

LINCOLN LORE

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CALLIGRAPHIC LINCOLN PORTRAITS

Contemporary with the Spencerian school of penmanship there was developed what was known as calligraphic portraits. The likeness of an individual was reproduced by writing in such a fashion that the main features of the subject were made to stand out in bold relief, yet no lines were written which did not appear in the given text.

One of the most proficient of these earlier calligraphic artists was David Davidson of Boston. As early as 1856 he was making portraits and images in penscript and was probably the first artist to produce the likeness of Abraham Lincoln by this novel process. The calligraphic portrait of Mr. Lincoln was presented to the President-elect in December 1860. Secretary Nicolay acknowledged receipt of the picture on December 27.

The *Boston Gazette* for December 8, 1860, stated that the portrait at that time could be seen at the studio of the artist. A speech delivered by Lincoln in reply to Douglas was used as the basic writing by the artist, "every word of which he has wrought into hair, eyes, facial lines, shadows, cravat, shirt studs, watch guard, drapery, and extending out over the ornamental lines of the embossed page on which the picture is written, it presents the form of more flowers of speech than ever its author dreamed of imparting to it." The news item further comments, "Every mark, though microscopically small, has its meaning, and if looked at through a glass the continuity of the speech is easily traced, while the oval that immediately surrounds the face is a brief biography of Lincoln."

The Emancipation Proclamation written out in free hand has been most often used as a basis for the Lincoln portrait, although one very elaborate profile has been developed by using an autobiographical sketch of Lincoln.

Possibly the most artistic of all these calligraphic portraits was one made by W. H. Pratt of Davenport, Iowa, and lithographed by A. Hageboeck also of Davenport. Judge James W. Bollinger, so well and favorably known by Lincoln collectors, was in Pratt's writing classes and also was acquainted with Mr. Hageboeck.

The Lincoln National Life Foundation has several of these calligraphic Lincoln portraits which will be briefly described in the compilation which follows. As is customary with all listings of portraits, the Meserve classification will be used as the unit of identification. For instance, the calligraphic Lincoln by O. O. Bowers is an attempt to reproduce a portrait of Meserve number 62. The size of actual plate and a brief description of the print is submitted.

M62a. Bowers, O. O. Size 4 x 5
GETTYSBURG ADDRESS in portrait form with no design around it. Inscription: Left, Address at/Gettysburg. Center, Penned by O. O. Bowers/New Philadelphia, Ohio. Right, Copyright 1926/by G. L. Bowers.

M62b. Bowers, O. O. Size 5½ x 8½
Similar to M62a except for size and inscription. Inscription: Right, Copyright 1926/By G. L. Bowers. Center, Penned by O. O. Bowers/Compliments of /The Dauntless Plumbing & Electric Co./18-24 State St. Fr 8109.

M85a. Bishop, R. Morris Size 16 x 21
EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION portrait with a border containing fancy scrolls and in the left corner a picture of a slave being whipped, in the right corner a picture of liberty freeing the slave. The inscription above the picture: E Pluribus Unum/September 22d 1862 January 1st 1863/Emancipation Proclamation. Lower inscription: A. Lincoln (fac.) William H. Seward

(fac.)/Allegorical Portrait/Abraham Lincoln/Respectfully dedicated to the Union League of the United States by the Publishers/Published by the Art Publishing Association of Philadelphia, Swander Bishop & Co./Entered according to Act of Congress in the year 1865 by Swander Bishop & Co. in the Clerk's office of the Dist. Court of the U. S. in and for the Eastern Dist. of Pennsylvania/Des. and drawn with a steel pen by R. Morris Swander—Engraved facsimile by P. S. Duval & Son Philada.

M85b. Pratt, W. H. Size 18 x 24
BIOGRAPHY forms light background and darker picture of Lincoln. Inscription: Designed & written with a steel pen by W. H. Pratt, Davenport, Iowa—Ent. accdg. to act of Congr. in the year 1868 by A. Hageboeck, in the Clerk's office of the Dist. Court of the U. S. for the Dist. of Iowa—Lithographed & printed by A. Hageboeck, Davenport, Iowa./Biography of Abraham Lincoln.

M87a. (Du-So & Breitfeld) Size 12½ x 15
EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION in oval surrounded by border of names as suggested in inscription at top: Proclamation of Emancipation/Names of Members of Congress/Who Voted for the Resolution to Submit to/The Legislatures of the Several States the/Amendment to the Constitution of the/United States Prohibiting Slavery Forever. Inscription beneath oval: Abraham Lincoln/Right, 742 device I.P.E.U./Left, Copyright 1934/By Du-So & Breitfeld.

M87b. Green, C. A. Size 9¼ x 12¼
EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION portrait in oval surrounded by scroll. Inscription at top: Proclamation of Emancipation. Inscription below picture: Abraham Lincoln/Son of Democracy. Left, C. A. Green, Columbus, Ohio/Copyrighted 1919.

M87c. Green, C. A. Size 9 x 12¼
Same as M87b except for size, omission of line, Son of Democracy, and inscription at lower left: Copyrighted 1931, C. A. Green/Columbus, Ohio.

M87d. (Green, C. A.) Size 9 x 12¼
Same as M87c except for size and omission of inscription at lower left.

M87e. Halbert, C. E. Size 12½ x 14¼
Same as M87a except size and date September 22, 1862 between "Proclamation of Emancipation" and "Names of . . ." Also dates 1809 1865 below name "Abraham Lincoln" beneath oval. Added inscription at bottom of page: Copyr. June 9, 1931, Claude Earnest Halbert, Kansas City, Mo.

M87f. Pratt, W. H. Size 9 x 12¼
PROCLAMATION OF EMANCIPATION is inscribed above oval calligraphic portrait. Inscription below: Left, Designed and written by W. H. Pratt, Davenport, Iowa. Center, Abraham Lincoln/Ent. accdg. to act of Congr. in the year 1865 by W. H. Pratt in the Clerk's office of the Dist. Court of the U. S. for the Dist. of Iowa. Right, Lith. by A. Hageboeck, Davenport, Iowa.

M87g. Smith, E. C. Size 9¼ x 12¼
PROCLAMATION OF EMANCIPATION which appears to be either a copy of the Pratt Calligraph or a touched up photographic copy of the Pratt work. Inscription at top: Proclamation of Emancipation. Center beneath oval, Abraham Lincoln/Written by E. C. Smith. This last seems to show an effort at similarity in the writing which would lead one to believe that Smith only claimed this as his own.