

copy Union

October 17, 1939

Dear Mr. Hill:

I am not really as ungracious a person as my long delay in replying to your letter of last May would justify you in thinking.

I did appreciate your letter and would have answered at once but that I had been foolish enough to overwork and about that time was obliged to go into retirement. I came out on Labor Day, but found such an accumulation of things that I have just gotten around to my correspondence.

And now to your letter. Of course I am pleased that you liked "All in the Day's Work" and I am particularly pleased if something I said led you to revise your determination to read nothing more about Abraham Lincoln. It was a bad resolution, dear Mr. Hill. There is something universal about the man that we can afford to make him a life-long study.

So You ask me where Lincoln got his minutes to the Constitution of 1787. He owned Elliott's Debates on the Federal Constitution and his speech shows to what good effect he studied those debates. Where he got them, I do not know, or if I ever had any authority for saying where he got them it is gone from me. And I have not my notes at hand. As a matter of fact I have been turning over all my Lincoln material to my old College - Allegheny at Meadville, Pennsylvania where they are setting up a Lincoln room, not a show collection but a working collection with the hope that it can be integrated into undergraduate work, work on biography writing, on the development of America, etc., etc. I have not got the scheme worked out fully yet, but my experience so far makes me hopeful that it can be done practically.

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If you want any more information on the sources for the Cooper Union speech why not apply to Mr. M. L. Hauser in Peoria, Illinois. He is our present chief authority on the books that Lincoln read.

Thanking you for your letter and apologizing again for my long delay in answering it, believe me

Faithfully yours

P.S. I am glad you have a garden and I am glad it helps you to keep steady in this troubled world.

Mr. George R. Hill
14 North Center Street
Joliet, Illinois