Typed by M. Cloud

Ada P. McCormick
Tucson, Arizona
April 4, 1946

(Letter from Ida M. Tarbell to her family, 1892. At side of letter, this is written "Spring of '92?")
(First few lines are so badly torn that they are illegible - am starting on fourth line from top)

132T...I have just finished my next syndicate letter which I hope won't shock any of you. It is in the House as an article of diet. I won't tell you anything of what I have been doing in making up the article in order that it may sound more interesting. It leads me on some queer excursions -- this newspaper business. Last week I started out looking up the mushroom quarries. They, the toadstools, grow them somewhere around Paris and popular opinion seems to indicate a little place outside the south wall called Montrouge. So Friday Mary, Miss Weaver and I started for a day outside of the city, ostensibly to hunt mushrooms, really to get out of town. The day was beautiful. We have been having a few days of warm sunshine. We rode to the wall and walked on it, to the town or opposite it. It is great fun walking on the earth-works. The stone wall is 52 feet high and the earth about 50 deep. There is a moat some 80 (?) feet wide. It is all beautifully kept. I assure you it was fun to feel the springy grass under our feet after 8 months of pavements and cobbles. We went to Montrouge and began our mushroom hunt by visiting a cemetery. There isn't room enough left in one of these French cemeteries to grow a mushroom to begin with and if there was and one should come up it would wilt with disgust. They are the most horribly artificial hideous things I ever saw. The girls stole some of the bead wreaths for souvenirs. I didn't because I haven't forgotten the 10 commandments and because there was a man around, but I intend to get one before I

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come home -- buy it, I guess. From the cemetery we passed through M. inquiring at every corner for mushrooms. It was always a little farther on. We bought lunch here and went out of town to eat it. We selected a picnic ground at the mouth of a quarry where there were heaps of big stones. We were within stone throw of a huge one of the which runs around Paris. After lunch we started on. Everybody we met we asked for information. They all said that there were mushrooms in the neighborhood but nobody knew exactly where. I don't know how many old quarry mouths we looked into hoping to find some trace of the toadstools. In our tramp we went through 8 little towns. One of them was very old with a church built in the 13th century. They were cleaning it up and told us that ...[top of next page and it is also torn 133T and illegible. Am starting about third line down]...that it hadn't been cleaned since and think it must have been). The decorations of the portal of this church is composed of a headless Virgin, a footless Baby, several angels without their wings and several devils without their tails. This havoc was wrought in 1798 in the Revolution.

At the next village we found another church which suffered still worse than the first in 1870 since it had to be built all over after the war. You cannot go out of Paris without learning a page of history. We walked to a 3rd village, famous for violets and strawberries, and they told us there that we were out of the mushroom district. We were glad to find it out. If one can't find a mushroom in their native haunts there don't seem to be any use looking for them outside. So we took a train home -- about 6 miles. We had walked fully 8 in the day and were glad enough to get back to our room. I was tired but not

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so much so but that I gave M. Chevallier his Englishlesson in the evening. You will see by this tale that I am enjoying sufficiently good health.

I have done nothing else of interest since I wrote last except to help get Miss Weaver off. She went last night at 11 o'clock and sails from Havre at 2 today. She gets her passage from here home for $55.00. I am sorry to see her go. She is a jolly, unselfish, frank girl that one cannot help liking. Through her we have met some new people, navy officers, one of them married to a friend of Miss W's, who are stationed here for 3 years to study French naval engineering. They are all very cordial and have been to see us.

I find I have gotten quite a little reputation by my Mme. R. paper among the American crowd at Dr. Thurber's. I ought to haste to say that I think none of them know anything about the subject, and last Sunday again several ladies were entreating me to read it again. I shall if Dr. T. thinks best. I must get to making some money some way and that may lead to something. I have my new dress. Cost 11.70 and looks very trim and neat. It will be my living dress for that poor old plaid is one mass of rags, and the waist just holds together.

We had a card yesterday from Jo. She is in Naples and having a gay time. I received letters Sunday night from Will and Sara. Was delighted of course, don't fail to keep me in letters. I cannot get along without them. Will's account of the oil business isn't very flattering. Don't get blue and do keep hopeful. It's very hard I know, but things always do straighten out. Sara ~~sells~~ says not to sell that carpet but if you have a chance you better and give her the money .

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134T I have no news . Love to everybody..[page torn at top -- illegible] ....going to write him a special letter [again illegible]....won't get one from him unless I do. Tell Will I shall answer his letter immediately. The clippings are exciting. That one from the Derrick is too funny. I shall wait with a great deal of interest for the outcome of the matter. Keep me posted and keep cool yourselves. Of all things don't show any personal feeling on my account.

You must thank Mr. Bloss for me for his kind notice. It has put the girls into a gale and they call me the "fair correspondent" on all occasions. I suppose Brother B. means well if it don't express himself well. How did he get hold of the Scribner story? Somebody must 'fess I imagine. But good bye. Love to all.

Lovingly,

Ida M. Tarbell

PARIS
147.

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