January 3, 1923

Mr. T.A.Frank Jones,
Kansas City, Mo.

Dear Mr. Jones:

Thank you for your letter of December 29. I meant before this to answer your letter of December 19, and tell you that when I was working on my Life of Lincoln, I had a thorough search made in the Springfield papers for any possible reference to the supposed wedding.

I also had the Journal of the House for January gone over, day by day. You will find the result of that search in my Life of Lincoln. Mr. Lincoln reported in the House the fatal first of January, and he was there quite as often and was quite as active throughout January and February as most of the members.

One thing that has interested me a great deal in this story is this. I think you will agree with me in saying that in a town of the size that Springfield then was, the importance of the parties being considered, if such wedding as Mr. Herndon is describing had been arranged, everybody would have known about it, and that if the groom had failed to appear, everybody would have known about it. It would have been a story that would have fixed itself in the minds of the entire town. Everybody would have known of it and have talked about it. Now, the truth is that Mr. Herndon's story was a surprise to Springfield when it came out - so much of a surprise that it has always been a matter of dispute.

Of course it may be true that it had been settled upon between Mr. Lincoln and Miss Todd that they were to be married on a certain day, but there surely were no extensive preparations, and there was no tragic result such as Mr. Herndon describes. It could not have been without its becoming a part of the town's social history. And that certainly did not happen.

This may not impress you as it always has impressed me. I cannot tell you the number of people who said to me, "Of course I never heard of it until I saw it in Herndon" - and many of these that believed Herndon's story.

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Mr. Pasfield refers you to Weik's "Real Lincoln". It is an interesting piece of work, and every Lincoln student should read it. The best corroboration that he gives of the Herndon story is Judge Matheney's insistance that he was asked to serve as a groomsman at the wedding which did not come off.

Of course, if any new light or new information on the episode comes to you, I shall be glad to have it.

Thanking you for your letters, believe me,

Very sincerely yours,

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