

From the
Tarbell Lincoln Collection
Reis Library - Allegheny College

October 14, 1927.

Mr. William H. Briggs,
Harper Bros.,
East 33d Street,
New York City.

Dear Mr. Briggs:

The last time that I saw you we talked of the possibility of getting hold of the Robert Lincoln papers. I have spent the last week in Lexington, Kentucky and have run across something better which possibly might lead to a substantial find if you are willing to follow it up promptly. I was on a hunt for Mary Todd Lincoln material and discovered that Miss Katharine Helm, a daughter of a half sister of Mrs. Lincoln's was doing a life of her aunt, using material from her mother and from Mr. Robert Lincoln's papers. I know the Helms but did not under the circumstances, feel that I had any right to ask them for material. I did, however, ask Miss Katharine if she had a publisher, she said no. I told her that you had been interested in Lincoln material and that if she had unpublished matter I thought that you might be willing to consider it.

How important what she is doing is, I have no means of saying, but they talk of quantities of unpublished letters. I asked her that I would be willing that I write to you, she said she would be glad to have me do so. Now if you are still interested I would advise your coming down to Lexington yourself and investigate it. I can't do it because I would at once be under suspicion naturally, moreover, if I should see what she has I might use it almost unconsciously, I would rather wait until her book is out.

An important side to this is, in my judgment that the Mary Lincoln biography might lead to fresh Lincoln material from Mr. Robert Lincoln's files. Now I leave it to you.

Tarbell? Oct. 14, 1927

- 2 -

If you want to write the address is

"Katharine Helm, Lexington, Kentucky."

but I am inclined to think that it is worth a trip down.

Very sincerely,