Springfield, Dec 18. 1857.

Henry C. Whitney. Esq

My dear Sir.

Coming home from Bloomington last night I found your letter of the 15th

I know of no express statute or decisions as to what a J. P. may do with the expiration of his term shall do with his docket books papers, unfinished business &c. but so far as I know, the practice has been to hand over to the successor, and to cease to do anything further whatever, in perfect analogy to Secs 110 & 112— and I have supposed & do suppose this is the law— I think the successor may forthwith do, whatever the retiring J. P. might have done— As to the proviso to Sec. 114 I think it was put in to cover possible cases, by way of caution, and not to authorize the J. P. to go forward and finish up, whatever might have been begun by him—

The view I take I believe is the common law principle, as to retiring officers and their successors, to which I remember but one exception, which is the case of sheriffs and ministerial officers of that class—

I have not had time to examine this subject fully, but I have great confidence I am right—

You must not think of offering me pay for this—

Mr John O. Johnson is my friend; I gave your name to him— He is doing the work of trying to get up a republican organization— I do not suppose Long John ever saw or heard of him— Let me say to you confidentially, that I do not entirely appreciate what the republican papers of Chicago are so constantly saying against Long John— I consider those papers truly devoted to the republican cause, and not unfriendly to me; but I do think that more of what they say against "Long John" is dictated by personal malice than themselves are conscious of— We can not afford to lose the services of "Long John" and I do believe the unrelenting warfare made upon him, is injuring our cause— I mean this to be confidential—

If you quietly cooperate with Mr J. O. Johnson, in getting up an organization I think it will be right—

Your friend as ever

A. Lincoln