

The Methodist Episcopal Church
Farmington, Coles County, Illinois
(Post Office, Lerna, Ill.)
April 16th, 1925.

Miss Ida M. Tarbell,
132 East 19th Street, New York.

Dear Miss Tarbell:---

It has occurred to me that you would be interested in a very earnest way in a little Lincoln enterprise I, as the Pastor of the Methodist Episcopal Church at this place, have in hand. Send a line, and if you wish to lend a hand, say the word.

Upon taking up my work at Farmington, I was surprised and impressed because of frequent meetings with people from all over the country who drove in here to see the Lincoln homestead and visit the graves of Thomas and Sarah Lincoln, and have given a good deal of attention to thoroughly inform myself as to the situation. I have now taken up the task of restoring the Lincoln homestead as it was during the years of Thomas Lincoln's residence here—1832-1851, and of his wife, Sarah Bush Lincoln, 1832-1869. There are eighteen acres in the original piece, on which the Lincoln cabin stood, and this I have bought, depending upon the co-operation of friends to assist me in this. And there is also, adjoining, a thirty-four acre piece, which should be added to the eighteen acres. Without the latter the undertaking will cost between five and ten thousand dollars. I have already taken steps to restore the homestead as it was, and wished you to know of the plan. There is no way to make the plan a public trust, nor to organize the local community, since the town has gradually faded since the coming of the Illinois Central some two or three miles away. The only way this thing can be handled, I find after extended inquiry and counselling with proper parties, is by the plan I am pursuing. I shall restore the cabin, and the tract that properly belongs to the cabin inclosure, and plan to put a house on the thirty-four acres adjoining so as to enable a keeper to maintain himself while caring for and showing the cabin and grounds to interested tourists.

I shall be pleased to have any suggestions you may wish to offer. The place is so vitally connected with the name of the Martyr-President that it is thought everything should be done to keep it in form. Tourists from near and far will stand with bared heads on the site and inquire in the most serious manner about the history. The college histories show the cabin as it was at first and as I am restoring it.

If you wish to share in the least way in the cost and trouble of restoring the property, I shall appreciate your friendly co-operation. I should also appreciate any suggestions you may offer, and the names of people who would assist even a little. Thanking you, I beg to remain,

With great respect,

P.S. I was once a ~~Rev.~~ S. Townsend Weaver.
pastor in Washington and
also with the American U.
in the Capital City.

