(w. walter)

Savannah, June 2d, 1866.

Dear Reader:

Your favor duly received. I am glad you have undertaken the task of writing the life of President Lincoln for publication. I did not know all about the case of Armstrong, but we doubt many things occurred that have been forgotten.

In the summer of 1857, at a camp meeting in the South East portion of Mason County, a man by the name of Stillman was murdered. Three men were charged with the offense. "James N. Harris and {redacted}, Armstrong," both of whom were indicted at the fall term of our Court of that year. Harris was tried and convicted of murder. He was sentenced to the Penitentiary for eight years. Armstrong took a change of venue to Cape County, and up to this time I had conducted the defense. In the spring of 1858, Armstrong, at the Cape County Court, was put on his trial. Here Mr. Lincoln first appeared in the case. I had presented the evidence adduced at the trial of Harris; this Mr. Lincoln examined closely, and very soon was fully posted in regard to the case. The evidence showed that the deed, together with a large number of others were off some distance, say half a mile, from the place of worship, where some wagon and provisions...
and Ligons were stationed. At one of these wounds the difficulty occurred. The main witness knew that he saw Ligons strike Wiggins across the brow of the head with some large stick, seeming a near pont of a wagon, and that something about the neck with what appeared to be a thong, or about the face and that the parties climbed and fell to the ground. Wiggins lived one or two days. The witness who testified to this stood off 10 or 15 paces from the parties in the night about eleven o'clock. The examination of dead showed fracture of the skull at the back and base of the brain, and also an other fracture at or near the inner corner of one eye. That fracture occasioned the most immediate death of which was shown would produce death. I examined the witness and when through Mr. Lincoln would tell me what to ask, having reference to the testimony of some on the Morris trial. we made no showed numerous contradictions. Then we showed by an other witness that the man who pretended to have been all the difficulty had not been on the ground at all that night. Mr. Lincoln made the closing arguments for the defense. He spoke slow and carefully reviewed the whole testimony picked it all to pieces and showed that the man did not kill had not received his wounds at the place or Time named by the witness, but afterwards and
from the hands of some one else. The test of his kind feelings toward the Mother of the Prisoner - a widow - that she had been kind to him when he was young, lone and in need friends. The last 15 minutes of his speech was as eloquent as I ever heard, and such sincere and earnestness with which he spoke that some all and as if entranced, and when he was through found relief in a gush of tears. I have never seen such emotion exhibited over the feelings and emotions of men as in that occasion.

The boy was acquitted. None of that interesting thing occurred as his acquitted that some writer has mentioned. The old lady came to the Parlor where Mr. B. and the Judge and some others were sitting and took Mr. B. by the hand and with streaming eyes said, God would bless him and his children, because he had been kind to the widow and orphan. The word he done was the reward of his large kind heart - his reward the consciousness that he had done his duty.

Should the facts be of any assistance - use them as you please.

Yours

W. Walker.