

Lower Flat,
608 West Maple St.,
Milwaukee, Wisconsin, *Wisc.*
November 3, 1934. *and*

Miss Ida Minerva Tarbell,
Bethel, Connecticut.

Dear Miss Tarbell:

I have just finished reading your Billy Brown Stories, those fine little descriptions of Abraham Lincoln, who, apart from Christ, is my greatest hero of all time. Perhaps, I love the Great Commoner more than any other hero because I have several things in common with him. He was a common man of meager means. I was also born of poor parents--my father died when I was five--my widowed mother worked as a char woman to give me a meager education; I had to leave school early and to forget my desire to become a journalist, in undertaking manual work for a company which now works little or not at all. The great Emancipator loved books. Since I was very young--I am 27 now--I have been a constant reader of good literature; during my entire life, I have been a periodical sufferer with Asthma, in fact, I have just had an attack from which I am recuperating, and reading is a great solace to me during these spells; while financially impoverished, I feel that I am rich--wealthy in possessing the love of good literature, for I am able to afford this pastime by borrowing books from the library. What a wealth of knowledge books hold, and how wide a scope do they not cover! Then, too, besides increasing one's store of knowledge, enlightening and uplifting one's soul, and encouraging one to go on, they offer to the invalid an escape from reality, bringing him through an adventure of healthy individuals; and, sometimes, they carry one mentally through many interesting foreign lands. Truly, good clean literature is a treasure, and those who are called to bring that wealth to us, are really our unknown friends. And I like to write, just once, to each author whose works I have read and let him or her know just what I derived from reading his or her books.

Your stories of Lincoln have given me an even better picture of the Great Commoner than one finds in history books. They let me see Lincoln through the eyes of a common man who lived with and talked with him; they incited within me the profound admiration and love of Lincoln through the heart of Billy Brown, whose unbiased and unprejudiced mind felt the greatness of "Abe" consuming his very soul. Your stories made Lincoln live again, and one felt that he knew Lincoln personally--talked with and befriended him! Your little themes made me know Lincoln and contained events during his life of which I had never heard of. Just a month or so ago, Milwaukee unveiled its newest-acquired art treasure--a statue of Abraham Lincoln executed by Giovanni Cecere, a sculptor of note. The bronze statue stands 16 feet high on a bridge leading down to Lincoln Memorial Drive a beautiful drive along the Lake Michigan.

But even the thought that it was paid for over a period of some twenty odd years by the school children, does not impress me as much as the statue itself--the noble head! It is beardless because Lincoln never grew a beard until 52, and, as the sculptor said, it would be a shame to cover so noble features with a beard. The face is that of a kind, thoughtful, honest man, rugged and simple--yet, it has a determined jaw and a look of leadership about it which makes one wish to bow his head in subjugation to his Leader. That is the face I had in mind while reading your stories, and it fits right into your splendid pictures,--as he sat in Brown's Store, as he made his farewell speech before going to Washington aboard the train, as he visited the sick during the war; yes, throughout his career! Your stories put life into that cold, bronze statue, and made it live,--made it--my friend!

I wonder if you would care to contribute a few lines to my Treasure Chest. This is a sort of scrapbook containing plates, or sheets of dark cardboard on which are pasted a biography of an author whose works I have read with a list of his accomplishments, and below this, a picture sheet, similar to the one enclosed, containing your picture. On this, the author has written a few words in his own handwriting. This gives a personal touch to the biography, and is a cherished remembrance of my having written to the person whose picture is thereon. The biography is a remembrance of the works I have read, and is very often most encouraging, for many of those biographies are stories of great handicaps overcome, and, of course it is inspiring to me, in view of the fact that the future is so cloudy and vague. I have fifty-three such sheets containing the above, similar to this:

A brief biography is here typed with the listing of the works of the author whose picture sheet is below.



Plate
Either a slogan
or brief letter
with
Signature

I have read the works of 53 contemporaries. I would be very grateful to you for your few words. Within a few days, I hope to be able to get to the library to take notes from various books on your life, and thus compile your biography for my Treasure Chest. I have also read your book on Owen D. Young. He has a very inspiring life, one which reads like that of an Alger hero.

Within the next few days you will celebrate your seventy-seventh birthday. I would like to be included in the host of friends who will deluge your home with greetings and good wishes on and before that day. But my wish for you is not a birthday wish--I desire to have it hold true throughout the many years to come: May you have health and strength to continue your fine writing. May you be filled with Happiness--that happiness that comes from being of service to mankind in enriching their lives with your literary works. May you have continued success in all you do, and may many fruitful years spread before you!

With every good wish, I am,

An unknown Literary friend of your works,

Hubert Frank Jakubovsky

HUBERT FRANK JAKUBOVSKY

Thank you very much for your time.