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Dear Miss Tarbell:-

I was glad to receive your letter of 15th inst and will try to answer your questions. I was taken in a photograph with Mr Lincoln and Willie and Tad during the campaign of 1860. When at the Sesqui Centennial, for the first time I saw the enlarged copy of the picture in the reading or rather writing room of the Union League Club in Philadelphia. I had heard years ago that the picture was there but never saw it until that year. Of course we have a copy and I have had many small prints made from it. We lived a block west of the Lincoln home so I often played with the two younger boys.

There have been several brief sketches of my father printed, in several histories of Snagamon County, but do not know whether they could be found outside of Springfield. I can give a few facts from hearing him tell them so often. He was born October 5th 1822 in Downingtown, Chester County, Pennsylvania. His father conducted the Swan Tavern, and provided for the teamsters that transported the freight along the Pike from Philadelphia to Harrisburg and the west. His father died in 1832 and his mother continued the business until her marriage to Morgan L. Reese. Shortly after his father's death, he was apprenticed to the proprietor of a newspaper in West Chester, for five years, for his vituals and clothes. The last six months of his term he was to have that much schooling, and as the teacher learned he contemplated going west, he advised him to study surveying, with the mathamatics that were necessary. When he became a journeyman printer he worked for some time in Philadelphia with his brother, Isaac R. Diller, who owned a paper there. After the presidential election of 1844 he started for Springfield, Illinois, where he had a married sister. The trip took two weeks, to Harrisburg by rail, to Pittsburgh by canal and then by boat down the Ohio and up the Mississippi and Illinois to Naples, where he took the stage for Springfield. He had cast his first presidential vote for Polk, but did not know of his election until he reached Louisville, Ky. He was given a case on the Illinois State Register, and after a year was appointed clerk in the State Auditors office. While there the state of Iowa was being surveyed, and he secured a contract to lay out a few counties, so his knowledge of surveying came in use. He returned to his position in the Auditors office and his cousin J. Roland Diller, who was partner in the Drug firm of Wallace & Diller died and their head clerk Charles S. Corneau persuaded him to go in with him and buy out the store, and they formed the firm of Corneau & Diller, and he remained in that business, having purchased the interest of his partner, who died in 1869, until you knew him. I wish you could come across a book entitled "The Conversion of children" written by Rev. Edward Payson Hammon, in which a chapter is given of the great

change that took place in his life

during the Revival conducted by Rev. Hammond in

1866. Like Saul of Tarsus, he often told of the change in his life to encourage others to hope for like deliverance from the Devil and one of his worst forms of slavery, the appetite for drink. He often told how the teamsters would carry him on their shoulders around the bar room of the tavern and let him have the sugar from the bottom of their glasses. He loved the taste and while I never remember seeing him but once under the influence of liquor, he was a steady drinker and had it handy in the drug store. My mother was a Quakeress, and you know as a rule they were opposed to negro slavery and liquor slavery, as well. He would promise her he would stop and has even signed pledges with his own blood, but the appetite was stronger than he was. It required the power of God to break the chains that bound him, but that did, and for that reason he was always glad to give his testimony to help others. Rev. Hammond had him come to other cities where he was holding meetings and after Moody and Sanky returned from their campaign in England and Scotland he had him come to Chicago in 1877 to tell his story in his meetings. It was at that time his brother Isaac was converted and also redeemed from the same curse. Do you wonder that he gave up his party idolatry and identified himself with the Prohibition Party? He would tell his old Democratic friends he was a better democrat than they were for he was working now, "For the greatest good to the greatest number" to remove the temptation from the path of those who could not resist the evil. Thank God, while he was not permitted to see the license system outlawed, he died in the faith it would be, as he often quoted the lines,

"For right is right, since God is God, and right the day must win,

To doubt would be disloyalty, to falter, would be sin."

He often told an incident that occurred on the canal boat on his way west. As I said he voted before he started, and with another young democrat, would take the poll on the boat every time any new passenger came aboard. There was one abolitionist who always voted for Birney. One evening he sat down by him and undertook to show him the fallacy of his position. Slavery had always existed and was recognized by the constitution and laws and never would be abolished. This man said to him, "Young man, you see the sun going down in the west, and if we live until morning we will see it rise in the east. and just as sure as the sun goes down in the west and rises in the east, and there is a God in heaven, slavery will be abolished in this country." Of course fatherhood his statement, but as he would say, "In less than twenty years, slavery was abolished." We old prohibitionists know it is not the place or kind of alcoholic beverages that are consumed, but the thing itself that does the mischief. So we thank God that the traffic is now an "OUTLAW" and while it may take years to overcome the appetite for it, a new generation will arise that does not have it. We know the lie that everybody drinks and carries hip flasks, is false, and the elections show that there is not the demand to repeal the 18th Amendment its enemies would have us accept, straw votes to the contrary notwithstanding. Well there he goes again, I can hear you say, but I hope you will come to see it some day and use your talent to advocate and not oppose the cause I hope you read the Christian Herald. I enclose some clippings that may go in the waste basket, but I think they are good. Yours very truly

Isaac R. Diller