

The International Nickel Company

EXECUTIVE OFFICES: 67 WALL STREET

A. J. WADHAMS
MANAGER OF
DEVELOPMENT AND RESEARCH

New York.

IN YOUR REPLY PLEASE REFER TO
DEVELOP. AND RESEARCH DEPARTMENT
ATTN.--

February Twenty-sixth.

Ida M. Tarbell,
120 East Nineteenth St.,
New York City.

Dear Madam,

I have just finished reading your book, "The Life of Abraham Lincoln", and, late as I am in doing so, I cannot resist the impulse of writing to you to tell you how good it was and how much appreciated. There are several outstanding features that I believe make it distinctive and differentiate it from other books on the life of the same great man. The most valuable of these is your ability to make the reader realize, without consciously taking thought, the constant strife in Mr. Lincoln's life, the problems that confronted him, the opposition that he encountered, the grave difficulties that beset his path while President. Some authors give the impression that the decision to emancipate the slaves was unavoidable and that public opinion was unanimously in favor and clamored for it. Similarly, others would lead one to believe that Mr. Lincoln entered office with an unalterable determination to wage just such a war as was waged, to conquer and convert the South, instead of trying with

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all his might to avert such a catastrophe and, when it was seen to be inevitable, preparing for it with reluctance.

Then I liked the personal and human touch that you gave. Tad and the goats, his pardoning of so many soldiers - I had no idea that there were as many as the appendix indicates - his method of getting a company through a gate, the broadsword duel, etc. But why is there always so little mention of Mrs. Lincoln. The few glimpses allowed only pique the reader's interest, even though you do mention her more in connection with the account of Mr. Lincoln's last day.

I particularly enjoyed that part where you gave the paragraph of the First Inaugural that Seward wrote and then showed it as Mr. Lincoln rewrote it. It was all new to me and I thought as I read it of what a valuable lesson in speaking and writing was contained in that one page.

Finally the great detail of the book is indicative of the lengthy and exhaustive study that you must have made. Only one example of the many afforded now comes to mind. That was when you exiled Vallandigham. I think most authors stop there, but you follow him from Bragg's camp to Wilmington, and thence to Bermuda, Halifax and finally Windsor. I suppose you know that he was feted and dined in Hamilton by the sympathetic Bermudians. Parenthetically I wonder if you know about the interesting war activities of that little island. About the plot of Dr. Blackburn to inoculate the North with yellow fever and the capture of the "Roanoke" by Braine and the story of Lieutenant Hardinge and his bride.

My literary hobby, sadly neglected I am afraid, is the study of Mr. Lincoln's life and the Civil War, with particular reference to the battle of Gettysburg. While this hobby is carried on in a very amateurish manner, there are some books and pictures that I do try to have - and keep from my appreciative friends. Unfortunately I have not a copy of the Cooper Institute photograph and I would like to transgress on your kindness to the extent of asking you where, if possible, I can obtain a good one. I can boast of possessing a copy of the "Brick Row Lincoln", whatever that may be worth.

In closing, I wish to again express my appreciation and opinion of your work and the hope that I have not unutterably bored you with this long letter.

Yours very truly,

Charles McKnight Jr.
Charles McKnight, Jr.

97 Lincoln St.,

Montclair, N.J.

P. S. Please don't infer from this that I am unfamiliar with your other books about Mr. Lincoln. I have just started on "In the Footsteps of the Lincoln"