

LINCOLN LORE

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LINCOLN FAMILY PICTURES

There are no original group photographs showing all the members of the Lincoln family and those often submitted as genuine are nothing more than composite pictures or reproductions of paintings. Mrs. Lincoln and two of her sons, William and Thomas, had a group picture made at Springfield, Illinois, by P. Butler, a local photographer about the time of Mr. Lincoln's election. An engraving of the photo was published in *Leslies' Weekly* on December 15, 1860. Mr. Lincoln, while President, on two different occasions had his picture taken with his son, Thomas, but there is no evidence that he was ever photographed with other members of the family. These two sittings and the one of Mrs. Lincoln and her two younger boys are really all we have in original group photographs of the Lincoln family.

Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln

As far as can be learned, Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln never posed together for any photographer or any painter and it is quite likely that the very great difference in their heights had very much to do with it. Lincoln often referred to the "long and short of the presidency."

One picture of Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln which seems to have been accepted as genuine shows a front view of Mr. Lincoln and on his left a profile view of Mrs. Lincoln. His head is turned slightly to the left and her head is directed slightly to the right. Mrs. Lincoln is in a black dress with white collar and cuffs and carries a fan in her hand. The copy in the Foundation collection which is 1.6 x 4.12 bears the imprint of the publishers, "R. R. Landon, Agt. Chicago, Ill."

Composite Pictures of Lincoln Family

The picture of Abraham Lincoln and his son, Thomas, made by Brady in 1864, has become the basis of most of the early composite lithographs of the Lincoln family. Later on the picture of Lincoln and his son, Thomas, made by Gardner in 1865, was used for the larger lithographs and engravings of the family.

One of the earliest composite studies of the Lincoln family was produced by Currier and Ives, in 1865. They called the picture "President Lincoln at Home Reading the Scriptures to His Wife and Son." This is a reproduction of the father and son portrait by Brady with Mrs. Lincoln added to the picture. The photograph album which Mr. Lincoln was showing Tad in the original picture is changed to a Bible with the word Isaiah plainly visible on the open page. The plate from which this lithograph was made was 14.8 x 7.14. Another Currier and Ives print widely distributed was of rectangular form with two of Lincoln's sons, Robert and Thomas, grouped with Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln, all of them seated, except Thomas.

More popular, apparently, than any of the several Currier and Ives prints of the Lincoln family was one published by John Dainty, showing Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln

seated, Robert Lincoln in military uniform standing back of his parents, Thomas standing beside his father, and a picture on the wall of William. This is the family group most often called an original photograph.

Among the other publishers who brought out Lincoln family group lithographs and engravings were Bradley, Philadelphia; Clark, Chicago; Chapman, New York; Hoover, Philadelphia; Kellogg, Hartford; Kelly, New York; Kurz and Allison, Chicago; Moore and Annin, New York; Robertson, New York; and Smith, Philadelphia.

Paintings of the Lincoln Family

There are two paintings of the Lincoln family which have been most successfully reproduced as outstanding steel engravings. One is by Waugh and the other by Carpenter.

The painting by Frank B. Carpenter portrays the Lincoln family as it appeared in 1861. William Lincoln, who died in 1862, was still living so there are three sons shown with Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln. The order and position in which the characters appear in the engraving are Mrs. Lincoln seated, William seated, Robert standing, Thomas standing, and Mr. Lincoln seated.

The engraving of the Carpenter painting was done by Buttre and the total cost of the engraved plate, 24.4 x 18, was over \$1500. The original painting was presented to the New York Historical Society in 1909. Although the painting is not done from life, it is by far the most satisfactory likeness of the Lincoln family at the time they entered the White House.

The painting by S. P. Waugh showing but four members of the family, Thomas, Mr. Lincoln, Robert and Mrs. Lincoln, from left to right in order named, was engraved by William Sartain, one of the famous Sartain brothers. The plate is 25 x 18 and the work of the engraver is especially fine.

Composite Reproductions

The assassination of Lincoln caused a great demand for pictures of the Lincoln family. There was a rush by the lithographers to get their products on the market with the result that a great many inferior pictures were distributed and little attention was paid to historical accuracy.

Most of the large size lithographs of the Lincoln family show a little boy with a drum. Inasmuch as Robert and Thomas are easily identified, the boy with the drum must be William. He was two years older than Thomas, which, apparently, has not been taken into consideration by the lithographers who make him much smaller than his younger brother. Altogether, the composite group pictures of the family were very unsatisfactory as historical exhibits to visualize the Lincolns as they appeared between the years 1861 and 1865.