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Don to Jim, 20 April 1960

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LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY PRESS

BATON ROUGE

April 20, 1960

Air Mail
Special Delivery

Mr. Jim Silver
Department of History
The University of Mississippi
College of Liberal Arts
University, Mississippi

Dear Jim:

We had a brief holiday here (Friday and Monday) so your letter just came in this morning. I hasten to reply, but am afraid this won't reach you before you go down to Jackson.

First, the news that the Board has approved signing the contract is most welcome. (I wrote Miss Capers just last week, as I recall.)

The conditions of the Board seem reasonable, particularly about keeping the length of the MS down to 375 pages.

Now, about the manuscript itself. I wrote Bell Wiley on March 10, and sent him your memorandum for the reader, told him our problems about reducing the length of the MS, and also offered him a sizable reader's fee for some really expert and detailed advice. Bell was on Army duty in Washington, and didn't reply to my letter until March 29. He can read the manuscript, but not until June 10. But he says: "I am very favorably impressed by the comprehensiveness of the work. It is going to be a splendid model for other states who have in mind similar undertakings for their commemorative programs. Jim has done a splendid job of surveying and sampling. His introduction is good."

I then asked Harry Williams to have a look at it, but he is also very busy right now. I have written Rembert Patrick, but have had no reply as yet.

However, the best editorial advice in the world is not going to come up to the level of your own intimate knowledge of the material. A reader's suggestions for deletions would most likely simply reflect the reader's own interests. For overall porportion and scale, I would much rather rely on your own judgment.

In any event, there will be opportunity for reconsideration later. What we must do before the end of the fiscal year is, one, conclude the contract and get the money, and, two, get bids from the printer before the end of the fiscal year and encumber the money. Up until the time that the manuscript goes to the printer, further changes can be made. Our own editors here will likely have some suggestions after the manuscript goes into production.

So don 't be too pesimistic; I am sure a fine volume is going to result.

Most cordially,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Don". The letters are cursive and fluid.

Donald R. Ellegood
Director

DRE:dvl