



Lincoln's Gift from Homer, New York: A Painter, an Editor and a Detective

Martin A. Sweeney

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Although Illinois enjoys the indisputable title of "The Land of Lincoln," one small town in New York State played a significant role in the sixteenth president's history. Three native sons of Homer--a detective, a journalist, and a painter--helped inscribe Abraham Lincoln's place in the nation's iconic imagery. Private investigator Eli DeVoe foiled an assassination plot against Lincoln before his first inauguration; journalist William Osborn Stoddard, an early Lincoln supporter, became an influential secretary of the president; and artist Francis Bicknell Carpenter painted The First Reading of the Emancipation Proclamation before the Cabinet, which still hangs in the U.S. Capitol. This exploration of these men and the town that produced them offers insight into the complexities of presidential image-making, and reveals why a small New York town has become a choice destination for Lincoln historians.

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