

LINCOLN LORE

No. 127

FORT WAYNE, INDIANA

September 14, 1931

LINCOLN LORE

BULLETIN OF
THE LINCOLN
HISTORICAL
RESEARCH
FOUNDATION



ENDOWED BY
THE LINCOLN
NATIONAL LIFE
INSURANCE
COMPANY

Dr. Louis A. Warren

Editor

THE LINCOLN OF THE FAREWELL ADDRESS

Upon bringing together the photographs of Abraham Lincoln and the events associated with them, one must be convinced that on every instance Lincoln "looked the part." As congressman, lawyer, politician, debator, orator, nominee, or president-elect

there is a peculiar pose or expression which seems to be in harmony with the atmosphere which was surrounding him at the time. In no instance is this fact more clearly exhibited than in the accompanying photograph taken at Springfield shortly before he left his home of many years



THE NEIGHBORLY LINCOLN

From a photograph made by C. S. Germon. Taken at Springfield, Illinois, not later than February 9, 1861. *Meserve*, No. 35.

for the White House.

The expression of friend and neighbor is stamped upon his face here so certainly that one will not question the sincerity of his remarks upon leaving Springfield, shortly after this photograph was taken. This is unquestionably "The Neighborly Lincoln," of the famous Farewell Address which follows:

"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 can-

not 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."

On December 21, 1895, the S. S. McClure Company, publishers of McClure's Magazine, sent out a circular letter in which they stated that "out of fifty photographs of Lincoln which we shall publish in our magazine not more than fifteen or twenty have ever been published before."

This announcement marked a revival of interest in the personal appearance of Abraham Lincoln. The presentation of new studies was largely due to the untiring energy of Miss Ida M. Tarbell who gathered many Lincoln portraits which were unknown to exist.

In January, 1896, the picture which is the subject of this sketch was first published. Two years later it was used again in McClure's with the following comment:

"It is one of the first portraits in which Lincoln wears a beard. The beard certainly softened the ruggedness of his face somewhat, and hid slightly the deep hollow of his cheeks; but it is not this which gives the charm to this peculiar portrait; it is, instead, the gentleness of the expression and the steady kindness of the deep-set eyes. There is not in existence, perhaps, another portrait of Mr. Lincoln in which the tenderness of his nature is so perfectly expressed."

It is in keeping with the character of the portrait and what it symbolizes that a Springfield photographer should have made the negative. C. S. Germon is said to have been the artist who caught Lincoln in this typical mood.

One may observe the drapery in the background of the picture. The same drapery is also visible in the negative owned by Herbert Wells Fay which presents Lincoln as the President-elect. The evidence supplied by these furnishings give proof of a common origin of these two likenesses of the president and there is little doubt but what C. S. Germon made both of them.

As to the exact date on which this latter portrait was taken there seems to be no evidence. The sitting could not have been later than February 9, 1861, as the following day, Sunday, Lincoln spent, "quietly in a select circle of friends," and on February 11

at 8 a. m. he left Springfield for Washington.

The stages in the growth of Lincoln's beard are the best evidence of the time this portrait was taken. The earliest picture of Lincoln with a beard, indicates he could have been growing a beard but a very short time before the portrait was taken. The negative was probably made during the latter part of December, 1860. The next portrait, described in Lincoln Lore No. 125, must have been taken about three weeks later, say the middle of January, 1861. "The Neighborly Lincoln", showing the beard full grown must have been from a sitting given the photographer during the first days of February, 1861.

This portrait is closely associated with the writing of the First Inaugural and was taken during the period when Lincoln was laboring with this important document. On January 28, the correspondent of the New York Tribune wrote: "The first draft of the Inaugural Message is now being made by the President elect." On February 2, Lincoln wrote to the editor of the Louisville Journal: "I have the document blocked out; but in the now rapidly shifting scenes, I shall have to hold it subject to revision up to near the time of its delivery."

It was in the atmosphere of neighborliness that this important paper was prepared. Lincoln was never a provincialist. Not only were the people of Springfield his friends but the people of the South, where he was born, were also his neighbors. If the conclusion of the First Inaugural is read with the portrait of "The Neighborly Lincoln" in mind one will not question the deep pathos which prompted this utterance:

"I am loath to close. We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained, it must not break our bonds of affections. The mystic cords of memory, stretching from every battle field and patriot grave to every living heart and hearthstone all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature."