

21. A LITTLE GIRL SUGGESTS WHISKERS

On October 15, 1860, during the Presidential campaign an 11-year-old girl from a small hamlet in Western New York wrote to the Republican candidate expressing her concern over his appearance, which she was afraid might have a bad effect on the voters in the forthcoming election. The campaign photographs of Lincoln were a disappointment to her. She suggested that his appearance would be improved if he wore whiskers. Thus the image by which several generations have known the emancipator was sculptored in a child's mind. When he went east to Washington, in February, Lincoln's train stopped at Westfield, between Erie and Buffalo. When Lincoln appeared to speak a few words to the assembled people, the whiskers already were in evidence. He asked if his little correspondent, Grace Bedell, were present. She was. He asked her to come forward and then placed a fatherly kiss on her cheek. Lincoln's reply to the little girl is given below.

My dear little Miss: Your very agreeable letter of the 15th is received. I regret the necessity of saying I have no daughter. I have three sons—one seventeen, one nine, and one seven years of age. They, with their mother, constitute my whole family. As to the

whiskers, having never worn any, do you not think people would call it a piece of silly affectation if I were to begin it now?

LINCOLN TO GRACE BEDELL, OCTOBER 19, 1860.

22. "HERE I HAVE LIVED"

It seems that Lincoln did not write out beforehand the few words of the Springfield Farewell. Apparently, either they had been formulated in his mind earlier or they came to his lips spontaneously in the hour of parting from his home and neighbors. The version given below is that used in Nicolay & Hay, Abraham Lincoln Complete Works. A goodly crowd of people had assembled at the railroad station to see Lincoln depart. He spoke from the platform of the rear car. Some eyewitnesses described the weather as clear; others said bystanders stood with their heads bared to falling snowflakes. The great preponderance of evidence, however, shows conclusively that it was raining at the time. The language of the Farewell is simple and moving in its eloquence, and unmistakably it reveals the mood of the man at that moment.

My friends: No one, not in my situation, can appreciate my feeling of sadness at this parting. To this place, and the kindness of these people, I owe everything. Here I have lived a quarter of a century, and have passed from a young to an old man. Here my children have been born, and one is buried. I now leave, not knowing when or whether ever I may return, with a task before me greater than that which

rested upon Washington. Without the assistance of that Divine Being who ever attended him, I cannot succeed. With that assistance, I cannot fail. Trusting in Him who can go with me, and remain with you, and be everywhere for good, let us confidently hope that all will yet be well. To His care commending you, as I hope in your prayers you will commend me, I bid you an affectionate farewell.

FAREWELL ADDRESS AT SPRINGFIELD, ILL.,
FEBRUARY 11, 1861.