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Remarks: The History of the Life Size Standing Oil Painting of Abraham Lincoln

Anonymous

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The most words of Leusta D. Voorhees and Hoar
THE HISTORY OF THE LIFE SIZE STANDING OIL PORTRAIT OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN

The life size standing oil portrait of Abraham Lincoln was painted from life in the Fall of 1864 and Spring of 1865 by George W.F. Travis of Frankfort-on-the-Main and is pronounced by all who know this great man to be the best and only true life-size oil painting that has ever been painted of him from life. Mr. Travis, the artist was the son of a painter; he came to this country in the Fall of 1864 and offered his services to the government to fight for the same. He was refused on account of pulmonary affection. He then went to Washington, D.C., and endeavored to interview the President. He failed in this. One day he saw Mr. Lincoln on the street, he approached him, introduced himself telling him his history that he desired to fight for the country and he being refused he believed he could paint a picture of the President which would identify him with the issue of the day. The President was much touched by the man's earnestness and he made an appointment for sitting. Several other sittings were given the artist during the fall of 1864 and spring of '65. The picture was finally finished in the artist's studio in Frankfort-on-the-Main after Mr. Lincoln's assassination. It was purchased by the representative of this country, Mr. Webster, who kept this picture in his office until 1876 when he sent it to the Centennial Exhibition at Philadelphia where it attracted much attention and was pronounced by all the true and lifelike Lincoln.

Mrs. Lincoln saw it for the first time in Memorial Hall and was so overcome by the lifelike appearance that she fainted and was carried from the hall by attendants.

Ward H. Lamon, during February of 1868, did write to Senator William M. Evarts and say "The Travis portrait is the most lifelike picture of Mr. Lincoln I have ever seen. In other pictures I have seen the artist sacrificed character for beauty. The portrait represents a true likeness of the man with his rugged features and irregularities of personal appearance true to life. The face of the portrait is remarkably lifelike and I venture to say if the face be covered and hidden from view there is not a man who knew him intimately who would not instantly recognize the trunk and limbs on the canvas as being those of Abraham Lincoln.

(Signed) Ward H. Lamon,
Friend of Lincoln,
Ex-Sheriff of the District
of Columbia in 1865.

But as it is fitting that this portrait of the lamented Lincoln should be in the possession of the government and as this is acknowledged by artists and art critics, and friends to be the best lifelike portrait of him your committee unanimously recommends that the Travis portrait of Lincoln be purchased for the sum of \$15,000 (Fifteen Thousand Dollars).

The proofs of the above under the seal of the U.S. Senate is in the hands of the present owner of the picture.

(Signed) Daniel Voorhees,
William M. Evarts,
G. F. Hoar, Senators.
Members of the Library Committee
U. S. Senate, 1868.

Also since this date the picture has been endorsed by prominent men who were intimate acquaintances of Lincoln, viz:
Ex-Speaker J.C. Cannon of Illinois
Gen. John C. Black,
General during Rebellion
Judge A.J. Dittenhoffer,
An elector of N.Y. State, 1860-64
Republican Party
James Creelman, an art critic of note, a correspondent recognized as a man of artistic ability by the newspaper fraternity

Senator Cullum
Corporal Tanner
of Rebellion Fame
F.J. Ruckstull, Art Editor
of the Art World, a sculptor who has two pieces of art in the United States Capitol at Washington, D.C.
Also many other people who knew Lincoln

These men have personally viewed the painting which is now on view in the Rooms of the Ohio Society, 15th Floor of the Waldorf Astoria. Visitors invited. Black and White photographs of this picture.

Digital Image, 2009. The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library

Mr W B Bates who lives at the
Ansonia Hotel, he was Lincoln private
secretary from 1861 to 1865, he views
the portrait and states in a communication
that the picture is a wonderful likeness

GP
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New York