

LINCOLN LORE

Bulletin of the Lincoln National Life Foundation - - - - - Dr. Louis A. Warren, Editor
Published each week by The Lincoln National Life Insurance Company, Fort Wayne, Indiana

Number 600

FORT WAYNE, INDIANA

October 7, 1940

CAMPAIGN PORTRAIT PENDANTS

The prototype of modern campaign buttons was the portrait pendant of the 1860 and 1864 political contests. These small circular pieces of metal bearing the tintype pictures of the candidates have gone through an interesting process of development until we now have the inexpensive celluloid pin which will be in general use until after the first Tuesday in November.

The original campaign tokens of 1860 and 1864 are usually an inch or about 25 millimeters in diameter. There are some, however, with a diameter of but 14mm. while other tokens reach a dimension of 47mm.

The frames of these circular tokens were usually made of solid or shell brass, or white metal, and were often silvered. A plastic clay material was sometimes substituted for metal and colored a brilliant hue. Another type was a metal shell covered with plush. Nearly all of these frames were pierced so that the pendant could be used as a watch charm or tied on a ribbon. The frames were not always circular, but often took the form of stars, shields, ovals, rectangles, or other designs.

The solid brass frames having a flat surface were used for inscriptions which usually included the name of the candidate and the date. The round brass shell, white metal and ceramic frames were usually decorative with no inscription.

The portraits of course are the most interesting features of the pendants and they were usually ferrotypes, or as we call them today, tintypes. When there was no opportunity to put the name of the candidate on the frame, it was put on the ferrotype usually over the picture.

It is not difficult to separate the 1860 from the 1864 pendants, as Lincoln was clean shaven during the first campaign and wore a beard at the time he was a candidate for re-election.

The picture of Lincoln most often used on the ferrotype pendants of 1860 was a highly retouched picture of Lincoln, known in the Meserve collection

of original portraits as number 15. The picture in every instance is reversed, and shows the mole on the right side of Lincoln's face as the pose shows Lincoln facing to one's left. The original picture from which this tintype was made was very likely Meserve number 15, taken in 1858 or 1859, probably at Peoria and possibly made by H. H. Cole, although authentic information about the picture is difficult to secure.

Another portrait found on some of the pendants is a tintype of the Cooper Institute photograph made by Brady. More often, however, the Currier & Ives reproduction of the Cooper Institute Lincoln is used. These also are usually found reversed, the mole being on the wrong side of Lincoln's face.

The 1864 pendants showing the bearded Lincoln seem to have favored the original portrait known as Meserve 87, though in one instance at least Meserve 74 is used. Both of these portraits also appear in reverse. It would be a rarity indeed if one found a tintype of Lincoln on a campaign pendant which showed Lincoln facing in the same direction as shown in the original pose.

The Lincoln National Life Foundation has in its collection about forty of these pendants of the political campaign of 1860 and 1864, with eighteen of them containing ferrotype portraits of Lincoln. A brief description of some of these Lincoln campaign portrait pendants follows:

Brass Album

This album has four brass pages within the covers, each page containing a small portrait. The Lincoln picture is a miniature copy of the Cooper Institute print, size 20mm. x 23mm.

Plush Frame Pendant

This 1864 campaign pendant with a bright red plush frame is one of the rarities of the Foundation collection. It is 23mm. in diameter and has a narrow brass rim about the ferrotype. On the reverse side of the pendant is a picture of Herschel V. Johnson, instead of Andrew Johnson the proper candidate. Herschel Johnson was candidate

for the Vice-presidency on the Stephen A. Douglas ticket in 1860.

Large Brass Framed Tintype

Some of the brass framed ferrotypes approach the size of daguerreotypes. One put out by Abbott & Co., New York, contains a portrait of Meserve 34, in reverse as usual, and is 35mm. x 43mm. It is made with a ring attached to the top of the frame.

Rectangular Pendants

Pendants made to hang on a ribbon were used more largely during the funeral ceremonies than during the campaigns, although a few with national colors are available. Paper prints instead of tintypes are often used, and either Meserve 85 or 87 are the portraits usually framed.

Star Pendant

A five-pointed star made of brass with point extremities 47mm. apart contains a circular brass frame at the center but 15mm. in diameter. It is an 1864 pendant and the tintype within the circular frame is a likeness of the Meserve picture number 87.

Miniature Brass Pendant

The smallest of the campaign pendants in the Foundation collection is a solid brass frame with one of the miniature tintypes of Lincoln, only 9mm. in diameter, encased. This is an 1860 pendant.

Large Silvered Pendant

This souvenir of the 1860 campaign is the very largest of the pendants, being 47mm. in diameter, and the brass shell is silvered. The Lincoln tintype in this token is a copy of the Currier & Ives Cooper Institute portrait.

Meserve No. 15 Ferrotype

Mr. Meserve states, in his famous collection of one hundred original pictures of Abraham Lincoln, that his number fifteen is "From a tintype in a small badge used in the campaign of 1860." The badge from which he made his copy was in the collection of Judd Stewart, and Major Lambert had one similar to it. We have reason to believe that the ferrotype in the Foundation collection is similar to these copies.