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Guide to the Robert Todd Lincoln Collection 1881-1897



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Descriptive Summary

Identifier	ICU.SPCL.LINCOLNRT
Title	Lincoln, Robert Todd. Collection
Date	1881-1897
Size	0.25 linear feet (1 box)
Repository	Special Collections Research Center University of Chicago Library 1100 East 57th Street Chicago, Illinois 60637 U.S.A.
Abstract	Robert Todd Lincoln (1843 –1926) first son of President Abraham Lincoln and a politician, lawyer, and businessman. The collection contains two letters written by Lincoln and five documents signed by Lincoln as President James Garfield’s Secretary of War.

Information on Use

Access

The collection is open for research.

Citation

When quoting material from this collection, the preferred citation is: Lincoln, Robert Todd. Collection, [Box #, Folder #], Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library

Biographical Note

Robert Todd Lincoln was born in Springfield, IL, on August 1, 1843. He was the first son of President Abraham Lincoln and Mary Todd Lincoln and was named after his maternal grandfather, Robert Smith Todd. Robert had three younger brothers, Edward Baker, William Wallace, and Thomas “Tad.” Robert was the only one of his siblings to live well into adulthood. Robert studied at Harvard University after his preparatory work at Phillips Exeter Academy and graduated in 1864. After graduating, Robert pursued Harvard Law School from September, 1864, to January, 1865. He left law school to join the Union Army, much to his mother’s dismay. Robert was assigned to General Ulysses S. Grant’s immediate staff, ensuring that he would not be involved in actual combat. Lincoln was present at Appomattox for the surrender of the Confederate Army by Lee. Lincoln resigned and returned to civilian life on June 12, 1865.

Robert Lincoln’s political career began with his position as Town Supervisor of South Chicago from 1876-1877. President James Garfield appointed Lincoln to the position of Secretary of

War, a position which Lincoln held from 1881 to 1885 under Presidents Garfield and Chester A. Arthur. Lincoln's next position was as the U.S. Ambassador to the United Kingdom from 1889-1893. After his service as Ambassador, Lincoln returned to his business practice as a lawyer.

Later in life, Lincoln was the general counsel for the Pullman Palace Car Company under George Pullman. Upon Pullman's death in 1897, Lincoln was named president of the company. Lincoln remained involved in the administration of the company until he stepped down from his position as chairman of the board in 1922. Lincoln died in his Vermont home on July 26, 1926, of a cerebral hemorrhage.

Scope Note

The Robert Todd Lincoln collection contains two letters written by Lincoln and five documents signed by Lincoln as President James Garfield's Secretary of War. One letter, dating from 1894 and addressed to "Mrs. Washburn," is written on stationery from "The Temple, Chicago," presumably the Masonic Temple Building. The other, written in 1896, is addressed simply to "Rufus," and written on stationery from "60 Lake Shore Drive." The remaining documents are on "War Department" stationery, with two displaying the official seal of the War Department. These documents date from 1881-1884 and are arranged in chronological order.

The collection was previously part of the Miscellaneous Manuscripts Collection.

Subject Headings

- Lincoln, Robert Todd, 1843-1926
-
- United States. War Department

INVENTORY

Box 1

Folder 1

Correspondence, 1894-1896

- Letter from Robert Todd Lincoln to Mrs. Washburn, March 14, 1894
- Letter from Robert Todd Lincoln to "Rufus," August 18, 1896

Box 1

Folder 2

War Department documents, 1881-1884

- Memo to U.S. Attorney General Isaac Wayne MacVeagh, May 5, 1881
- Certificate of Authentication of Official Records, April 21, 1882
- Memo to Martin Linn Clardy, U.S. Representative, March 5, 1883

- Certificate of Authentication of Official Records, February 23, 1884
- Memo to Unknown re: Certificates of Authentication, March 24, 1884