain that I have received a conditional commission to execute a marble Bust of President Lincoln from Henry C. Townsend of Philadelphia. The conditions were that it should be completed in that city —but from causes unforseen then the model was not completed until near the close of the Fair. The following card was placed on the exhibit:

"Model
of a bust of
Abraham Lincoln

"Now being executed in marble by W. Marshall Swayne of Washington, D. C. To be purchased by Subscription for the Union League of Philadelphia as an ornament for their new house.

Presented To The Great Central Fair
By
Henry C. Townsend"

There is no evidence that Swayne ever completed a marble bust of Lincoln or that he ever began such a project. The original plaster bust (now coated with bronze) is exhibited by the Smithsonian Institution.

Swayne did make a number of small plaster busts of Lincoln to be sold at the Philadelphia fair. He also made a number of small models in bas relief of Mr. Lincoln and his cabinet for the Fair held in Washington for the benefit of the Christian Commission.

The sculptor continued to reside in Washington after the completion of the Lincoln bust and in his letters to his family he related incidents connected with the Sixteenth President.

November 10, 1864

"Mr. Lincoln will probably be serenaded tonight and I want him to be on hand, there is no doubt of his re-election. I am only afraid he did not get every state as I had hoped he would."

November 14, 1864

"In evening I went with all Washington to serenade the President and heard a very good speech from him."

Swayne's "Reminiscences concerning the Modeling of a Bust of Lincoln" appeared in *The Federal Architect*,

From the Lincoln National Life Foundation

The Victorian red plush arm chair in which the president sat while Swayne modeled the Lincoln bust. The chair is on exhibit in the West Chester, Pennsylvania, Historical Society.

From the Lincoln National Life Foundation

Statuette of Abraham Lincoln by William Marshall Swayne. This is the model submitted to the committee who proposed to erect a heroic bronze statue of Lincoln in front of the Washington City Hall. It is now exhibited in the West Chester Historical Society Museum.

July, 1940. This article apparently gives the entire record of the sculptor's contact with Lincoln.

The assassination of Lincoln came as a great personal loss to Swayne. On April 15, 1865 he wrote his family:

"How can I tell you of the great calamity that has come upon us? I cannot realize it myself and could scarcely believe it had I not seen the city draped in mourning from one end to the other, and the hearse as it conveyed the precious remains of our beloved President to his now sad home. You will learn by the papers all particulars of the terrible murder. I can give you no idea of the deep gloom that seems to overshadow everything and everybody, but saddened hearts and weeping eyes will not be confined to this City. The whole world will mourn him, will miss him."

According to Henry Pleasants, Jr., the author of *Four Great Artists of Chester County* "the assassination of Lincoln dealt a blow to Swayne from which he never recovered." It was the sculptor's request that he be allowed to be the last person to view the president's remains before the body left Washington and "for an hour or more William Marshall Swayne stood looking down on the figure resting at last from the labors of the salvation of a nation." An unidentified newspaper article provides additional information concerning Swayne's request:

"The sculptor (Swayne) was the last man to gaze upon the face of Abraham Lincoln as he lay in his casket just prior to his burial. He made the request that he be allowed to take the last look at the President as he lay in state in order that he might catch a new expression on the face of the martyred statesman. This final request was granted the man who had come to know him in his hours outside of his executive office."

With the death of Lincoln a great deal of interest was manifested in a project for the erection of a Lincoln statue in front of the Washington City Hall. An unidentified Washington, D. C. newspaper indicated that a Swayne statue model was considered:

"Among the designs offered in competition for the statue of Mr. Lincoln to be placed in front of City Hall, that of Mr. W. M. Swayne of this city commends itself most favorably as a truthful representation of our late lamented President.

"Mr. Swayne has seized upon that striking event in the life of Mr. Lincoln which is sure to go down to posterity, ever embalming him in the hearts of succeeding generations. He has represented him as about to utter those memorable words which more than any others show the character and spirit of the man; 'with malice toward none, with charity for all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on,' & etc. The position is that which beautifully harmonizes with those forthgivings of that great heart.

"Instead of going into particular description I would recommend a view of the model, now to be seen at the jewelry store of M. W. Galt and Bros., 354 Pennsylvania Avenue.

"Among the busts of Mr. Lincoln, he himself had a marked preference for that of Mr. Swayne, as a true representative of him.

"This artist had rare opportunities of studying the man, and it is only a matter of justice to him to state that in both the bust and the statuette now referred to he has been most successful in bringing before the eye and the mind the peculiar external and internal characteristics of Mr. Lincoln.

"An excellent judge of works of art, who attended the inauguration ball, forty days before the death of Mr. Lincoln, thus writes afterward: 'But this I know the scene all comes back to me today, as I passed into the Old Hall of Representatives and stood before the bust of Lincoln executed by Swayne. The very face that looked down upon us that night is here; the sad eyes, the patient furrows set in marble, the story on the lips told in everlasting silence.' And in the model or statuette, no one can fail to recognize the true expression which would be most valued in a full statue."

Needless to state, Swayne did not receive a commission to create a heroic bronze statue of the martyred president. The death of Lincoln marked the end of Swayne's professional career as a sculptor. He had resided in Washington during a nine year period, a part of which he had served as a clerk in the Treasury Department and "as the perpetrator of the physical characteristics of the greatest leaders of the country." These nine years had been eventful, and into them Swayne had crowded the experiences of a life time and the sorrows of an era. Then, too, the political atmosphere of the reconstruction period in Washington was not conducive to the production of heroic sculptural studies. There were no longer any heroes and the capital city was barren of new artistic concepts. At least that was the way Swayne appraised the situation.

The sculptor returned to his home and family in Pennsylvania and took up new duties as a Collector of Internal Revenue for the 7th Congressional District of Pennsylvania composed of Chester and Delaware Counties. Occasionally he could be persuaded to create a likeness of some banker or lawyer or celebrated person in plaster or marble, but his life work as an artist was finished. In 1918 in quiet contentment the man who made a "mud head" of Lincoln died in obscurity, but he was loved by all who knew him, and was honored by all of his associates.

SWAYNE, WILLIAM MARSHALL

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Sculptors - S
(Busts)