

1312 ARROTT STREET
FRANKFORD, PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Feb.
9 th
1931.

MISS IDA M. TARBELL,
c-o Collier's Weekly.

My dear Miss Tarbell:

After seeing David Wark Griffith's ABRAHAM LINCOLN the wife and I walked down the street and took in Eddie Cantor in Whoopie. We needed the second picture to forget the first.

Of course any man takes on a big job who does such a Lincoln picture. Mr. John J. Citizen is familiar with more little things about the life of Lincoln than with the intimate biography of Washington. Perhaps the cherry-tree fable ruined the Father of his Country for some of us and, unjustly, we look upon the rest as a lot of bedtime stories, too. But people now living and many but lately dead knew and spoke of Lincoln. In your books you have drawn largely from these original sources of information. Lincoln, biographically speaking, has been in good hands from the first.

Because most of us have read and loved the Lincoln life we went to see the talkie with preconceived notions of how the picture would unfold. We who gladly allow the scenario writer to develop the sex triangle any way he darn pleases are fussy about how he handles the man who belongs to the ages. This is how Mrs. Sullivan and myself reacted:

1: The hand of Providence was in the deadlock in the convention at the Wigwam in Chicago. It was a dramatic moment in Lincoln's life and in the life of this nation. Instead of having us feel the thrill of this momentous occasion, the director portrays Lincoln talking to Herndon and admitting that the Lincoln life has been a failure. The door opens and a man (a stranger from the East) announces Mr. Lincoln's nomination. Did not Lincoln learn the news on the streets of Springfield just after it had come over the wire?

For an industry that loves to put on costly spectacles (Ben-Hur, Noah's Ark, Covered Wagon, etc.) involving huge expenditures of money and employment of thousands of extras, why cheat historical fact and thereby subtract one of the most dramatic incidents in a great life.

2: It is our impression that Ann Rutledge's father kept a hotel. The place where Ann died, in the picture, looked not at all like an inn but more like a Negro shack somewhere in the Carolinas.

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5: Great men do not always love fine, intelligent women. But Lincoln could never have adored the sticky, gooey type of girl that was the picture Ann.

Now you may well ask why I write you all this. You cannot but be interested in how the much spoken of "man in the street" feels about this picture. After seeing it we wish heartily that Mr. Griffith had done a "Her Night of Love, in five parts" instead of his ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

With admiration and good wishes,

sincerely,

Geo. L. Sullivan
GEO. L. SULLIVAN.

Ouch!