March 4, 1909.

Mr. J. Henry Lea,

c/o Houghton-Mifflin Co.,

85 Fifth Ave., New York.

Dear Sir:-

I have so much enjoyed your book on the Ancestry of Abraham Lincoln that I am going to write you about a couple of things I did not like and which I wish you had not introduced, because even if they are not in error as to the facts they are to policy. I refer to charges of cowardice and avarice against the brothers of Thomas Lincoln, the father of the President. If true, these charges should be suppressed because they tend to promote ill feeling and can do no good. Personally, I believe both are incorrect, and as to that in regard to cowardice in connection with the Indian affair, I think your own book proves my point as nearly as it can be proven at this late date: one brother ran for aid and the other for his gun with which he killed the Indian. What else could they have done? It looks to me as if in your praisworthy effort to place Thomas Lincoln upon his proper plane you have committed the same error with regard to them as the detractors of Thomas did in their effort to show how lowly was the President's origin, they belittled the father, you his (the father's) brothers. I think you have made a mistake and hope you will omit this in any other editions you may publish.

It occurs to me that you may think I have a personal feeling in this matter. I, therefore, will tell you that I am not a descendent from either of these brothers. My great grandfather was Joseph, the son of Thomas, as shown on page 75 of your book, and further, that this Joseph is the same one who purchased the land in Radnow Township from his brother Thomas and his brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law Dickinson, as given on page 178 in your book. I would still further say that you may omit the question mark after the foot note on same page, as Joseph's daughter Margaret was the mother of Wayne and Franklin MacVeagle (she also had other children).

In regard to Hannaniah, whom you can not determine whether he was a son of Mordecai or Thomas. It may not prove anything but be a straw showing the drift of the current: The Thomas Lincoln who married Priscilla Dickinson (your book page 178) had a son Joseph, a batchelor, and apparently a rover who visited among his relatives. A son of one of Joseph's brothers wrote to me that amonf the people Uncle Joseph had talked about was Jannaniah: I have always understood that he was talking about an uncle because he visited his uncles and first cousins.

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In this connection, you give the names of Thomas' children (page 75) as Hannah, Thomas, Michael, Joseph, Sarah, Mary, and Elizabeth. a granddaughter of Sarah told me that Sarah had several brothers, but no sisters. I, therefore, cannot account for the Hanna, Mary and Elizabeth unless they all died young or that Mary and Elizabeth did and that by Hanna is meant Hannaniah. I would state further in regard to the names of these children that I have always understood that instead of Michael the name should be Mishal or Mishael. I see it is given in the first census (recently published by the Government) and a descendent so spelled it in correspondence with me.

I am not a genealogist and I therefore hesitate in making the following criticism: It does not appear to me that you have good proof for stating that the President's grand-mother was Bathsheba Herring instead of Mary Shipley. You seem to have forced Thomas' birth from 1775 to 1780 in order to help you contention. I believe I remember that the President set the date in his bible at 1778 and that he stated his father was about seven years old when the Indian affair occurred, which you say was in 1785 which agrees with the 1778 date of birth. Besides that evidence I do not think that Sunny South article has much weight: but suppose it has, then it is not possible that the child she had by Abraham was one of those unaccounted-for daughters. In fact it looks to me as if you were straining a point to get a connection with that Arch Bishop of Canterbury.

I hope you will forgive my frank criticisms and accept my thanks for having published the book.

Yours sincerely,

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