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PEORIA, ILL.

Feb. 9, 1931.

Miss Ida M. Tarbell,
120 E. 19th St.,
New York, N. Y.

My dear Miss Tarbell:

I have your letter of February 5, 1931 and very greatly appreciate your kindness and courtesy in permitting me to quote you on the Ann Rutledge matter. I have your "Lincoln's First Love" in the Collier's of February 8, 1930, very carefully catalogued and an extra copy along with it. Did you have another story of the same kind in February 1929? If you did I missed it. I persisted in obtaining every one of your books and magazine articles pertaining to Lincoln as well as other subjects and I do not see how I could have missed 1929. It may be that the typist meant 1930. I have written Collier's to ask whether you had another story in the February number for 1929.

After making exhaustive inquiry into all the facts I agree with you that your story is exactly true notwithstanding the fact that we cannot produce the witnesses to some statements. I am complimented by your request for a copy of the book. You would have received a copy, in any event. It is not intended for "literature" but rather as a brief proving the statements that Herndon made. It is in the hands of the printer but will probably not be bound for several weeks. The printer is a great Lincoln student and has spurred me on to make the investigations that I have made. I have had an opportunity to see either the original or the copy of all the documents mentioned by any of the biographers of Lincoln or the writers of stories about Lincoln. Albert J.

Beveridge was a very close personal friend, but I cannot commend his chapter on New Salem and Ann Rutledge. I have just read that portion of Edgar Lee Masters book dealing with New Salem and the Lincoln-Rutledge matter and it is hardly worth reading. He has no new evidence and quotes only the poorest evidence. He says that Uncle Jimmy Short did not know, etc.---but Uncle Jimmy Short would not have known, in any event. We are not asking the people who did not know. There were millions of people who did not know. In trying a law suit we bring in witnesses who saw, who heard, who knew, etc. Dr. Barton gave me permission to quote his story. I received his letter just a few days before he died. His son Robert has also given me permission. I am submitting it as part of the evidence in the case. He highly commends the witnesses that are whole heartedly in favor of Herndon's statement and yet doubts the existence of any love affair between Ann and Abraham. I can forgive Masters for his unfair handling of Lincoln's life in New Salem because he wrote those words that they put on her tombstone in the Petersburg cemetery to which place her remains were removed.

Houghton Mifflin also gave me permission to quote from Beveridge. There is such ample testimony in support of Herndon's story and the information you gathered from 1893 to 1896 that I am introducing the full statement of Beveridge and Dr. Barton. I think that two lines will do for Edgar Lee Masters.

I belong to the Oakwood Lincoln Club and I am challenging the members to disagree with me; to bring in any testimony to refute your statements of the Lincoln-Rutledge love affair or the statement of Herndon which was the first one made and which was made as a "declaration" in the case. You may know Paul Angle who finished Senator Beveridge's book and also republished Herndon's Lincoln with a preface and notes. He belongs to the Club. The late J. B. Oakleaf belonged to

the Club. There are a number of people in adjoining states who are greatly interested in the subject of Lincoln who belong to the same organization. Strangely the majority of these persons agree with Dr. Barton but a few of us do not. Therefore, we are asking these persons, many of whom are engaged in writing editorials or books on different subjects, to bring in their testimony and refute Herndon's statement if they can or refute your statement if they are able to do so. I think I should ask your pardon for burdening you with this letter. You can let your Secretary condense it and then tell you what it is all about.

Again thanking you for your generosity in replying to my letter, I am

Yours truly,



PGR/EP