

CHARLES ROLLINSON LAMB
LAMB'S LANE
CRESSKILL, NEW JERSEY

February 21, 1938

Miss Ida M. Tarbell
120 East 19th Street
New York City

Dear Miss Tarbell:

It is obvious that the Times would ask you to write the review of the Herndon Lincoln, made up from letters and papers of his former law partner Wm. H. Herndon. If I had not seen a different review in the World-Telegram I should have thought all was well with our martyred President in his marital relations, but when I read that Mary Todd rushed out after him with a carving knife and he had to turn around and grab her by the back of the neck and rush her into the house and say, "if you are going to make a fool of yourself don't do it in front of our neighbors" I was surprised, because, if my memory serves me right, I never told you I was born in the 60's and have understood that after the assassination of our beloved President she was given a pension and went abroad to live, with an un-hinged mind caused by the assassination. But, according to the information Herndon gives it would seem to have been incipient insanity, or crazy jealousy against Mary Owens. How can you excuse the episode of his sitting in a dreamy attitude, the mind tranquil and this "wild-cat" saying I have called you three times to put wood on the fire, will you remember to do it, and then slaps him across the nose with a log of wood, as the result of which he had to appear before the Supreme Court next day with his nose plastered up. That Lincoln was classed as ir-religious in these papers is absolutely an error, else why was he found on his knees in tears during the great war praying to the All Mighty for help and guidance.

My dear Lady, you may say why should I, one of your strong adherents write you this letter - it is because there may be a time when you can agree somewhat on these errors which have not seemed possible in this interview.

There is also another point which I have never seen in any book, and yet I am confident it is a fact - why should Wilkes Booth be found entangled in the opposition government. Why should he be in Washington boarding at the Surrat house? Is not the answer that the two brothers Edwin and Wilkes, who were quite different in their ability to act; for example Wilkes was the handsomer of the two and did the remarkable characters like Romeo or Othello, while Edwin was of a different temperament, making a remarkable Iago and a great Hamlet which would be a waste of histrionic ability to have the two brothers acting on the same stage, and did they not, like the circus people, afterwards divide the country so that New York was the center for

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Edwin and Washington the center for Wilkes, and in this way the great catastrophe of the assassination of Lincoln, which was worst of all for the south itself because there you will agree that if he had lived he would not have allowed the horrible reconstruction period which was caused by Charles Sumner and those crazy New Englanders who wished to keep the South under the domination of the negro by giving the vote to every negro, but possibly would have insisted that it should be a matter of education so as to postpone for at least a generation the vote which would have to be earned by the second and third generation. If this premise is correct I know of no one who could put it into more accurate form than you for the young of today, which information I did not have as a young boy.

I remember as I dictate, seeing the great catafalque of Lincoln turning the corner of 14th Street and going up Broadway, to be carried home to be buried with honor at Springfield, Illinois. I can see the picture in my mind now of the six great horses covered with plum drapings and the soldiers with reversed arms with the butt up against their shoulders and hands behind their backs grasping the bayonet, making a great impression on my childish mind.

With all good wishes, believe me,

Sincerely yours, *Charles Rollinson Lamb*

not letter about these weeks ready to be done.

P.S. As I re-read this letter I see I have forgotten to mention the fact of Wilkes Booth being shot in the barn, and was not one of the eight in the photograph I saw in that old shop at 1234 Pennsylvania Avenue; a group I saw many years later. Obviously the heavy woman was Mrs. Surrat. No knowledge was given as to where Wilkes Booth was buried. Edwin retired from the stage for over three years until his friends urged him to overcome his melancholy and take up the stage again. There was a rumor at that time that his brother's body was removed and brought north for burial; the truth of which I do not know.