Notes of Interview with A. E. Chandler, Dec. 2.

Go to Mr. Chandler's at Postal Telegraph office with letter of introduction from Mr. Maynard. He is occupied and asks that I wait. Comes out to get me after a little time. Tells me that he has had the Governor of Vermont to lunch and could not send him off at once. Find him sympathetic, modest, willing. Explain what I am doing and what I want. He tells me that he, with D. H. Bates of the Tradesmen's Bank, and C. A. Tinker formerly? of the Western Union had charge of the telegraph office in the War Department. He was in an office next to Mr. Stanton which was usually called the President's room, since that it was there that Lincoln came to send his messages and to get an early reading of those being received. He tells how Mr. Lincoln would tell stories freely as if kind of a relief to the strain upon him. Mr. Chandler says these stories were notalways such as could be repeated, but they were always to the point to explain or illustrate something. He says he talked a great deal to him, but it was only because he was the only person there; that he had the necessity of talking to somebody about the telegrams that he was receiving, and as Mr. Chandler was much alone with him he was obliged to talk to him. He tells how he would come up and go to the map on the

Digital Image, 2009. The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library

talk to him. He tells how he would come up and go to the map on the wwll, pointing out the positions of the confederate and federal forces, commenting upon the moves that they might make or had made, illustrating his ideas by stories frequently. Mr. Chandler says he thinks that perhaps this is not very interesting to me, but I tell him that it gives me a vivid picture of Mr. Lincoln saying, "Rosencrans is there. I wonder what Brag willdo, etc." Mr. C, smiles when I say this, and tells me that it reminds him of the only time he ever heard Lincoln swear. It was in Septerber of '63. Burnside had been ordered to Rosencrans' relief. They supposed he had moved, but a telegram was received from him while Mr. Lincoln was in Mr. Chandler's office, saying that he, Burnside, was marching towards Jonesboro. Jonesboro was northeast of Knoxville, Chattanooga being southwest. When Lincoln read this telegram he said with great impatience, "/onesboro, Jonesboro, dam Jonesboro; why don't he go to Rosencrans. He studied for a moment looking out of the window, scratching his temple as was his custom, and repeating half aloud to himself the phrases of the telegram. Then, taking his pencil, he wrote: "General Burnside, Greenville, Tennessee. If you are to do any good to Rosencrans it will

Digital Image, 2009. The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library.

not do to waste time at Jonesboro. It is already too late to do the most good that might have been done; but I hope it will still do some good. Please do not lose a moment". (Page 410 Letters and Speeches). Mr. Chandler tells me that Lincoln had the habit of studying in this way, looking out of the window, scratching his head and forming the phrases of something he wanted to write half aloud, but when he had studied his dispatch in this way he wrote it directly without erasures. (Examine manuscript of these telegrams in War Department.) Mr. Chandler tells me that Lincoln frequently used a pen of his which lay upon the desk; that he would fumble around over the desk for it saying, "Where is that little pen of yours, Chandler? it seems to me I can do better with that than anything else. I am interested by Mr. Chandler's modest attitude toward his journal. He has kept one for forty-two years. That referring to the time that he was in the War Department he claims is not as interesting as it ought to be, since he was very much occupied, working from twelve to sixteen hours a day. He says that he married and brought his wife from Vermont to Washington at that time, so that there is more about his girl in the journal than he presumes a historical student would think there ought to be. Asks me if I do not think it was rash that he should marry in that way.

Digital Image, 2009. The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library