

LINCOLN LORE

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ETCHERS OF LINCOLN PHOTOGRAPHS

During the latter part of the nineteenth century there was a marked revival in the art of etching and it soon vied with the line engraving for the favor of the connoisseurs of fine portraits. The two outstanding engravings of Lincoln are known as the Gugler and the Marshall masterpieces and both have been recognized in separate copies of Lincoln Lore. It is with more difficulty however that we choose the most satisfactory etchings of Abraham Lincoln and we will have to confine this bulletin to listing some of the best known etchers and concentrating on some of those who seem to have given special attention to Lincoln.

When Charles H. Hart completed his catalogue of Lincoln portraits in 1899 he stated that the best etchings created up to that time were by Rajon and Johnson. One of the closing paragraphs of Winfred Porter Truesdell's work on *Engraved and Lithographed Portraits of Abraham Lincoln* published in 1933 observes: "In the final volume it is the intention to produce some of the more recent examples that might be chosen for their excellency." He then names as the outstanding etchers; Thomas Johnson, James S. King, J. Nuytens, Otto J. Schneider and Jacques Reich.

We are greatly assisted in the identification of the works of art by the custom of the etchers to sign, each proof in pencil so that there are but few studies that might be called unidentified. There is much confusion however, in arranging the etchings in proper sequence as it was not unusual for the artist to make a proof copy as soon as the subject was well under way and then continue to draw proofs at intervals until the final lines were made on the plate. The fact that these proof sheets were also signed as the portraits went through the different states makes it impossible on occasions to identify what might be called the final proof. Some etchings apparently were never finished. Another confusing factor in the cataloging of etchings is the different kinds of paper utilized for the prints.

The fact that most etchings are copied from original photographs has allowed us to approach a satisfactory method of identification by using the number associated with the photograph of Lincoln in the Meserve classification. It will be noted that the most popular beardless Lincoln reproduced is Meserve No. 26, the photograph made by Hesler at Springfield on June 3, 1860. The favorite among the bearded studies is Meserve No. 85, known as the Brady photograph and

appearing on the \$5.00 bank note. Number 81, a profile made by Brady on the same day as the above negative has also attracted many etchers.

T. JOHNSON

There were two Thomas Johnsons who made portraits of Abraham Lincoln, one is usually designated as

ETCHERS

The list of etchers here presented is by no means complete but does make available the names of those who seem to be best known in their chosen field. The Lincoln photographs as numbered by Meserve indicate the portraits used.

Albrecht, Henry—26, 39
Audibert, P. Raymond—85
Bartlett, Dana—81
Bicknell, W. H. W.—25
Dunlap, Helen—59
Fagan, James—85
Gaspard,—59
Hall, C. B.—7, 9, 12, 14, 19, 26, 28, 31, 45, 71, 77, 81, 85, 93
Horter, Earl—26
Hovenden, Thomas—85
Jacquemart, Jules—81
Johnson, Thomas—8, 19, 25, 26, 36, 77, 81, 88
Jones, Hayden—26
Kemp, H.—59
King, James T.—73
Lucioni, Louis—3, 76
McClellan, Hugh—81
Miller, E. H.—87
Nuytens, Pierre—59, 85
Pack, W.—85
Rajon, Paul—8
Reich, Jacques—85, 87
Rendell, William George—26
Rosen, David—79
Rosenthal, Albert—59, 85
Rosenthal, Max—42
Rost, H. C.—87
Sadd, H. S.—20
Schlecht, Charles—6
Schneider, Otto J.—19, 26, 29, 45, 59
Smith, Sidney L.—81
Stuart, Frederick T.—6
Taylor, Henry Jr.—26
Tittle, Walter—97
Wall, Bernhardt—85

Thomas M. Johnson and the other most always signs his art pieces as T. Johnson. The former was born in Boston, 1836, and died in Paris in 1869. He is best known for having made a painting of Lincoln from life which was the basic study of a lithograph which had wide circulation in 1860. T. Johnson in whom we are especially interested was an English-

man born in 1834 and died in 1904 at London.

There are several etchings of well known Americans made by Johnson, among them, one after Stuart's George Washington and another of Daniel Webster, known as the famous "hat picture." But Abraham Lincoln however, seems to have been T. Johnson's favorite American subject, for we have at least six different photographs of Lincoln copied by him. Apparently he was most impressed with a full profile of Lincoln M. 81. When a copy of this etching was presented to Robert Lincoln, son of the President, Robert wrote to the publishers "It is an artistic reproduction of one of the two photographic portraits of him which I value most highly." The other we know, was the Brady Lincoln (M. 85).

CHARLES B. HALL

Possibly the most prolific producer of Lincoln etchings was Charles B. Hall of New York. We have been able to discover at least fourteen original photographs of Abraham Lincoln which he etched on copper. He was especially interested in the early portraits of Lincoln, eight of his studies of Lincoln presenting him without a beard. His etchings were usually limited to "Fifty India Proofs Only" which were signed and numbered.

OTTO J. SCHNEIDER

The etchings of Otto J. Schneider, a Chicago artist, have had a wide circulation, not only because of a variety of studies but a quantity production. At the Lambert sale in 1914, there were auctioned off thirty-three etchings by Schneider, all different. One study had gone through at least 11 states, another was "one of 50 impressions on parchment," another, "one of 50 impressions on Japan Vellum Paper" and still another "one of 250 issued on Japan Vellum Paper." The prize Schneider offering in the catalogue however, was "The original copper plate of an etching inked and gold plated."

BERNHARDT WALL

Bernhardt Wall is the one name which stands out most prominently in the minds of the modern collector of Lincolniana. His first book of etchings was entitled *The Gettysburg Speech*, and was published in 1924. The frontispiece was from the famous Brady photograph (M. 85). From that time on he continued to bring out books featuring Lincoln etchings until eighty-five separate volumes had been completed, nearly every phase of the Lincoln story was included.