

Harrisonburg, Va.,
October 13, 1922.

Mr. John S. Phillips,
New York City.

Dear Mr. Phillips:

When I left New York Saturday, it was to go direct to Lancaster, Pa.

I went there to get hold of what might be in the Court House on John Lincoln, Virginia John. John wrote into a deed made in 1748 that he was of Caernervan Township, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania; also he set himself down as a weaver; this being much better documentary proof than I generally get hold of, I took it that he must have held land in the County, been assessed there, at least, and of course I was determined to get my eyes on what was left of his home and my feet on the land that he had trod. My first day was Sunday and my work for that day was shaped by some fascinating postal cards picked up when I went down to breakfast. They were pictures of what they call in Lancaster County "plain people," Amish, Mennonites, Dunkards. There is a town I discovered by these cards called Ephrata, where there were fascinating buildings called the cloisters. I wiggled and twisted to make out how I could go to what I thought was the John Lincoln place and still see Ephrata and found by consulting my maps that it was easy and more economical than going by motor to Lancaster. We went through a lovely country to the town. There I picked up an intelligent driver with an excellent car and started our sight-seeing. It makes the greatest difference in the world, I find, what kind of driver you succeed in getting on these expeditions, -- whether or not he really is interested in the country and willing to go to trouble to find what you want. We had a man twelve years a school teacher, and he told us many interesting things about the cloisters. The point of all that is that I find when John Lincoln came down into Lancaster County he came down to rub elbows with a greater variety of religious dissenters, separatists, celibates, pietists, etc., etc., every shade of religious reason and unreason that they produced in that period. I am greatly interested in the intellectual and spiritual atmosphere in which these Lincolns at different periods lived. The radicalism of that day seems to have been almost entirely along religious lines. What these people seem to have been after was the escape from politicians, that is, governments, the right to earn their own living without interference, to wear what they wanted to or didn't want to, to stand or sit or kneel at prayer. Very curious how they stuck on some matter that seems very unimportant to me, like whether or no ~~waxed~~ buttons or hooks were on their coats. But these things were symbols, of course. The point to me is that John Lincoln had to live or did live in a country sizzling with strange and contradictory doctrines.

I don't think that is why he left Pennsylvania, however. Of course I was after what I supposed to be his home. Lincoln died in Caernervan a few years ago, -- Abraham Lincoln --. He had owned and lived for years in a place known as White Hall, one of the beautiful places of this County which really is as full of fine, spacious farm houses and manor houses as any land I ever saw in

this country. It was near church-time, and we made for Churchtown, which our driver assured us was one of the most aristocratic places in the County. One long street we found it, lying on an upland something like Redding ridge, only more thickly built up. We went to the Squire, thoroughly informed and very hospitable. Would like to go with us to see Whitehall but hadn't had his dinner. However, there was a Mr. John Jacobs down the street, who knew everything. It was lovely to see him hang on to us, wanting so to go, fresh ears into which to pour endless talkes of the people of Churchtown, but he had company and was so hungry, and so we went ahead. It was such a temptation to stop and tell of the people which you find on these hunts. Here was John Jacobs' sister, eighty-six, so full of the recollections of the splendor of the Jacobses and the Jenkinases from whom she had descended, and particularly of ~~the~~ Windsor, the Jacobs' family home that I could scarcely get in the name Lincoln. We literally tore ourselves away, as J.J. was not at home.

By this time, I have learned from the Squire and Miss Jacobs that Whitehall was not an original Lincoln place, nor had any of them ever heard of a John Lincoln in Caernorvan. An Abraham Lincoln, it seems, had bought the place, that he had had but one child, Betty; that she had lived out her life there and died. And they were all buried in a graveyard in Churchtown, with monuments whose letters were so big you could read them from the road as you passed by.

While we were talking with Miss Jacobs, she told me that she thought Mordecai Lincoln was buried at Morgantown on the line. So we drive four miles ahead, and the driver, Sarah, and I all walk up and down the rows and read faithfully every stone. Sarah is proving an excellent investigator, quiet and persistent, and she discovered the Lincoln group after I had given up. But they were too late. There was a Mordecai, and a John, and an Abraham, -- all the good old names, but they belonged to later times. There was nothing to do then but to go back to Ephrata by another road in order to see as much as possible of the land John had lived in according to his own statement, even though he had left nothing behind him that anybody now living there remembered.

The next morning, I do what what I always try to do first, get in touch with the Historical Society, and I was of course delighted to find that Lancaster has one of the best in the country. It would do credit to a New England Town. It has quarterly meetings at which very well prepared papers are read, all of which are published. I hadn't been at this long before I discovered that the chief contributor was an H. Frank Esleman. He had paper after paper here of real historical interest. I telephoned him. Found out that he was the president of the Society, a lawyer, and wouldn't I come over and see him, which I did. I really should write a sketch of H.F.E. He is a real interesting person, not one of Sid's fakes who never did anything but make money. (Don't tell Sid!) He is an im-

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passioned student of history. Says when a man has no children he should make books. He has a devotion to the Constitution, to Democratic principles that is something to stir your soul. He has got together the most interesting matter on how we vote or donot vote in the country, the most wonderful statistics. He has made a digest of the Pennsylvania sources that is the most wonderful monument to any man.

I dictated this with my eye on the clock
for we were to take the paper down. All
"Pike" to Shattuck - 2 if. write for no more.