Link to full Chapter Sixteen
http://www.knox.edu/documents/pdfs/LincolnStudies/Burlingame,%20Vol%201,%20Chap%2016.pdf

Page 4

He would not endorse a biography unless he thoroughly reviewed and corrected it, which he was then unable to do. He could not obey the advice of all his "discreet friends" to make no public statements while simultaneously approving a campaign life for his opponents "to make points on without end." If he were to do so, "the convention would have a right to reassemble" and name another candidate.[1] To maintain deniability, Lincoln refused to read the manuscript of any campaign biography. He had his friends at the Illinois State Journal run a disclaimer and his secretary write letters of protest both to Howard and to Follett and Foster.[2]

That secretary was the industrious, efficient John G. Nicolay, a twenty-eight-year old, German-born journalist from Pike County who since 1857 had been clerking for secretary of state Ozias M. Hatch. A week before the Chicago Convention he had helped build support for Lincoln's candidacy in an elaborate article comparing his record on slavery with Henry Clay's, arguing that they were very similar.[3] He probably did so at the suggestion of the would-be candidate, who may have written the piece.

---

[1] Lincoln to Samuel Galloway, Springfield, 19 June 1860, Basler, ed., *Collected Works of Lincoln*, 4:79- 80.

[2] *Illinois State Journal* (Springfield), 15 June 1860; John G. Nicolay to Follett and Foster, Springfield, 15 June 1860, and to James Q. Howard, 19 June 1860, Michael Burlingame, ed., *With Lincoln in the White House: Letters, Memoranda, and Other Writings of John G. Nicolay, 1860-1865* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2000), 2-4.

[3] *Pike County Journal* (Pittsfield), 10 May 1860. I am grateful to Warren Winston for calling this item to my attention.