

STATE TEACHERS COLLEGE
HARRISONBURG, VIRGINIA

September 29, 1938

Miss Ida M. Tarbell
120 N. 19th Street
New York City

Dear Miss Tarbell:

You will remember, I am sure, Miss Kate Pennybacker of Linville Creek. Her postoffice address is Linville, Va. Her health is not good, so she is going to dispose of her personal effects and move off the farm before winter sets in.

As you will recall, she lives in an interesting old Lincoln house, built in 1820 or 1825 by Jacob Lincoln, a brother to Colonel Abraham Lincoln, Miss Kate's grandfather. She has a large collection of old furniture, linens, quilts, a handsome carpet, some china, silver spoons, cut glass (wine glasses), a caster, a candelabrum, and many other things that have come down to her from her grandfather (Col. Abraham Lincoln) and her great-grandfather (Captain Jacob Lincoln of the Revolution) and their wives. The linens were made by the Lincolns from the ground up. They grew the flax, put it through the various refining processes, and spun and wove it on old hand wheels and looms. Everything dates from before the Civil War, and many pieces are 100 years old or more, to wit, the carpet, the punch bowl, and most of the quilts. One quilt was made in 1806 or 1807 by Mary Homan (later the wife of Col. Abraham Lincoln) when she was only 8 or 9 years old, and it is a beauty.

Among the linens are tablecloths, sheets, counterpanes, etc. There is a sampler made by Mary Elizabeth Lincoln, Miss Kate's mother, in 1842, when she was 15 years old.

Some years ago Miss Kate sold several pieces of old Lincoln furniture for upwards of \$15,000. She has other pieces of furniture, but I think her chief values are in fabrics. Altogether she has enough things to stock a good-sized museum.

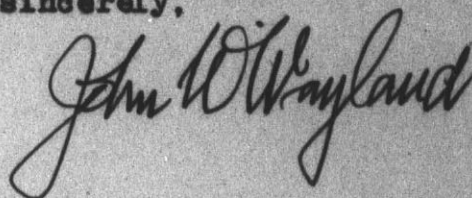
She has no near kin. If these things are put up at public sale they will of course bring good prices, but I think it would be a pity for them to be scattered to the four winds. They should be acquired by some person or institution that will keep them together and at the same time make them accessible to students and perhaps the general public.

I have no financial interest in the matter, but I do have a historical interest, and should like to see them well placed. Accordingly I am trying to help Miss Pennybacker make an appropriate disposition of them. I have written to the National Museum in Washington, to Harvard University, the American Antiquarian Society in Worcester, Mass., to Henry Ford, and to the University of Illinois.

I am writing to you, Miss Tarbell, because I know you will be interested, and will no doubt take pleasure in mentioning this matter to any person or institution that you think should know about it. We have no museum or other institution near here that has money enough to buy or properly care for this collection. Besides, I have no doubt that their interest and value will be appreciated more in some other parts of the country than they would be here.

Mrs. Wayland joins me in kindest regards to you and your sister. We remember with pleasure your visit here some years ago, and wish that you would come again.

Yours very sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John W. Wayland". The signature is fluid and elegant, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

John W. Wayland
Harrisonburg, Va.

Anyone who is sufficiently interested should come and see these things that I have referred to. They must be seen to be adequately appreciated.