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Civil War Veterans, Fourth of July or Decoration Day, Ortonville, Minnesota ca. 1880

Source: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/ooocha/2594385242>

MARY TODD LINCOLN DOCUMENTS TO BE AUCTIONED



Mary Todd Lincoln, widow of Abraham Lincoln, spent a year in an Illinois insane asylum in Batavia, Illinois. Her son, Robert Lincoln, signed the commitment papers in 1875 for the 56-year-old widow of America's 16th president.

The papers were discovered in 1933 and then were stored in a desk drawer box for another 60 years. Historians were unaware of the existence of these papers. They were slated for auction on June 11.

Historians say the rare 1875 documents, which are well-preserved, provide a unique paper trail to one of the most controversial episodes of the Lincoln family. Robert's motivations and Mary's mental state, are still hotly debated by historians and writers.

See:

<http://www.azcentral.com/news/articles/2010/06/07/20100607lincoln-papers0607.html>

Contributed by Neil Chippendale



RARE PHOTO OF SLAVE CHILDREN



A 150-year-old photo was recently found in a North Carolina attic

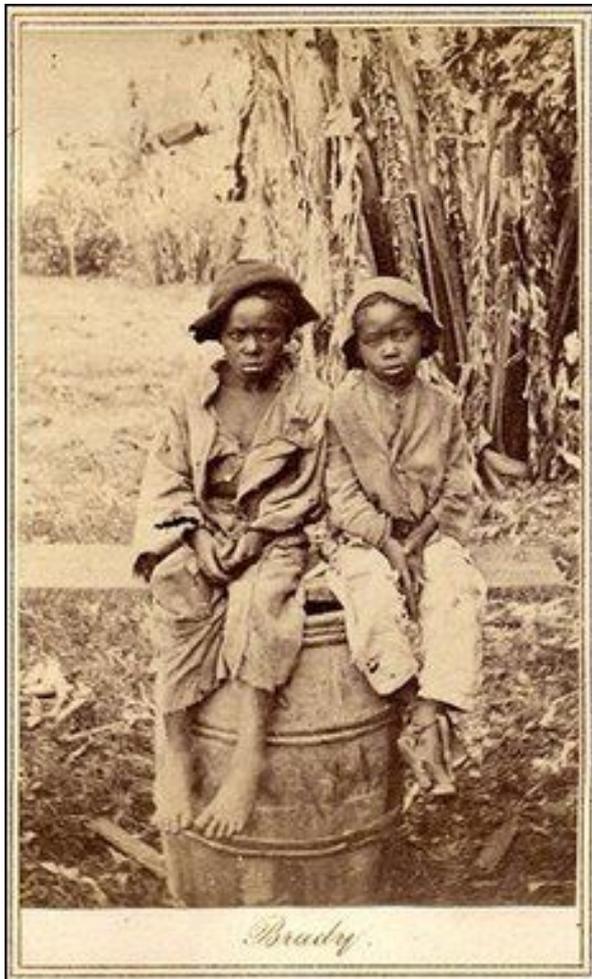
that shows two young black children. One was named John and the other is unidentified.

Art historians believe it's an extremely rare Civil War-era photograph of children who were either slaves at the time or recently emancipated. The photograph was found with a document detailing the sale of John for \$1,150.

Several art experts have examined the photograph and stated they believe it was created by the photography studio of Mathew Brady, a famous 19th-century photographer. The photo probably was not taken by Brady himself but by Timothy O'Sullivan, one of Brady's apprentices. O'Sullivan took a multitude of photos depicting the carnage of the Civil War.

See:

<http://www.ksl.com/?nid=157&sid=11119336>



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JOHN BURNS – HERO OF GETTYSBURG

by B. D. Beyea



In the town of Gettysburg live an old couple by the name of Burns. The old man was in the War of 1812, and is now nearly seventy years of age; yet the frosts of many winters have not chilled his patriotism, nor diminished his love for the old flag under which he fought in his early days.

When the rebels invaded the beautiful Cumberland Valley, and were marching on Gettysburg, old Burns concluded that it was time for every loyal man, young or old, to be up and doing all in his power to beat back the rebel foe and give them a quiet resting-place beneath the sod they were polluting with their unhallowed feet.

The old hero took down an old State musket he had in his house, and commenced running bullets. The old lady saw what he was about, and wanted to know what in the world he was going to do. 'Ah' said Burns, 'I thought some of the boys might want the old gun, and I am getting it ready for them.' The rebels came on. Old Burns kept his eye on the lookout until he saw the Stars and Stripes coming in, carried by our brave boys. This was more than the old fellow could stand. His patriotism got the better of his age and infirmity. Grabbing his musket, he started out. The old lady hallooed to him: 'Burns, where are you going?' 'O,' says Burns, 'I am going out to see what is going on.' He immediately went to a Wisconsin regiment, and asked them if they would take him in. They told him they would, and gave him

three rousing cheers. The old musket was soon thrown aside, and a first-rate rifle given him, and twenty-five rounds of cartridges.

The engagement between the two armies soon came on, and the old man fired eighteen of his twenty-five rounds, and says he killed three rebels to his certain knowledge. Our forces were compelled to fall back, and leave our dead and wounded on the field; and Burns, having received three wounds, was left also, not being able to get away. There he lay in citizen's dress and if the rebs found him in that condition, he knew death was his portion: so he concluded to try strategy as his only hope.

Soon the rebs came up, and approached him saying: 'Old man, what are you doing here?' 'I am lying here wounded, as you see,' he replied. Well, what business have you to be here? and who wounded you our troops, or yours?' 'I don't know who wounded me; but I only know that I am wounded and in a bad fix. 'Well, what were you doing here? - what was your business?' 'If you will hear my story, I will tell you. My old woman's health is very poor, and I was over across the country to get a girl to help her; and, coming back, before I knew where I was, I had got right into this fix, and here I am.' 'Where do you live?' inquired the rebels. 'Over in town in such a small house.' They then picked him and carried him home, and left him. But they soon returned, as if suspecting he had been lying to them, and made him answer a great many questions; but be stuck to his old story, and they failed to make anything out of old Burns, and then left him for good.

He says he shall always feel indebted to some of his neighbors for the last call; for he believe someone had informed them of him. Soon after they left, a bullet came into his room, and struck in the wall about six inches above where he lay on his sofa; but he don't know who fired it. His wounds proved to be only flesh wounds, and he is getting well, feels first-rate, and says he would like one more good chance to give them a rip.

Thanks to James Johnson

See:

<http://www.gettysburgguide.com/burns.html>

Picture credit:

<http://www.sonofthesouth.net/lee/foundation/gettysburg/gettysburg-hero-paul-burns.htm>

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CONTACT INFORMATION



Editorial Desk

c/- Dave Sanders

Email: blakstara@yahoo.com.au

Anderson Zouaves – Research and Living History (62^d NYSVV Co. F)

<http://andersonzouaves.tripod.com/lhrg>

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62^d NYSVV Co. F.

c/- Company Clerk

William Lincoln

P.O. Box 227., St. Peters. NSW 2044

The Dog Robbers – Company F Band

<http://www.myspace.com/thedogrobbers>

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