

# LINCOLN LORE

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## LINCOLN LORE

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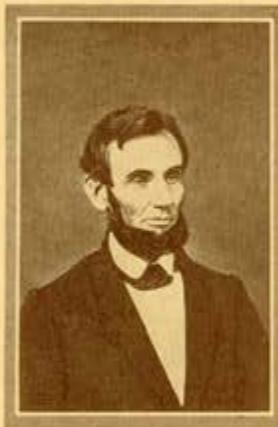
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Dr. Louis A. Warren

Editor

### LINCOLN REMEMBERS KENTUCKY

During this season of the year, just seventy years ago, there was great unrest in Kentucky and the border states along the Ohio, for fear that the confederate troops were planning an offensive that would sweep through the Blue-grass State into Indiana and Ohio.



THE REMINISCENT LINCOLN

From an original photograph but name of photographer is unknown. Taken not later than October 3, 1861. Meserve, No. 42

where Abraham Lincoln was born.

The governor of Indiana became greatly alarmed and wrote to Lincoln for the purpose of impressing him with the seriousness of the situation. It appeared then that there would be an attack on Louisville, and Morton realized that Indianapolis might be the next city on the itinerary of the confederate forces. Lincoln replied to him at length and advised him, "As to Kentucky, you do not estimate that state as more important than I do."

The alarm in Kentucky over the southern offensive sent many committees to Washington to see Lincoln. Among the Kentuckians who were in constant touch with Lincoln was Joshua Speed. We have Speed's own testimony that he was in Washington for a conference with the president at this crucial time and undoubtedly it was the reminiscences which Speed stirred up in the mind of Lincoln that was responsible for the presentation of the accompanying picture to Joshua Speed's mother.

In the summer and early autumn of

1841, Abraham Lincoln, greatly depressed because of his broken engagement with Mary Todd, visited Joshua Speed in Louisville, hoping to find consolation in the companionship of his old friend. As early as June 19 the previous summer he had promised Speed in a letter he wrote him at that time, that he would pay him a visit. Just when Lincoln arrived in Louisville and how long he stayed is not quite clear. Joshua Speed stated in his reminiscences that it was several months but he probably meant several weeks. Lincoln could not have left Springfield before June 25, and was back on the circuit again by September 27.

On this latter date he wrote a letter to Miss Mary Speed, sister of Joshua, in which he reviewed some of the incidents occurring during his recent visit in the home of her mother. The paragraph of particular interest in this discussion is the one in which he mentions Mrs. Speed. It is as follows:

"Tell your mother that I have not got her present (an Oxford Bible) with me, but I intend to read it regularly when I return home. I doubt not that it is really, as she says, the best cure for the blues, could one but take it according to the truth."

There has been much speculation as to what prompted Abraham Lincoln, after he became president, to present to Mrs. Lucy G. Speed one of his photographs autographed with this inscription:

"For Mrs. Lucy G. Speed from whose pious hand I accepted the present of an Oxford Bible twenty years ago.

"Washington, D. C., October 3, 1861.

"A. LINCOLN."

The 1841 visit of Abraham Lincoln with the Speed family in their Kentucky home, not only gave Lincoln a helpful contact with Joshua Speed's parents who were married the same year Abraham Lincoln was born, but Lincoln's association with James Speed, Louisville attorney, and brother of Joshua, was finally responsible for bringing James Speed into his cabinet in 1865.

The day after he had autographed the portrait for Lucy G. Speed he had occasion to refer to her son James. Mr. Walker, son-in-law of Governor Morehead of Kentucky, interviewed Lincoln about some arrests which had been made in Kentucky, with the result that the following note was sent by Lincoln to the Secretary of State:

"I understand the Kentucky arrests were not made by special direction from here and I am willing if you are that any of the parties may be released when James Guthrie and James Speed think they should be."

After gathering such evidence as is available it appears that two factors must have contributed to the autographing of the photograph for Mrs. Speed; the presence in Washington of her own son Joshua, by whom the pic-

ture could be sent, and the contemplated advance of the southern troops on Louisville, which was one of the live questions for discussion. Just why Lincoln mentioned the gift of the Bible, which he had remembered all the years, is not so easy to answer. If it had been on this visit to Washington that Speed came upon Lincoln "sitting near a window intently reading his Bible," as he said he did later in Lincoln's administration, the point of suggestion would not be difficult to make.

Regardless of what prompted the inscription on the photograph which mentioned the Holy Bible and its "pious" donor, Lincoln could not have chosen to autograph a picture of himself which more vividly portrayed his own piety.

The "Reminiscent Lincoln" is one of the likenesses of the president which refuses to be grouped with any other photograph. It is one of the mystery pictures. When, where, and by whom it was taken seems to have escaped the students of the emancipator.

The date of the autograph, October 3, 1861, sets for us the last day it was possible for the photograph to have been taken, but it implies by no means that the sitting was taken on that date or any other date in the proximity of it.

An engraving of this portrait by Jackman now before the writer, and prepared especially for "Abbott's Civil War," bears the inscription of G. D. Appleton & Company, photographers. Two other prints both enscribed by C. D. Fredericks & Co., New York, are at hand.

The Lincoln National Life Insurance Company is in possession of one of the original Fredericks prints presented by Mrs. Martha A. Anderson, of Zionsville, Indiana, now deceased, the grandmother of Gail Beamer, one of the Fort Wayne representatives of the company. The endorsement on the picture states that Mrs. Anderson bought this picture of a vendor who was on the train that bore Lincoln to Indianapolis enroute to Washington for the inaugural. The editor of Lincoln Lore has talked with a gentleman who heard Lincoln make a few remarks at Zionsville where the train had stopped at a water tank. This testimony would appear to place the taking of this picture at Springfield previous to his departure for the East.

One will note the trimming of the beard seems not to have been the work of a Washington hairdresser, but it is characteristic of the western manner of wearing the beard. At no other time does Lincoln's beard appear as it does here. Evidently a Springfield barber had been at work on him just before he left for Washington. Possible it is this feature which gives him the appearance of a pioneer preacher. It is this unique presentation which allows this portrait to find a place among the dozen portraits of the president which are being featured in this series.