Knucks

On Abraham Lincoln's city,
Where they remember his lawyer's shingle,
The place where they brought him
Wrapped in battle flags,
Wrapped in the smoke of memories
From Tallahassee to the Yukon,
The place now where the shaft of his tomb
Points white against the blue prairie dome,
On Abraham Lincoln's city... I saw Knucks
On the window of Mister Fischman's second-hand store
On Second Street.

I went in and asked, "How much?"
"Thirty cents apiece," answered Mister Fischman.
And taking a box of new ones off a shelf
He filled anew the box in the showcase
And said incidentally, most casually
And incidentally:
"I sell a carload a month of these."

I stuffed my fingers into a set of knucks,
Cast-iron knucks moulded in a foundry pattern,
And there came to me a set of thoughts like these:
Mister Fischman is for Abe and the 'malice to none'
And the street car strikers and the strikebreakers,
stuff.
And the sluggers, gunmen, detectives, policemen,
Judges, utility heads, newspapers, priests, lawyers,
They are all for Abe and the 'malice to none' stuff.

I started for the door.
"Maybe you want a lighter pair."
Came Mister Fischman's voice.
I opened the door... and the voice again:
"You are a funny customer."

Wrapped in battle flags,
Wrapped in the smoke of memories,
This is the place they brought him,
This is Abraham Lincoln's home town.

From
"Cornhuskers."

Carl Sandburg

Carl Sandburg came to visit me last night. He had been at the church service before and he and Mrs. Sandburg and Mrs. Barton and I had a visit. Last night he and and I visited in the kitchen town until after midnight and the last train had gone for Elmhurst. He spent the night and remained until nearly noon this morning.

He wrote them poems at my request

Mehamk. Barton

March 17. 1923.