Lincoln Gossip:

No longer those who knew Lincoln come to talk to me after my lecture - now sixty-eight years since his death. Those who remember him were children - taken by their parents as a rule to see his body as it lay in state. If they remembered that they would be past seventy-five now.

2/12'23

After my talk in Buffalo Sunday night a man came telling of how when the funeral passed through Buffalo his father took him down, how he can still see all of the details as it seemed, the catafalque of the soldiers ~~that~~ at headed ~~a~~ afoot - all the ceremony of grief.

The papers have had several letters from men and women who tell the same kind of recollections.

The birthday always brings out a grist of recollections - second-hand for the most part now - and ~~always~~ flim presented as a discovery. Three or four years ago there was much noise over the discovery of a speech by Lincoln on Washington. The discovery was made in Seattle or Portland or some Northwestern city. The speech made in '42 I think.

This year has turned up something of the same sort claiming to be a dectective story written by Lincoln in 1846 but the newspaper is not as interesting an account so far

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reported in the press as the story of the affair which Lincoln wrote to his friend, Speed, in June of 1841, a lively, amusing account of the excitement as a neighborhood particularly of those who in their zeal broke down the dam expecting to find the body at the bottom. I wrote a brief account of this in "The Footsteps of Lincoln."

It is true that the paper does contain this report by Lincoln. It should be given in full. Write Warren asking him what he knows about it.

What Lincoln would have done about it is the subject of a good many addresses apparently. Take this one of Klein Lincoln would not have stood ~~crime.~~ It is true that / today for inflation. Of course he believed in a sound currency, but emergency may make it essential to issue paper money as it was in the Civil War, not that I myself believe so now but it might be so. That is I think it quite unsafe to say what Lincoln would have done - the way he would attack this problem is another matter.

The present day papers are still discrediting Lincoln's problem - this of Barnes declaring that Lincoln faced a rather simple situation compared to that with which Mr. Roosevelt must grapple. Everything was simple, nothing but secession confronted Lincoln. Barnes says he knows of ~~two~~ few historical students of the period who now / believe that it would have been a calamity if the South had been permitted to withdraw peacefully, if there were no human beings in the case.

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It is the case of our own troubles being always worse than anybody elses troubles could have been. No period of distress is as great as our periodof distress.

Since dictating above note on mystery story I have read the Chicago Tribune account evidently prepared with the help of the Barretts; There seems to be no doubt that Lincoln did write this account which is much fuller than that given in other papers, much fuller indeed though less lively than the account of the letter to Speed. It also contains two or three solutions of the tangled affair.

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Lincoln Gossip:

At Paul Manship's studio met a Miss Gugler who tells me that her grandfather was in the Treasury Department in Lincoln's time - an engraver - he made the first Lincoln head used on a Five Dollar bill. I do not know this head, if it is the one that is now on our Five Dollar bill. Look into this. She tells me that her grandmother used to carry dinner to the man in his office in the Treasury Department and that coming in one day she found Mr. Lincoln sitting beside him watching him at his work. This has been one of the great tradition of the family and Miss G. asked her once, "What did you wear?" And she said, "Oh, I had on my paisley shawl and my bonnet and the lunch was in a basket I carried on my arm."

Miss G. says that her grandfather made a large steel engraving of Lincoln, that it was the plate from which the ~~Martyr~~ Marshall of Lincoln was afterwards made. Do not know about this. See Lincoln Lore. She says that a number of years ago her brothers who are engravers or ~~typers~~ do not clearly understand, which found in a shop in Brooklyn, a junk shop, the original plate made by the grandfather. They drew several copies from it. ~~Although it is the only plate no longer in use~~ she thought she might get me a copy. If so, I can see her and get the story in full.

At these gatherings where there is a Lincoln interest

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you are almost certain to run onto ~~my~~ family relations.

Among the guests was one introduced as Miss Hanks. I am told that she is a musician. She stood beside me without speaking, eyeing me intensely. She suggested nothing to me as I had not gotten her name, but when she began to talk she told me this tale, that once at a reception she found somebody eyeing her intensely and the woman said, "Do you know you look like Abraham Lincoln?" I am not sure but that this is a case of the wish being father of the thought and that her intense gaze on me was to give me a chance to get a Lincoln resemblance. I confess I did not see it. But she is a nice person and I would like to get her family line.

Much talk about the Manship Lincoln with which I am greatly pleased. It is the young man just before he left Southwestern Indiana and ~~where all of~~ liar the dreamer, the far look, the mobility, that undoubtedly was in him. I said to Manship. "He did not wear such good clothes." I think that bothered him a little and he was right in saying, "But this is he as I saw him." I suppose he means in spirit, in mind, and to have tried a realistic garment would have been grotesque. He is quite right. Sculpture, he says, does not lend itself, should not be used for realistic representation, details of garment. I get the idea.

He has made his dog more realistic, however. It was, as he said, a mongrel, but it was a mongrel with certain

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treatment of ~~years~~. Fine dog, but it did not suggest to Indiana the dog that they knew the pioneers were familiar with - the hound. He has made a beautiful hound.

Altogether I think it is an extraordinary, distinguished and ~~uplifting~~ figure. Gets away from the effort to emphasize the sordid detail, ~~to~~ emphasizes the thing that really in the end prevailed in Lincoln - nobility of character, insistence on following his dream, on building, on growing, in spite of the ~~at~~ odds against him.

My next Lincoln contact was a lunch at Barnard's last Sunday. Barnard ~~has much talk with~~ early Lincoln. ~~nature of what you may call it, he says~~; making a tool to carry out ~~the~~ great design. This is the tool prepared before it had been used, ready for work.

He has made a second head - the head of Lincoln at the end of the Presidency, after the tool had been dulled by the terrible work on which it had been used. It puzzled me no little at first, that is I did not at first get his idea. I see better now and would like to go back to it. The eyes were slightly dull but the lips had taken on ~~the~~ look of with malice towards none. At least that is all that I read into the thing. I don't quite see it. He had an idea that he might make a head of the Christ of it and so ~~straight~~ draped the head with hair, and beard like the conventional heads of Christ. You get a curious effect, an extraordinary human Christ, not exactly beautiful but provocative.

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We went to his studio and there he showed me a model of a design for the Lincoln Memorial at Redlands - Watchorn's Memorial to his son in which the Barnard bust is placed. It is an interesting thing - square, made of logs, architectural, but it was a little too unusual for Watchorn evidently, so he got his little conventional Greek, I think it is, temple. But he did get the Barnard bust.

All of these sculptors would like to see their Lincoln heads and statues placed in some spot where they would be impressive, appropriate. Manship thinks of his Lincoln statue, not on a pedestal, but almost on the level placed on the little knoll where the Lincoln cabin in Indiana stands - a gigantic boy overlooking the Pigeon Creek Valley. It is the finest location and the most appropriate of any of these gigantic suggestions that I have encountered.

I remember that Borglum told me once that he wanted to place his in gigantic head size at the border between each two states along the Lincoln Highway.

Barnard's gigantic head he wanted to put in Washington. Someday possibly all of these may be realized. They are the dreams of their creators.

The more I see of that early Barnard head the more strongly I feel that it is far and away the best thing that has ever been done of the man, Lincoln, before he was made President.

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Lincoln Gossip:

A man giving his name as John Parker says he is the grandson of John W. Parker. The story is for the first time as far as I know told in O E's book "Why Was Lincoln Murdered?" The man says the story he has was told him by a friend of his grandfather's who the boy never knew. He apparently corroborates the story. Just what he has that would add or or invalidate Eisenschmil's story I do not attempt to get from him. I told him I never heard of Parker until E's. book was published. I told him his best plan was to write directly to E. asking for the information he wanted, with that he could perhaps tell his own story. He promises to call me up.

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Lincoln Gossip:

In a birthday letter this morning the writer writes two paragraphs saying that "Had Douglas been elected to the Presidency there would have been no war, etc."

This is one of the problems that can very properly put in the list I make up for students.

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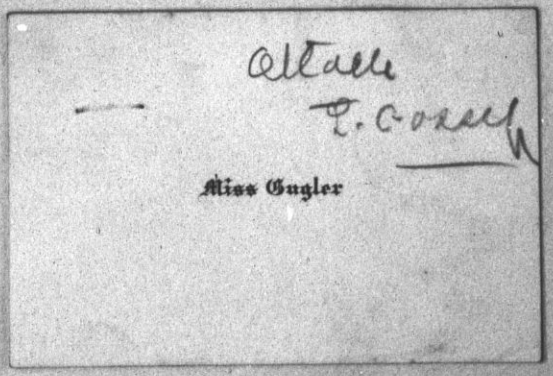
Lincoln Gossip:

Called on the telephone by a pleasant voiced lady - tells me she has two chairs, inherited from her grandmother, whose name if I understood her was Weaver. They were White House chairs in Lincoln's time, so she believed, at least her grandmother claimed. Recently in Herald Tribune Will Irwin had an article on the White House. He speaks of four chairs that were hang-overs from Lincoln's time. Says there were six and nobody has been able to find the other two. She claims that she has them, at least two exactly like those which he presents, with the tradition passed on from her grandmother. What she wants to do is to put her two with the four, to show that they really belong to the original set and were bought by her family.



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Lincoln Gossip:

Among the documents acquired by Warren and now in the Fort Wayne Museum is a long letter from a young woman telling of the visit of her soldier lover, of their intention to marry, of their taking advantage of this intention to indulge, as she puts it, in "matrimonial bliss", of a ~~married~~ widower father, the return to the army of the lover, and of her discover that she will soon be a mother. She begs the ~~Government~~ President to send her lover to her that they may be married and she saved disgrace.

On the back of the letter is written in Lincoln's hand:

"To Honorable Secretary of War:

By all means send him to her.

A. Lincoln."

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Lincoln Gossip:

Viola Rosebore tells a story that she heard at DeMilles' table. It seems his wife is one of her clients. He is talking about the ignorance of all persons outside of their speciality, that is more or less common to sportsmen. He says that one of our most distinguished tennis women experts was at his house and that he pointed out a portrait of Edwin Booth of which he was very proud.

"Who did you say it was?" she said.

"Edwin Booth.

"A very great name, you know."

"Oh, yes I recall. He shot somebody, didn't He?"

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Lincoln Gossip:

Rachel Crothers told me at dinner last night (April 6th) that she was born and brought up in Bloomington and that Lincoln was a hero in her family. She bemoans the fact that she did not realize what she was hearing and gather it up. Confesses she was bored by this constant hero worship. The stories she does remember is of her father who was a physician employing Lincoln in a case where he had been sued for malpractice. It seems that he had set a leg and through some lack of co-operation on the part of patient, possibly, it had to be broken and re-set and there was a suit brought. Dr. Crothers was sure of his case and he wanted Lincoln to take it. He wrote him a letter and learned that the opposite side had taken the train to Springfield to persuade him to take their case.

Mrs. Crothers hearing this suggested to the Doctor that he telegraph Lincoln. This he immediately did and the two from the Western Union office in Springfield carried on what she calls a telephone conversation at $1.00 a word. The upshot was that by telegraph agreed to take Dr. Crother's case and when the opposite side arrived he listened fully to their story and then said, "Gentlemen, I am already employed by the defense."

Digital Image, 2011, The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library.

Miss Crothers says that her father used to tell with glee of the way in which Lincoln informed himself about the case of setting the bone, learning the terms, getting actually what had happened in mind and able to handle it scientifically. But when it came to the case he threw all this aside and used the ordinary language to such good effect that he won his case.

Evidently in the Crothers home he was a very great man and particularly a very great person.

I was interested to know that two or three women at the table had read the "Napoleon." Miss Vail said she had read it twice. Mrs. Watson (?) said her little girl brought it home from Miss Capen's school where it was in the required reading and that she, herself, thought it was the most interesting thing she had ever read. She thought it easy reading, I take it.

R. C. was surprised to know that I had ever written it, contradicted them, said she was sure I never had. And so finally she appealed to me.

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Lincoln Gossip:

Called up this morning by the Representative of the Associated Press who tells me of one of the most fantastic Lincoln stories I have heard for a long time. It seems that a Canadian lawyer, in Vancouver I think, said yesterday in public that John Wilkes Booth had been hired by Canadian bankers to assassinate Lincoln because the later had used greenbacks in the Civil War. These bankers, international bankers he called them, were for gold under all circumstances, and considered Lincoln a dangerous threat to the stability of their business. Therefore, they got Booth to assassinate him.

I tried to make it clear to the man I talked with that it was rot. There is absolustely no evidence that I ever saw for such a yarn.

It is an example of the loose talking - the argument of hate and terror that those who do not know what they are talking about so often employ.

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Lincoln Gossip:

The talk always comes around to Lincoln when we sit long enough after dinner by the fire or delay after tea. Somebody is sure to say, "I heard something the other day that would interest you." And then a Lincoln item.

The other night a friend came in, fresh from the dinner table, "Here is something for you. I came especially to tell you. A man at the Club has been telling this, 'Up near Albany,' "he said," 'is an old house known as the Hatter's House. Friends of mine bought it not so long ago and in looking it over for restoration found that carefully papered over on each side of the big fireplace were ~~c~~closets running to the ceiling - you know how they did it in those old days. Of course they picked off the paper, pried open the closets. One had nothing but dust but on a nail in the other hung a gown, an evening gown of the '60's, ruffles, lace, flaring skirt with tight waist. They took it down and examined it carefully, brushed off the dust and someone quickly remarked, Look at that sleeve. It is stained from the shoulder to the elbow. There was a startled silence; everyone of them went back to the night of April 15, 1865 when Miss Harris, the daughter of this house, sat that night in a box with her financee, Major Rathburn. To their left were Abraham Lincoln and Mrs. Lincoln, then came the and it was Miss Harris who lifted the head of the President that lay on her arm, The blood of Abraham Lincoln, said someone solemnly.

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"Now what do you make of that?" said my friend

What could one make of it? Only say, "Maybe so."

"Then of course we Miss Harris and Major Rathborn - their marriage and the fatality which followed them. Major Rathburn could never get over the feeling that somehow ~~they~~ she should have prevented the assassination. They went abroad and in his mind, broken under his brooding, he shot and killed his wife, then himself.

It was all too terrible and thefriend who had dropped in broke it. "Did you ever hear this tale of Lincoln?

They tell their gossip and those who follow all the clues and traditions left today among the living are generous to report them. We are building up a considerable of Lincoln pilgrims, those who use their vacations to visit this or that spot and from them they send you back stories that they have heard. A postal card laid on my desk this morning comes from one of the most indefatigable of these Lincoln travelers - John MacHarg. He has been over at Port Washington, Wisconsin where in Lincoln went to make a speech and he writes:

"The traditions of Lincoln's visit is the orthodox faith of this fascinating town, but so far as I can learn, it rest almost entirely on Captain Beger's report of his conversation with Lincoln, reported in the Wisconsin Magazine of History."

So I looked it up and here is the story. These traditions exist but of course nobody wants the truth about the

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matter - they want the traditions, the meticulous , the punctilious seekers for the facts and facts only destroy what Mr. MacHarg calls the orthodox faith of the town.

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Lincoln Gossip:

I have just read in the Recollections of Mrs. John B. Pine this paragraph - Mrs. Pine was born in 1857 at 24 Gramercy Park where she still lives.

"I have no clear recollection of President's Lincoln's funeral procession on Broadway, but I have never forgotten the impression the news of his assassination gave me, or the sorrow which even I experienced as I sat on the floor putting on my shoes, and hearing the talk of the adults about me."

I think by putting together the grist of similar notes which I have, an effective article might be made for the anniversary of Lincoln's death under the title of "When I Heard of Lincoln's Death" or "Impact - The News of Lincoln's Death." The title would have to be studied.

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Lincoln Gossip: Gettysburg

All of the boys who were at Gettysburg during the Battle and are now telling their stories of their experiences have something to say about Lincoln and his speech and all of them were impressed by the man's earnestness.

"It was the earnest manner of its delivery that impressed me as a boy, and the scene with all its accompaniments marked itself so unmistakably on my mind that I have never forgotten it." *

Mr. Skelly has written an excellent pamphlet - A Boy's Experiences during the Battles of Gettysburg." He worked in Mr. Fahnstock's fathers store and certainly seemed to get the most out of what was going on.

A newspaper article by W. R. Rathvon in the (Magazine Section) Christian Science Monitor/speaks of this same seriousness. Said he was solemn looking and seemed quite tired. He couldn't connect the funny stories that they said he told with the serious looking man standing talking as though every word came right from his heart.

Both Skelly and Rathvon speak of Lincoln riding a small horse in the parade. How funny it looked to see such a long-legged man on such a short-legged horse.

* A Boy's Experiences During the Battles of Gettysburg
By Daniel Alexander Skelly. Page 27

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Lincoln as a Politician:

Warren has a letter to the Honorable R. W. Thompson, dated July 10th, 1860. It is the only letter in which I have ever seen at the end the instructions, "Burn this."

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Lincoln Gossip:

Every now and then sometime turns up - one can never say that Lincoln research is at at end - here comes to my desk this morning an article claiming and with good reason that down in Kentucky, three and a half miles from where little Abraham lived in his childhood, has been found a stone marked T. L. When reading the article and noting the connection with it with my old friend Mr. Barry seemed little doubt that the stone marks the grave of whom Lincoln speaks in one of his autobiographical notes, "A brother, younger, died in infancy."

It doesn't make it seem impossible that someday the lost link in the chain of ancestry may be found and it may be the actual grave of Abraham Lincoln's grandfather will be found. Someday a grave stone that will clear up that Shipley relationship. The returns are never all in.

~~The Kentucky Page~~

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Lincoln Gossip:

The matter of keeping up with Lincoln includes the corrections of old errors. There is in the relation of Edward Rutledge the Ann Rutledge family/who signed the Declaration of Independence in the Illinois State Historical Society Journal for January, 1937, Page 432 denies this and refers to an article in the South Carolina Historical Magazine. It seems to back up the denial. I think in everything I have written on the Rutledges I have referred to Edward Rutledge as an ancestor of the family.

I will have to make a list of the cases.

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Lincoln: See manuscript of Lincoln-Douglas debate.

Samuel Colcord tells with a choke in his voice and tears in his eyes of the effect Lincoln had on him. At Greenville they were off the railroad - his business was to go some twenty miles to get to St. Louis Dispatch and bring it home. When he opened the paper-he was twelve years old - about at least - he read the review. He says that it stunned him. He went home in a daze, carried the paper to his father. And when he said, "What is the news, son," he turned away without a word. It was days before he was able to recover from the blow.

Add to notes on S. C. and Lincoln-Douglas debate.

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Lincoln Gossip:

The play on the name Lincoln was used amusingly in the Lincoln Douglas debates. See Beveridge Page 633 footnote.

I think I have in my Life of Lincoln two or three songs the girls sang.

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Lincoln - Biographical Notes:

What did Lincoln mean by democracy? In quoting from him in Boys Life of Lincoln, page 126, she says:

"The leading principle, the chief anchor of American republicanism is that no man is good enough to govern another man without that man's consent."

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