

December 6, 1939

Dear Helen Burr:

It was kind of you to write me about Mrs. Hequembourg. The news came to me several days after her death, came as a great shock. I knew she was frail but she had such an indomitable spirit that I felt there was a long life yet before her. She has done much for Titusville and Venango County in her persistent and thorough work on records and restoration. She is leaving a fine contribution behind and Mary who is a dear girl understood thoroughly what Mrs. H. was doing and will carry on, I am sure.

I should apologize for not having answered the letter you wrote me on receiving what I had written on Booth in Franklin. I was greatly pleased that you felt that I had come somewhere near doing what I set out to do, that is to give the true value to the Franklin experience in a study of Booth. I do not think I have quite done it - I may have to write the article over. Nevertheless, if you feel that the treatment makes the article something more than a bit of local history I shall keep at it. I shouldn't wonder that eventually I would get a little book. I could easily make what I have written three or four times as long.

I was interested of course to see what Carl Sandburg would say about Booth and his oil region experience in his Lincoln: The War Years. It is a grand piece of work that he has done - a kind of Lincoln Omnibus, but all that he says of Booth in the oil regions is "Booth went to the Pennsylvania Oil Regions, sold his stockholdings for gold, travelled to Canada, reached Montreal in October." That is all, and it isn't enough. The weeks or months that he spent in Franklin with the platform of the Venango Spectator ringing in his ears and hearing more or less constantly the bitter criticism of Lincoln could not have helped but have fed the bitterness he had felt from the time Lincoln appeared on the scene. But I

have not brought out as well as I might and ought what I really think about his growing determination to make some kind of a bold personal stroke in these months.

What you say of your letters from England and Scotland confirms all that I hear. They seem to have set their teeth, determined to go through it without complaint. And it looks to me as if they were coming slowly, but surely, to a time when Germany would have to cry, "enough." How incredibly horrible the whole affair is.

I hope you are all well and that your Christmas will be a happy one. Please remember me warmly to Mrs. Alexander.

Affectionately yours

Ida M. Tarbell

P.S. Thank you for the corrections that you made on that first copy. I shall take care of them all.

Mrs. Helen Burr
Franklin, Pa.