

WILLIAM FORTUNE
INDIANAPOLIS

September 20, 1922.

My dear Miss Tarbell:

Your letter of the 18th inst. is before me, and it interests me very much. I shall be glad to be of such help as I can in carrying out your plans.

About a year ago, I visited Bardstown, Kentucky, with some friends and had a very interesting talk there with a Colonel Wickliffe about some of the more important points in the history of the Lincoln family in Kentucky. Although quite old - as I remember, more than eighty-five - he is still vigorous and has a very clear recollection of important points. He is a local historian and has given particular attention to the preservation of family records in Kentucky, and I believe you would find that he could give very important assistance in your investigations.

It has been my intention to make another visit to Kentucky for the purpose of making a more careful investigation and, if agreeable to you, I shall be glad to go over the ground with you there as well as in Indiana. I infer that it is your intention to make the approach to Kentucky from the Shenandoah Valley. I apprehend that you will find this a pretty hard journey. If you adhere to this plan it would probably be better for me to meet you at some point in Kentucky and proceed from there to follow as nearly as possible the route of the Lincoln family through Kentucky to the point on the Ohio river where they crossed to Troy. I think we shall find the Kentucky roads very rough, but I have a 7-passenger car which has thus far been equal to the most extreme requirements of service, and doubtless it can carry us over Kentucky hills and roads if we are not unfortunate in attempting the journey after the autumn rains have made travel more difficult. The car will of

course provide for a party of six besides the chauffeur, and others besides ourselves can be included if agreeable to you. It is not improbable that it may be desirable to have local people along on some parts of the journey.

I shall be interested in going through Kentucky, as this particular region was the abiding place of the preceding generation of my maternal ancestors, and I have never visited it. The point on the Indiana side of the Ohio river where the Lincoln family crossed to Troy was the home of my father's family. The roads from Troy to Lincoln in Spencer county are extremely rough, or were two years ago when I was last over them.

It may be of interest to you while in Indiana to follow the road over which the Lincoln family traveled when they moved to Illinois. This has been marked in the last two or three years by a commission appointed under authority of the Indiana legislature.

If you have never met Jesse Weik, the author of Herndon's "Life of Lincoln", I think you may find it interesting to have a visit with him. He has in his possession some Lincoln documents of great interest, given to him by Herndon, including a book in which Lincoln kept memoranda and newspaper clippings for use in his campaign speeches. I have known Mr. Weik for many years. He lives about forty miles from Indianapolis and we can arrange for a visit with him either here or at his home, if his health will permit. I am under the impression that he is now an invalid. I haven't seen him for more than three years.

If you prefer to come directly to Indianapolis and desire to have me accompany you on the Kentucky trip we can make the journey around by automobile from here. I am depending upon you, of course, to be quite frank as to your preferences. I shall be glad to conform to your ideas as fully as possible.

I have some apprehension as to the weather at the time suggested by you, but we shall have to take chances on this. I have engagements, either definite or tentative, which will probably hold me until about the 14th of October, but so far as I can foresee the time after that date will be open for me and I shall be very glad to join in such plans as will be interesting and agreeable to you.

I have not yet received the books which you have so kindly had forwarded to me, but they will doubtless arrive in due time. Your thoughtfulness is deeply appreciated, and I thank you.

As soon as advised of your preferences regarding the plans, I shall proceed to make definite arrangements accordingly.

Hoping to hear from you soon,

Most cordially yours,

Miss Ida M. Tarbell,
120 East Nineteenth St.,
New York City.

William Feltner