
INKLINGS and IDLINGS

The Newsletter of the Carl Sandburg Historic Site Association

313 East Third Street • Galesburg, Illinois 61401 • (309) 342-2361 • www.sandburg.org

Spring, 2010

Sandburg Still an Icon

It came as quite a surprise to many of us when photographer Len Steckler recently unveiled a series of photographs he had taken of Marilyn Monroe — with her friend Carl Sandburg. The images were captured at Steckler's New York City apartment in December, 1961 and were saved from anonymity by Steckler's son who recognized the cultural significance of them.

Only 250 of each picture have been printed and are being sold for \$2,000 each for the single images, numbered, signed and framed, and \$4,000 each for the two triptyches (three images together). They can be seen online at <www.thevisitseries.com>. I have been in touch with Steckler, who was a good friend of Sandburg, and he has offered us the triptych shown below, unframed, for half price. I'd love to be able to display it in our museum but that's still a little out of our price range. If any philanthropist would like to donate one of the photos or the triptych, we'd be thrilled to accept the offer and give you appropriate credit.

Not only were these amazing photographs recently discovered but Board Vice President Rex Cherrington found a pristine 16mm film on eBay that's a real treasure. "A Visit With Carl Sandburg" is a 1953 television show hosted



by NBC Public Affairs Director Edward Stanley. The animated, 75-year-old Sandburg waxes profoundly on Galesburg, Republicans and hangings, discusses his arrest for riding the rails, reads from "Phizzog," "A Couple" and "Sliphorn Jazz," plays guitar and sings "The State of El-anoy" and "Before I'd Be a Slave." His sincerest passion, however is for Abraham Lincoln, as he discusses his life and the joys of writing the biography of his beloved president. We will show this great 30-minute show on Thursday, April 22nd at 7pm at the Historic Site. We are also having it digitally converted to DVD and will be offering copies for sale.

— Norm Winick, president, CSHSA



THE VISIT SERIES TRIPTYCH #1 - 37" x 14"

FROM THE SITE SUPERINTENDENT

Carl Sandburg has been in the news lately. The never-seen-before Len Steckler photos of Sandburg and Marilyn Monroe generated some excitement. Hearing Steckler on the Today Show recount his photo session with two friends was fascinating. It was also nice to see *The Old Farmers' Almanac's* entry on January 6 note, "Poet Carl Sandburg born, 1878." That Sandburg continues to be remembered as we begin the second decade of this century is an affirmation of the Carl Sandburg State Historic Site and the Association's efforts on its behalf.

Winter still is hanging on, but planning for spring and summer at Carl Sandburg State Historic Site has begun in earnest. The annual **Sandburg Days Festival for the Mind will be April 22-25. The Site will be open those four days from 10 am to 4 pm.**

The Site and Association host a number of activities during this Galesburg-wide event. **The Festival Kickoff reception will be Thursday, April 22 at 7 pm. This will feature the 21st. century premier of a recently discovered and restored 1953 TV interview with Carl Sandburg.** The interview pertains more to his Galesburg years than most Sandburg interviews did and was filmed not long after the release of *Always the Young Strangers*. The film will be viewed in the Site's Barn.

The Knox College Poetry Contest Awards will be given in the Site's Barn on Saturday, April 24 at 1 pm. These awards will recognize the creative energies of Knox County's fifth through eighth graders. Following those awards there will be a variety of traditional games for kids including the Swedish lawn game of Kubb. Kids of all ages are welcome to try their abilities at this game of skill. **Saturday evening the Songbag Concert will feature blues artists Joe and Vicki Price. Concert begins at 7 pm in the Barn.**

Sandburg Days will conclude April 25 at 7 pm with the lecture by Lowell Peterson entitled "Omer N. Custer: A Small Town Political Boss." O.N. Custer's life is a fascinating story. He came to Galesburg penniless and rose to financial and political power in the 1920's and 1930's. He owned Galesburg's newspaper, radio station, largest bank, telephone company, and more. His influence reached beyond Galesburg, serving as Treasurer of the State of Illinois. In addition to his businesses endeavors he also donated land for Galesburg parks. This lecture will be in the Site's Barn.

Looking beyond April there is reason to be optimistic that beginning in May the Site will be open Thursdays-Sundays, 9 am to 5 pm. The Illinois Historic Preservation Agency, Historic Sites Division is working hard to assure the Site has a seasonal employee, so that May to October there are regular open hours at the Site. Soon the crocus will begin to show themselves in the Site's gardens, the grass will green, trees will bud and the Site doors open again.

Martha Downey

SONGBAG CONCERTS

Saturday, March 27—Songbag Concert featuring Dan Zahn & Kate Moretti playing traditional folk, blues, country swing, jazz, and Dan's originals. Barn. 7 pm.

Saturday, April 24—Songbag Concert featuring Joe and Vicki Price playing the blues. Barn. 7 pm.

SANDBURG'S WARTIME COLUMN RAN IN THE *GALESBURG POST* 1941-45

Mike Hobbs asked what I remember about Carl Sandburg. First and foremost I would like to tell of his relationship with the *Galesburg Post* and its editor-publisher Mary Allensworth

Creighton. They had something in common. Both were determined to be writers, and both found success with much struggle in the big tough city of Chicago. We have all read how Carl worked so hard to be recognized. Mary bravely faced hard-boiled Chicago editors for a chance to report, made the rounds, and was finally given a chance by Richard Finnegan, editor of the *Chicago Times*.

This was 1917. Now fast-forward to fall of 1940. Mary, publisher of the *Galesburg Post*, was in Chicago with her two teen-aged boys and sought out her first boss. "So you're publishing a weekly paper in Galesburg. The *Times* is syndicating a column by Sandburg. The *Register-Mail* thought Carl was too radical. We could go into the *Post*. The cost would be little. . . . I'll write to Sandburg. He'll be happy to be published in this hometown." (This is quoted from a column by M.A.C. in a later *Post*.) Mary proudly put the Sandburg column for its war-time duration 1941-45 on page one.

Sandburg and Mary Creighton had this in common: both were passionate about the suffering of their fellow humans as they saw it in daily life. He had great feelings for the plight of the working man. She was concerned mostly about children and their food and housing.

(The *Post* publisher also formed a friendship with the Sandburg sisters which led to an invitation to Conamara in Flat Rock, North Carolina. More later in *Inklings and Idlings*.)

Pete Creighton

QUOTATION WALK

Have you ever "walked the walk" which circles Remembrance Rock located behind the Carl Sandburg Birthplace?

Last fall three CSHSA Board Members (Charles Bednar, Mike Hobbs, and I) greeted two tour groups at the Carl Sandburg State Historic Site. Since it was a bright, sunny, and dry morning, most of the tour members "walked the walk", and many read the quotations aloud and visited about

the thought-provoking and philosophical images created by the twenty quotations.

Throughout the years I have asked my Young Author students to choose his/her favorite quote, and quite often I was impressed by the various reactions/interpretations of each literary gem. The tour groups were comprised mainly of senior citizens, and it was entertaining to hear thoughts and remembrances of the older groups compared to the futurity and anticipation thoughts of my young students. I was reminded that the lines and words of Sandburg contribute meaningful wisdom to all ages and to all cultures.

If you ever have the chance to attend a GED graduation at Carl Sandburg College, you will be handed a program as you enter. On each program are the words "Nothing happens unless first a dream." ("Washington Monument By Night", Carl Sandburg, 1922). The GED graduates have nourished the dream of a high school diploma; the accomplishment of that dream becomes a reality on that evening.

That quotation is often the favorite of those who visit the Site. Because of my particular interest in adult education I find that these were words that I often used as an inspiration to those who were struggling to fulfill their dreams after failure in the public schools to receive a diploma.

Stan Shover

FROM THE PEOPLE, YES, CARL SANDBURG, 1936

"Have you seen men handed refusals

Till they began to laugh

At the notion of ever landing a job
again—

Muttering with the laugh,

'It's driving me nuts and the family too,'

Mumbling of hoodoos and jinx,
fear of defeat creeping in their vitals—

Have you never seen this?
or do you kid yourself
with the fond soothing syrup of four
words

“Some folks won’t work’??

Of course some folks won’t work—
They are sick or wornout or lazy
Or misled with the big idea
the idle poor should imitate the idle rich.

Have you seen women and kids
step out and hustle for the family
some in night life on the streets
some fighting other women and kids
for the leavings of fruit and vegetable
markets
or searching alleys and garbage dumps
for scraps?

Have you seen them with savings gone
furniture and keepsakes pawned
and the pawntickets blown away
in cold winds?
by one letdown and another
ending
in what you might call slums—

To be named perhaps in case reports

and tabulated and classified
among those who have crossed over
from the employables into the
unemployables?

What is the saga of the employables?
what are the breaks they get?

What are the dramas of personal fate
spilled over from industrial transitions?
what punishments handed bottom people
who have wronged no man’s house
or things or person?

Stocks are property, yes.

Bonds are property, yes.

Machines, land, buildings are property, yes.

A job is property,
no, nix, nah nah.

The rights of property are guarded
by ten thousand laws and fortresses.

The right of a man to live by his work—
what is this right?
and why does it clamor?
and who can hush it
so it will stay hushed?
and why does it speak
and though put down speak again
with strengths out of the earth?”

SANDBURG QUOTED IN MOVIE

In the Howard Hawks directed comedy/romance "Ball of Fire" (1941) actor Gary Cooper as Professor Bertram Potts spoke this line:

"Slang,' as the poet Carl Sandburg has said, 'is language which takes off its coat, spits on its hands and goes to work.'

SANDBURG COLLECTION AT KNOX COLLEGE'S SEYMOUR LIBRARY

The Special Collections & Archives section of the Seymour Library at Knox College has an impressive collection of Sandburg items. According to the Scope Notes shown at the website archives@knox.edu, "The [Sandburg] collection consists of correspondence to, from and about Sandburg, photographs, newspaper and magazine articles, tape scripts from radio broadcasts, galley proofs for novels, lectures and speeches given by Sandburg, and various other memorabilia." In the collection are Sandburg's Douglas School record and course work at Lombard College, a program for the play *The World of Carl Sandburg* performed in Rock Island in 1959 starring Bette Davis and Gary Merrill, the radio discussion by the University of Chicago Round Table in 1946 about *The People, Yes* and the text for the chamber-cantata based on the poem, the 2008 musical *Dust and Dreams*, the PBS American Masters Series program *The Day Carl Sandburg Died, Selected Poems of Carl Sandburg* read on the Armed Forces Overseas Edition in 1943, 1905 and 1906 editions of *Tomorrow Magazine*, an original 1940 radio script of *Abraham Lincoln*, and the Donna Workman Collection of books that Lincoln read that was donated by the Chicago social activist and businesswoman to Knox in honor of Sandburg. To gain access to the Sandburg items you must fill out a Reader Registration Information form in the Special Collections & Archives section of Seymour Library.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN: THE PRAIRIE YEARS AND THE WAR YEARS (ONE- VOLUME EDITION), 1954

In the Preface to his *Abraham Lincoln: The Prairie Years and the War Years (One-Volume Edition)* published in 1954, Carl Sandburg acknowledged the depth of new research about Lincoln since the publication of *The Prairie Years* in 1926. He wrote, "Since the writing of *The Prairie Years* . . . there have been some thirty years of fiercely intensive research on the life of Lincoln before he became president. In no thirty-year period since the death of Lincoln has so rigorous and thorough an examination been given the facts and myths of the life of Lincoln." In "Sources and Acknowledgements" at the back of the One Volume Edition Sandburg listed works he consulted, and quoted Paul Angle who said "I am convinced that annotation irritates almost everyone except professional historians. . . . Still, if he is to play fair with his readers, the historical writer can hardly omit all mention of the materials he has used." On the issue of footnotes Sandburg quoted James G. Randall, "Perhaps in general footnotes should be held guilty unless proved innocent." In "Sources and Acknowledgements" Sandburg wrote that the Abraham Lincoln Association in Springfield was the "chief center of research" on Lincoln before he was elected President, and he cited works by Harry Pratt, Benjamin P. Thomas, Paul Angle, Roy P. Basler, Marion Dolores Pratt, Lloyd A. Dunlap, and Philip Van Doren Stern. Other authors, whose works appeared after the publication of *The Prairie Years*, who Sandburg researched for the One-Volume Edition were James G. Randall, Ruth Painter Randall, David Donald, Bruce Catton, Allan Nevins, Henry Steele Commager, and Douglas Southall Freeman,

In the Preface to the One-Volume Edition Sandburg comments on the mythic status of Lincoln in American history by quoting Kansas Congressman Homer Hoch's address to the U.S. House of Representatives on February 12, 1923,

“There is no new thing to be said about Lincoln. There is no new thing to be said of the mountains, or of the sea, or of the stars. The years go their way, but the same old mountains lift their granite shoulders above the drifting clouds; the same mysterious sea beats upon the shore; the same silent stars keep holy vigil above a tired world. But to the mountains and sea and stars men turn forever in unwearied homage. And thus with Lincoln. For he was a mountain in grandeur of soul, he was a sea in deep undervoice of mystic loneliness, he was a star in steadfast purity of purpose and service. And he abides.”

The final chapters of the One-Volume Edition are moving. They are a testament to Sandburg’s ability to use words to convey feelings. In the chapter entitled “Blood on the Moon” he tells of the assassination. He called John Wilkes Booth the “Outsider” and describes the result of his deed, “For Abraham Lincoln it is lights out, good night, farewell—and a long farewell to the good earth and its trees, its enjoyable companions, and the Union of States and world Family of Man he has loved.” In a later chapter, “In a home at Huntington, Long Island, a mother and son, Walt Whitman, heard the news [of the assassination] early in the morning, sat at breakfast and ate nothing, sat at other meals during the day and ate nothing, silently passed newspaper extras to each other during the day and said little, the son deciding that as long as he lived he would on April 14 [the date of the assassination] have sprigs of lilac in his room and keep it as a holy day for the man he later characterized as ‘the grandest figure on the crowded canvas of the drama of the nineteenth century.’” In the final chapter “Vast Pageant, Then Great Quiet”, “Then at last [the funeral train came] home to Springfield. In the state capitol where he had spoken his prophet warnings of the House Divided, stood the casket. Now passed those who had known him long, part of the 75,000 who came. They were awed, subdued, shaken, stony, strange. They came from Salem, Petersburg, Clary’s Grove, Alton, Charleston, Mattoon, the old Eighth Circuit towns and villages. There were clients for whom he had won or lost, lawyers who had tried cases with him and against, neighbors who had seen him milk a

cow and curry his horse, friends who had heard his stories around a hot stove and listened to his surmises on politics and religion. All day long and through the night the unbroken line moved, the home town having its farewell.” After the burial at Oak Ridge Cemetery, and everyone had gone home, “. . .the night came with great quiet. And there was rest. The prairie years, the war years, were over.”

LINCOLN AND CATS

Sandburg wrote this in the One-Volume Edition, “[Mary Lincoln] knew he [Lincoln] liked cats and kittens as he did no other animals. She had written to him gaily from Kentucky of fun and trouble with kittens. Staying with one of the Grigsbys in Indiana a cat’s yowling in the night broke all sleep and Lincoln got out of bed, held and quieted the cat and enjoyed it.”

ABRAHAM LINCOLN, CIRCUIT RIDER

In 1834 Abraham Lincoln won the first of four terms in the Illinois Legislature. He also began the private study of the law. At that time it was not necessary to attend law school to become an attorney. A man could “read” the law under the supervision of a practicing attorney, or he could do as Lincoln did—borrow and study law books to become an attorney. In 1836 he was licensed to practice law in Illinois.

Most communities on the Illinois frontier weren’t large enough to support a law office. There were Justices of the Peace who heard local cases. These cases could be appealed to the Circuit Court. The state was divided into Judicial Circuits. The judge and attorneys traveled from county seat to county seat to hold court sessions in the spring and the fall.

David Davis served as the only judge in the Eighth Judicial Circuit. He later helped nominate Lincoln to the Republican Party ticket and managed his presidential campaign in 1860. Lincoln appointed him to the U.S. Supreme Court in 1862.

Having settled in Springfield, Lincoln traveled the Eighth Judicial circuit. He continued doing it for twenty-three years, except for the period when he had been elected to the U.S. House of Representatives (1847-1848).

The Eighth Judicial Circuit included fourteen counties in eastern and central Illinois. The area covered more than 10,000 square miles. The distance traveled by the judge and legal representatives was nearly 400 miles for the entire 10- to 12- week session. The county seats were located from 20 to 70 miles apart. It usually required two days to travel 60 miles by horseback or horse-drawn buggy.

Roads were little more than tracks across the prairie. There were few people living on the prairie, so the views were composed of long distances and the open sky. When it rained travel was quite difficult. There was mud everywhere. Creeks might rise to flood stage and block the way. Places to stay overnight were few and usually filled with insects of various kinds. The food was greasy, poorly prepared and of dubious quality. Stabling for horses wasn't much better.

Lincoln traveled with his old green carpetbag. It contained clean shirts, a homemade yellow nightshirt and other necessities. His appearance was often disheveled, but most of his clients and people in the courtroom looked no better. They knew he was a man of his time, and they believed in him.

During these days Lincoln seemed to enjoy the rugged conditions. He also learned how to give the vigorous representation his clients deserved without offending opposing counsel.

After a day in court the judge and lawyers gathered in the evenings to tell stories and share political news. They came to know one another very well. Lincoln was a great teller of stories and always added to the levity of the evening. He learned to use humor as a way to put people at ease and to reduce friction among individuals. He also made friends with many men who would later play roles in his presidential career. It was excellent training for a politician.

David Campbell of Springfield was the State's Attorney for the Eighth Circuit. He engaged the services of private attorneys to help prosecute important cases. Lincoln was able to serve as prosecutor as well as defense attorney while on the circuit. In more than a few cases which were similar, Lincoln might argue for the plaintiff in some, or might take the defense in others. About 5,000 cases have been found in 88 courthouses across the state in which Abraham Lincoln had a part. The vast majority of cases were of a civil nature with only a small number being covered by the criminal law.

He was most concerned about getting to the truth. William Herndon, his law partner for many years, said Lincoln's mind 'caught the substantial turning point of his case and he stripped all cobwebs and collateral away, and stood up the substantial question fairly and honorably before his opponent, court and jury.' Lincoln had a gift for language, and he learned to use it well.

Barbara Schock

“QUEER PLACE IN MY LIFE”

“I am at a queer place in my life and feel all sorts of things buzzing merrily or snarling viciously about me. Badger, the Boston publisher, has written me that he has noted my work in *To-morrow* with much interest and will give 'immediate and careful attention' to any material I might care to submit. It's new to me to have publishers write that way.”

Carl Sandburg letter from St. Charles, Illinois to his sister Mary, circa March, 1905

Carl Sandburg Historic Site Association
P.O. Box 108
Galesburg, IL 61402-0108

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



	PRESORTED STANDARD US POSTAGE PAID PERMIT NO. 100

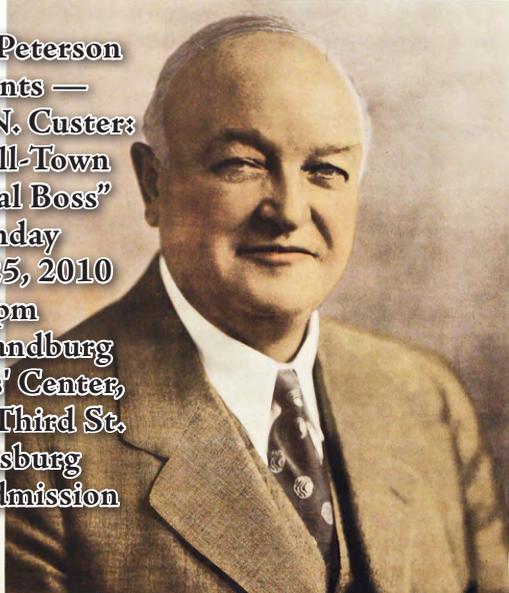
*Sandburg Days Festival
for the Mind
April 22-25, 2010*



Join us for the 21st Century Premiere
Thursday, April 22, 2010 • 7pm
Carl Sandburg Visitors' Center, 313 E. Third St.
Free Admission

A Business Administration

Lowell Peterson
presents —
"Omer N. Custer:
A Small-Town
Political Boss"
Sunday
April 25, 2010
7pm
Carl Sandburg
Visitors' Center,
313 E. Third St.
Galesburg
Free Admission



OMER N. CUSTER
Republican Candidate for
GOVERNOR
Primary April 12th

LITHOGRAPHED BY STROEBERS ALLEN & CO. CHICAGO