

THE MASK OF LINCOLN

An Educational Resource from the Smithsonian Institution

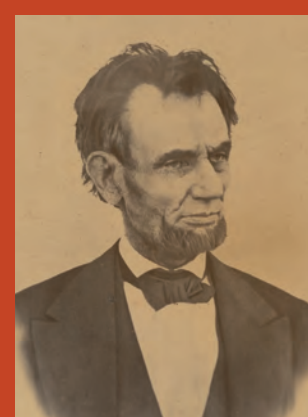
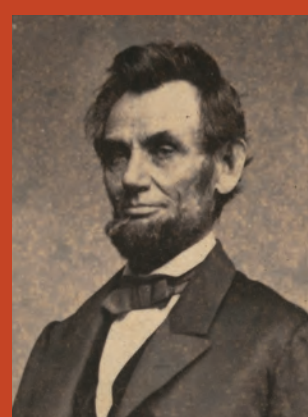
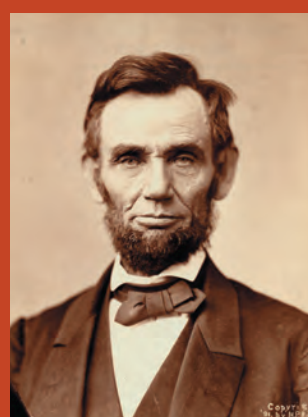
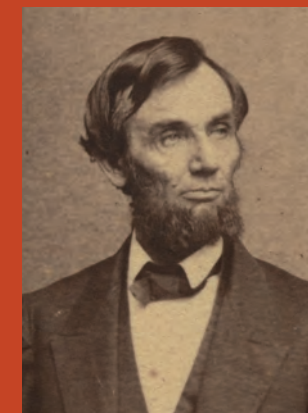
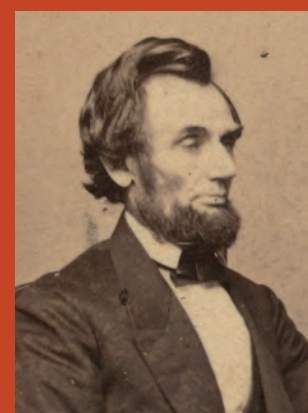
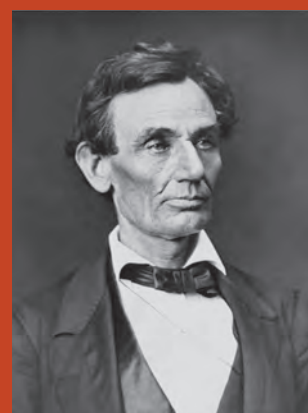
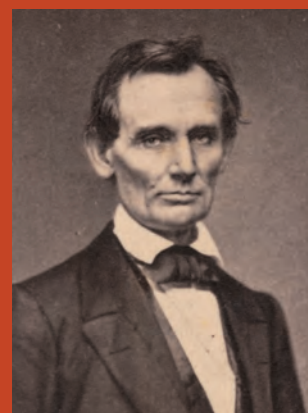


Smithsonian
Institution

THE MASK OF LINCOLN

An Educational Resource from the Smithsonian Institution

- Ten iconic portraits of Abraham Lincoln
- Variety of downloadable lesson plans
- Links to Smithsonian digital collections
- Perfect for history and government classes
- Tied to national learning standards
- Based on Smithsonian scholarship



The Mask of Lincoln portfolio was developed by the National Portrait Gallery and the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service. This portfolio was made possible by a grant from the Smithsonian Women's Committee.

How to Use This Portfolio

In 2009, the Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery (NPG) in Washington, DC, commemorated the bicentennial of Abraham Lincoln's birth with *One Life: The Mask of Lincoln*. Drawing primarily on NPG's extensive collection of Lincoln portraits, the exhibition revealed the president's many faces, charting his passage from youthful congressman to distinguished president.

Because the original Lincoln photographs are exceptionally fragile and rarely on view, the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service (SITES) partnered with NPG to create a portfolio set of the most compelling images and interpretive panels from the exhibition. *The Mask of Lincoln* portfolio ensures access to this rich scholarship and the Smithsonian's unrivaled Lincoln materials.

www.sites.si.edu/lincoln

A multi-functional educational resource geared especially to middle- and high-school students and their teachers, this portfolio presents ten iconic portraits of Lincoln. They are organized chronologically and complement the study of the American presidency, the Civil War, slavery, portraiture and the visual arts, and Lincoln himself. These topics also tie directly to national learning standards in both Social Sciences and Fine Arts.

While the large-format portfolio is designed for high-impact classroom use, the portfolio is also available as a free, downloadable .pdf at www.sites.si.edu/lincoln. There you will also find links to additional Lincoln-related Smithsonian resources, including digital collections and a variety of lesson plans and classroom activities.

Cover: The Lincoln Memorial, dedicated on May, 30, 1922, is located on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. Photo by Jeff Hunter, 2008. © 1999–2009 Getty Images, Inc. All rights reserved.
Inside Portfolio: President Abraham Lincoln's first inauguration at the unfinished U.S. Capitol, Washington, D.C., March 4, 1861. Salted Paper Print. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, LC-ppmsca-07636.

THE MASK OF LINCOLN

*An educational portfolio marking the
200th anniversary of Abraham Lincoln's birth*

Developed by the National Portrait Gallery and
the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service

This portfolio was made possible by a grant from
the Smithsonian Women's Committee



Smithsonian
Institution

THE MASK OF LINCOLN

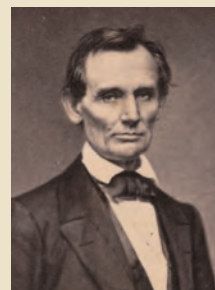
This portfolio, commemorating the 200th anniversary of Abraham Lincoln's birth, presents portraits of Lincoln's rise to national prominence and presidential years from the National Portrait Gallery exhibition *The Mask of Lincoln*. These images show the changing face that Lincoln presented to the world as he began his presidency and led the fight for the Union during the Civil War. Shaping himself to the uncertainties of the present and mindful of his role as the heir to the Founding Fathers, it was Lincoln's uncommon ability that led the nation where it never intended to go: from a political crisis over states' rights to the revolutionary act of abolishing slavery.

While Lincoln's politics played out on a national stage, the advent of photography placed his persona before the public as well. Lincoln left the

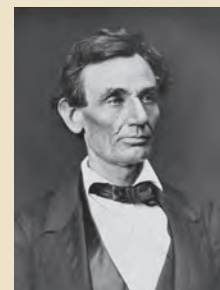
following description of himself: "If any personal description of me is thought desirable, it may be said I am, in height, six feet four inches, nearly; lean in flesh, weighing on average one hundred and eighty pounds; dark complexion, with coarse black hair and gray eyes. No other marks or brands recollected." Despite his unprepossessing appearance, Lincoln nonetheless had an elusive quality that caused Americans to look beyond first impressions to the essence of the man himself. The Civil War-era wit and social commentator "Petroleum V. Nasby" (David Ross Locke) met Lincoln and was bowled over, saying "I never saw a more thoughtful face. I never saw a more dignified face. I never saw so sad a face." The portraits of Lincoln included in this portfolio illustrate the role Lincoln's changing image played during his leadership of a rapidly changing nation.



PORTRAIT 1, c. 1857



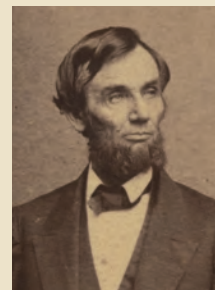
PORTRAIT 2, 1860



PORTRAIT 3, 1860



PORTRAIT 4, 1861



PORTRAIT 5, 1863



PORTRAIT 6, 1863



PORTRAIT 7, 1864



PORTRAIT 8, 1864

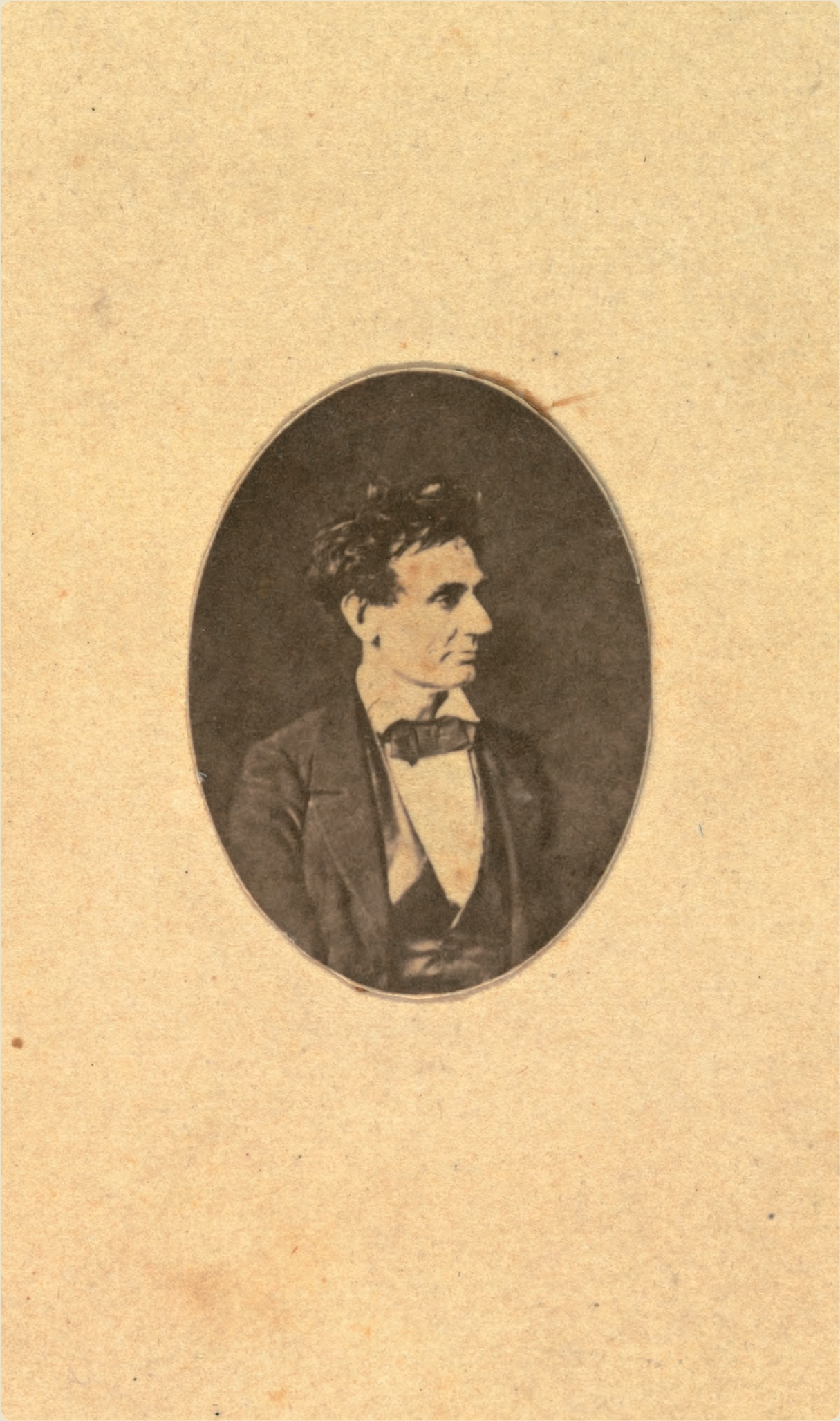


PORTRAIT 9, 1865



PORTRAIT 10, 1865





PORTRAIT 1

THE MASK OF LINCOLN

“Stand by your principles, stand by your guns.”

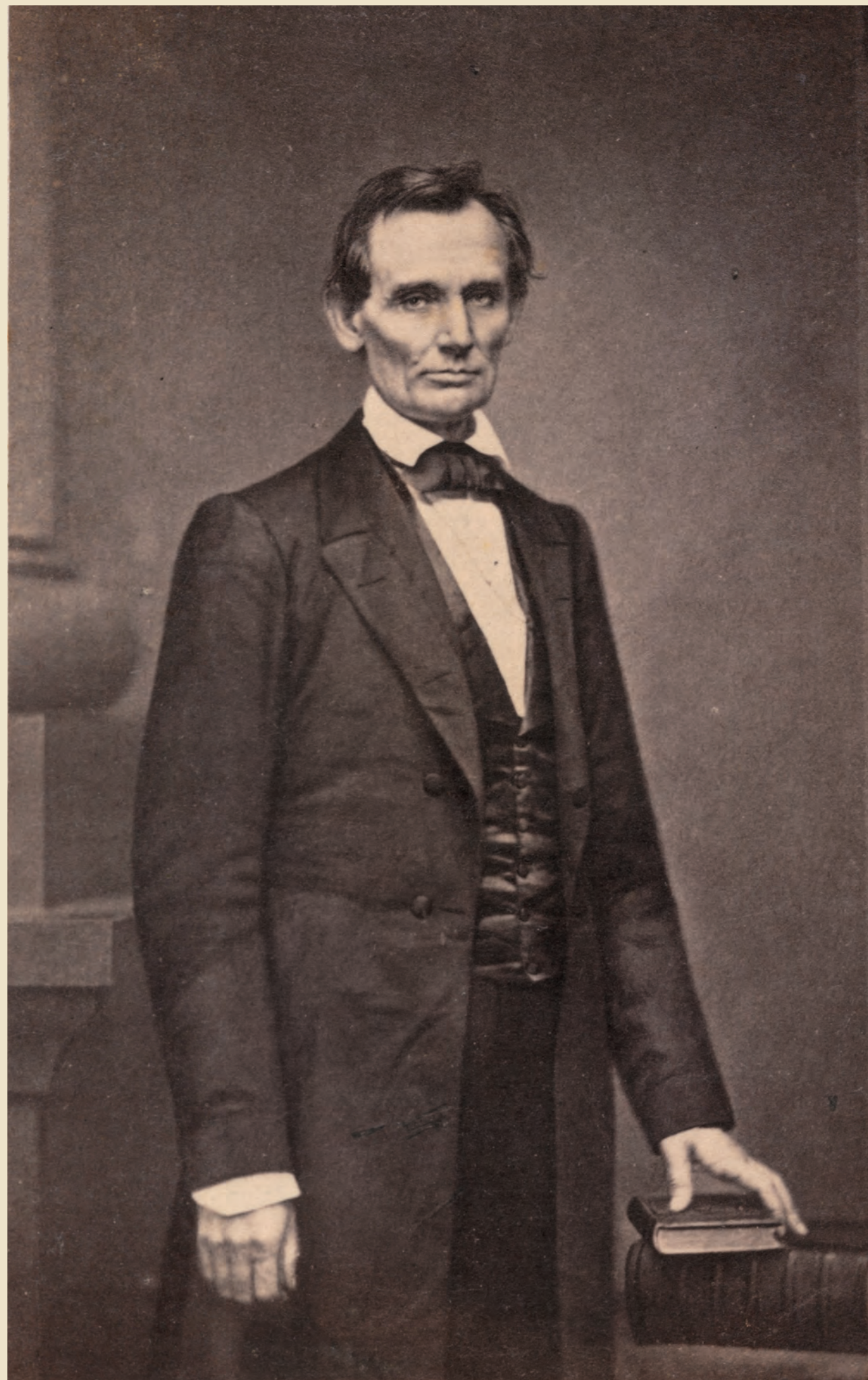
ABRAHAM LINCOLN, *Chicago speech*, 1859

ALEXANDER HESLER’S 1857 “TOUSLED HAIR” PORTRAIT WAS PRODUCED and printed in tiny copies so that it could be cut out, placed in a frame, and worn as a pin or locket during the 1860 campaign. Such partisan political symbols had long been a staple of American elections, but the heated political climate of 1860—and the need for the Lincoln organization to mobilize all its supporters—led to a plethora of new and creative ways to energize a public immersed in the political culture of the time. Political participation and partisanship was a major source, probably second only to religion, of most Americans’ identities in the mid-nineteenth century. Wearing Lincoln’s likeness was a particularly personal way for good Republicans to flaunt their allegiance to both man and party as they joined in the public rituals of American politicking.

Unidentified artist, after Alexander Hesler, Albumen silver print, c. 1857 (printed c. 1860), National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, 2.7 x 2 cm, (1 1/16" x 13/16")



Actual size



PORTRAIT 2

THE MASK OF LINCOLN

“Let us have faith that right makes might . . .”

ABRAHAM LINCOLN, *New York City speech*, 1860

ON FEBRUARY 27, 1860, LINCOLN HELD AN OVERFLOW CROWD AT NEW York’s Cooper Union spellbound as he delivered a careful, comprehensive, and eloquent explanation of the Republican Party’s opposition to slavery, ending with a near-biblical plea of moral conviction. As important as what he said was the way that he said it: his delivery convinced his audience that he was not a country bumpkin but a serious constitutional thinker and an eloquent representative for the party. Before the speech, Lincoln had his portrait taken by Mathew Brady, and this picture became known as the “photograph that made Lincoln president.”

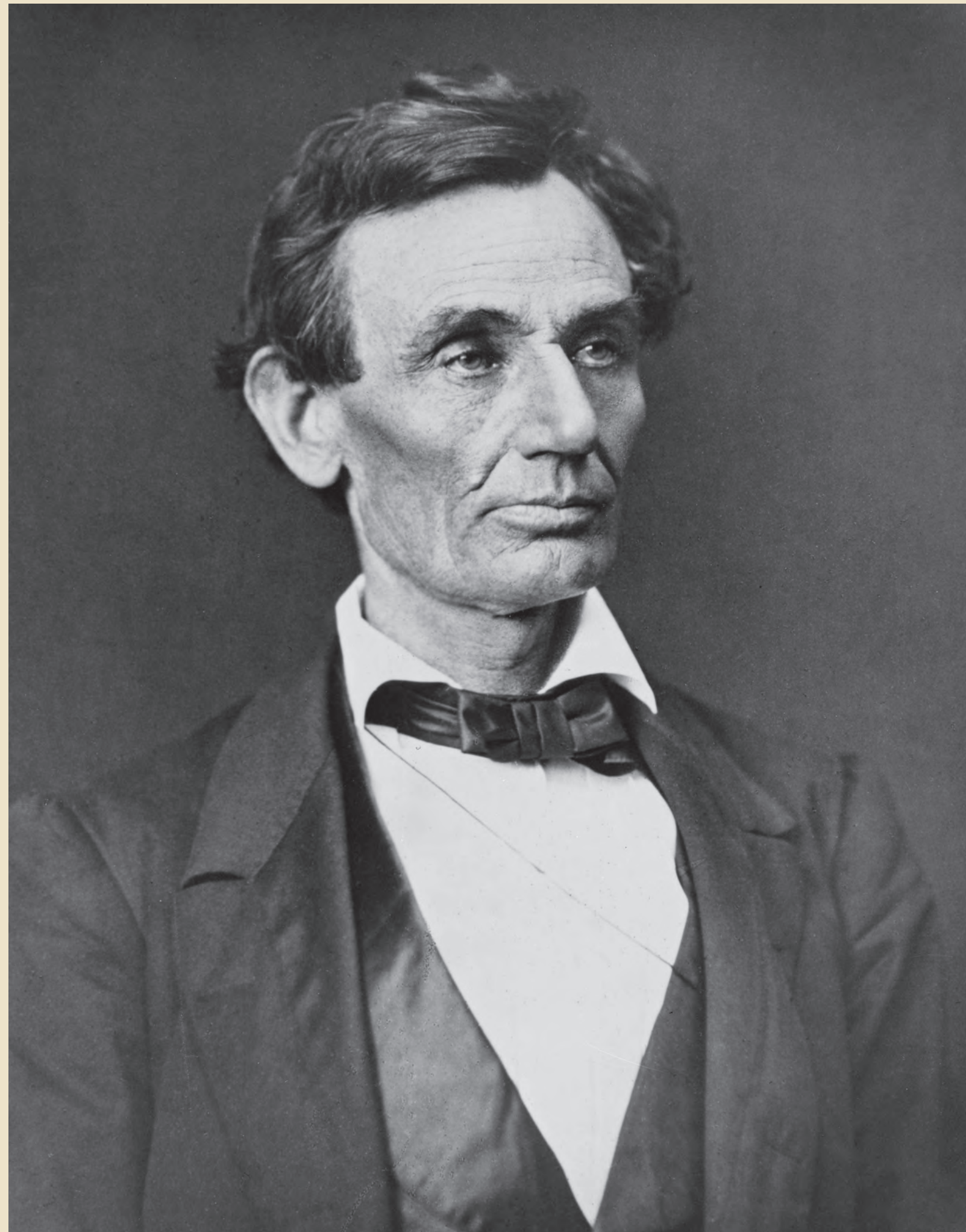
Mathew Brady (1823–1896), Salted paper print, February 27, 1860, National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, Image/Sheet: 8.6 x 5.4 cm (3 3/8" x 2 1/8")

“His ambition was a little engine that knew no rest.”

WILLIAM HERNDON, *contemporary Lincoln biographer*, 1889

LINCOLN WAS CONTINUALLY UNDERESTIMATED BY HIS OPPONENTS, and even his friends. Because he had not served long in national politics—only one term in the House of Representatives—he was seen as a nonentity; the smart money certainly did not consider him of presidential timber. Quietly ambitious, Lincoln launched himself as a major figure in the Republican Party, promoting Northern unionism in his senatorial campaign against Democrat Stephen Douglas in 1858. Moreover, Lincoln created a focused campaign organization that won him the Republican presidential nomination. By 1860, with the national political parties splintered, Lincoln ran against three opponents, the most prominent of whom was Douglas. After a hard campaign, in which the South ratcheted up the secession rhetoric, Lincoln won with a plurality of the popular vote and an overwhelming Electoral College advantage. With “Black Republicanism” triumphant, South Carolina seceded from the Union on December 20.

George B. Ayres (born 1867-?), after Alexander Hesler, Platinum print, 1860 (printed c. 1881), National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, 33.7 x 25.4 cm (13¼" x 10")





PORTRAIT 4

THE MASK OF LINCOLN

“Public sentiment is everything.”

ABRAHAM LINCOLN, *Lincoln-Douglas debates*, 1858

LINCOLN WAS THE FIRST PRESIDENT TO SERVE AFTER PHOTOGRAPHY truly came of age. He embraced the new technology, sitting frequently, and he was interested in both technological issues and composition. Perhaps because of his early struggle to make himself into somebody of substance—to make himself visible—Lincoln was acutely aware of the power of image-making. Although Lincoln knew, and joked about, the fact that he was a difficult subject, he was not camera shy, producing a continuous portrait record of his time in office. Attuned to public opinion, Lincoln used portraits to keep himself in the eye of his fellow citizens. When he arrived in Washington, Lincoln quickly arranged to have himself photographed at Alexander Gardner’s studio. These photographs were the first widely disseminated pictures of the president with his newly grown beard.

Alexander Gardner (1821–1882), Publisher: Edward & Henry T. Anthony & Company (active 1860–1901), Albumen silver print, 1861, National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, Image/Sheet: 8.6 x 5.4 cm (3⅜" x 2⅛")



PORTRAIT 5

THE MASK OF LINCOLN

“All quiet along the Potomac.”

ETHEL LYNN BEERS, *American poet*, 1861

MATHEW BRADY’S CAMERAMAN, THOMAS LE MERE, THOUGHT THAT A standing pose of the president would be popular. Lincoln wondered if it could be accomplished in one shot, and this is the successful result. It was taken on April 17, 1863, a pause after an eventful winter that saw the implementation of the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1 and a further reshuffling of the command of the Army of the Potomac following the disastrous Union defeat at Fredericksburg, Virginia, on December 13. Joseph Hooker replaced the hapless Ambrose Burnside, refitted the army, and prepared to move south. Striking Robert E. Lee at Chancellorsville on May 1, Hooker obtained a strong initial advantage but was undone by Lee and “Stonewall” Jackson’s audacious flank attack on the Union right, just as the sun set on the battle’s first day. Demoralized, Hooker withdrew, allowing Lee to invade the North for the second time. Hearing the news, Lincoln cried, “My God! What will the country say? What will the country say?”

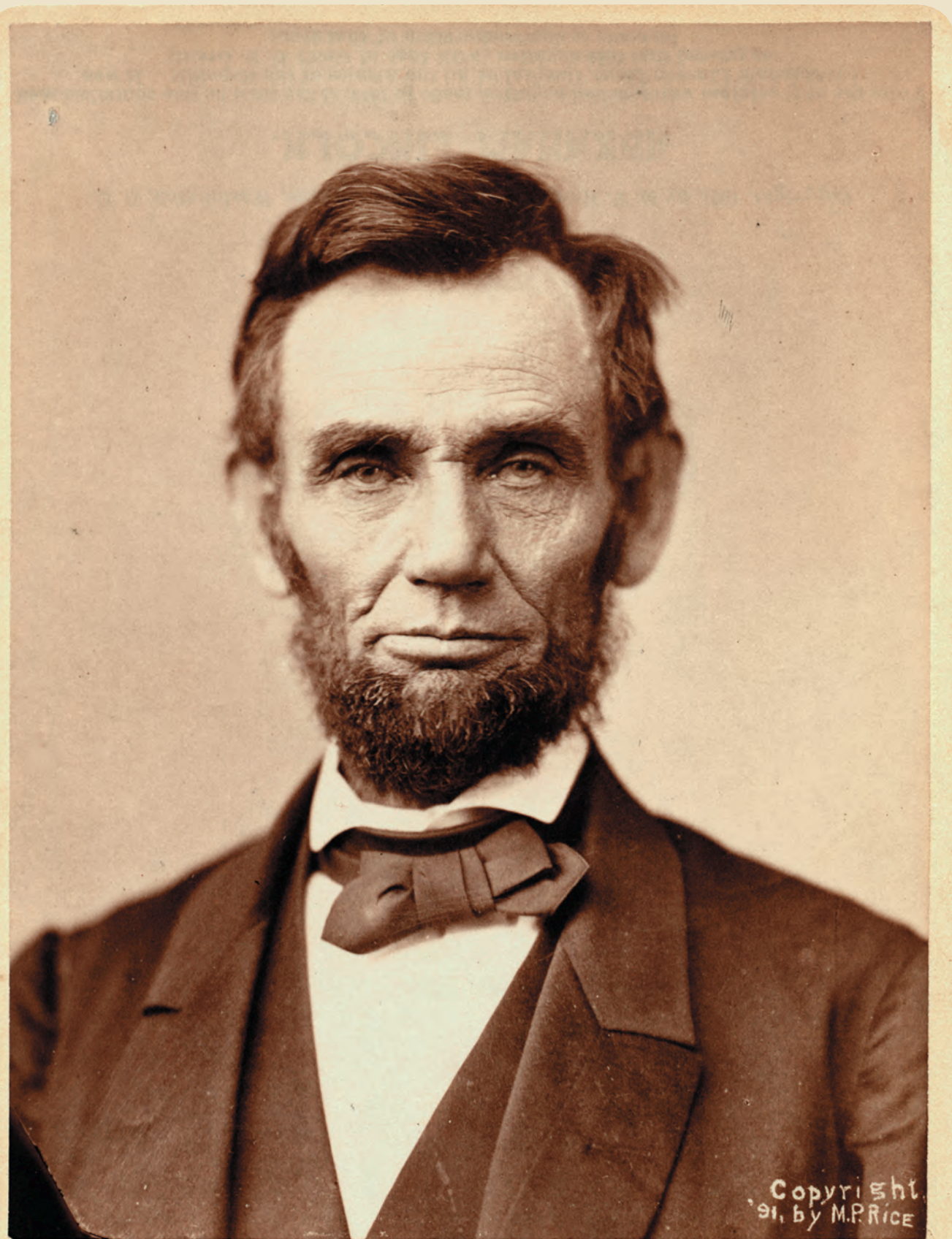
Thomas Le Mere (life dates unknown) at the Mathew Brady Studio, Albumen silver print, 1863, National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, Image/Sheet: 8.6 x 5.4 cm (3³/₈" x 2¹/₈")

*“Government of the people, by the people,
for the people.”*

ABRAHAM LINCOLN, *Gettysburg Address*, 1863

ON NOVEMBER 8, 1863, LINCOLN HAD THIS PORTRAIT TAKEN BY ALEXANDER Gardner. While waiting, he read a newspaper account of the speech that famed orator Edward Everett would make at the dedication of the cemetery at Gettysburg. Lincoln would also speak but had yet to compose his remarks, promising only that they would be “short, short, short.” On November 19, after Everett’s three-hour oration, Lincoln rose and delivered a speech of only 271 words. His Gettysburg Address powerfully recast the Civil War as being about the simple preservation of the Union to the certification, consecrated in blood, of a “new birth of freedom” to redeem the purity of the Republic’s founding. In Lincoln’s famous biblical phrasing, “Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent, a new nation, conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.”

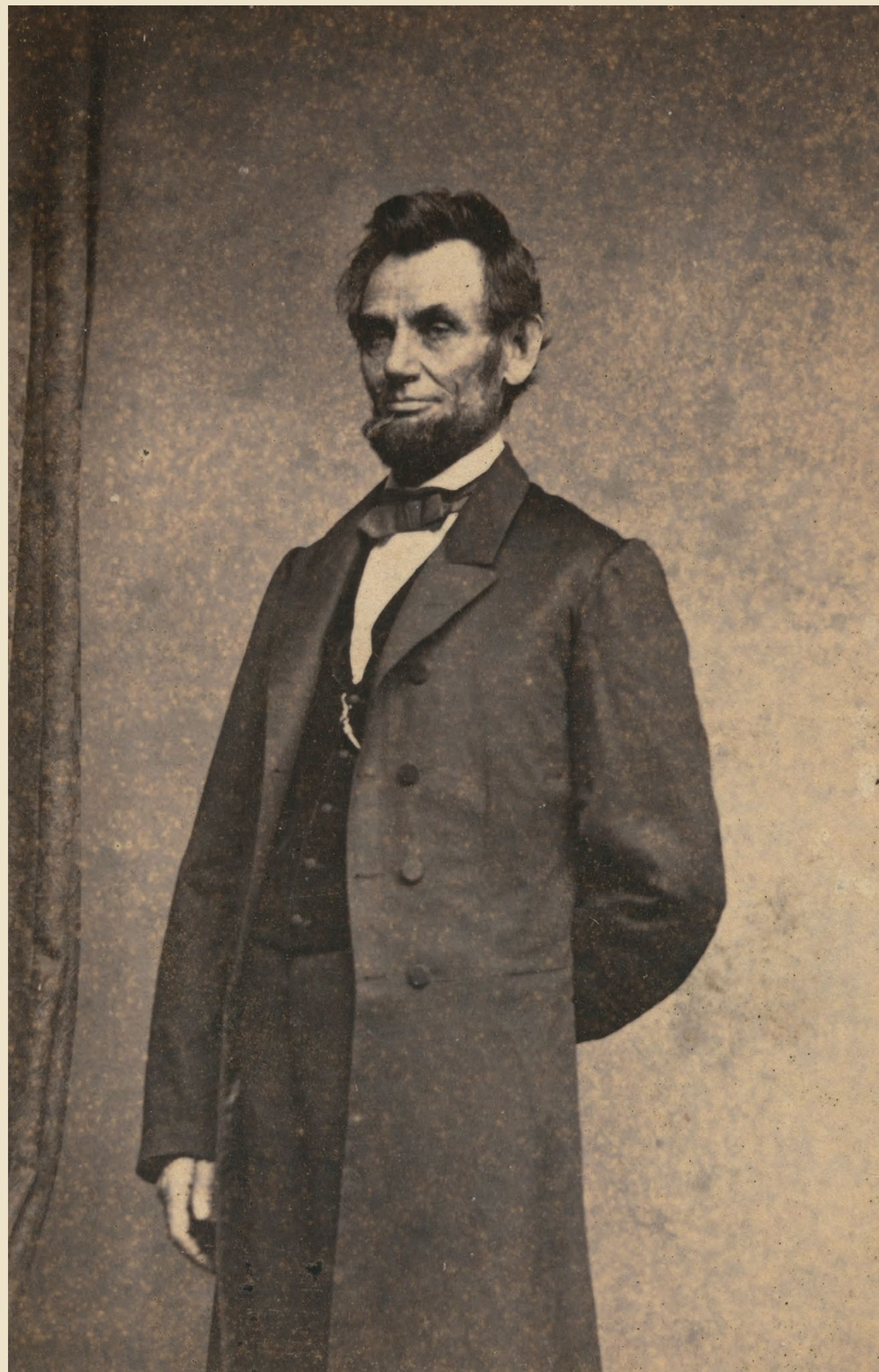
Alexander Gardner (1821–1882), Albumen silver print, November 8, 1863, Collection of Keya Morgan, LincolnImages.com, Sheet: 16.5 x 10.8cm (18" x 14")



Copyright, 1891, by M. P. RICE, 1217–19–25 Penna. Avenue, Washington, D. C.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

From the only original unretouched negative, made in 1864, at the time he commissioned General U. S. Grant Lieut. General of all the Armies of the Republic. It was suggested that this negative (with that of Gen'l U. S. Grant) be made in commemoration of that event.



PORTRAIT 7

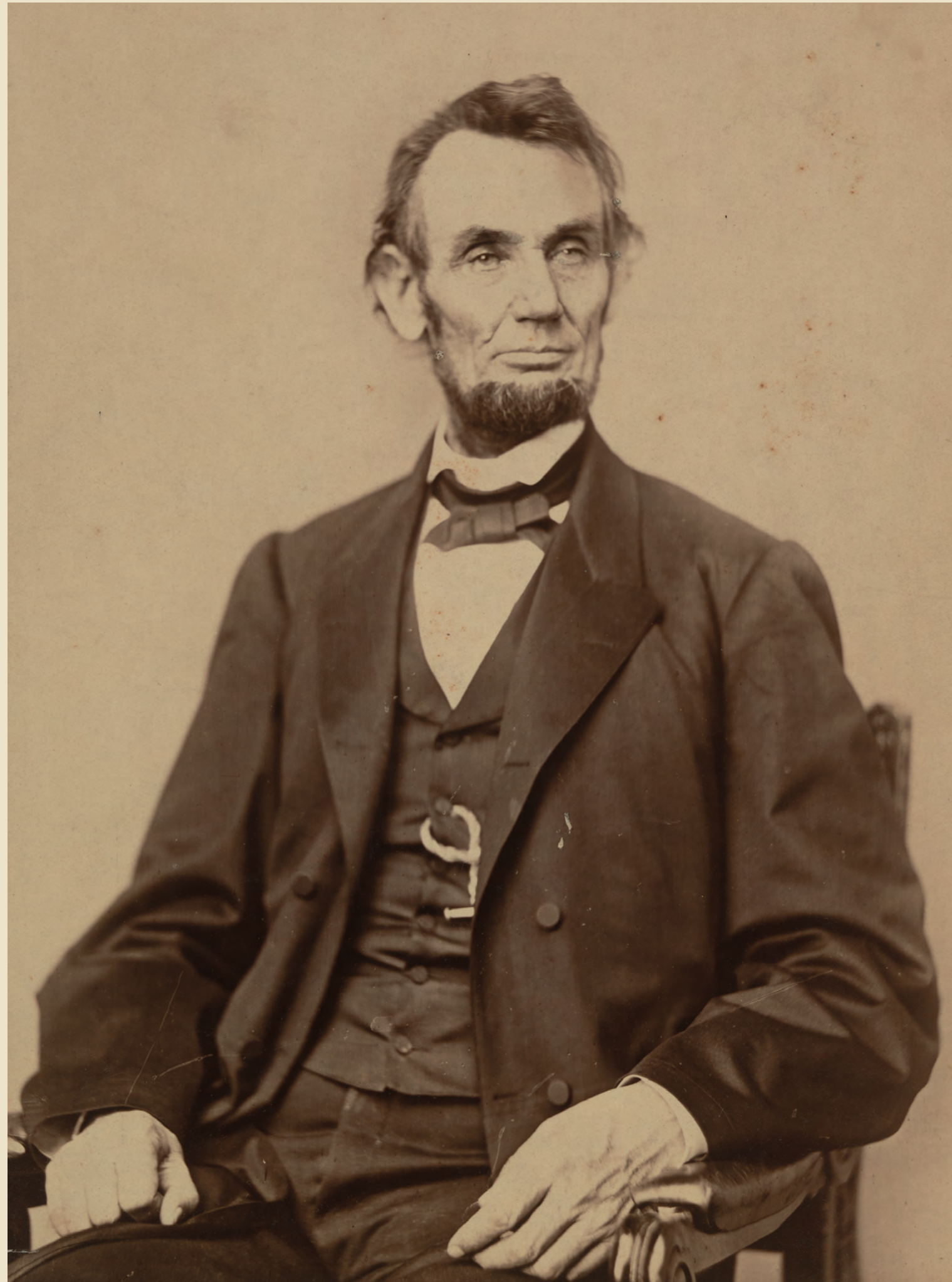
THE MASK OF LINCOLN

“A tall, ill-favored man, with little grace.”

CHARLES FRANCIS ADAMS, *contemporary politician*, 1861

BOSTONIAN CHARLES FRANCIS ADAMS CHARACTERIZED LINCOLN IN the quotation above in 1861. With an appearance that was vilified and mocked more than any other president in history, Lincoln used self-deprecatory humor to his own advantage. In one of their debates, Stephen Douglas charged that Lincoln was two-faced. Lincoln’s response brought the house down: “If I had another face do you think I’d wear this one?” While ungainly, Lincoln was physically strong, easily winning such frontier tests of strength as wrestling or holding a large axe parallel to the ground. His campaign managers came up with the inspired idea of calling him the rail-splitter, emphasizing his humble origins as a working man.

Mathew Brady Studio (active 1844–1894), Albumen silver print, 1864, National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, Image/Sheet: 8.4 x 5.6 cm (3⁵/₁₆" x 2³/₁₆")



“The most satisfactory likeness.”

ROBERT T. LINCOLN, *Abraham Lincoln’s son*

DESPITE HIS REPUTATION AS AN EXPERT SPEAKER IN EVERYTHING from joke-telling to formal oratory, Lincoln was careful about what he said and was, in fact, very reluctant to speak in public, especially extemporaneously. He frequently disappointed crowds at serenades and other informal events by not doing much more than greeting them. He did not want to speak off the cuff and risk being misunderstood. Lincoln was aware of the power of words, so he husbanded them for maximum impact, and subjected his major speeches and state papers to many revisions. Lincoln also had a larger sense that it was not fitting for the president to speak too much, especially on informal matters. To keep himself—literally—in the public eye, Lincoln relied on photographs of himself, not words.

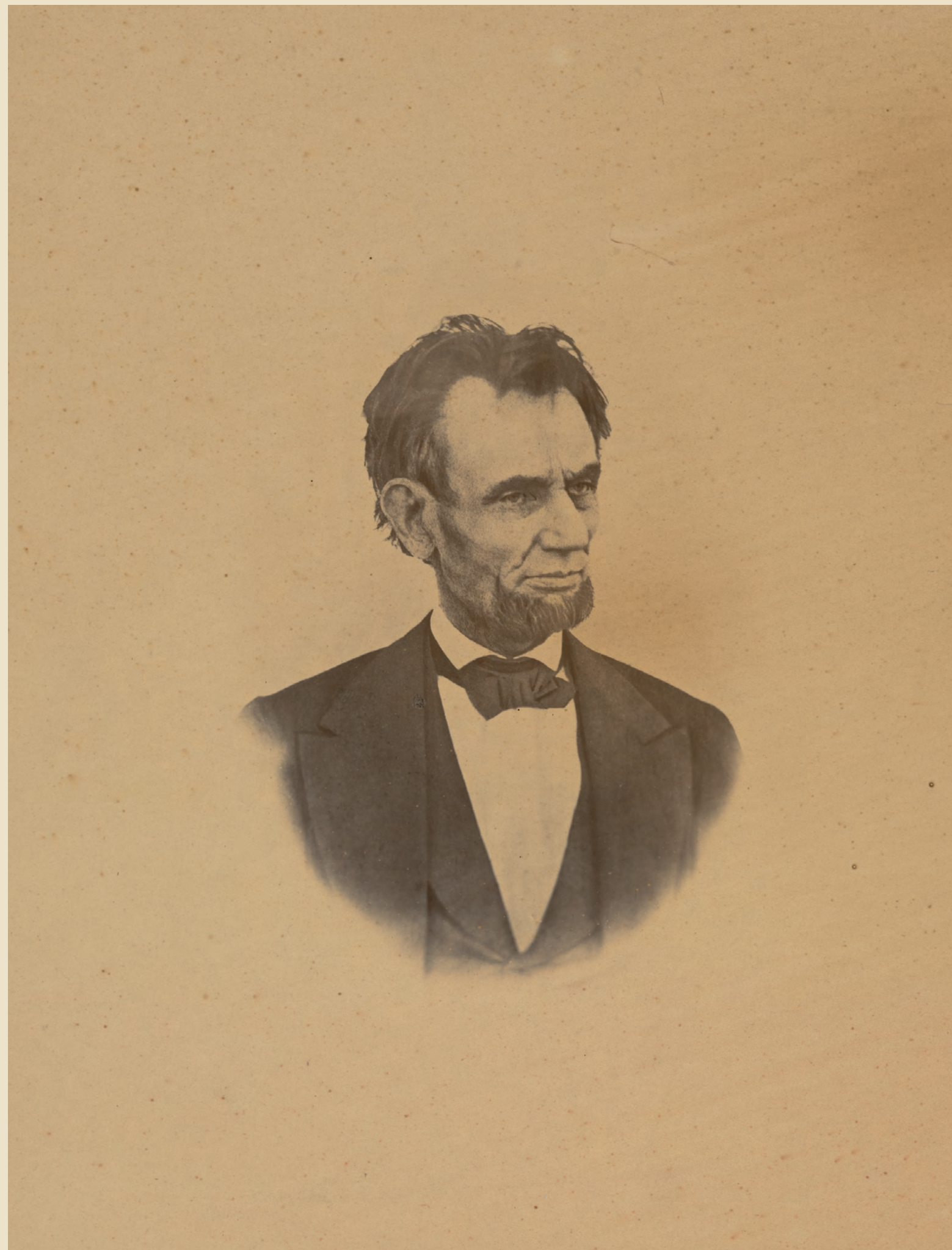
Anthony Berger (life dates unknown), Albumen silver print, 1864, National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, Image: 32.4 x 24.1 cm (12¾" x 9½")

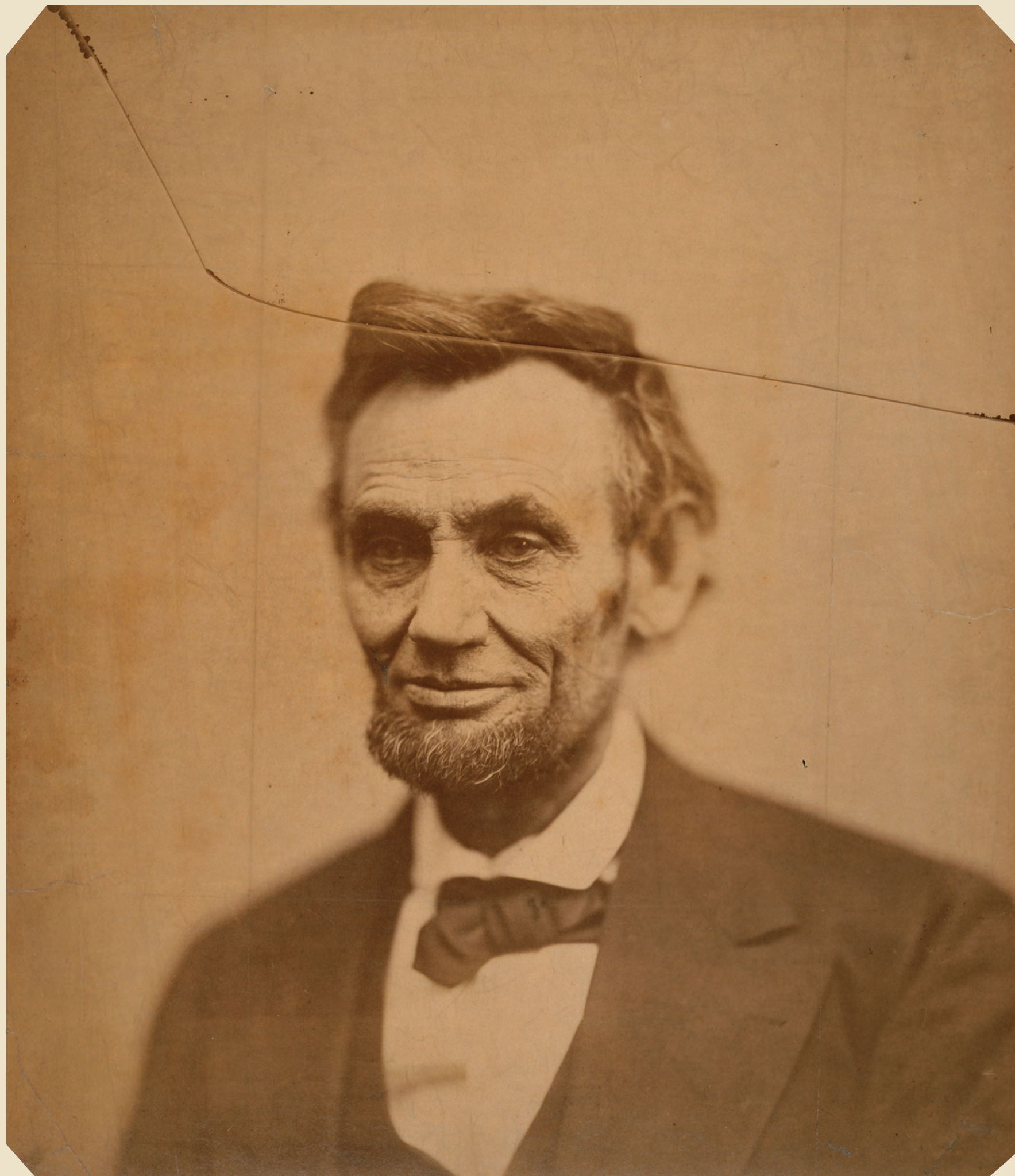
*“Now bring out your father and I will
make a picture of him . . .”*

HENRY F. WARREN, *Lincoln photographer*, 1865

HENRY F. WARREN GOT THIS SHOT OF THE PRESIDENT BY TAKING SOME candid pictures of Tad Lincoln riding his pony. When Warren delivered the prints to the White House on March 6, 1865, he asked Tad to go get his father so he could take the president’s picture. Lincoln obliged, bringing a chair out onto the south balcony for the sitting, but was not pleased with how the photographer had ambushed him. Lincoln looks very severe in what was to be the last photograph taken of him.

Henry F. Warren (life dates unknown), Albumen silver print, 1865, National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, Image: 33.8 x 25.8 cm (13 5/16" x 10 3/16")





THE MASK OF LINCOLN

“Now he belongs to the ages.”

EDWIN STANTON, *Lincoln’s Secretary of War*, 1865

ONE OF THE MOST HAUNTING IMAGES IN AMERICAN HISTORY and art, this portrait was taken in February 1865. The picture of Lincoln—hollowed, careworn, and yet with a slight smile still after four years of war—is given added poignancy by the crack that appeared in the negative after it was developed. Inadvertent, the crack nonetheless seems to symbolize the division of the Union that Lincoln dedicated himself to prevent. Looking forward, the line of fracture seems almost to presage the path of the bullet that John Wilkes Booth would fire on April 14. With Lincoln’s death, cracks would again appear in the Union, as the government struggled to determine how America would be reconstructed. After the assassination, this image became an icon in the deification of the martyred president.

Alexander Gardner (1821-1882), Albumen silver print, 1865, National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, Image: 45 x 38.6 cm (17 3/8" x 15 3/8")

