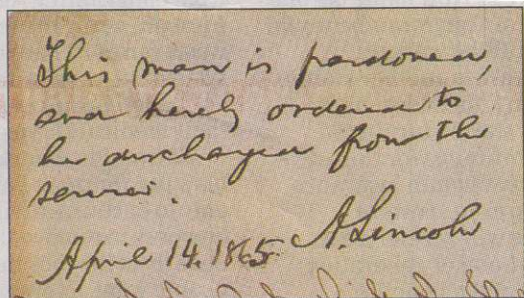


A Lincoln researcher has admitted he altered the date on a pardon.

National Archives via AP



Lincoln pardon to be pulled from archives

THE WASHINGTON POST

WASHINGTON — A pardon signed by Abraham Lincoln, with a date altered to make it appear to be one of the president's final acts before his assassination, will be taken out of circulation at the National Archives, which disclosed the tampering this week.

The document, which the archives says was changed by a Woodbridge, Va., history buff to amplify its significance and promote the man's career, will be kept in a locked vault at the agency's downtown Washington headquarters, officials said Wednesday.

"People are now going to come through the door and say they want to see it," said Trevor Plante, the archives' acting chief of reference, whose suspicions about the timing of the pardon were confirmed this month by investigators from the inspector general's office.

The original record of Lincoln's decision to spare a mentally incompetent Union Army private the death penalty for desertion will be replaced by a high-resolution scan.

Archives officials said that Lincoln did pardon Pvt. Patrick Murphy but that it was issued April 14, 1864, exactly one year before his assassination. They said amateur historian Thomas Lowry wrote a 5 over the 4 in 1864 sometime in 1998 using a fountain pen.