Digital Image, 2011, The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library.

Lincoln 1

7308 Vashon Place,
Seattle, Feb. 12, 1918

Miss Ida M. Tarbell,
Dear Miss Tarbell;

Perhaps the enclosed newspaper clipping will interest you as it has some personal testimony regarding Lincoln.

I also enclose a Lincoln sonnet of my own that was published in the Post-Intelligencer Feb. 24 last. The paper was on the streets on the close of your lecture the evening before but as you left town the same evening prbabky you did not see it. In the letter I had from you later, replying to a note I left for you at the Y.W.C.A., you referred to a sonnet of mine it contained, but that, of course, was not the Lincoln one. You referred to a book you thought I left for you but it was not I who left it.

I took up seriously the writing of poetry in 1909, - only having written fugitive pieces previously. One, published in 'Success' of Dec. 1901, "Summum Bonum", was reproduced in the Sunday Sun of Aug. 21, 1904. Last month I sent two of my sonnets to "The New Republic", and before the close of the month two of them were accrpted and a check sent me, - The titles were 'Impartial Nature' and 'Courage, Courage Ever more'. I hope to publish a volume of poetry before very long. I include good deal of experience regarding two wars, - the Civil War and the present one. I was in England two years, 1909-1911- when the present war looked to me very much like a foregone conclusion. I was in Vancouver, B.C. for two years since.

The end of my presidential campaign of 1908 was that the 22 Brooklyn delegates were elected or appointed with the view of having me nominated, J.J. Fitzgerald to make the nominatiog speech. McCarran's slogan was "Welch's views can be used to conjure with". I had not been a McCarren man, believing him a specially strong Standard man. But when he took me up for the nomination and the presidency I changed my mind. McCooey had great influence with the Tammany democrats but against Murphy's influence he could not swing them around to my support. The N.Y. Post said in a leading article, May 24 (20?), 1909, that Murphy did not want a democrat elected president in 1908 on account of the embarrassment it would likely throw upon him, through patronage, in the management of Tammany Hall. This was in confirmation of what I practically kwew. Murphy and Coler got up a second set of delegates for Denver. Both sets went on and with the help of State Chairman the Murphy-Coler set got the seats, no voice was raised against Bryan and it was the some old hopeless nomination over again. I was in Washington March, 1907 at the close of Congress and found that the Southern men wanted new York to bring out a man who could carry New York and some of the other Eastern states and with their help this would bring success at the poles. My mission to Washington was written up by Crist in a despatch to the Eagle of 13 March of a little more than a column, March 13.

I made some movement in gubernatorial politics in Pennsylvania in 1889- the Hoyt campaign. The Phila. Times and Ralph Bagley's paper of Pittsburg were shouting for independence in politics. You know probably

two enc.

7308 Vashon Place,
Seattle, Feb. 12, 1918.

Dear Miss Tarbell;

You may receive a copy of the enclosed Lincoln clipping from an other source but an extra copy will do no Harm.

I also enclose you a type-written copy of my sonnet, "Abraham Lincoln," which was published in the Post-Intelligencer Feb. 24 last, appearing the evening before, - immediately after your address. Probably you did not see it. You mentioned another sonnet that I enclosed to you. The book you mentioned in your letter left for you at the Y.W.C.A. was not from me.

My presidential campaign of 1908 had a denouement but did not have public attention. The 22 Brooklyn democrats were primed to support me. Fitzgerald was to nominate me, so McCooey said. But Murphy and Coler sent on another set and they with the help of Chairman Conners got the seats. The South was ripe for breaking away from Bryan, All it wanted was that New York should take the lead with a man who could carry the state, and any New York man could probably have done that. My movement in that direction dated as far back as the Pennsylvania gubernatorial campaign of 1878, - when the New York Herald was very anxious that I should run for governor. I have quite a story on the matter of 20,000 words which I may submit for publication before very long.

Having written poetry somewhat from the days of my service in the Civil War, including confinement in four prisons and escape from Columbia, S.C. to East Tennesee (about 3300 miles, I took up the writing of poetry seriously in 1909 and have accumulated well on to 300 poems, mostly sonnets. I sent three of them to the New Republic early last month and very promptly received acceptance for two of them with check. The titles were "Impartial Nature" and "Courage, Courage Evermore". I am looking for their publication any time.

A poem from me "Summum Bonum" that was published by "Success" Dec. 1901 was copied in the Sunday Sun, Aug. 21, 1904, but that is all I have had published except in local papers of Vancouver, where I lived three years, and Seattle.

The N.Y. Evening Post in a recent issue said that Taft's administration was the most discredited one of the last fifty years but it did give the facts that were the base of the statement. I have no regrets, however, ~~it was not my administration~~; I am pretty well satisfied with the other work that I have done since.

Very sincerely yours.

John Cealeus Welch

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