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**Table of Contents**

Descriptive Summary 3
Information on Use 3
Access 3
Citation 3
Biographical Note 3
Scope Note 4
Related Resources 5
Subject Headings 5
INVENTORY 6
Descriptive Summary

Identifier  ICU.SPCL.LINCHERN

Title  Lincoln Collection. William E. Barton Collection of Books from the Lincoln and Herndon Law Library

Date  1827-1866

Size  70 volumes

Repository  Special Collections Research Center
University of Chicago Library
1100 East 57th Street
Chicago, Illinois 60637 U.S.A.

Abstract  The Lincoln-Herndon Law Library contains a number of law books that were owned by William H. Herndon during his legal practice in Springfield, Illinois. Some of the books in the collection also date from the period when Herndon was a law partner of Abraham Lincoln. The collection consists of legal texts as well as some U.S. government publications.

Information on Use

Access  The collection is open for research.

Citation  When quoting material from this collection, the preferred citation is: Lincoln Collection. William E. Barton Collection of Books from the Lincoln and Herndon Law Library

Biographical Note

The Rev. William Eleazar Barton (1861-1930) was one of the early twentieth century’s most prominent writers and lecturers on the life of Abraham Lincoln. Born in Sublette, Illinois, in the same year Lincoln assumed the presidency, Barton grew up in an environment heavily influenced by reverence for Lincoln. After pursuing undergraduate studies at Berea College in Kentucky, Barton earned his divinity degree from the Oberlin Theological Seminary in 1890. He served parishes in Tennessee, Ohio, and Massachusetts before becoming the pastor of the First Congregational Church of Oak Park, Illinois, a position he held until his retirement in 1924. Four years later, Barton accepted an appointment as lecturer at Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee, where he also organized and served as pastor of the Collegeside Congregational Church.
Barton’s work as a writer produced a number of denominational manuals for church organization and a series of books presenting the wisdom and parables of a character he named Safed the Sage. For the last ten years of his life, however, Barton was best known to the public as a prolific author and lecturer on Abraham Lincoln. His publications about Lincoln included The Soul of Abraham Lincoln (1920), The Paternity of Abraham Lincoln (1920), The Life of Abraham Lincoln (1925), The Great and Good Man (1927), The Women Lincoln Loved (1927), and The Lincoln of the Biographers (1930).

In the course of compiling material for his writings and talks, Barton visited Lincoln sites in Kentucky, Indiana, and Illinois; interviewed surviving Lincoln relatives and acquaintances; and traveled as far as California and England to collect information and conduct genealogical research on the ancestry of the Lincoln family. While acquiring a large collection of books, periodicals, pamphlets, manuscripts, and ephemera related to Lincoln and the Civil War era, Barton also purchased privately or at auction historical materials amassed by other Lincoln collectors such as John E. Burton and Osborn H. Oldroyd.

**Scope Note**

In 1926, William E. Barton purchased the available volumes of the Lincoln-Herndon law office library in the hope that they would form a single, important collection of historical interest. Neither Abraham Lincoln nor William H. Herndon had been concerned with accumulating a library. When Lincoln left Springfield, IL for Washington, D.C. to assume the presidency, his law books remained in the office with his partner William H. Herndon. Herndon, in turn, when closing the practice, left behind these books as well as a large number of other volumes, papers, pamphlets and miscellaneous material. His successor, Major Alfred Orendorff, recognized their historical value and kept them as a collection. At the time of Orendorff’s death, approximately 100 of these books remained in the hands of his family. These were purchased en bloc by Barker’s Art Store of Springfield, IL.

Barton became concerned about the collection when he saw books belonging to the partnership appearing in various Lincoln collections. Immediately prior to his purchase, for example, the Pennsylvania State Historical Society had acquired about 25 volumes from Barker’s. Barton contacted Duncan McDonald, Barker’s proprietor, and discovered that 70 volumes from the Orendorff sale still remained.

Of these 70, eight were claimed to have been Lincoln’s own law books before the formation of the partnership and bore the inscription: “A. Lincoln to W.H. Herndon” in Herndon’s hand on the verso of the front cover. Another 52 volumes were law books from the partnership and most bore Herndon’s signature. A final group of ten books was sold to Barton as “miscellaneous volumes.” These included a group of U.S. government publications and a few non-legal, non-governmental books.
After the purchase of Barton’s collection of Lincolnniana by the University of Chicago, this core group of 70 volumes was augmented by the inclusion of several other non-law books. The majority are of uncertain provenance, though several do bear Herndon’s signature. One, a volume of Worcester’s History, Ancient and Modern has the inscription: “Lincoln & Herndon, Springfield, Ill” in what is alleged to be Lincoln’s own hand and was purchased by Barton in 1919 from the collection of John E. Burton.

The books which were not part of the original Barton purchase of 1926, have been separated from this collection and are part of the Lincoln Rare Book collection. These books are:


Related Resources
Browse finding aids by topic.

Subject Headings
• Barton, William Eleazar
• Herndon, William Henry
• Lincoln, Abraham
• United States -- President (1861-1865: Lincoln)
INVENTORY

Item 1

Item 2

Item 3
Carlyle, Thomas. History of Friedrich the Second, called Fredrick the Great. (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1858). vol. 2. viii, 556 p. (Signed by Herndon)

Item 4
Davis, Andrew Jackson. The Great Harmonia, Concerning the Seven Mental States. (Boston: Benjamin B. Mussey & Co., New York: J.S. Redfield; Fowlers and Wells, 1852). vol. 3. 401 p. (Signed by Herndon)

Item 5

Item 6

Item 7
Great Britain, Court of Exchequer. Reports of Cases Argued and Determined in the Courts of Exchequer and Exchequer Chamber, at Law, in Equity, and in Error, from Hilary Term, 5 & 6 Geo. IV., to Michaelmas Term, 6 Geo. IV both inclusive [1824-1825]. By Thomas M’Cleland and Edward Younge...with a Table of the Cases: and References to Decisions in the American Courts. J.I. Clark Hare, ed. (Philadelphia: T. & J.W. Johnson, 1853). x, 643 p. vol. 1. (Signed by Herndon)

Item 8
Great Britain, Court of Exchequer. Reports of Cases Argued and Determined in the Courts of Exchequer and Exchequer Chamber, at Law, in Equity, and in Error, from Michaelmas Term, 7 Geo. IV, to Trinity Term, 8 Geo. IV both inclusive [1826-1827]. By Edward Younge, and John Jervis...with Tables of the Cases and References to Decisions in the American Courts. J.I. Clarke Hare and H.B. Wallace, eds. (Philadelphia: T. & J.W. Johnson, 1852). x, 602 p. vol. 1. (Signed by Herndon)

Item 9
Great Britain, Court of Exchequer. Reports of Cases Argued and Determined in the Courts of Exchequer and Exchequer Chamber, at Law, in Equity, and in Error, from Michaelmas Term, 8 Geo. IV, Michaelmas Term, 9 Geo. IV both inclusive [1827-1828]. By Edward Younge, and John Jervis...with Tables of the Cases and References to Decisions in the American Courts. J.I. Clark Hare and H.B. Wallace, eds. (Philadelphia: T. & J.W. Johnson, 1853). x, 641 p. vol. 2. (Signed by Herndon)
Item 10
Great Britain, Court of Exchequer. Reports of Cases Argued and Determined in the Courts of Exchequer and Exchequer Chamber, at Law, in Equity, and in Error, from Hilary Term, 9 & 10 Geo. IV, to Hilary Term, 10 & 11 Geo. IV, both inclusive [1828-1830]. By Edward Younge, and John Jervis...with Tables of the Cases, and References to Decisions in the American Courts. J.I. Clark Hare and H.B. Wallace, eds. (Philadelphia: T. & J.W. Johnson, 1853). x, 594 p. vol. 3. (Signed by Herndon)

Item 11
Great Britain, Court of Exchequer. Reports of Cases Argued and Determined in the Courts of Exchequer and Exchequer Chamber, from Easter Term, 11 Geo. IV., to Trinity Term, 1 Will. IV, both inclusive [1830-1831]. By Charles Crompton, and John Jervis...with a Table of the Cases: and References to Decisions in the American Courts. J.I. Clark Hare, and H.B. Wallace, eds. (Philadelphia: T. & J.W. Johnson, 1852. x, 618 p. vol. 1. (Signed by Herndon)

Item 12
Great Britain, Court of Exchequer. Reports of Cases Argued and Determined in the Courts of Exchequer and Exchequer Chamber, from Michaelmas Term, 2 Will. IV, to Trinity Term, 2 Will. IV, both inclusive [1831-1832]. By Charles Crompton, and John Jervis...with a Table of the Cases: and References to Decisions in the American Courts. J.I. Clark Hare, and H.B. Wallace, eds. (Philadelphia: T. & J.W. Johnson, 1856). x, 705 p. vol. 2. (Signed by Herndon)

Item 13
Great Britain, Court of Exchequer. Reports of Cases Argued and Determined in the Courts of Exchequer and Exchequer Chamber, from Michaelmas Term, 4 Will. IV., to Trinity Term, 4 Will. IV., both inclusive [1832-1834]. By Charles Crompton, and R. Meeson...With a Table of the Cases: and References to Decisions in the American Courts. J.I. Clark Hare, and H.B. Wallace, eds. (Philadelphia: T. & J.W. Johnson, 1856). x, 781 p. vol. 2. (Signed by Herndon)

Item 14
Great Britain, Court of Exchequer. Reports of Cases Argued and Determined in the Courts of Exchequer and Exchequer Chamber, from Trinity Term, 4 Will. IV., to Hilary Term, V Will. IV., both inclusive [1834-1835]. By Charles Crompton, R. Meeson, and H. Roscoe...With a Table of the Cases: and References to Decisions in the American Courts. J.I. Clark Hare, and H.B. Wallace, eds. (Philadelphia: T. & J.W. Johnson, 1854). x, 962 p. vol. 1. (Signed by Herndon)

Item 15
Great Britain, Court of Exchequer. Reports of Cases Argued and Determined in the Courts of Exchequer and Exchequer Chamber, from Easter Term, V Will. IV., to Michaelmas Term, 6 Will. IV., both inclusive [1835]. By Charles Crompton, R. Meeson, and H. Roscoe...With a Table of the Cases: and References to Decisions in the American Courts. J.I. Clark Hare, and H.B. Wallace, eds. (Philadelphia: T. & J.W. Johnson, 1854). x, 782 p. vol. 2. (Signed by Herndon)

Item 16
Great Britain, Court of Exchequer. Reports of Cases Argued and Determined in the Courts of Exchequer and Exchequer Chamber, from Hilary Term, 6 Will. IV., to Trinity Term, 6 Will. IV., both inclusive, [1836]. With Tables of the Cases and Principal Matters.

Item 17
Great Britain, Court of Exchequer. Reports of Cases Argued and Determined in the Courts of Exchequer and Exchequer Chamber, from Michaelmas Term, 6 Will. IV., to Trinity Term, 7 Will. IV., both inclusive [1836-1837]. With Tables of the Cases and Principal Matters. By R. Meeson, and W.N. Welsby...With References to Decisions in the American Courts. J.I. Clark Hare, and H.B. Wallace, eds. (Philadelphia: T. & J.W. Johnson, 1855). x, 942 p. vol. 2. (Herndon's initials back cover)

Item 18

Item 19

Item 20

Item 21
Great Britain, Court of Exchequer. Reports of Cases Argued and Determined in the Courts of Exchequer and Exchequer Chamber, from Michaelmas Term, 10 Vict., to Easter Term, 10 Vict., both inclusive [1846-1847]. By R. Meeson, esq. and W.N. Welsby...With a Table of the Cases: and References to Decisions in the American Courts. J.I. Clark Hare, and H.B. Wallace, eds. (Philadelphia: T. & J.W. Johnson, 1855). viii, 910 p. vol. 16. (Herndon’s initials front cover)

Item 22

Item 23

Item 24

Item 25

Item 26

Item 27

Item 28

Item 29
Item 30

Item 31

Item 32

Item 33
Massachusetts. The Revised Statutes of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, passed November 4, 1835.... (Boston: Dutton and Wentworth, State Printers, 1836). xvi, 1007 p. (Signed by Herndon)

Item 34

Item 35

Item 36

Item 37

Item 38

Item 39
Item 40

Item 41

Item 42

Item 43

Item 44

Item 45

Item 46

Item 47

Item 48

Item 49

Item 50

**Item 51**

**Item 52**

**Item 53**

**Item 54**

**Item 55**

**Item 56**

**Item 57**

**Item 58**

**Item 59**
Item 60
U.S. Congress. The Public Statutes at Large of the United States of America from
the Organization of the Government in 1789, to March 3, 1845.... Richard Peters,
ed. (Boston: Charles C. Little and James Brown, 1848). xii, 826 p. vol. 8. (Signed by
Herndon)

Item 61
Doc. No. 54. House of Representatives. (Washington, DC: Wendell and Van Benthuyesen,
1848). 661 p. 8 plates. (Signed by Herndon)

Item 62
Congress, 1st Session. Senate. Ex. Doc. No. 27. pt. 1, "Arts and Manufactures".
(Washington, DC: Beverley Tucker, Printer to the Senate, 1854). 510 p. (Signed by
Herndon)

Item 63
U.S. President, 1853-1857 (Pierce). Message from the President of the United States to
the Two Houses of Congress, at the Commencement of the Third session of the Thirty-
Fourth Congress...34th Congress, 3d Session. Senate. Ex. Doc. No. 5. pt. 3, "Illustrations
Belonging to Reports Accompanying the Message." (Washington, DC: A.O.P. Nicholson,
Printer, 1856). (Signed by Herndon)

Item 64
U.S. President, 1857-1861 (Buchanan). Message of the President of the United States to
the Two Houses of Congress at the Commencement of the Second Session of the Thirty-
Fifth Congress. 35th Congress, 2d Session. Senate. Ex. Doc. No. 1. (Washington, DC:
Wm.A. Harris, Printer, 1858). 406 p. (Signed by Herndon)

Item 65
U.S. Treasury Dept. Report of the Secretary of the Tresury on the State of the Finances,
(Washington, DC: William A. Harris, Printer, 1858). 493 p. (Signed by Herndon)

Item 66
U.S. War Dept. Message of the President of the United States, and Accompanying
Documents, to the Two Houses of Congress at the Commencement of the First Session
of the Thirty-Eighth Congress. 38th Congress, 1st Session. House of Representatives. Ex.
Herndon)

Item 67
Upton, Francis H. The Law of Nations Affecting Commerce during War: with a Review
of the Jurisdiction, Practice, and Proceedings of Prize Courts. (New York: John S.
Voorhies, 1863). xxii, 503 p. (Signed by Herndon)

Item 68
Van Heythuysen, Frederick Miles. The Equity Draftsman, being a Selection of Forms of
Pleadings in Suits in Equity. 3rd American ed. (New York: John S. Voorhies, 1843). lvi,
952 p. (Signed by Herndon)

**Item 70**