

METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

CHAS. FITZHENRY

PASTOR

BUCKLEY, ILLINOIS

2 - 16 - 38

Miss Ida M. Tarbell,
Somewhere in America.

Dear Miss Tarbell:

I do not know ~~who~~ to whom of the Lincoln biographers I can turn with the inquiry that is in my mind, unless it be to you; Barton and Beveridge are dead; Sandburg is a dreamer who confuses his dreams with fact a la Bill Herndon.

I have just read in the current number of "the esteemed Post" the revived story of the escape of John Wilkes Booth and his living under the name of John StHelen until 1903. I do not believe it, but I would like to be able to discredit it more effectively than I am now able to do. I read Bates' book on the subject years ago, and "kempt my gorge" because I had read years before that the government-authorized account of the slaying and burial of Booth. But I can tell you this story is getting hold of school children, and I don't like it. It is a part of the "debunking of history" process, conducted by debunkers who ought themselves to be debunked. At least I want to refresh myself on the official account given out "back yonder", and while I could probably write to some of the bureaus at Washington and get something, I prefer to turn first to you to ask, both what you yourself have ever encountered on this story and what Washington source I might most hopefully turn to for reliable, original and complete data.

You may vaguely remember me as one who some dozen years ago submitted to you a paper on "The Human and The Divine in Lincoln" - a paper which you warmly approved, approving also my then purpose of expanding the paper into a brochure, ~~and~~ thing which I have never done.

I hope you are enjoying health and life, and that this appeal will not be boresome to you. Thank you for any response.

Yours truly,

Chas. Fitz-Henry.