a-2/23/10

45 Boutwell Ave., Dorchester, Mass.,
Feb. 18, 1910.

Dear Miss Tarbell:-

Please forgive me for suspecting that you might have failed to go to the original source,-which I know has long been your custom.

My parents lived in New Jersey at the time when I was born and for some years later. At that time there were many old people in New Jersey who remembered the voting of women. My father and mother took pains to collect these reminiscences and to study up the matter, and I heard them tell about it, but I myself have never gone to the original source, though I think that they did. Therefore, it becomes me to be modest in speaking of it. But what I always heard them report was that the Quaker element was strong in early New Jersey, and that on July 2d, 1776, at the instigation of Peter Cooper, a Quaker preacher, the restriction of white males was abolished. Later, New Jersey filled up largely with Pennsylvania Dutch, who were a much more conservative element; and the tax-paying negroes and tax-paying widows and spinsters generally voted the Federalist ticket, and thereby gave offence to the Democrats. Later, when the Democrats came into power, a Democratic legislature inserted the words, "white male" and at the same time abolished the property qualification.

By hunting in the files of the Woman's Journal, I might be able to find the exact authority for this, but as I am still confined to my bed, I can only give you my remembrance.

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In regard to the Smith sisters of Glastonbury, Conn., I think that Miss Frances Ellen Burr, of Hartford, could either tell you the outcome of their struggle against taxation without representation, or refer you to persons in Glastonbury who could. Miss F. E. Burr was ~~active as~~ one of the very old and experienced suffrage workers of Connecticut. She was for many years secretary of the State Association, and I think holds that position today. A letter addressed to her in care of Mrs. E. D. Bacon, 106 Capen street, Hartford, Conn., would reach her.

I do not know whether you have access to a file of the bound volumes of the Woman's Journal, but if not, you might find the record there. My impression is that the Smith sisters did finally compromise with the town. One of them married an old gentleman after she was an old lady; I think this was Julia. She and Abby both devoted a large part of their means to bringing out a translation of the Bible made by themselves, and containing many points of difference from the usual version.

In regard to Mary Lyon: I am still in bed and cannot at this moment put my hand upon a copy of the American Magazine, but I thought you said that her efforts, although ridiculed by some, commanded the approval of the majority. I have been accustomed to make a point, in my arguments for suffrage, of the fact that every gain thus made in the votes for women has been secured by the efforts of a progressive few, and in spite of the opposition of some and the indifference of the majority. I have been in the habit of mentioning Mary Lyon's efforts as a case in point. If it had been true that her efforts had been approved by the majority

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from the beginning, of course I should have been in error and should have had to revise that argument. But, from what you say in your letter, I evidently misunderstood you, or read too hastily, in getting the impression that you said she had the approval of the community in general.

All this letter is very vague, and would be unpardonably so if I were on foot and able to look things up.

Yours sincerely,

Miss Ida M. Tarbell

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