Abraham Lincoln papers

From John Hay to John A. Dix, December 1, 1863

Washington, December 1, 1863.

I have not been permitted until today to present to the President your communication of the 23d November.¹ He directs me to express his deep regret that his illness² will prevent him from accepting your kind invitation giving any on this occasion expression to the profound interest he feels in the success of a work so vast and so beneficent as that which you are about to inaugurate.

¹ Dix had requested a letter from Lincoln that could be read at the ground breaking ceremony for the Union Pacific Railroad. Dix's letter is in this collection.

² Lincoln had been diagnosed with varioloid, a mild form of smallpox, and spent three weeks under quarantine.

Respectfully your Obedient Servant

John Hay

Assistant Private Secretary