

Journal at Salem

46 Elm St., Worcester, Mass.,
August 26, 1922.

Miss Ida M. Tarbell,
120 East Nineteenth Street,
New York, N.Y.,

My dear Miss Tarbell:

I duly received your letter of August 10. My Lincoln genealogy is now being printed and I hope will be out in a few months. I will advise you when it is ready.

I suppose you have read William E. Barton's "Paternity of Lincoln," a book which I think had as well not been published. Owing to it I have, however, had considerable correspondence with Mr. Barton and it is he who claims to have discovered documentary evidence that Nancy Hanks was the illegitimate daughter of a Lucy Hanks, the eldest daughter of Joseph Hanks though not named in his will. He will not give me any indication as to what his documentary evidence consists of, and I really doubt if he has any which is really satisfactory. He accuses Mrs. Hitchcock and Lea and Hutchinson of all manner of lying and seems to have come to the conclusion that Dennis Hanks, whom I have always considered a very bad lot, to be worthy of all credence. This is not the opinion he had of him when he wrote his book, but is what he expresses in a recent letter to me.

I have advised Mr. Barton that unless he has very strong documentary evidence, practically unimpeachable, as to Nancy's birth he had better let the matter rest where it is. He claims that the Nancy, daughter of Joseph Hanks, and named in his will, did not marry Thomas Lincoln but did marry Levi Hall after having given birth to the illegitimate Dennis, but he admits that he has not found a bond or record of such marriage, and when I asked him how he distinguished the several Nancys, if there were several as he claims, he could not or would not tell me.

To tell the truth I have not formed a very high opinion of the reverend gentleman, not so high, I fear, as his own. He impresses me as desirous of advertising himself and not caring much how he does it. I may, however, be doing him an injustice, and he has certainly been of some assistance to me for which I am duly grateful, though I may not seem so in thus expressing myself about him.

I am now convinced that Bathsheba Lincoln, the President's grandmother survived her husband, and I doubt if his grandfather ever married a Mary Shipley. If you visit Kentucky this fall you may get some information from Rev. Louis A. Warren of Elizabethtown, who claims to have found much new evidence, though he is shy about imparting it to me.

*Yours very sincerely
Waldo Lincoln*