

October 13, 1938

Dear Mr. Lytle:

Do forgive my long neglect of your letter of September 2nd. I have been busy with a piece of work that had to come out by a certain time and I am just getting my head above the accumulation.

I want to thank you for your generosity in allowing me to keep Mr. Rennick's book which you say is the last copy autographed by him. You may be sure it will be treasured here.

Yes, I have a copy of "The Education of Abraham Lincoln", the edition printed for Lincoln Memorial University. It was given to me by Mr. Schriver. Mr. Houser also sent me a copy. So you see your extra copy should go to somebody who needs it more than I, though as a matter of fact I am always glad to have extra copies, using them in exchange for something I have not.

You spoke in your letter of Daniel Green Burner and of the interview I had with his grandson. It is not I who saw Mr. Burner, but my assistant in the gathering of the material for the Early Life of Lincoln.

My assistant was a young lawyer of Springfield - J. McCann Davis. I needed somebody to look up people, gather photographs and do all of the detailed work that such an investigation that I was carrying on required. It was after my second visit to Springfield looking the ground over that Mr. Davis was recommended to me, by whom I cannot now remember. He is an admirable assistant. Almost all of the notes under the pictures in that Early Life were prepared by him, particularly the biographical notes. It was he who saw Mr. Burner near Galesburg, and as the notes say he was then about eighty years of age. You see I have no reaction towards the gentleman at all. The note itself is very non-committal.

I have genuine respect for the work Mr. Davis did in and around New Salem gathering material. We went over the ground together a couple of times. It was he who prepared with the aid of the people in St. Petersburg the little map of New Salem published in the book, the location of the houses, etc.

Don't you think that compared with the later investigation that it has stood up pretty well? There may have been mistakes made but they were the mistakes of the informers. The map was reviewed by several old residents before it was published.

If at any time any question comes up about the material in my life of Lincoln I shall of course be glad to know of it. It is much to my interest - I want to further the Lincoln research if I can.

Many thanks for your letter, believe
me

Very sincerely yours

Mr. H. J. Lytle
Davenport, Iowa