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## JOSHUA FRY SPEED—1814-1882 ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S MOST INTIMATE FRIEND

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PART I: JOSHUA FRY SPEED, 1814-1882

PART II: LINCOLN'S LETTERS TO SPEED

### PART I

#### JOSHUA FRY SPEED, 1814-1882

A tall, angular young man with lean, wrinkled cheeks and sad, gray eyes, walked into a general store in Springfield, Illinois, more than a century ago, and laid on the counter a pair of saddle bags which he carried in the crook of his long arm. He asked the young proprietor of the store the price of a mattress, blankets, sheets, coverlid, and a pillow for a single bed. The items came to seventeen dollars.

"It is perhaps cheap enough," the young man with the saddle bags said, "but small as it is, I am unable to pay it. If you will credit me until Christmas, I will pay you then, if I do well; but if I do not, I may never be able to pay you."

The proprietor looked up into the face of his prospective customer and was moved by the forlorn expression in his eyes. He said:

"You seem to be so much pained at contracting so small a debt, I think I can suggest a plan by which you can avoid the debt and at the same time attain your end. I have a large room with a double bed which you are welcome to share with me."

"Where is your room?"

"Upstairs," the proprietor replied, pointing to a pair of winding stairs which led from the store to the room.

The tall young man picked up his saddle bags, went upstairs, set them down on the floor, returned below with a beaming countenance and exclaimed jovially:

"Well, Speed, I'm moved!"

This episode is familiar to all students of the life of Abraham Lincoln.<sup>1</sup> The date of its occurrence, April 15, 1837, marked the transition of Lincoln into a career which led to immortality. For seven years he had lived at New Salem, on the Sangamon River, where he had been a popular young man about town, serving as postmaster, storekeeper, soldier in the Black Hawk War, and as a member of the Illinois legislature meeting at Vandalia. He had occasionally come to Springfield and borrowed law books from John T. Stuart. When he was ready to be admitted to the bar, he had decided to move to the town which had recently been made the new state capital largely as a result of his own efforts. He had borrowed a horse to ride into Springfield that day, had secured his license to practice law, and had been accepted as a junior law partner with his friend Stuart. After he had sought out a carpenter and made a trade for a single bedstead, he had gone to the general store of A. Y. Ellis & Company, where his rooming troubles had been so easily solved by the generous-hearted young partner in the company, Joshua Fry Speed.

The career of Abraham Lincoln has been fully charted by competent biographers, and there is little new to be contributed. But the less spectacular role of Joshua Fry Speed, who became Lincoln's most intimate friend<sup>2</sup> and shared in his reflected greatness, has never been fully given. In the intimacies of these two men which began on this occasion, there is a story of a remarkable friendship worthy of fuller elaboration.

Joshua Fry Speed was twenty-two when he became the benefactor of the penniless wayfarer from New Salem, five years his senior. He was a friendly, handsome, blue-eyed, medium-sized youth with the culture and bearing of a gentleman. He was born near Louisville, Kentucky, on November 14, 1814, had attended good private schools, and had studied for two years under Bishop Reynolds at St. Joseph's Academy in Bardstown, Kentucky. After a period of illness, he had quit school and had taken a clerk-

ship in the Louisville wholesale store of William H. Pope.<sup>3</sup> Then succumbing to the restlessness so common in that day, he had joined in the migration westward and went into business in Springfield in the spring of 1835, when that village of less than 1,500 people had little prospect of becoming the capital of the new prairie state of Illinois.

Speed and Lincoln were not entirely strangers that night as they stretched out together and exchanged pleasantries for the first time. There is no record of their conversation but it is likely that Speed, as the genial host, led in the talk and put his bashful guest at his ease.

It is almost certain Speed recalled when he first had seen the young New Salem politician the summer before, when Lincoln was seeking re-election to the legislature.<sup>4</sup> It was at a speaking in the courthouse in Springfield, when George Forquer, a prominent political figure, had followed Lincoln's speech and said that he "would have to take the young man down." Forquer had once been a Whig, but had changed his politics and had received an important appointment as a result. He had lately placed a lightning rod on his home, which Lincoln had seen on the way to the meeting. After Forquer had finished, Lincoln replied with such dignity and force, Speed never forgot the conclusion:

"Mr. Forquer commenced his speech by announcing that the young man would have to be taken down. It is for you, fellow citizens, not for me to say whether I am up or down. The gentleman has seen fit to allude to my being a young man; but he forgets that I am older in years than I am in the tricks and trades of politicians. I desire to live, and I desire place and distinction; but I would rather die now than, like the gentleman, live to see the day that I would change my politics for an office worth three thousand dollars a year, and then feel compelled to erect a lightning rod to protect a guilty conscience from an offended God."<sup>5</sup>

The retort by Lincoln was so devastating, Speed remembered his words vividly and repeated it often. Perhaps now as they lay chatting together they chuckled over the incident. Then perhaps the conversation turned to each other, since they were both Kentucky born. It is likely that Lincoln revealed something of his own past, the death of his mother in Indiana, and his experi-

ences at the fading town of New Salem which he had left that morning.

Since Speed was the modest host, no doubt Lincoln showed much interest in his new friend's background. Why did Speed come to Springfield? Why did he leave Kentucky, where his father was the well-known Judge James Speed, a successful planter with large land holdings, and Louisville was rapidly becoming the first city in that commonwealth? Perhaps Speed told him it was because so many prominent Kentuckians had already settled in Springfield, and he saw an opportunity to grow up with the West.

Thus it was that Joshua Fry Speed and Abraham Lincoln passed the first hours in their bed together. Speed saw in Lincoln the rough-hewn product of the frontier, whose ancestry went back to old England, through successive generations in Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, and Virginia. As America grew up, the Lincoln family had moved westward, and by the time it had reached the "wilderness of Kentucky," it had taken on the elemental forces of the mountain, plain, and forest. Gentle blood of common folk had mingled with the aristocracy of New England, and in Tom Lincoln and Nancy Hanks it had flowered into a brooding, ambitious youth whose only fortune was a strong, angular frame, and an inquisitive, discerning mind.

In Joshua Fry Speed, Abraham Lincoln saw a youth who was truly a "gentleman to the manner born." Perhaps ancestral lines meant little to him in those days, but Lincoln must have been impressed with the fact that his bed-fellow could trace his heritage to forefathers who had distinguished themselves in every generation; to the renowned English historian, John Speed, in the sixteenth century; to Dr. John Speed, an eminent physician of Southampton; to James Speed, the emigrant to Virginia in 1695, who had created a great colonial estate; to another John Speed of Mecklenburg County who was "a great man in the Episcopal church"; and to Captain James Speed, young Joshua's grandfather, born in 1739, who had fought in the Revolution and was disabled for life at Guilford Court House.\*

Perhaps Lincoln noted the similarity of the movement of their grandfathers and compared their relative fortunes. Captain James Speed had journeyed into Kentucky in 1782,<sup>7</sup> and one of his children with him was James, then aged ten, who was to

become the father of his friend Joshua. Two years later, Captain Abraham Lincoln with his family followed the same Wilderness Trail through Cumberland Gap into Kentucky. One of the sons, Thomas, then about six years old, was to be Lincoln's own father. James Speed had become a great and venerable citizen of Kentucky, with a family of twelve children, two by his first wife, and ten by his second, living in the fine old homestead of "Farmington," near Louisville, and owning more than seventy slaves to till his fertile lands.<sup>o</sup> Tom Lincoln had wandered from place to place, having title troubles and accumulating little, and at last had reached the prairie lands of Illinois where he was eking out a meager existence. It was not a happy comparison.

But Joshua Fry Speed had also a maternal claim to a proud heritage. As Lincoln thought of his own "angel mother" who had withered and died all too soon in the bleak cabin in the Indiana forest, he must have listened somewhat poignantly to Joshua's description of his mother, Lucy Gilmer Fry Speed, who was the accomplished and cultured daughter of Joshua Fry, of Danville, one of Kentucky's great teachers and benefactors. This old mentor and inspirer of countless youth who were making history for Kentucky was the grandson of Colonel Joshua Fry, of Virginia, friend and fellow-surveyor of Peter Jefferson, the father of Thomas who became the author of the Declaration of Independence. Lucy's mother was Peachy Walker, the twelfth child of Dr. Thomas Walker, neighbor of the Frys and Jeffersons, god-father and tutor of young Thomas Jefferson, and was the first white man to open Kentucky in 1750 for the settlers who were later to swarm through Cumberland Gap.<sup>o</sup>

Surely Joshua Fry Speed as the offspring of Judge James Speed and Lucy Gilmer Fry was a worthy friend for the young lawyer now embarking upon his career. Their intimacy which began so pleasantly on April 15, 1837, rapidly ripened into an enduring friendship. How much Speed contributed to the development of Lincoln in the four years they slept together is idle speculation, but their kindred hopes and ambitions fused into a unity and understanding which was never broken.

For four years Speed and Lincoln lived in constant companionship, except for the brief periods when the young lawyer was busy with his law practice or legislative duties; four years of unmarred relationship; four years of sharing with each other

their youthful dreams and experiences. It was Joshua who encouraged the timid, bashful Abraham Lincoln in forming social contacts. They went to parties together; they attended debating clubs and political forums; they occasionally took rides into the country.<sup>10</sup>

As Lincoln established his reputation as an able and honest lawyer, Speed prospered modestly as a merchant. Many times their young friends about town would gather around the stove in Speed's store, gossip about ordinary things, and engage in political and philosophical discussions. In these gatherings Lincoln would appear at his best as a conversationalist and story teller. It was a pleasant, robust life for the young men of Springfield who were later to share in shaping the destiny of the nation.

The friendship of Speed and Lincoln was more easily formed because they saw alike in so many things, and were in agreement in politics. Speed saw that his new friend was no uncommon politician. He watched Lincoln as he debated with the leaders of Illinois, as he maneuvered adroitly in the legislative councils, and as he attained fame as a lawyer. He marveled at his friend's ability to tell a story with always the right point to clinch an argument. He shared Lincoln's broad views on internal improvements, and was sympathetic with his ambition to become known as the "DeWitt Clinton of Illinois."<sup>11</sup> When Lincoln became moody, Speed invariably listened with a receptive and understanding heart.

There is no evidence that Speed sensed in his bed-fellow the spark of greatness, nor foresaw the time when he would outstrip all of his Illinois associates; but he felt the deep moving currents which stirred within the restless, moody, ambitious Lincoln as he struggled to fit himself for some service to humanity. Lincoln often talked about that, and once in a time of deep melancholy expressed regret that so far he had done nothing worthy of being remembered by his fellow man.

It was when the flame of love was lighted that Speed and Lincoln's friendship reached its tenderest beauty. They shared with each other their intimacies and doubts. It was perhaps Speed who first introduced Lincoln in the Ninian W. Edwards home which resulted in his courtship of Mary Todd.<sup>12</sup> When the romance had culminated in an engagement, only to be broken

on that "fatal first of January," 1841, it was Speed who burned Lincoln's letter breaking the engagement and compelled him to go and face his fiancée in person.<sup>13</sup> It was Speed who was most concerned at the subsequent melancholy which almost drove his friend to suicide. "I am now the most miserable man living," Lincoln had written to Stuart, his law-partner, then away in Congress, and "If what I feel were equally distributed to the whole human family, there would not be one cheerful face on the earth."<sup>14</sup>

Speed, who was preparing to move back to Kentucky, regretted to leave while his friend was plunged into such depths of sadness, but there was a deep sorrow in his own heart because of the recent death of his father in Kentucky. He had written his sorrowing mother when he received the news, and his tender note marks the sentiments of a loving and dutiful son:

"Much, dear Mother, as I lament the death of a Father, I can but feel more sensibly when I reflect how much beyond measure has been your loss greater than mine. Those virtues that we as his children and you as our mother and his wife loved him for will I hope serve now to enshrine his memory in our heart. . . . If it would be any consolation to you in your affliction to have me with you, you have only to let me know and I will be with you and shed with you 'tear for tear.' "<sup>15</sup>

With heavy hearts the friends parted, after Speed had sold his interests in the store. Lincoln was left alone in his despondency and self-condemnation at so rudely wounding the heart of Mary Todd. Suffering with remorse, he went about his work, listless and forlorn. But occasionally episodes broke into his gloom, and in a few months, he was writing to his Kentucky friend a long and chatty letter about the Trailor murder trial which had thrown Springfield into "the highest state of excitement here for a week past that our community has ever witnessed."<sup>16</sup> With something of the joy of anticipation, he assured Speed he would be visiting him soon. This letter is, as far as is known, the longest letter Lincoln ever wrote.

No incident in Lincoln's life was perhaps more enjoyable than his visit in the Speed home at "Farmington" near Louisville in August and September, 1841.<sup>17</sup> Now thirty-one, he had the experience of living in the quiet and luxuries of a wonderful home which was in marked contrast to any of the drab hovels in which

he had grown up. The spacious colonial Speed home had been built about 1809 by skilled workmen brought from Philadelphia. The rooms were large, with high ceilings, deep casements, and tall windows. The woodwork, floors, and casements were of the finest hardwood. A long driveway lined with locust and walnut trees approached the mansion set back a quarter of a mile from the Bardstown Pike. In the rear of the home was an avenue which led to the family burying ground, and a stone barn and springhouse added distinction to the plantation. Here in 1812 Judge Speed had fed and equipped a group of volunteers on their way to war. The atmosphere about the home was one of culture; friendliness, and peace.

Lincoln occupied the big front room on the left of the wide hall. He was assigned a servant for his personal needs from among the slaves. He tramped the fields with Joshua; he took long rides into the country; he had pleasant chats with gentle, philosophic, and motherly Mrs. Speed. He romped with Mary, Speed's older half-sister, and once in a playful mood shut her up in a room to prevent her, as he said, "from committing assault and battery upon me." He adored little Eliza Davis, a niece visiting in the Speed home, and would later be writing to Mary to "kiss her o'er and o'er again" for him. He occasionally made trips to Louisville where he spent many delightful hours with James Speed, Joshua's brother who was a rising young barrister, and read many of his books. Once he had the painful experience of going to a dentist in Louisville who made a futile effort at a tooth extraction. Of all the good things he had to eat, nothing was more enjoyed than "the dishes of peaches and cream" which the Speeds so bountifully supplied.<sup>10</sup>

Lincoln, who was trying to forget his unpleasant affair with Mary Todd, found that Joshua—now aged twenty-five—was having his own love troubles. A sprightly, black-eyed damsel, Fanny Henning, living with her uncle, John Williamson, on a farm near by, had captured Joshua's heart. Lincoln accompanied Joshua on some of his calls to the Williamson home, but the uncle was too much in the way. One night, that the two lovers might steal away, Lincoln monopolized the uncle's attention by invoking a spirited political discussion. Joshua made good use of the respite provided by his friend's conspiracy, and secured Fanny's precious promise on that very night.



When the time came for Lincoln to return to Springfield and to say his 'good-byes, Mrs. Speed pressed into his hands an Oxford Bible. She had often noted his recurrent melancholic moods, and assured him that the reading of the Book "was the best cure for the blues" which could be found.<sup>19</sup> It was a thoughtful act which he never forgot.

Although he was ill at the time, Joshua Fry Speed accompanied Lincoln on his return to Springfield. They took a boat at Louisville for St. Louis, and then went across the country by stage to Springfield. On the river trip they witnessed a shipment of shackled slaves; this brought a comment from Lincoln in his subsequent letter to Mary Speed which has been widely quoted. The fact that he should describe the incident in so great detail revealed that he was already thinking deeply on the slavery question.<sup>20</sup>

Speed busied himself in Springfield during the next few weeks, attending to collections and business affairs. Lincoln took to the circuit, and from Bloomington wrote Mary Speed, as mentioned above, to express his appreciation for the hospitality which he received in the Speed home. This communication now preserved in the Library of Congress has been regarded as one of the most beautiful and typical of the Lincoln letters in existence.

During his stay in Springfield, Speed was the uncertain and distraught lover who worried about his Fanny back in Kentucky, and wondered whether or not he loved her. Lincoln was so impressed about his friend's troubles, he handed Speed a letter on his departure, January 1, 1842, which he urged him to read and ponder on his return to Kentucky. He analyzed Speed's emotions and tried to bolster his spirits. "Were not those heavenly black eyes" the whole trouble? "After you and I had once been at [her] residence, did you not go and take me all the way to Lexington and back, for no other purpose but to get to see her again, on our return that evening? . . . I shall be so anxious about you that I shall want you to write by every mail."<sup>21</sup>

No sooner had Speed returned home than he was writing Lincoln that Fanny was seriously ill. He confessed again his doubts and wondered what he should do. But Lincoln rejoiced that his friend was so concerned about the health of his fiancée. He

hastened to reply: "You well know that I do not feel my own sorrows more keenly than I do yours, when I know them; and yet I assure you I was not much hurt by what you wrote me of your excessively bad feeling at the time you wrote . . . . I hope your melancholy bodings as to her early death are not well founded. I even hope that ere this reaches you she will have returned with improved and still improving health, and that you will have met her, and forgotten the sorrows of the past in the enjoyment of the present . . . . It really appears to me that you yourself ought to rejoice, and not sorrow, at this indubitable evidence of your undying affection for her."<sup>22</sup>

On February 12, 1842, Speed hurried another letter to Springfield, and immediately Lincoln was replying: "I opened the letter with intense anxiety and trepidation; so much so that although it turned out better than I expected, I have hardly yet at a distance of ten hours become calm." After a discussion of the nonsense of foolish forebodings, Lincoln became reflective: "I now have no doubt that it is the peculiar misfortune of both you and me to dream dreams of Elysium far exceeding all that anything earthly can realize. Far short of your dreams as you may be, no woman could do more to realize them than that same black-eyed Fanny."<sup>23</sup>

But all was soon right with Speed. On February 15, 1842, he and Fanny were married. The happy news was rushed to the anxious Lincoln who in turn hastened to send his congratulations and to express his keen disappointment that they had decided not to come to Illinois to reside permanently.

Speed in his new-found happiness turned to a simple domestic life on his country place in the Pond Settlement, thirteen miles from Louisville. In a little while he was advising Lincoln about his renewed romance with Mary Todd. Despite busy days in the legislature and life on the circuit, Lincoln still brooded, but it was natural that he should find himself easily drawn into a new affair with the woman whom he had "stood up" on the first day announced for their wedding. On October 4, 1842, he was probing Speed with a "close question." He wrote: "The immense sufferings you endured from the first days of September till the middle of February, you never tried to conceal from me, and I well understood. You have now been the husband of a lovely woman nearly eight months. That you are happier now

than the day you married I well know, for without you could not be living . . . . But I want to ask a close question, 'Are you now in feeling as well as in judgment glad that you are married as you are?' . . . . Please answer it quickly, for I am impatient to know."<sup>24</sup>

What Speed said in his reply must have been on a high note of happiness. His words stabilized the halting, vacillating suitor in Springfield, and on November 2, 1842, Lincoln and Mary Todd were married. On January 18, 1843, Lincoln wrote to Speed: "How the married life goes with us I will tell you when I see you here, which I hope will be very soon."<sup>25</sup> That he was not more eloquent in his communication may have indicated his marriage did not lift him completely from his melancholy, but never afterwards did the lonely lawyer and political leader express a word of unhappiness in his new relationship.

Speed in his next letter evidently broached an intimate subject about an expected baby, because Lincoln on March 24, 1843, was writing: "About the prospects of your having a namesake at our town, can't say exactly yet."<sup>26</sup> In July, Lincoln was getting anxious for Speed's expected visit: "We shall look with impatience to your visit this fall. Your Fanny cannot be more anxious to see my Molly than the latter is to see her, nor as much as I am. Don't fail to come." And then hinting at the approaching event in his home, he closed his letter with the significant words, "We are but two as yet."<sup>27</sup>

Lincoln turned the question of a "blessed event" upon Speed in a letter of May 18, 1843. "By the way," he queried, "how do 'events' of the same sort come on in your family? Are you possessing houses and lands, and oxen and asses, and men-servants and maid-servants, and begetting sons and daughters?"<sup>28</sup>

Unfortunately, the friendship of the two men would not reach its consummation in a namesake for each other. When the Lincoln twain (on August 1, 1843) became three, it was not the proud father who named the offspring. "Molly" christened their son, "Robert Todd," for her own distinguished father in Lexington, and as other sons came, no Lincoln ever bore the Biblical name of Joshua. And for Joshua and Fanny, in otherwise perfect happiness on their Kentucky farm, no child came to bless their union. They were destined to live only for each other and for the scores

of nephews and nieces who often came to play and romp in their home.

Nine quiet, happy years Joshua and Fanny spent in their prolonged honeymoon. As farm crops were grown, Speed spent much time with Fanny in their flower gardens. The exquisite roses which they developed became famous throughout the countryside. They rode together, visited their neighbors, and often journeyed to nearby "Farmington" to spend some time with Mrs. Speed, growing gracefully old. Their life was congenial and pleasant, and only occasionally did they communicate with their Springfield friend. Usually it was on business matters, for there were many old Springfield accounts, notes, and mortgages which Speed turned over to Lincoln for collection. In one letter, Speed reviewed several accounts and gave instructions as to how they should be handled. He concluded with: "Your toll you will keep, of course. Make it as light as you can."<sup>29</sup>

Letters between them became fewer, but on October 22, 1846, immediately after his election to Congress, Lincoln went into a lengthy explanation of a suit for the collection of an account in which Speed was involved. After making a recommendation as to its settlement, he chided Speed about the neglect of their friendship. "You, no doubt, assign the suspension of our correspondence to the true philosophic cause; though it must be confessed by both of us that this is rather a cold reason for allowing a friendship such as ours to die out by degrees. I propose now that, upon receipt of this, you shall be considered in my debt, and under obligations to pay soon, and that neither shall remain long in arrears hereafter. Are you agreed?"<sup>30</sup>

They were not long in seeing each other after that. In the fall of 1847, Speed met the Lincoln family in St. Louis,<sup>31</sup> as they were journeying to Kentucky while en route to Washington. But this visit was with the Todds in Lexington, not the Speeds, for it is not recorded that Lincoln ever returned to "Farmington" after his delightful stay there in 1841. There is a great possibility, however, that he stayed overnight with Joshua and Fanny on this trip to Lexington.

Speed, the quiet, easy-going, self-effacing gentleman farmer in Kentucky, had one turn at politics. He was elected to the Kentucky legislature from Jefferson County for the 1848-49 term,<sup>32</sup> and was in Frankfort at the time his brother, James, was

a Senator from Louisville. The slavery question was a paramount issue, and since 1833, when an act was passed prohibiting the importation of slaves into the State, a bill had been introduced in every succeeding legislature to repeal it, only to be defeated whenever it came to a vote. However, the restrictions of the 1833 act were considerably modified in 1849, when an amendment was passed and approved by Governor John J. Crittenden, which provided that slaves for domestic use only might be purchased and brought into the State, but not for re-sale within five years. Speed voted against this measure, and was with the majority which changed the time limit of eighteen months in the original bill to a minimum of five years. When a bill was passed releasing violators of the penalty in the 1833 act, the records show that Joshua Speed did not vote. He may have been absent.

Speed and Lincoln exchanged letters in 1855 which marked the only sharp divergence of views in their relationship. Speed became so worked up over the state of affairs in Kansas, he wrote his candid opinion on the situation, and queried Lincoln as to how he stood on the issues of the day. Lincoln's reply revealed how far he had gone in forming convictions which were to become the cornerstone of his political philosophy. He scolded his Kentucky friend in a gentle way. "You suggest that in political action, now, you and I would differ. I suppose we would; not quite as much, however, as you may think. You know I dislike slavery, and you fully admit the abstract wrong of it . . . . You say that if Kansas fairly votes herself as a free State, as a Christian you will rejoice at it. All decent slaveholders talk that way, and I do not doubt their candor. But they never vote that way."<sup>33</sup>

So it was that Speed and Lincoln passed the decade after the Missouri Compromise and watched the gathering storm. Speed moved from his farm into Louisville and went into the real estate business with his brother-in-law, James W. Henning, in 1851. It was a successful partnership. Speed was the wise and careful financier and planner; Henning was the experienced surveyor and astute appraiser of property values. As Louisville and Kentucky developed, their business rapidly expanded. Speed rose to leadership in the commercial life of Louisville, as Lincoln became a national political figure in Illinois and measured his strength in debates with Senator Douglas.

Nothing is known of Speed's participation in the presidential campaign of 1860. He had no enthusiasm for the extreme views of the abolitionists, and his position was perhaps more in accord with that of Bell than either of his Springfield friends, Lincoln and Douglas. He could not have supported his fellow Kentuckian, John J. Breckinridge, representing the more extreme views of state rights. It is natural to assume that his vote was among the feeble ninety-one cast for Lincoln in Louisville. Regardless of his private opinions as to slavery, he must have gone along with Lincoln whose adherence to the Union could scarcely have been greater than his own. There must have been quiet rejoicing in the Speed home when the news came that his closest friend had been elected to the highest office in the nation.

Whether he sent congratulations to Lincoln is not known, but it is reasonable to believe that he did. He wrote to Lincoln on November 14, 1860, and it was not long until he received a short reply from Lincoln stating that he would be in Chicago on November 21, 1860, to meet with Hannibal Hamlin and other leaders. Lincoln invited Speed to join him there. Since Mrs. Lincoln was expected to be along, Mrs. Speed was also urged to come. Speed evidently felt that the invitation for the president-elect was as much a command as a gesture of friendship, and naturally they responded.<sup>34</sup>

When Speed attempted to see Lincoln at the Tremont House, he was forced to produce Lincoln's letter before he could gain admittance. He found the president-elect much worn and fatigued. After the exchange of greetings, Lincoln asked: "Speed, have you got a room?" Receiving an affirmative reply, Lincoln said: "Name your hour, Speed, and I will come and see you, and will bring my wife." Then, in an afterthought, he added: "Mary and Fanny can stay here. Let's you and I go to your room."

When the two men were alone, Lincoln stretched his long frame upon the bed, and asked: "Speed, what are your pecuniary conditions? Are you rich or poor?"

Speed replied: "Mr. Lincoln, I think I know what you wish. I will speak candidly to you. My pecuniary conditions are good. I do not think you have any office within your gift I can afford to take." As the discussion continued, Lincoln turned to the problems before the nation, and expressed the desire that Ken-



*The Meserve Collection, New York*

JOSHUA FRY SPEED

Photograph by Matthew Brady, in Washington, about 1862. Lincoln posed for Brady in similar, if not identical, studio chair.



*The Meserve Collection, New York*

JOSHUA FRY SPEED

Photograph by Matthew Brady, in Washington, about 1862. Lincoln posed for Brady in similar, if not identical, studio chair.





MISS FANNY HENNING  
About 1842



MRS. FANNY HENNING SPEED  
About 1882



*Copyright by Caufield & Shook, Louisville*

"Farmington," near Louisville, as it appears today. Lincoln occupied front room on left while visiting the Speeds for six weeks in 1841.



MISS FANNY HENNING  
About 1842



MRS. FANNY HENNING SPEED  
About 1882



*Copyright by Caufield & Shook, Louisville*

"Farmington," near Louisville, as it appears today. Lincoln occupied front room on left while visiting the Speeds for six weeks in 1841.

tucky have a representative in the Cabinet. He offered a post to Speed, perhaps the Secretaryship of the Treasury, for which he was well fitted, but Speed declined. Lincoln then asked him to sound out James Guthrie of Kentucky for a place. When Guthrie was subsequently interviewed, he, too, waived any appointment."

The crisis facing the country approached swiftly and irrevocably. One by one the Southern states began to withdraw from the Union, to assert their independence, and finally to join in the compact of the Confederacy. Kentucky's decision was in the balance, and Lincoln looked with special concern toward his native state, feeling that "to lose Kentucky would be nearly to lose the whole game." Plagued by office seekers, perplexed by the mounting emergencies, and appalled by the "insurrection" which had become a wide-spread "rebellion," the president was forced to answer in kind the first guns at Fort Sumter in April, 1861.

Where was Joshua Fry Speed as the nation began to break asunder? He had differed with Lincoln on the question of the extension of slavery. He had suffered its existence in Kentucky and would not abolish it by decree. But if there was any doubt about his position when the time came to decide whether he would go with the North or the South, there was but one answer. His loyalty to the Union was unquestioned, and in the White House was a friend in whom he had the utmost faith. He was ready to serve the Union and his friend to the limit of his ability and devotion.

Early in May, 1861, while Unionist and Confederate sympathizers were arguing as to Kentucky's position in the conflict, a huge man weighing 300 pounds stealthily approached Speed's home in Louisville on Second Street, between Liberty and Walnut. He hesitated in front of the house, and then walked up and down the street for several minutes. Mrs. Speed, who saw him through the window, grew fearful. At last the man approached, knocked on the door, and asked for Mr. Speed. He was told that Mr. Speed was at his office—on Jefferson Street between Fourth and Fifth.

When the giant entered the office, Speed was sitting at a table. The stranger asked if he were Joshua Speed. The man carefully closed the door behind him and then asked if they were

alone. Upon receiving this assurance, he inquired if there were another room in the office. Mysteriously, the man asked Speed to withdraw into that room. When they were seated, the stranger introduced himself as William Nelson, formerly of Maysville, Kentucky, and now Commander in the United States Navy; he explained that he had been sent by President Lincoln on a secret mission.<sup>36</sup>

Nelson confided that in a recent interview with the President, they had discussed the situation in Kentucky, that the President was worried about the possibility of the well-armed State Guard under Simon Bolivar Buckner being transferred to the Southern cause, thereby leaving the loyal people without means of enforcing the will of the legislature which was Union in sentiment. Nelson suggested to the President that arms be supplied to the loyal groups in the State. Lincoln agreed to the proposal, but realized that such a venture would require the utmost tact and secrecy. He directed Nelson to go to see the one man in Kentucky whose wisdom and judgment could be relied upon—his old friend, Joshua Fry Speed.

The two men talked long and earnestly about the problem, and agreed that a meeting should be called of State leaders whose loyalty was unquestioned. They arranged to go to Frankfort that afternoon, traveling on the same train, but as strangers to each other. That night in the Capital Hotel, Speed and Nelson divulged their plans to a group composed of James Harlan, John J. Crittenden, Charles A. Wickliffe, Garrett Davis, Thornton F. Marshall, and James Speed. Their suggestions were approved, and Joshua Fry Speed was named as the representative of the committee to determine who should receive the guns.<sup>37</sup>

In this clandestine meeting on the night of May 7, 1861, the first steps were taken to supply the loyal citizens of Kentucky with what came to be called "Lincoln guns." The first shipment of 5,000 was surreptitiously distributed to specified points on May 18th. A second issue of 5,000 was made on June 5th.<sup>38</sup> Under the careful maneuvering of Speed and his associates, the power of the Unionists was strengthened and their coup in holding Kentucky in the Union was soon to be enforced by the arms which had been furnished.

During the succeeding weeks, Speed was busy in this secretive distribution of arms and ammunition, and in conferring with

leaders of Union sentiment. He had much to do in shaping Kentucky's first position of "intermediational neutrality," which in effect later became "armed neutrality" under the proclamation of the pro-Southern Governor Magoffin. On the day of the first battle of Bull Run, Speed and his brother, James, were in Lexington to confer again with their secret group. When they returned to Louisville that night, they found the city in a state of wild excitement.<sup>39</sup> Heated passions could no longer be controlled, and the war at last broke upon the country in its full fury. The pseudo-neutrality of Kentucky was soon abandoned, open recruiting of Federal troops under William Nelson, commissioned a brigadier general, was begun at Camp Dick Robinson, and General Robert Anderson, hero of Fort Sumter, was sent to Louisville to take command of the gathering Union forces.

It was during the latter weeks of September, 1861, that General W. T. Sherman, who had shortly before relieved General Anderson, began to apply frantically to Washington for more men, more arms, more ammunition, and more supplies. Nervous and wild-eyed, he magnified the force of the enemy out of all proportion to its strength and power. Thus aggravated and distraught because his requests were unheeded in Washington, he one day expounded his woes to Joshua Fry Speed. "What do you want?" Speed asked. "Everything," Sherman replied. "Arms, wagons, tents, bread and meat, money, and a competent staff."<sup>40</sup>

"Name what you want on paper and give it to me," Speed requested. Sherman hastily scrawled out his list. Speed took the train for Washington, submitted the request to President Lincoln, and within a few days was back in Sherman's office. He handed him copies of orders naming two important officers in the quartermaster corps to be assigned to his staff, with a drawing account for \$100,000. One order, signed by Lincoln himself, directed the ordnance department to supply the Kentucky forces with 10,000 Springfield rifles of the latest design.<sup>41</sup>

Sherman was amazed. "How is this that more attention is paid to the requests of you, a citizen, than me, a general in the army?" he demanded. "You had better take command here."

Quietly, Speed told Sherman of his friendship with Lincoln,

and then said: "The only mistake you made, General, was not asking for more."

Unfortunately the intimacies of Speed's visit with Lincoln in Washington on this occasion are not revealed. It would have been natural for the two old friends to talk of many things besides the war. Lincoln was fond of recalling incidents of former days, even when he was busiest. He must have asked his friend about his mother, whom he remembered so pleasantly, and Speed likely said: "Mother would like a picture of you." Always willing to grant any humble request, Lincoln then took up a recent photograph of himself made by Matthew Brady, and inscribed it with these words: "To Mrs. Lucy G. Speed, from whose pious hands I received an Oxford Bible twenty years ago. October 3, 1861."<sup>42</sup>

Speed's activity during the war is veiled in the simple anonymity which characterized his modest life. That he made several trips to Washington on important missions is certain, and he was always a welcome caller at the White House. These occasions were never reported in full by him, and only four were recorded later in his reminiscences. There was some correspondence with the President, particularly during the period when Lincoln was considering compensated emancipation.<sup>43</sup>

Speed was present at a conference of a committee with the President when Braxton Bragg and E. Kirby Smith were overrunning Kentucky in the fall of 1862. General William Nelson lay wounded in Cincinnati, after the disastrous rout of his inexperienced troops at Richmond on August 30th. With Kentucky apparently soon to be conquered by the Confederates, the people of Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois were in a panic. The war was being brought to their borders, and everybody agreed that the time had come for some decisive counteraction. A self-constituted committee of distinguished gentlemen from the four states, including Speed, took it upon themselves to go to Washington and confer with the President about what should be done.<sup>44</sup>

Speed, in reporting the interview in his *Reminiscences of Abraham Lincoln* (published in 1884) said:

"Senator Lane opened for Indiana, Garrett Davis followed for Kentucky, and other gentlemen for Ohio and Illinois. They all had complaints to make of the conduct of the war in the West. Like the expression in the Prayer-book, the Government was

'doing everything it ought not to do, and leaving undone everything it ought to do.'

"The President sat in a revolving chair, looking at everyone till they were all done. I never saw him exhibit more tact or talent than he did on this occasion. He said, 'Now, gentlemen, I am going to make you a curious kind of a speech. I announce to you that I am not going to do a single thing that any one of you has asked me to do. But it is due to myself and to you that I should give my reasons.' He then from his seat answered each man, taking them in the order which they spoke, never forgetting a point that anyone had made. When he was done, he rose from his chair and said:

" 'Judge List, this reminds me of an anecdote which I heard a son of yours tell in Burlington, in Iowa . . . . He gave an account of a family who started from Western Pennsylvania, pretty well off in this world's goods when they started. But they moved and moved, having less and less every time they moved, till after a while they could carry everything in one wagon. He said that the chickens got so used to being moved, that whenever they saw the wagon sheets brought out they laid themselves on their backs and crossed their legs, ready to be tied. Now gentlemen, if I were to listen to every committee that comes in at that door, I had just as well cross my hands and let you tie me.' "45

At another time when Speed was in Washington, the President discussed the proposed EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION. Speed realized that many Unionists of Kentucky with pro-slavery views might be alienated by such a drastic move, and he advised the President against it. Lincoln patiently outlined the arguments and seemed to feel that Speed "should see the harvest of good" which would come from it. He then alluded to a conversation with Speed more than twenty years before when he was in such a period of depression he had almost contemplated suicide. At that time he had said he "had done nothing to make any human being remember that he had lived," and that it was his desire to link his name with some important event in the interest of his fellow man. In discussing the Emancipation Proclamation, he said with earnest emphasis, "I believe that in this measure my fondest hope will be realized."46

Joshua Fry Speed perhaps knew as much about Lincoln's religious convictions as his own wife or his last law partner, William Herndon. It was on a visit to Lincoln in the summer of 1864 while the President was staying in the Soldier's Home, in

Washington, that Speed got a new insight into his friend's growing interest in religion. When he entered the President's room, he found him reading the Bible.

"I am glad to see you so profitably employed . . . If you have recovered from your skepticism, I am sorry to say I have not," Speed said, in greeting.

Looking Speed earnestly in the face and placing his hand upon his shoulder, Lincoln replied: "You are wrong, Speed; take all of this book upon reason that you can, and the balance on faith, and you will live and die a happier and better man."<sup>47</sup>

The last time Speed saw the President was about two weeks before the assassination. He went to his office and found him "jaded and weary." There was a steady stream of callers, and he watched from an inconspicuous place while the interviews were conducted. At last all the callers were thought to be gone, and Lincoln asked Speed to draw up his chair. But two humble-looking women who had not been noticed were discovered, and Lincoln said somewhat fretfully: "Well, ladies, what can I do for you?"

Speed recited the story which has been covered in most of the Lincoln biographies, how the mother and wife sought the release of a son and husband who had been imprisoned for resisting the draft in Pennsylvania, and how the President called in General Richard Dana and had twenty-seven men released who were charged with the same offense. It was the old woman's expression of gratitude which touched Lincoln most. Wiping her eyes with her apron, she looked into his face and said: "Good-bye, Mr. Lincoln, we will never meet again till we meet in heaven." He clasped her hand in both of his own and escorted her to the door, saying as he went: "With all that I have to cross me here, I am afraid that I will never get there; but your wish that you will meet me there has fully paid for all I have done for you."<sup>48</sup>

Now that they were at last alone, the two old friends sat before the fire. "Speed, I am a little alarmed about myself; just feel my hand," Lincoln said. It was cold and clammy. Lincoln pulled off his boots, stuck his feet out before the fire, and soon they were steaming. Speed said that overwork must be producing nervousness, and that such scenes as he had just witnessed were surely nerve-wracking.

"You are mistaken," the President replied. "I have made



two people happy today; I have given a mother her son, and a wife her husband."<sup>49</sup>

It is likely that on some of these later visits of Joshua Fry Speed, Lincoln discussed the possibility of James Speed for a place in the Cabinet should a vacancy occur. When Attorney General Bates resigned in November, 1864, because of age and long service, Lincoln was determined to balance his top-heavy Northern Cabinet with a Southern man. His first choice, Judge Joseph Holt, of Kentucky, would not accept the place because he was averse to the work before the Supreme Court. James Speed, next in favor, was chosen, despite the fact he was not well known to Washington leaders.

Lincoln told his advisers he did not know James as well as his brother, Joshua. "That is not strange," he remarked, "for I slept with Joshua for four years, and I suppose I ought to know. James is an honest man and a gentleman, and if he comes here you will find he is one of those well-poised men, not too common here, who are not spoiled by a big office."<sup>50</sup>

Brother James did not have any important role in the remainder of Lincoln's administration, but he was one of the members of the Cabinet who kept the death watch at the bedside of Joshua's greatest friend. To his brother far away in Louisville, James would be able to recite the details of that fatal night of April 14, 1865. It is not recorded how Joshua and Fanny received the tragic news, but it is told that Mrs. Lucy G. Speed, the white-haired mistress of "Farmington," was so shocked she was speechless for several moments. Then she said, "If it had been my son, James, the news would not wound me more."<sup>51</sup>

On April 19, 1865, Joshua Fry Speed sat with a sad heart in a hurriedly called meeting of citizens in Louisville to mourn the passing of the President, and to draft resolutions to send to President Johnson, pledging their faith and loyalty.<sup>52</sup> Speed was named a vice-president of this meeting, and sorrowfully assisted in the arrangements for a memorial service for Lincoln. There is no record that he attended the funeral in Springfield several days later, but early in June he and Fanny were among sixty members of the Speed family in Kentucky who subscribed a dollar each to the National Lincoln Monument Association, for a *popular fund* for an appropriate monument which it was proposed to build at the tomb in Springfield.<sup>53</sup> Heading the list

was Mrs. Speed, the gentle old mother, and Joshua's sisters, Mary and Eliza, who remembered the tall, lonely, mystical young man who had sojourned in their home in 1841. When the monument was finally dedicated on October 15, 1874, Joshua Fry Speed was among the distinguished men present for the ceremony.

Speed was not allowed to brood long in his sorrow before William H. Herndon, who had clerked for him in Springfield before going into partnership with Lincoln, began to write him letters, asking many questions on his relationship with the mourned President. Herndon realized the importance of gathering immediately all the facts of Lincoln's life, and he set out to get the reminiscences of those who had been closely associated with the President. With considerable reluctance and a tender sense of the proprieties, Speed gathered up the more important Lincoln letters and sent them to Herndon. He replied to many of Herndon's questions, but his modesty and reticence would not permit him to draw aside completely the curtain which veiled a sacred friendship.<sup>54</sup> The information Speed gave to Herndon and his own reminiscences of Lincoln published two years after Speed's death provide much revealing material on Lincoln's life, but Lincoln students regret that he did not tell more of the man whom he esteemed above all others.

It is difficult to evaluate the importance of Speed in Lincoln's life. That he was a stabilizing influence in Lincoln's earlier years is unquestioned. That he was a prominent instrumentality in helping to preserve the Union when Kentucky's decision was hanging in the balance is fully established. That his advice to Lincoln on his many visits in the White House was helpful and appreciated may well be granted. His service to the nation has been described by General John H. Finnell, Adjutant General of Kentucky during the Civil War, with this appropriate tribute:

"Without at any time an office, civil or military, he (Speed) was the trusted confidant, adviser, and counselor of both the civil and military authorities of the state and nation all through the rebellion. He was a man of few words . . . never in a hurry, never disconcerted; he seemed intuitively to know the right thing to do and the right time to do it. His compensation was found alone in the consciousness of duty performed. He uniformly de-

clined to receive pay for any time or any effort he was asked to give to the cause of his country.'"<sup>55</sup>

Although a staunch Unionist, Speed's service to the people of Louisville and to Kentucky had no partisan limits. Once he was summoned as a grand juror in the Federal Court where an oath was required that no aid or comfort had been given the enemy. Speed said he did not know that he could take the oath, for he admitted he had supplied funds to people whom he knew were going to engage in the rebellion. He and his brother-in-law managed many properties in Louisville while the owners were away, either in the Union or Confederate service, or had fled to places of refuge in the South. These properties were carefully preserved and restored to their owners with only modest fees for their management. In no case has it been reported that Speed and Henning took an unfair or dishonorable advantage in their service as realtors.

Soon after the war Speed and his wife moved to a country home, "Cold Spring," on Beargrass Creek, near Louisville's present Cherokee Park.<sup>56</sup> Here they lived again for a number of years in blissful serenity, with Speed riding to his city office each day, and Fanny cultivating flowers around their home and in specially built greenhouses.

As Speed's estate accumulated he became a leader in civic and business affairs.<sup>57</sup> He pioneered in many public improvements, was for a time the president of the Louisville and Portland Canal Company, and for two years the president of the Louisville, Cincinnati and Lexington Railroad. He was president of the Louisville Hotel; was a director of the Louisville Safety Vault Company; the organizer and director of the Louisville Cement Company; and a director in the Savings Bank of Louisville.

In later years ill health due to diabetes limited his activities and he took more time for leisure and travel. He made a trip to California in 1876 which brought so much pleasure he later wrote an account of it, which was published two years after his death. He spent the winter of 1881-82 in Nassau. After he returned to Louisville, he passed away in the Louisville Hotel on May 29, 1882, at the age of sixty-eight years, and was buried in Cave Hill Cemetery, Louisville.<sup>58</sup> His estate, estimated at about \$600,000, was equally divided between his beloved black-

eyed Fanny, who had first choice in her share, and his surviving brothers and sisters and their descendants.<sup>50</sup>

Henry Watterson, commenting in *The Courier-Journal*, April 12, 1915, on *James Speed, a Personality*,<sup>50</sup> paid a tribute to James Speed, but his description of Joshua is revealing in making a comparison between the two brothers who were so devoted to each other:

"The affinity between James Speed and Joshua F. Speed was close in the extreme and beautiful to see. No two brothers were held nearer together. In their likes and dislikes, in their simple, unconventional pleasures, at work or at play, they displayed the same bent; always moderate but fixed and firm; reserved but not ungenial; the sense of caste, perhaps only half conscious, but very obvious and not at all intrusive."

But the chronicle of Joshua Fry Speed, Abraham Lincoln's most intimate friend, does not end with his passing. "Aunt Fanny," who survived him until August 10, 1902, was a rare, generous, beloved soul who lived entirely for others.<sup>51</sup> A devoted member of the Trinity Methodist Church, which Joshua had also joined several years before his death, she contributed liberally to its support and development. Her major charity, however, was the educational work among the mountain people through the Methodist Kentucky Conference, and Union College, established soon after the Civil War, at Barbourville, Kentucky.<sup>52</sup> Her interest in this college was increased because Dr. Daniel Stevenson, a long-time family friend, was president. Her gifts to this institution, while she was living and later by her bequest, totaled more than \$375,000 for current expenses, building, and endowment.<sup>53</sup>

It is fitting that the close and beautiful friendship of Joshua Fry Speed and Abraham Lincoln should be perpetuated in a common service to humanity. Two institutions, only fifty miles apart, Union College at Barbourville, Kentucky, and Lincoln Memorial University at Harrogate, Tennessee, near Cumberland Gap, the gateway into Kentucky, are serving the same loyal and patriotic constituency. In life, Speed and Lincoln were much alike in spirit, ideals, and love of country; in death, their memory is preserved in an inseparable union in the hearts of a grateful people.

## FOOT NOTES, PART I, JOSHUA FRY SPEED

<sup>1</sup> Undated Speed MS., Herndon-Weik Collection, Library of Congress.

<sup>2</sup> Robert T. Lincoln to Gilmer Speed Adams, of Louisville, June 15, 1895: "I have no doubt that your uncle, Joshua F. Speed, was the most intimate friend my father ever had." Adams Papers in possession of Mrs. Dan MacDougald, Atlanta, Georgia. John G. Nicolay and John Hay, *Abraham Lincoln, A History* (New York City, 1904), Vol. I, page 193: "It is hardly too much to say that he (Speed) was the only—as he was certainly the last—intimate friend that Lincoln ever had."

<sup>3</sup> Joshua F. Speed, *Reminiscences of Abraham Lincoln and Notes of a Visit to California—Two Lectures—by Joshua F. Speed—With a Sketch of His Life* (Louisville, 1884). This booklet of 67 pages is divided into three parts: "Joshua Fry Speed" (his life) pages 3-14; "Reminiscences of Abraham Lincoln," pages 15-43; "Notes, Reminiscences, and Reflections of My Trip to California in 1876," pages 44-67. The reference here is to pages 3 and 4.

<sup>4</sup> Undated Speed MS., Herndon-Weik Collection, Library of Congress.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> Thomas Speed, *Records and Memorials of The Speed Family* (Louisville, 1892), pages 7, 57. Among the illustrations in this volume is one of Mr. and Mrs. Joshua Fry Speed from an oil, painted by Healy, in The Filson Club.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, page 57.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, pages 93, 99. *The Courier-Journal*, Louisville, February 7, 1909.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, page 102.

<sup>10</sup> It was on one of these rides an incident happened which illustrated the profound tenderness of Lincoln's heart. Speed said, in repeating the story: "Six gentlemen, I being one, Lincoln, Baker, Hardin, and others were riding along a country road. We were strung out along the road, two and two together. We were passing through a thicket of wild plum and crab-apple trees. A violent wind-storm had just occurred. Lincoln and Hardin were behind. There were two young birds by the roadside too young to fly. They had been blown from the nest by the storm. The old bird was fluttering about and wailing as a mother ever does for her babes. Lincoln stopped, hitched his horse, caught the birds, hunted the nest and placed them in it. The rest of us rode on to a creek, and while our horses were drinking Hardin rode up. 'Where is Lincoln,' said he? 'Oh, when I saw him last he had two little birds in his hand hunting for their nest.' In perhaps an hour he came. They laughed at him. He said with much emphasis, 'Gentlemen, you may laugh, but I could not have slept well tonight, if I had not saved those birds. Their cries would have rung in my ears.'" Speed's *Reminiscences of Abraham Lincoln*, page 26.

<sup>11</sup> Paul M. Angle, *Herndon's Life of Lincoln* (New York, 1936), page 140.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, page 166.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, page 168.

<sup>14</sup> John G. Nicolay and John Hay, *Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln* (New York City, 1894), Vol. I, page 159.

<sup>15</sup> Joshua F. Speed to Mrs. Lucy G. Speed, April 7, 1840. Letter in possession of Philip Speed Tuley, Louisville, Kentucky.

<sup>16</sup> Nicolay and Hay, *Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln*, Vol. I, page 168. (See Letter No. 1.)

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. I, pages 177-180. *The Courier-Journal*, Louisville, February 13, 1938. Article by Peyton Hoge on "Lincoln Talked to Uncle and Joshua Made Love" is most complete story written of Lincoln's visit to "Farmington" and is regarded by members of the Speed family as generally accurate. See also *The Courier-Journal*, February 7, 1909, for description of "Farmington."

<sup>18</sup> Nicolay and Hay, *Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln*, Vol. I, page 180. (See Letter No. 2.)

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. I, page 180. (See Letter No. 2.)

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. I, pages 177-180. (See Letter No. 2.)

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. I, pages 182-185. (See Letter No. 3.)

- <sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. I, pages 185-187. (See Letter No. 4.)
- <sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. I, pages 211-213. (See Letter No. 6.)
- <sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. I, pages 238-240. (See Letter No. 10.)
- <sup>25</sup> Lincoln to Speed, January 18, 1843. Herndon-Weik Collection. (See Letter No. 11.)
- <sup>26</sup> Nicolay and Hay, *Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln*, Vol. I, page 261. (See Letter No. 12.)
- <sup>27</sup> Lincoln to Speed, July 26, 1843. Herndon-Weik Collection. (See Letter No. 15.)
- <sup>28</sup> Nicolay and Hay, *Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln*, Vol. I, pages 267-269. (See Letter No. 14.)
- <sup>29</sup> Speed to Lincoln, April 3, 1843. Photostat in Abraham Lincoln Association file, Springfield, Illinois. (See Letter No. 13.)
- <sup>30</sup> Nicolay and Hay, *Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln*, Vol. I, pages 297, 298. (See Letter No. 16.)
- <sup>31</sup> Benjamin P. Thomas, *Lincoln, 1847-1853* (Springfield, Illinois, 1936), page 44.
- <sup>32</sup> Collins, *History of Kentucky* (Louisville, 1876 and subsequent reprints), Vol. II, page 357.
- <sup>33</sup> Nicolay and Hay, *Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln*, Vol. II, pages 281-287. (See Letter No. 19.)
- <sup>34</sup> Speed to Herndon, December 6, 1866, Herndon-Weik Collection, Library of Congress.
- <sup>35</sup> *Ibid.* Paul M. Angle, *Herndon's Life of Lincoln*, page 386. See also Speed MS., Herndon-Weik Collection, Library of Congress, which slightly varies from the way Herndon recorded incident.
- <sup>36</sup> *The Magazine of American History*, Vol. X, No. 2, August, 1883, page 118. Article by Dr. Daniel Stevenson (close friend of the Speeds): "General Nelson, Kentucky, and Lincoln Guns."
- <sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, page 122.
- <sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, page 132.
- <sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, page 133.
- <sup>40</sup> W. H. Perrin, *Kentucky: A History of the State* (Louisville, 1887), page 382.
- <sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, page 382. *Official Records of the War of the Rebellion*, Vol. IV, Series I, page 305: "An agent for the state assures me 17,000 arms have been sent for Kentucky troops." Sherman to Thomas, October 12, 1861.
- <sup>42</sup> This autographed picture of Lincoln presented to Mrs. Speed is dated about the time Joshua F. Speed was in Washington visiting the President, and it is safe to presume that Speed took it to his mother. It is now preserved in the J. B. Speed Memorial Museum, Louisville, and has been a subject of wide comment because of the sentiment expressed.
- <sup>43</sup> Ida M. Tarbell, *Life of Abraham Lincoln* (New York, 1902), Vol. II, page 97.
- <sup>44</sup> Joshua F. Speed, *Reminiscences of Abraham Lincoln*, page 29.
- <sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, page 30.
- <sup>46</sup> Speed to Herndon, December 6, 1866, Herndon-Weik Collection, Library of Congress.
- <sup>47</sup> Joshua F. Speed, *Reminiscences of Abraham Lincoln*, page 32.
- <sup>48</sup> Speed to Herndon, January 12, 1866, Herndon-Weik Collection, Library of Congress.
- <sup>49</sup> Joshua F. Speed, *Reminiscences of Abraham Lincoln*, page 28. The same incident is covered in Speed's letter to Herndon, January 12, 1866, in the Herndon-Weik Collection, with only slight variations.
- <sup>50</sup> Carl Sandburg: *Abraham Lincoln: the War Years* (New York City, 1939), Vol. III, page 602. Nicolay and Hay, *Abraham Lincoln, A History*, Vol. 9, pages 347, 348.
- <sup>51</sup> Rev. John Heywood, *Tribute to the Memory of Mrs. Lucy G. Speed* (Louisville, 1874), page 10.

<sup>52</sup> *Louisville Journal*, April 19, 1865.

<sup>53</sup> *Illinois State Journal*, Springfield, June 6, 1865.

<sup>54</sup> From June 22, 1865, to December 6, 1866, Speed wrote nine letters to Herndon, in reply to specific questions. These letters furnished the basis of a number of the more familiar episodes in Herndon's biography. Some of the incidents were repeated in Speed's lecture, *Reminiscences of Abraham Lincoln*, and the slight variations in conversational text resulted perhaps from Speed's failing memory of the clearness of the interviews. However, there are no important differences. The Speed letters are in the Herndon-Weik Collection, now in the Library of Congress. Lincoln's letters to Speed were never returned by Herndon to Speed.

<sup>55</sup> Joshua F. Speed, *Reminiscences of Abraham Lincoln*, page 11.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, page 12. *Louisville Post*, March 15, 1919: "The old home of Joshua F. Speed was 'Cold Spring,' on the road from the city to 'Farmington.' Remodeled and with numerous additions the old home is incorporated in the present home of Mrs. Samuel C. Henning near Cherokee Park. Mrs. Henning is not a Speed, but her brother, Colonel Morgan Duke, who lives in Ohio, married Jennie Speed, daughter of George Keats Speed and Jennie Ewing, and granddaughter of Major Philip Speed. The late Samuel C. Henning was a nephew of Fanny Henning Speed."

<sup>57</sup> *The Biographical Encyclopedia of Kentucky* (Louisville, 1878), page 174. Speed was described as "a man of fine judgment, social and intellectual attainments, of experienced conversational powers, and a man of fine taste, and admirable traits of character."

<sup>58</sup> *The Courier-Journal*, Louisville, June 1, 1882.

<sup>59</sup> Will Book No. 11, Jefferson County Court, pages 227-231.

<sup>60</sup> *James Speed, A Personality*, by James Speed, his grandson (Louisville, 1914). "James Speed, The Attorney-General, 1864-1866," by Helen L. Springer, appears in *The Filson Club History Quarterly*, July, 1937.

<sup>61</sup> *The Courier-Journal*, Louisville, August 11, 1902.

<sup>62</sup> Will Book No. 24, Jefferson County Court, pages 614-616.

<sup>63</sup> Letter of Dr. Conway Boatman, president of Union College, to author, December 12, 1942.