

81 Irving Place
New York City
February 1, 1938

Dear Dr. Tolley,

Your letter of December 7th asked me to "go ahead at full speed in helping Miss Tarbell fill out her Lincoln Collection."

Ten days ago I lunched with Mr. Mills and found him enthusiastic about having the whole N.Y. Alumni Association get back of Miss Tarbell's Collection. We plan to bring the matter up at the Annual Dinner (probably February 25)th and voted on by the Association as a whole.

After talking with Mr. Mills and being assured of his support, I persuaded Miss Tarbell to get some material ready for us to begin work. She would like the N.Y. Alumni Association to take as its special mission a section of the proposed Collection called "Books Read and Studied by Lincoln . . . before He Was Twenty-One." I feel reasonably certain the Association will agree to do that, but I do not feel the statement should be made in print until after official action is taken at the Annual Dinner.

Now we must decide how we can most efficiently begin to work. Our N.Y. slice is only to be one part of the whole and obviously we should begin in a way advantageous to the whole.

As I understand it, the entire student and alumni body are to be urged to search libraries and attics everywhere, and see what can be unearthed. After that has been thoroughly done will be the time to get people to spend money. But before that can be done, students and alumni will need to know what books are wanted.

I do not know if any plan has been set up by the College. In order to get things going I will make this suggestion: That the Campus publish a complete list of books desirable for all sections of the Lincoln Collection; together with an explanatory statement, and that this be reprinted in convenient pocket form on a somewhat durable paper and sent to all Alumni, ^{with a request} asking for intensive search for all books listed. We could set a date-- say early next fall-- before which we will not spend money. And by that time other Associations will probably take on other sections to help fill.

You see my present misery is that I really pushed Miss Tarbell to give me a list of books (and she responded gallantly) and now I do not see how we can very efficiently begin to work except by treating it as a part of the whole. So it seems to me some general College and Alumni plan should be set up in Meadville immediately so we can fit our slice of work into it.

I am enclosing the list and statement Miss Tarbell gave me. Not for publication now, but so you may see just what she has done so far. Please return it to me.

* list to be supplied by Miss Tarbell

Miss Tarbell assures me that I may assure you that whatever I do will not be exceeding my authority so far as she is concerned. So I'll make another suggestion on the strength of that: Wont you appoint a very official somebody or somebodies to set up a general plan of work-- either as I have suggested it on the reverse of this page or a better one-- and let me know just what you need from Miss Tarbell. I will get it from her as quickly as she is able to give it to me.

Miss Tarbell wants all correspondence about books, as well as gift books themselves, to go directly to Meadville. I am sure she is counting on Miss Rowley's great help there. (I am sure Miss Rpwley would like to see the enclosed material from Miss Tarbell before it is returned to me.)

This would be much easier to talk about than to write about, but I want to get something specific shaped up before our Dinner when we hope we are going to have the pleasure of seeing and hearing you.

All good wishes.

Sincerely,

Ida M. Tarbell