

# LINCOLN LORE

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## NEW LINCOLN BOOKS—FALL 1940

No theme in Lincolniana has been worked overtime to such an extent as the story of John Wilkes Booth and the assassination of the President. During the past three years books published exclusively on this subject have contained 2,852 pages; the exhaustive four volume work on the *War Years* by Carl Sandburg contains but 2,503 pages.

The titles of the seven assassination books which embrace the 2,852 pages are: *This One Mad Act, Why Was Lincoln Murdered, The Unlocked Book, The Man Who Killed Lincoln, The Mad Booths, In the Shadow of Lincoln's Death, and The Great American Myth*. The last three have been published in 1940, the last two just having come off the press.

Two of the nine books to be mentioned in this bulletin are exclusively assassination books. All but the first 52 of the 422 pages in one of the other books relates to the assassination story, and still another presents the sermon preached at Lincoln's funeral in Washington, D. C.

### Recalling Lincoln's Visit to Egypt

*When Lincoln Came to Egypt*. By George W. Smith. Trovillion Private Press, Herrin, Illinois. \$3.50.

Freeport, Galesburg, and Charleston have received most of the emphasis in recalling the incidents relating to the Lincoln-Douglas debates, but the contest which seems to have aroused the most of human interest was at Jonesboro in the southern part of Illinois, known as Egypt.

Until the appearance of Professor George W. Smith's recent book, *When Lincoln Came to Egypt*, no effort had been made to review the incidents associated with this visit. The beautifully printed volume of 158 pages is limited to 498 numbered copies signed by the author and protected by a slip cover.

### Glorifying a Legend

*Lincoln Living Legend*. By T. V. Smith. University of Chicago Press, Chicago, Illinois. \$1.00.

Cooper Union at New York City where Abraham Lincoln spoke on February 27, 1860, is still very much alive and this year instituted "The Annual Abraham Lincoln Lectures." The first in this series of addresses was delivered on February 12, 1940, by Thomas Vernor Smith, Ph.D., LL.D., a congressman-at-large from Illinois. His lecture has just been put in print by the Chicago University Press. If this initial offering is a harbinger of the lectures to come, Lincolniana is to be greatly enriched.

Congressman Smith in the academic world is a philosopher, and his treatment of the subject dealing with Lincoln as a living legend is a rational appraisal of Lincoln as the "permanent guardian of the federal principle."

### Preserving a Eulogy

*Faith in God*. By Rev. P. D. Gurley. Davis & Warde, Inc., Pittsburgh, Pa. \$2.00.

The original manuscript of Rev. Phineas D. Gurley's sermon delivered in the East Room of the White House at the funeral of Abraham Lincoln, is in possession of the Presbyterian Historical Society of Philadelphia. Dr. Gurley stood at the bedside of Lincoln when he expired at 7:22 A.M. on April 15, 1865, and, at Stanton's request, offered the prayer of resignation.

The twenty-five page brochure limited to 300 numbered copies contains a double page reproduction of the painting, "Death-bed of Lincoln" done by John H. Littlefield, at one time a law student in the Lincoln-Herndon law office at Springfield.

### Extending the Sources

*In the Shadow of Lincoln's Death*. By Otto Eisenschiml. Wilfred Funk, Inc., New York. \$3.00.

The tremendous amount of source material on Lincoln's assassination gathered by Otto Eisenschiml and published in his first book, *Why Was Lincoln Murdered*, has now been supplemented by a second instalment in his more recently published volume, *In the Shadow of Lincoln's Death*.

Excluding the reference notes there are 370 pages in the book. Dates associated with the story of John Surratt and his mother utilize 210 pages of the text; John Wilkes Booth claims 55 pages; and 40 are given over to a discussion of Edwin M. Stanton.

### Rationalizing a Myth

*The Great American Myth*. By George S. Bryan. Carrick & Evans, Inc., New York. \$3.75.

The most recent book on the assassination of Lincoln, *The Great American Myth*, is so free from forced sensationalism, favoritism, prejudice, sectional bias, hero worship, and folklore influences that it should immediately take its place on the student's book-shelf as a scholarly discussion of this much written about subject. It is free from all those myth making elements which may sell books but will settle no questions.

George Sands Bryan, the author, is a trained analyst in the field of historical research, and his position on editorial staffs of important international publications gives his findings the atmosphere of authority. He does

not strive for forced climaxes or literary effect. His book is a common sense approach to a question which in its essential details never should have reached the present stage of controversy.

### Abridging the Prairie Years

*Abraham Lincoln, The Prairie Years*. By Carl Sandburg. Harcourt, Brace & Co., New York. \$3.65.

A newly published one volume edition of the *Prairie Years* by Sandburg is now on the market. It is a reprint of the one volume edition published in 1929 with the same pagination. This is called the abridged edition, because it contains about ten percent less wordage than the original two volume work.

### Reviewing Lincoln's Marital Relations

*Mary Lincoln, Wife and Widow*. By Carl Sandburg. Harcourt, Brace & Co., New York. \$3.00.

The phenomenal sale of Sandburg's *The War Years* has accentuated interest in all of his Lincoln publications, and the publisher of his writings announced the reprinting of *Mary Lincoln, Wife and Widow*. The first section of the book, the story of the President's wife by Sandburg, contains 159 pages, while the second part of the volume, a compilation of letters written by Mrs. Lincoln and edited by Paul Angle, contains 197 pages.

### Clarifying Booth Family Records

*Myths After Lincoln*. By Lloyd Lewis. Harcourt, Brace & Co., New York. \$3.50.

A new edition of *Myths After Lincoln* with an introduction by Carl Sandburg and some revisions in the original text is worthy of note. Beside the introduction there is new material on the matrimonial escapades of Junius Brutus Booth and on Lincoln's responsibility for the surrender terms submitted by Grant and Sherman. The pagination of the new edition is not changed.

### Popularizing Profanity in Literature

*For Us The Living*. By Bruce Lancaster. Frederick A. Stokes Co., New York. \$2.75.

It is to be regretted that Bruce Lancaster has used the Lincoln theme in his new novel, *For Us The Living*, as a medium to further popularize profanity in literature. It seems rather sacrilegious that one so free from profane language as Lincoln should be surrounded by a group of cursing individuals.

He is first introduced as an eleven year old boy in the Indiana cabin, and the last scene portrays him at New Salem, Illinois, in 1834 preparing to run for the Legislature.