The Arizona Daily Star
STATE CONSOLIDATED PUBLISHING COMPANY

TUCSON, ARIZONA

March 19, 1940

Miss Ida M. Tarbell
Box 4515
Tucson

Dear Miss Tarbell:

Rather than disclose your present address - a friend of mine who had a Lincoln story sent it to me with the request that I forward it to you.

Sincerely yours,

William R. Mathews

William R. Mathews
Editor and Publisher

WRM:P

Digital Image, 2009. The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library

EDWARD HOBART MOLSON
2020 EAST 7TH STREET
TUCSON, ARIZONA

March 10th, 1940.

Dear Bill,

The "Star's" recent article referring to Miss Tarbell reminded me that for some years I have intended to drop her a note recounting an incident in President Lincoln's life that was related to me under circumstances that made the story appear to be entirely credible and yet, I have never seen it referred to in print.

The relater was Colonel Roone, whose first name I forget, and he first told the story in 1924 or 1925 at the Seventh Regiment Armory in New York. He later repeated it in the course of telling some after dinner anecdotes regarding the history of The Regiment on at least two occasions to the members of the Sixth Company and he told it once at the monthly meeting of the Veterans of the Seventh Regiment. Colonel Roone at that time was a very old man, close to ninety I think, and while small and of slight build, he was very much alive, quick, active and spoke with a clear, stimulating voice, with certainty and without quaver, although he was totally blind. I was told at the time that he had been prominent in business and semi-civic affairs in New York for many years. He had been a former member of The Regiment but had not been active in its affairs for many years until, about 1923, after his retirement from business, he attended a veteran meeting and so impressed some of the officers with his clarity and forcefullness in relating some of the earlier history of The Regiment that they urged him to make his recollections available. His military history is available. It interested me that the three recountals I heard did not vary in detail. He is dead now.

Colonel Roone's story was that he went with the Sixth Company of the Seventh Regiment to the relief of Washington during the Civil War and was assigned as orderly to President Lincoln for one day while The President was inspecting some works on the banks of the Potomac and while The President was standing near the river with a group of officials including the Commanding Officer of the Seventh Regiment a cannon ball from across the river landed a short ways in front of the group and either a piece of the ball or a stone displaced by its impact struck The President high on the flank of the left leg, under his long coat, causing a rent in his trousers and underwear and a decided bruise and a small scratch on his leg. The official partyb was much alarmed and urged

Digital Image, 2009. The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library

EDWARD HOBART MOLSON
2020 EAST 7TH STREET
TUCSON, ARIZONA

The President's immediate withdrawal but Mr. Lincoln pooh-poohed the risk and refused to be paniced (?) into a precipitate retreat by one canon ball when his soldiers were facing so many.

An interesting side-light is that Colonel Roone told me that the incident had been discussed on and off for many years after the war by several men who had seen it and that they often wondered why it had not been made a matter of record.

Would you be kind enough to forward this letter to Miss Tarbell as, I think, it may interest her and she should be able to throw some light on the incident.

Very sincerely yours,

Edward Hobart Molson

Mr. William Mathews, Editor
The Arizona Daily Star,
Tucson, Arizona.

Digital Image, 2009. The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library.