

LINCOLN LORE

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CURIOUS LINCOLN CURIOS

Even though some object may be but remotely associated with Abraham Lincoln, it is usually classified among the rarities in the collectors realm. It is not difficult to tabulate various antiques and household items which were supposed to have been in the Lincoln home, office or White House. The wearing apparel of the members of the Lincoln family and accessories, such as jewelry, fans, canes, umbrellas, etc. has also been catalogued. The implements used on the farm and in the carpenter shop are easily arranged in their proper order, however, there is always the inevitable miscellaneous group of relics that is composed of the unusual items, comparable possibly to the "catch all" envelope, which Lincoln marked, "If you can't find it anywhere else, look here."

Some of the unusual curios which have come to the attention of the Lincoln National Life Foundation. Information about these items which refuses to be pigeonholed under definite subjects, is presented in this issue of Lincoln Lore.

Cowhide Sachel

A sachel described as "a plain box split in two and covered with black cowhide leather" is said to have been presented by Mr. Lincoln to his neighbor, Mr. Remann of Springfield, at the time the Lincolns left Washington. This curio is now the valuable possession of a museum in the far West.

Inscribed Jackknife

Upon Mr. Lincoln's death, Charles Forbes, one of the White House attendants, came in possession of several Lincoln mementos, one of them a jackknife. On the handle the manufacturer who presented it to the President had eight diamond-shaped ornaments inlaid in the handle and on each ornament a letter inscribed which spells, A. LINCOLN. This curio is in a Chicago exhibit.

Shingle Target

Someone is said to have preserved an old target made of a shingle, which Lincoln used while President, in trying out some newly invented rifle. The story does not relate as to whether or not Lincoln hit the bull's-eye. The target is supposed to be in existence and there has been some inquiry at the Foundation information bureau about it.

Mayflower Violin

While there does not seem to be much evidence that Lincoln was a musician beyond the ability to play the jew's-harp, yet there is a violin which came over in the famous "Mayflower" which Lincoln, it is claimed, "owned and used" and later presented to Coleman Gaines of Springfield.

Leather Wallet

One day Lincoln is said to have been at New Salem working with a fellow laborer, and while at dinner, their coats, which they left in the field, were badly chewed by the stock. Lincoln's wallet was in his coat and the prints of the cow's teeth are still visible in the leather. The wallet has a notebook attached which bears the name A. Lincoln and dated September 17, 1833. The name Jemenia R. Hill is written on one page.

Powder Horn

A noted sheriff who lived at Medina, Ohio, previous to 1920, came in possession of an old powder horn which was found in an old log house in Macon County, Illinois in 1870. The name "Abe Lincoln 1830" is inscribed on the horn.

Political Flagpole

A relic seventy feet in length would be difficult to show in any museum case, but a flagpole raised to celebrate Lincoln's election in 1864 was stored for seventy years in the top of an old covered bridge in Scioto County, Ohio. It was cut by John S. Huddleston and his brother, Powell Huddleston while they were home on a furlough in the fall of 1864.

Pullman Berth

A pullman car berth in which Abraham Lincoln is said to have slept has been preserved in Selings Grove, Pennsylvania. The berth was used as a bed for many years by C. C. Mason, who was for fifty years in the upholstering department of the Pennsylvania Railroad at Altoona.

Primitive Bootjack

Tradition claims that while a young man living near Springfield, Illinois, Lincoln was walking through the woods one day with James Danley. Their conversation turned to boots and Lincoln, who had an ax with him, made the bootjack for Mr. Danley out of the forks of a small tree.

Beaver Robe

When Lincoln visited Council Bluffs in 1859, he made the trip from Leavenworth to the bluffs in a steamboat, whose captain was Joseph LaBarge. After Lincoln became President, LaBarge presented him with a robe made of ten beaver pelts secured from the Indian Chief, Crooked Elbow. When the gift was thrown over Lincoln's shoulders, he is said to have pulled it about him "Indian fashion", danced about a bit and then let out a warwhoop.

Eagle Feathers

There was an eagle which went through the Civil War as the mascot of a Wisconsin regiment. It was nicknamed "Old Abe". In the midst of battle it would cry out from its perch and is said to have inspired the members of the regiment to greater valor. Three feathers from this eagle were once offered to the Foundation as appropriate Lincoln souvenirs.

Lightning Rod

It will be recalled that Lincoln once subdued a political opponent in Springfield by referring to the lightning rod, which his adversary had caused to be placed on his house as Lincoln concluded "to protect him from an angry God". One of the early pictures of Lincoln's home, however, shows that his own house was also equipped with the protective device. "A piece $\frac{3}{4}$ inches long of the lightning rod" from the Lincoln home, one person cherishes as a Lincoln treasure.

Rail Chip

A correspondent offered to sell to the Foundation a chip from a rail Abraham Lincoln split while residing on the farm on which he was born in Kentucky. Inasmuch as Abraham was but two years old when he left the birth place farm, he was a pretty small chip to be splitting rails at that age.