

LINCOLN LORE

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G. A. R. MUSEUMS

Every succeeding Memorial Day allows one to visualize the rapidly diminishing ranks of the Grand Army of the Republic, indicating that the time is not far distant when the last veteran of Lincoln's legions will pass from our midst.

Invariably these men who wore the little brown button in the lapel of a faded blue uniform were great admirers of their Commander-in-Chief, and this interest was nourished and stimulated by their regular meetings in their Grand Army Halls.

Shortly after the close of the war they began to collect and display in their meeting places curios and keepsakes not only of the civil conflict itself but especially those of human interest relating to Abraham Lincoln. There gradually grew up in the larger centers of population collections of Lincolniana which contained many rare and valuable objects.

One of the most significant of these G. A. R. museums is located in the Chicago City Library Building, and aside from the many relics of the Civil War, it is especially rich in Lincolniana.

The exhibit is built around the excellent collection of Lincolniana presented to the museum by Charles H. McConnell, who made a special effort to collect unusual pieces in metallic and portrait art. A special room aside from the large exhibit hall has been made available for most of this fine collection, and those who have been recording the various shrine rooms featuring Abraham Lincoln must not overlook this memorial.

Possibly the most impressive piece of statuary in the museum is a statuette of the St. Gauden's heroic bronze which stands in Lincoln Park. A well preserved copy of the John Rogers' "Council of War," showing Lincoln, Grant, and Stanton, is displayed as well as a bronze plaque of Lincoln by Pickett.

Two heroic size busts, one by George E. Bissell and another by George Ganiere dated Chicago 1914, contribute much to the display. There are several smaller bronze pieces which make the metallic part of the collection of interest.

The most striking of the portraits on display is a Healy painting of Lin-

coln. Just what is the history of this Healy we were unable to learn. There are already two in Chicago, one in the Newberry Library and another in the Chicago Historical Society. The one in the G. A. R. Museum seems to have been obscured by the other more prominent canvasses.

Another painting of Lincoln in the G. A. R. Museum is about four feet six inches square in an ornate frame and was done by A. F. Brooks. It is after the famous Brady portrait known to Lincoln students as Meserve 85.

and an original printing of the Cooper Institute speech.

Among the many interesting photographs is an exceptionally rare one of Thomas or "Tad" Lincoln, also an early lithograph of the Wigwam in Chicago where the Republican Convention was held which nominated Lincoln.

The items mentioned above are just a few of the large and valuable accumulation of Lincolniana which were brought together by the members of the Grand Army of the Republic during their more active days.

Two magnificent collections of Lincolniana in Chicago open to the public, those at Chicago University and the Chicago Historical Society, have so greatly overshadowed this G. A. R. collection that it is seldom mentioned. It is worthy of being preserved intact as the G. A. R. Lincoln Collection. We are wondering if it is not true that most of the valuable tokens gathered by Civil War veterans through the years are liable to be obscured and possibly lost.

This copy of *Lincoln Lore* goes out as an appeal to all G. A. R. posts still in existence to make some provisions for the preservation of the valuable Lincoln items which have been collected by the posts. The pictures on the walls, the books on the library shelves, the manuscripts in the archives, and the human interest articles which have been assembled should not be lost.

Broadsides, complete newspapers, magazine articles, newspaper clippings, ballots, badges, and in fact anything relating to Lincoln, has some value aside from the dollar and cent price that might be realized. There are undoubtedly many historical facts in the form of reminiscences, unpublished addresses, Lincoln programs and the like which should not be allowed to be destroyed when some hall occupied through the years by the Grand Army of the Republic falls into disuse and the mementoes once cherished are scattered and lost.

Where the sons and daughters of the veterans are organized and still carry on, there is no fear that these tokens will not be preserved. This is an appeal for the preservation of such collections of Lincolniana which might be destroyed with the passing of the last veteran of a post.

AN APPEAL FOR THE PRESERVATION OF G. A. R. RELICS RELATING TO ABRAHAM LINCOLN

The collection is especially rich in rare engravings, lithographs, and broadsides. An excellent copy of Littlefield's engraving, one of the famous \$100,000 reward broadsides, and another known as the Arostical Star are on the walls of the special Lincoln room.

There are many rarities in the display cases which the casual observer probably misses. Among the pamphlets are a Chicago imprint of the Scripps' campaign life, a speech of Mr. Lincoln in the House of Representatives on January 14 (January 12) 1848, a wide margin edition of *The Republican Party Vindicated*,