

Copyright Lore

■ Frank Evina

This month marks the 140th anniversary of the Act that amended U.S. copyright law to include photographs as copyrightable works. Signed into law by President Lincoln on March 3, 1865, the landmark legislation was one of the last laws approved by Lincoln before he was assassinated.

According to documents discovered in the files of the Information and Reference Division, the first important court action under the 1865 Act was instituted by famous Civil War photographer Mathew Brady. The action had to do with a photograph Brady took of President Andrew Johnson in Brady's studio after Lincoln's death. Brady registered his photograph of the new president shortly thereafter in the Federal District Court for the District of Columbia on May 1, 1865. A month later he obtained an injunction from a Federal Court to prohibit another photographer from reproducing and selling copies of the Johnson photograph, since such sale and reproduction constituted an infringement of Brady's copyright.

To commemorate the 1965 centenary of this important copyright legisla-

tion, the Copyright Office Reference Division mounted a special exhibit in the Public Information Office. It was



One of Brady's photographic portraits of President Johnson

entitled "A Century of Copyright Protection for Photographs, 1865–1965." Designed by Vincent Wintermyer, then assistant head of the Copyright Compliance Section, the exhibit contained a number of interesting artifacts. One

of them was the infringed photograph of President Andrew Johnson taken by Brady.

The exhibit ran from Feb. 15 through May 7, 1965, and was the subject of a Library of Congress press release and a special announcement sent to the Copyright Office mailing list. ©



Mathew Brady

Publications Received from the Printer

Miscellaneous

Copyright Notices • January 2005.

Copyright Notices • February 2005.

C-749 • *We Are Returning* card. January 2005—revised.

C-813A • CARP #10 envelope, white 9½ × 4". January 2005—new.

M-105A • CARP booklet envelope, white 9½ × 12½". January 2005—new.

Office Makes Changes to Document Cover Sheet

To clarify the requirements for Space 7, "Certification of Photocopied Documents," the Copyright Office has made changes on the Document Cover Sheet. The instructions for Space 7 now say, "The date entered in the DATE field should be the date you sign the Cover Sheet." In addition, the spaces for signature and date in Space 7 have been realigned. This new version of the Document Cover Sheet continues to be page 10 of Circular 12, *Recordations of Transfers and Other Documents*.

The version of the Document Cover Sheet that should be used is dated January 2005. The date may be found at the bottom of the Document Cover Sheet. ©