

June 27, 1923

Prof. C. W. Alvord,
University of Minnesota,
St. Paul, Minn.

My dear Prof. Alvord:

In a piece of informal Lincoln work which I am doing for a newspaper syndicate, I published recently a letter alleged to have been written by Abraham Lincoln in 1857 to the Rev. James Lemen, a letter which appears in McNaul's booklet, "The Jefferson -Lemen Compact," also in Gilbert Tracy's "The Uncollected Letters of Abraham Lincoln."

I have just received a letter from Mr. W. F. Norton of Alton, Ill., in which he says that he believes this letter a forgery and quotes you as being of the same opinion. I gathered from what Mr Norton writes me that you must have published something on the subject. If so, will you be good enough to let me have it? If not, will you not give me your reasons for believing the letter a forgery?

Several years ago I had considerable correspondence with Mr. Lemen of O'Fallen, Ill., and while I realized that the recollections he offered needed checking up and qualifying, I did not doubt the basis of them - thought them about as reliable as most recollection are. This letter I have always been inclined to accept as genuine, although I knew the original had disappeared. I made the mistake in quoting it in my article of not saying that the original was supposed to have been lost. And that is something I want to correct when I come to my book.

Very truly yours,