

LINCOLN LORE

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A PROFUSELY ILLUSTRATED LINCOLN BOOK

Lorant, Stefan. *Lincoln A Picture Story of his Life*. Harper & Brothers, 49 East 33rd Street, New York, 16, N. Y. Price \$6.00.

The ever increasing flow of profusely illustrated books has been augmented by Stefan Lorant's current publication *Lincoln A Picture Story of his Life* released by Harper & Brothers on September 25. Instead of trimming or reducing the 500 illustrations displayed, to fit into a limited page area, the format itself has been enlarged sufficiently to provide for the space needs of the pictures. This is a new departure in Lincolniana with the result that the 12½" x 9½" pages are bound in a book of the largest dimensions now available in Lincolniana, with the exception of one or two government publications issued shortly after the President's death.

Possibly the feature of the book from the viewpoint of the student of Lincoln is the appendix which is often the case when compilations of subject matter are assembled. On the front cover of the book's jacket the claim is made that the book contains "all the known photographs of Lincoln." Supplementing this statement the jacket also states, "In the appendix all Lincoln photographs are printed in chronological order with the detailed information as to when, how and by whom they were taken. It is the only complete sequence of Lincoln photographs in existence."

Mr. Lorant has taken special pains to weed out of his compilation all prints of Lincoln which have backgrounds added, and others highly retouched from an original. He has also, to the regret of some students at least, used but one print of the stereoscopic pair thereby reducing the actual number of negatives made of Lincoln and disturbing to some degree the interest which has been built up in this early phase of photography.

What is known as the Meserve List of 124 Lincoln Photographs has been reduced by Lorant to 100 originals. His enumeration cites 34 portraits taken of Lincoln without a beard or before his nomination to the presidency, 52 different pictures of Lincoln showing him with a beard, and 14 informal photographs where Lincoln is included in a group. This brings the total as selected by Lorant to 100.

The even number 100 was made possible by Donald Rietveld's discovery at Springfield, Ill. of a picture of Lincoln lying in his coffin at New York. Certainly no author ever had a more fortunate circumstance happen on the very eve of publication than the finding of this picture. It will easily become the feature picture in the book.

The portraits in the book are not confined to Lincoln alone or the Lincoln family which is well represented but there are also introduced associates at New Salem and Vandalia, his political rivals, law partners, contemporaries on the eighth judicial circuit, as well as the members of his cabinet.

The book is rich in candid photographs revealing grotesque scenes which emphasize the horrors of the civil war, as well as the more formal pictures featuring the military. The homes of Lincoln through the years and the buildings made historic by his association with them are also included. Even cartoons of the political campaigns are reproduced as well as a complete set of caricatures found in one rare Lincoln pamphlet. Lorant has borrowed heavily on early artists to set off, properly, scores of human interest episodes which occurred in the life of Lincoln such as railsplitting, river trips, wrestling matches, story telling, circuit riding, law cases, etc.

The Ann Rutledge story, usually featured by authors, while mentioned by Lorant gives way to the Lincoln and Mary Owens affair at New Salem and Lincoln's letters to her are reproduced in facsimile. The Duff Armstrong trial is given preference among Lincoln's law cases. Special attention is called to Lincoln's autobiographical sketches. A chapter on the life mask places the proper emphasis on this important piece of sculpture. The story of why Lincoln grew a beard is given special attention by Lorant. The death of Ellsworth at the very beginning of the war also receives feature notice.

The treatment of the civil war story is suggested by these captions: The First Battle of the War, The New Commander, Troubles in the West, Ordering an Offensive, The Peninsular Campaign, The Battle of Antietam, Burnside Succeeds McClellan, The Campaign in the West, The Battle of Fredericksburg, Hooker Succeeds Burnside, Hooker's Defeat at Chancellorsville, The Battle of Gettysburg, Lincoln Finds his General, The Campaign in the Wilderness, Sherman takes Atlanta, The 1864 Campaign, Marching Through Georgia, Preparing the Final Blow, and Lee Surrenders.

The illustrative material in the book, however, is not limited to photographs of people and places but is rich in facsimiles of manuscripts, memorandums, and personal correspondence as well as reproductions of broadsides, posters, and printed data referring to the Lincoln story.

Some of the early manuscripts presented include the marriage bond of his parents and the minister's return of their marriage, pages from an account book showing purchases of Thomas Lincoln, Lincoln's copy book, early surveys of legal papers, and his own marriage papers are but a few of the early exhibits. The book jacket emphasizes the fact that "all his important addresses and letters are reproduced in facsimile" and as might be expected a special emphasis is given to his assassination with the climax for this section being the full page reproduction of Gurney's picture of Lincoln lying in the coffin at New York. All in all the facsimiles contributed a sense of authenticity to the book which gives a running story of Lincoln from birth to burial.