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TELEPHONE MAIN 312
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9

February 18, 1931.

Miss Ida M. Tarbell,
New York City, N. Y.

Dear Miss Tarbell:

It has been some time since I heard from you but you have been in evidence more probably than you know out in Indiana, resulting, so far as I am concerned, in two events. First, one of my gandfather's grandchildren, first cousin of mine, a descendant of the First British Settlement in Indiana featured by you among others without naming them in your, "In the Footsteps of the Lincolns", page 150, was induced through my influences to finance a moving picture of the Rockport Pageant of July 4th last, where photographic work was done at the time and ample time later was taken to perfect the work which has been done, and on February 12th at the close of the annual meeting, at the beginning of our historical society's twelfth year on the 12th of February, that moving picture occupying fifty minutes was presented to our hall full of people and the public interest in our work historically was indicated by the fact that the luncheon at noon, which was featured on our program, was largely attended, filling the luncheon room, together with a large overflow table in another room.

It is sufficient to say that the unanimous opinion expressed by those who saw it seemed to be that the moving picture was a great success, and gave to the pageant a standard and an interpretation very well shown in the lettering on the films, as, of course, it was not a talkie. I am sure you would be interested in this. We did not know until after the performance what kind of a success it would be or we would have invited you to have come out, but there will be plenty of time yet.

Secondly, at the annual Lincoln meeting of the Indianapolis Bar Association in Indianapolis following a dinner at the Columbia Club, on February 11th I addressed the Bar Association upon the subject of "Abraham Lincoln in Indiana - The Frontiersman - The First True Type", in which I occupied the hour's limit with four minutes additional in an address in which I am sure you would be interested, but I have not time to go into the details of it in this letter. Suffice it to say that I spent I should think about two-thirds of my time on showing the workings in which I personally

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have been active, especially correspondence and dealings with Dr. William E. Barton and Ida Tarbell as two historians of prominence who had of their own initiative brought themselves into touch with me and my work, which had been chiefly conducted through the Southwestern Indiana Historical Society. I read for the first time publicly your two letters of December 19th and December 30, 1926, following my dictation at the Pennsylvania Hotel on the Sunday before Christmas, which no doubt you remember, and leading up to it I featured you in your work so far as it dealt with Lincoln in Indiana. I have never yet gone out of that with you but I do sometime want to make a short statement of how I value your second volume on account of the manner in which you have presented the Emancipation question, which a powerfully organized school is seeking to revalue in American literature, and indirectly, if not in fact directly, to pull Abraham Lincoln down from the pedestal he occupies before the world. But that does not deal with the information I am giving you now.

In addition to featuring you I featured Dr. William E. Barton, dealing with the somewhat dramatic state of facts which occurred in March, April and May of last year, immediately following my accidental meeting with Dr. Barton at Vincennes on the 6th of March at the hundredth anniversary of the date of Lincoln's having passed through Vincennes on his way to Illinois. Dr. Barton on meeting me accidentally showed the greatest enthusiasm and interest in seeing me and in having a confidential talk with me, finishing up, so far as he and I were concerned, by a short correspondence within a little more than sixty days what seemed to be the beginning of a final interpretation by Dr. Barton of Lincoln's life in Indiana.

Quite a while before Barton published his two volume edition of "Lincoln", upon the recommendation of Charles W. Moores, with whom Barton was intimate and by whom he was influenced, he came to me for my interpretation, put his questions in writing and I answered him in a printed address published in Bulletin 18, of which you had a copy. Soon afterwards Beveridge interfered and embarrassed Barton at the critical moment, and in fact Beveridge told me twice and I believed him, that he found Barton's publisher with the Bobbs-Merrill Company for his history, and while Barton was too big a man to do Beveridge's bidding as a large number of people in fact did in following out Beveridge's views, he was undoubtedly, in my judgment, intimidated or obstructed to a considerable degree, and long after his book was published his attention was called to the fact by James Truslow Adams in his critical review of Barton's, "The Lineage of Lincoln", that all there was left for Barton and other Lincoln historians to do was to give an interpretation of Lincoln rather than to be searching

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for new facts such as Barton's new book mentioned was dealing with.

Without attempting to go into this complex matter at this time any more fully, I would say that in a letter of the most intimate and sympathetic character from me to Dr. Barton of May 3, 1930, which covers ten and one-half pages of single spaced type, prepared by me with all the deliberation and care of which I was capable, I covered the field with Barton presenting somewhat tactfully, as I believe, his weak points as well as his strong points, and submitted to him two problems which interested me the most in leading his mind to a correct interpretation of Abraham Lincoln in the matter which two problems in substance may be tersely stated as follows:

First, the environments, particularly among the people of Southwestern Indiana in the Lincoln country in Lincoln's time, were as our Society and particularly I personally had described them as printed in Vannest's book quoting me and in Mrs. Bess V. Ehrmann's "Lincoln Inquiry" article in the Indiana Magazine of History also quoting me. These extracts, which covered the whole ground as fully as I knew how to cover it originally and which in my judgment cover the whole ground today as they will always, were stated in black and white, and identified by reference to the printed matter.

The second problem, particularly involving the opportunities of Abraham Lincoln while he lived in Indiana and how he took advantage of them, and how he was finally equipped by them, was not only stated in my letter to Dr. Barton of May 3rd by reference to Mrs. Ehrmann's closing pages of her magazine article but as lawyers say, I enclosed in my letter to Dr. Barton the vital interpretation on that subject taken from the printed page, all which he received and had before him in my letter of May 3, 1930, when he answered it on May 9th. His answer was that on all of these points stated both by me and by Mrs. Ehrmann, we seemed to be correct. He expressed great appreciation of my letter which he called a thesis, which he said was his greatest indebtedness to me in the whole transaction.

So far as I know he died without writing any further interpretation, though nobody yet knows what he did as his work is packed away at Nashville, where he was doing service as a pastor of a college church and his children in New York have not yet obtained access to it, but have with great cordiality and expression of sympathy accepted my offer (knowing the snags upon which the Barton family must run in this field of unlimited rivalries), for I had not long after Mr. Barton's death written to his son, Bruce Barton, in New York, outlining the correspondence, stating the delicacy of the situation and the necessity for friendly

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knowledge and friendly guidance from some source, which in my judgment was presented to Dr. Barton's family. After over a month's delay to my letter to Bruce Barton of December 12, 1930, I received a short formal letter from his brother Robert Barton in New York City, stating with an apology that he had just come across my letter for answer, that Bruce Barton was in Europe, that it would be next summer before Dr. Barton's papers were opened. But the letter did not take further notice of the situation to which I called special attention in my letter of December 12th.

Meanwhile having on short notice, less than sixty days, as I remember, been invited to deliver the Indianapolis address mentioned, I took the two problems so fundamental to that subject, the environments of Lincoln and the opportunities of Lincoln, and the use of same made by Lincoln in the Lincoln country in Indiana while he lived there, and as above stated I spent two-thirds of an hour approximately divided between Barton and this correspondence of May 3, and May 9, relating to Barton and the facts leading up to my letter of December 1926, dictated at the Pennsylvania Hotel, with two letters written by you shortly afterwards, and in dealing with Dr. Barton's relation to the matter I treated the correspondence as intended for the public as it seems to be no doubt and read his endorsement of my interpretation, and I read that interpretation as a result of that work. I claimed in my talk that that correspondence, so far as it was made possible (omitting certain personal references which for the present had no need to be made public), was in terms the addition of the substance of this interpretation of our Society, of my co-workers and myself on these two vital problems endorsed by Dr. Barton in his letter of May 9th, 1930, to be construed altogether as lawyers say, <u>in pari materia</u>.

Finally, the Barton family did not wake up until there appeared on February 12th in this Western country so far as I know an Associated Press article, in which a news writer by the name of Byron Darnton furnished to the Associated Press and published by the Associated Press in the Evansville Journal, Thursday Evening, February 12th, an interpretive review by Emanuel Hertz of New York who celebrated Lincoln's birthday by a short statement relating to six or eight Lincoln biographers, including yourself and Barton, but where the reference to Barton was decidedly unfriendly, following the trail of certain Western biographers I need not call by name who have been seeking to pull the ideal Lincoln from the pedestal upon which he stands before the world. I need not express my opinion of Mr. Hertz's reference to Dr. Barton. Doubtless you saw it, but for fear you didn't I am enclosing you a clipping of the whole article from the Evansville Journal of February 12th, which explains itself.

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#5 Ida M. Tarbell, Feb. 18, 1931.

I have put enough in one letter to you for a half-a-dozen and want to say that matters have been going swimmingly with us here in historical work. While I have just passed the half-way point between the age of 82 and 83, I am doing active work and taking a good deal of interest in my work, and in as good health as I could expect at my age, using all the care I can to conserve my resources.

It will be some time before I can give you a copy of my Indianapolis address, which took about thirty typed pages of my manuscript after I had cut out a dozen pages or so, and it will be some time before I will arrive at exact conclusion just how I will publish it. I don't suppose you will be coming through Chicago or Indianapolis any of these days soon. If so let me know and I will meet you for a talk.

I should add that upon the appearance of Hertz's ugly attack upon Dr. Barton through the Associated Press, about the day it appeared, I think, Mr. Robert Barton addressed to me a most cordial response to my letter of May 3rd, calling for copies of the correspondence which I offered and it will be some little time before I will be able to get the points together right, (the matter is so complex) but I have promised to send them copies of the correspondence. This for your information.

Sincerely yours,

John E. Iglehart.

JEI:VP

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