Steamboat Springs Colo.
12/19/07.

Miss. Ida M. Tarbell
New York City

My dear Miss Tarbell:—

Your good letter 12/1 came to Steamboat during my absence on a business trip. Yes I am very much interested in any one that "Knew Lincoln" or any one that is, in any way interested in Lincoln. As you say the younger people that personally knew Lincoln is 56 to 65 and now becoming few indeed. As a boy in 58 (it might have been 57) there was a murder trial in Knoxville Ill. my boyhood home, that caused much interest. A man named

Root had killed the "Bishop" & founder of a Swedish Colony not very far away. This Bishop was very unjust & tyranical & was most cordialy hated by - not only the members of this Colony but by outsiders. Who knew of his overbearing methods. Roots provocation was great. & he had the sympathy of the general public. I was able to provide as the door keeper of the Court room for admission - had run away from School. The room was packed. Our greatest lawyer Judge Manning (Statue of in your life of Lincoln) & Lincoln were both connected with the case. It was there that I first saw

Digital Image, 2009. The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library

Lincoln — the tallest man in that Court room. It is my impression that Lincoln was connected with the defense — as he was always a friend of "the under dog" That Root reminds a Sentence of only one year in the penitentiary was considered very wonderful & his lawyers reaped much credit. Root was a man of intelligence & education — not at all the ordinary appearing murderer, & when Lincoln was speaking his fine face lighted up with hope. Bratton thanked, he died in prison in a short time after the trial. A year or so later my father became acquainted with Mr Lincoln who during the "Court weeks" was a visitor at

Digital Image, 2009. The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library

our house. I was an eager listener at their Conversations. Both were "old line Wigs". Both cordialy hated the Abolitionists — thought slavery wrong — did not want it to "spread" into the new States, but both of them believed in law — until repealed — the enforcement of the Fugitive Slave law, as long as it was a law. I again saw & talked with Mr. Lincoln in 56 — about the time of the Fremont Campaign. He made a few remarks at the first Knox County Fair at Knoxville. He made a most remarkable public speech in Peoria about this time — just after the "last speech" was delivered in Bloomington. Years after while looking at a Most wonderful large photograph —

Digital Image, 2009. The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library

of Lincoln hanging on the wall in his dental office. Dr. Charles Greenleaf of Peoria gave me the history of this picture, — something as follows. "I was on the reception Committee & sat on the platform. Lincolns speech was most striking — must have been very similar to his Bloomington speech that put the reporters in a trance & so got lost. After the speech a few of us took him across the street to Henry Cales Photograph gallery — sat him in a chair & told Cale to picture him — just as he was. Mr. Lincoln wanted a comb & brush — a looking glass but we wanted a just-as-he-was picture. Henry shot him & that (pointing to the picture) is the result — hair a little mussed — collar

Digital Image, 2009. The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library

& neck tie a little out of plumb, but that is just how he looked that day. Henry Cales, gallery beaver-ed down. The negative beaver up. & that is the only copy of the best Lincoln picture there is — and its mine"

Dr. Freedlaf is long since dead & I applied to his son some years ago — when you wished for Lincoln pictures for your book. It had disappeared, but to be placed on the stage at some political meeting — never returned & now lost. Some day it will be found & be known as the Lincoln picture — after the prize fight — and no one will dispute the title.

I heard Lincoln & Douglas in their debate in Galesburg in 58. I was a student

Digital Image, 2009. The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library

at Knox College at the time. The speaking platform was erected against the East wall of the main College building directly opposite my room window which was in the second story of the East dormitory. Now they hold anniversaries with "platform on the exact spot &c" but their pictures show the North & main entrance of College building. This picture was in a recent Century.

In 60 I & several other Knox students went to Chicago to attend the National Republican Convention. We had no tickets but from the beams in the roof of the "Wigwam" heard the vote announced for Lincoln. My hat then thrown in the air. never was found by me.

In Chicago in 61. when a Clerk in the Grain office of my uncles Wm & Thomas Phillips I became acquainted with Ellsworth — became a member

Digital Image, 2009. The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library

of the Ellsworth Zouaves — a "Crack" Military Company organized & drilled by Ellsworth who afterwards went to Springfield & read law in Mr. Lincoln's office.

After serving through the war, in winter of 65. — still in service, I called & talked to Mr. Lincoln at the White House. He had grown old very fast. I never saw him again.

When I started this letter I had no intention of so prolonging it. I trust however I may be excused on the ground of very great admiration for Lincoln.

If I am in New York — perhaps next summer, I much hope to see you.

Yours truly

Henry H. Miller

Digital Image, 2009. The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library