January 5, 1923

Mr Ailes, President
Riggs National Bank,
Washington, D.C.

My dear Mr. Ailes:

Mr. Charles Bell writes me that you have told him that you would be glad to give me permission to examine the accounts which Abraham Lincoln kept in your Bank from 1861 to 1865, provided Mr Robert Lincoln has no objection.

I thoroughly appreciate your courtesy. It is of course proper that you should consult Mr. Lincoln. If you prefer, you may say to Mr Lincoln that I would gladly put before him any of my findings and withhold anything the publication of which he did not approve, though I can hardly imagine that there would be anything of that kind.

The point is just this. Mr. Lincoln left an estate of something over $100,000. In this estate were $57,000 worth of registered bonds. My supposition is that Mr. Lincoln paid for these bonds out of his salary as President, which means of course that he must have been very careful of his expenditures.

Another thing I am interested in is in knowing what he paid for them - how much below par. This seems to me to be a perfectly proper inquiry.

If you prefer that I should write directly to Mr. Robert Lincoln I will do so. Or if you think it would be advisable to go down to Washington and talk with him, I will do that. He has always been exceedingly courteous to me, but of course he is beset with inquiries for information and help by Lincoln students, and I don't like to unnecessarily add anything to his burdens.

Thanking you in advance for anything you may be able to do for me in this matter, believe me, my dear Mr. Ailes,

Sincerely yours,

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