

August 23, 1938

Dear Mrs. Burr:

I have just come back from a week in the country and I find your accumulated notes on Booth. What a lot of interesting work you have done, and how valuable for what I have in mind. I haven't had time to digest the material yet, nor can I for a little time. However, I want to make you a proposition - you become a collaborator and the article I get out finally we will sign together. How about that? And of course share the proceeds.

You send the address of L. J. Mackey. I have already been in correspondence with him. His article in the Jubilee Number of the Titusville Herald was very interesting. If you have not a copy of that I will lend you mine. I wrote Mr. Mackey in March of 1937 saying that I was doing an article and would like to quote him, also that if he had further information to consider it. I am enclosing this correspondence which please return at your leisure. You see Mr. Mackey does not want his stuff used as he is preparing a book as I understand it, but I am sure that you are stirring up enough fresh material to justify my going ahead.

There are two or three things touched on in your letters that ought to have what is called documentary proof. The chief of this is that Booth played in Oil City in 1863. There was a story that he played in Meadville and it was then that he stretched the words "Abe Lincoln departed this life, etc." but I have had that looked up and the papers make no mention of his appearance. An item in your notes which is important concerns the hearings of the military court in Franklin. I take it from the quotation you give from "The Spectator" that a complete transcript of Simmond's testimony is available.

Do you know where this and other testimony was published. Could it have been in The Spectator?

Another thing which might be followed up, though it may all be in the testimony taken by the government is the relation of the Oil City Paynes to Lewis Payne one of the conspirators. It was Payne who attacked Seward. You would have to be cautious I think in bringing this up with the Oil City Paynes though it may be by this time that they have no feeling either way in the matter.

I wish I could go at the article immediately, but I shall have to dove-tail it for a while for other pressing work.

You certainly have been doing an admirable piece of research and I shall count myself lucky if you will come on as a collaborator in the article.

With all good wishes

Very sincerely

Ida M. Tarbell
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