

LINCOLN AS HE SAW HIMSELF. "If any personal description of me is thought desirable," wrote Lincoln during the 1860 campaign, "it may be said I am, in height, six feet four inches, nearly; lean in flesh, weighing on an average one hundred and eighty pounds; dark complexion, with coarse black hair and gray eyes. No other marks or brands recollected."

Lincoln often jested about his appearance. "In the matter of looks I have the advantage," he used to say, meaning that he felt sorry for those who had to look at him.

He explained his homeliness with the following tale: "When I was two months old I was the handsomest child in Kentucky, but my Negro nurse swapped me off for another boy, just to please a friend who was going down the river, whose child was rather plain-looking."

Once in his youth, so the story goes, Lincoln was stopped by a stranger who pointed his rifle at the future President. "Hold on," cried Lincoln, "what do you think you are doing?"

"I took a vow on the grave of my mother that if I ever met a homelier man than I, I'd shoot him!"

Lincoln looked him over for a second or two and observed, "Well, stranger, if I am any uglier looking than you, I think you'd better shoot me."



LINCOLN IN 1860