

June 27, 1923

Mr. W. F. Norton,
1023 George St.,
Alton, Ill.

Dear Mr. Norton:

Thank you for your letter of June 22.

I first heard of this Lincoln-Lemen letter from which I quoted in one of the articles which the McClure Syndicate is handling, through Mr. J. B. Lemen of O'Fallen, Ill. Then I found it in the Jefferson-Lemen Compact, prepared by Willard C. MacNaul, published by the University of Chicago Press. Then Gilbert Tracy accepted it for his collection, quoting it from MacNaul, without MacNaul's qualification, however, that the whereabouts of the original were not known.

I knew Tracy well. He was a most thorough Lincoln student and had for years carried on an enormous correspondence, had his material classified far better than mine has ever been, and I am sure he would balance all the pros and cons in this case; that is, he would not put in a letter unthinkingly. The discovery of the manuscript of the Lemen diary and the manuscript of Dr. Peck's history made it seem probable to me that this letter was genuine. I should not have used it, however, without saying that there was a question of its authenticity, and I shall do that when it comes to republishing the articles in book form.

I am writing to Professor Alvord today as you suggest.

I am very grateful for your letter and this suggestion.

Sincerely yours,