Miles Smith

915 — 17th Avenue

Seattle April 9 — 1901

Ida M. Tarbell

C/o S.S. McClure Company

New York

Dear Madame

Your letter of March 30th just to hand and carefully read. My son to whom it was handed by Mrs Smith.

The life and death of my father, Victor Smith, forms a chapter of the history of our country during the War of the Rebellion, as he was the right hand — so to speak — of Salmon P. Chase, on the Pacific Coast, during that period.

To open up the story and present the facts of his official life before the public, would drag to the surface

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the names of many - and expose their respected memories to sharp criticism in vindication of the acts of Victor Smith on their prompting motives.

I was with my Father on Rancador Reef at the time of the wreck of the "Golden Rule" and know all of the facts leading up to the wrecking of that vessel, the loss of the treasure and the subsequent death of my Father, which occured on the 30th of July following when the Str "Brother Jonathan" went down with all on board save fourteen of the crew.

The story is a long one and would be tedious to You, but unless the whole story could be told, I do not care to see any more

"scraps", of history woven into story concerning the life of Victor Smith. I have long smarted under the slurs of Bancroft – dictated by Rufus Leighton – and Noah Webster who spitefully maligned the character and name of Victor Smith and his friend, the Secretary of the Treasury – Salmon P Chase, in order to ingratiate himself with the patriotic sentiment of the country by sparking on the "Sainted Lincoln" and by upholding a set of Copperheads that flourished near his person – belittle the truly great men who surrounded him and helped to make his administration what it was. Respectfully Yours

Norman R Smith

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