Kingston, Bartow Co., Georgia,
June 17th, 1898.

Miss Ida M. Tarbell,
919 I St.
Washington, D.C.,

Dear Madam: Yours of May 12, replying to my inquiry regarding the supposed relationship between Abraham Lincoln (and Jefferson Davis) was much appreciated. We also have the Life of Lincoln published in Century by Nicolay & Hay.

I waited to reply to your inquiry regarding the story of the illegitimacy of Lincoln until I had seen and asked friends of mine who I had heard refer to the matter. One of these, Mrs. Rose Hardin Helm (Mrs. T. J. Helm) of Rome, Georgia, I have just seen. She says that Abraham Lincoln's father was Benj. Hardin, a great criminal lawyer of Kentucky, who was Mrs. Helms great uncle, and it is believed that Lincoln inherited his gift of

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oratory from his father.
Benj. Hardin's daughter married Gov. Helm, of Kentucky. Their son Benjamin Hardin Helm was a Confederate General and now has a monument at Chickamauga. His Gen. Benjamin Hardin Helm married a Miss Todd, sister of Lincoln's wife.
Lincoln did all in his power to induce Helm to enter the Federal instead of Confederate Army. After Helm was killed Lincoln obtained a good government position for Mrs. Helm - his wife's sister-in-law, which she held for years.
At the time of speaking with Mrs. Helm, your letter could not be referred to. Should we have further conversation on the matter that I think might be of service to you, I will send you what data I obtain. It being a family matter of which they are not very proud, I do not suppose my friend Mrs. Helm has documentary

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proof of this story - Perhaps would not wish her name used in the matter, though she knew when telling the story that I wanted to send it to you in case you wished to use it in your work.

Thanking you for your kind reply to my former letter ~~and~~ remain,

Sincerely yours,

Bell Bayless.

I neglected to say that the source of the Lincoln-Davis story was the Atlanta Journal - perhaps in April issue - Further mention of it is in a story called "Surry of Eagle's Nest" which Virginia people who are well acquainted with the families written of, tell me contains more truth than fiction - even the impossible character "Dark".

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