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**A House Divided: Lincoln at Cooper
Union II**

Lead: In New York to make the speech of his political life, on the afternoon of February 27, 1860, Abraham Lincoln stopped by Matthew Brady's Broadway studio to have his picture taken.

Intro.: *A Moment in Time* with Dan Roberts.

Content: Four months earlier, Lincoln had received a speaking invitation from a group of New York Republicans. He was mostly unknown, the rangy, tall candidate from the frontier, and knew that this

was a golden opportunity to get his ideas before a sophisticated eastern audience and, even more important, to connect with the major newspapers of the day. Initially, Lincoln's speech was scheduled to be given at Henry Ward Beecher's church in Brooklyn, but due to the large crowds it was changed to the hall at Cooper Union in Manhattan. Lincoln's speech was enthusiastically received and began the ground-swell of support that led to his nomination and the White House.

During the afternoon before the speech, Lincoln dropped by Matthew Brady's studio at 359 Broadway. Brady had made his reputation by photographing pre-war notables and,

of course, during the Civil War, he and his staff took over 3,000 dramatic photographs of the battlefields and camps.

Brady took a picture of Lincoln wearing a new suit and standing next to a table with his left hand resting on a pair of books. He touched it up slightly around the eyes and softened some facial lines. It would become the most celebrated image of Lincoln and was printed in a new format known as the carte de visite, or calling card, 2.5 x 4 inches. Eventually thousands of the cards were mass produced. It was reprinted in newspapers and periodicals all over the country, and after Lincoln got the nomination, on campaign posters, buttons and

badges. After the election, Lincoln reputedly said, “Brady and Cooper Union made me president.”

At the University of Richmond, this is Dan Roberts.

Resources

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