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MOTHER, CONVERSION
AND CREED

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Being an open letter to the author of

“The Soul *of* Abraham Lincoln”

By

JAMES M. MARTIN

Privately Published at Minneapolis

1921



Nancy Hanks

THE days of the distaff, the skillet, the Dutch oven, the open fireplace with its iron crane, are no longer, but homemaking is still the finest of the fine arts. Nancy Hanks was touched with the divine attitudes of the fireside. Loved and honored for her wit, geniality and intelligence, she justified an ancestry reaching beyond the seas, represented by the notable names of Hanks, Shipley, Boone, Evans and Morris. To her was entrusted the task of training a giant, in whose childhood memories she was hallowed. Of her he said, "My earliest recollection of my mother is sitting at her feet with my sister, drinking in the tales and legends that were related to us." To him on her deathbed she said, "I am going away from you, Abraham, and I shall not return. I know that you will be a good boy; that you will be kind to Sarah and to your father. I want you to live as I have taught you, and to love your Heavenly Father." "All that I am or hope to be I owe to my angel mother." (*Abraham Lincoln.*)

(From the inscription on inside wall of the granite building erected in Hardin County, Kentucky, on the site of, and housing, the log cabin in which Abraham Lincoln was born.)

Open Letter

Minneapolis, Minnesota, January 28, 1921.

Rev. William E. Barton,

Oak Park, Illinois.

Dear Sir: I have read with interest your book entitled, "The Soul of Abraham Lincoln." The subject has been one of absorbing interest to me from my boyhood.

Reared in a Christian home, where the speeches, debates, every message, proclamation, and item of personal news of our great President was anxiously awaited and carefully read and studied by an ardent Whig-Republican, with real and genuine interest, no subsequent environment has caused me to forget those early lessons,—my reverence of the soul of Abraham Lincoln has grown with my age, and my love of him and of every true word written about him increases as the years go by.

(I must crave pardon for this personal tone which seems necessary to set forth my interest in the subject.)

I learned in those years, when scarcely ten years of age, at my father's fireside, that a mighty leader, an incorruptible statesman, had arisen in the land. The precept of that home was that Lincoln had come to his place in answer to the prayers of God's people, white and black, for generations past, and every utterance of his, that revealed his own soul, showed his Christian belief, or disclosed his faith in an over-ruling Providence or dependence upon the God of our nation as his personal God, was eagerly noted, and thanks given therefor at the family altar.

The keen sadness of that serious day in April, 1865, has never faded from my memory; I recall my father's tears as I, then not quite fourteen, draped my horse in black and rode in the solemn funeral procession to listen to a funeral oration by the best talent that the neighborhood afforded. It was a sad, sad day to those who loved Abraham Lincoln as our family truly loved him. So I am interested in the subject you selected for the title of your work.

That the soul of Abraham Lincoln was true, honest, sincere, loving, devout, free from selfishness, prejudice and bias, we then believed, and my father, I know, had, from his diligent study of his every utterance available, and from contemporary testimony of witnesses—now dust—determined that Abraham Lincoln was a true, devout, praying Christian, that he loved the Lord his God with all his heart, soul, mind and strength, and his neighbor as himself, and would, I know, have subscribed to the estimate of Reverend Chiniquy, Lincoln's client and fast friend, whom you have quoted appropriately in connection with a remarkable interview at the White House, when he said:

“I found in him the most perfect type of Christianity I ever met. Professedly, he was neither a strict Presbyterian, nor a Baptist, nor a Methodist; but he was the embodiment of all which is more perfect and Christian in them. His religion was the very essence of what God wants in man.”

What more could be said except to add the testimony of another who knew him, and deliberately stated in an oration:

“I present Mr. Lincoln as the best specimen of Christian man I have ever encountered in public life.”

No microscope can add to either of these.

In your book you have, with the tradition of sup-

pressed editions, but for the purpose of argument of course, reprinted the objectionable paragraphs in the works of Herndon and Lamon, the two familiar friends, wherein they each strove, without success, to make his Master appear such a one as he himself was, an infidel—and by your definition of “infidel,” and the many interesting illustrations gleaned from your personal experiences in the environment of the wilderness (though probably more than fifty years after Lincoln had come out of it), you have, I am sure, explained away the mistaken charge of infidelity, and shown that neither of the friends really meant what he said. The reprinting of the charges will, of course, not hurt Lincoln any more than the many campaign slanders really hurt, though they pained him, they did no injury to the pure soul of their object.

When I took up your volume, I noticed with joy your statement that “This book attempts to be a digest of *all* the available evidence concerning the religious faith of Abraham Lincoln. It undertakes also to weigh the evidence and to pass judgment, the author’s own judgment, concerning it. If the reader’s judgment agrees with the author’s, the author will be glad; but if not, at least *the facts are here set forth* in their full essential content.” (The italics are, of course, my own.)

This promise, I soon found with regret, was very far from being kept. Many facts and much evidence first hand and proven by indisputable testimony, is clearly omitted. This appears most noticeably in regard to the character, beliefs and influence of Mr. Lincoln’s mother. When a lawyer has promised the production of certain testimony, and then omits to introduce it, the conjecture is that his case has not developed just as he had planned it. But lawyers are usually frankly partisan.

In my humble opinion, you have done injustice to your subject by the manner of your treatment of the mother of Abraham Lincoln.

The Religious Influence of Lincoln's Mother.

You give a chapter of thirty-two pages to "The environment of Lincoln's boyhood," and scarcely a line, surely not a full paragraph without detraction, to the character, teaching or influence of his mother.

In effect, you say you have learned from reading Buckle's History of Civilization, that the development of an individual or a nation is profoundly influenced by environment. I have not read Buckle. Does he show a single authentic case where environment has swept away the firmly fixed spiritual anchor of an individual? Does your cited authority reverse the judgment of Solomon, rendered and formulated in an injunction three thousand years ago?

Environment, of course, should be studied. Environment may warp or develop, may profoundly influence an individual life; but if the anchor is shown to have been firmly fixed, as in Lincoln's case, I venture to say no environment, such as his is known to have been, has ever been shown to sweep that anchor away from the rock of truth.

There may be drifting and tossing, slacking and straining of the cable, darkness and storms may for years hide the rock, but the anchor holds, and the bark will not depart. So said the wise man, and so the religious life of Lincoln illustrated.

Have you not laid unprofitable stress upon the "character of the preaching which Abraham Lincoln heard in his boyhood" and forgotten his mother's Bible, and his mother's prayers?

You, no doubt, say truly that the prevailing and almost the sole type of preaching in that part of

Indiana during Lincoln's boyhood "was a very unprogressive type" and "*against it the boy, Abe Lincoln, rebelled.*" Why? Was it not the influence of his mother's teaching?

In attempting to set forth "The True Story of Lincoln's Spiritual Life and Convictions," as the advertisement of your book expresses it, can Lincoln's mother, her faith, her religion, her teachings, be ignored? Can one properly learn the secret of a tree's development and ignore its root?

In my humble opinion, it was very much more important to study the mother's religion, who held constant communion with the boy until he was nearly ten years of age, than to study the environments of either that mother or that boy during that period, or to inquire closely into the particular kind of a church that she joined with her husband, in a wilderness where churches were scarce, or the kind of preaching that the boy heard in those days, or even the preaching that he heard, or failed to hear, in after years, but of course this is only my opinion.

When I say religion, I mean, not the particular creed or doctrine of any church that she may have joined, but what was her girlhood religion, her woman's faith, her belief in God and about God, and her love of her boy.

Lincoln himself has not left the question of his mother's influence in doubt. Probably few prominent men of fifty-six have left such indisputable evidence as to the character and influence of his mother, and where and *by whom* his spiritual anchor was fixed.

I do not find that you have quoted any of these items of evidence in your book of upwards of 400 pages, and this is one of the omissions that I complain of.

J. G. Holland, as you know, in 1865, after the assassination, wrote a life of Lincoln, and in the preparation thereof went into the neighborhoods of all three of the states where Lincoln had lived, and where there were at that time many still living who knew personally Nancy Hanks Lincoln, the President's mother, and personally gathered the evidence as to both mother and son.

That Holland was not lacking in "training in or inclination toward historical investigation" (as you say Bishop Fowler was) must be admitted, and after such investigation he deliberately placed on record the facts that he found, and the conclusions that he came to, as follows:

"Mrs. Lincoln, the mother, was evidently a woman out of place among those primitive surroundings. She was five feet, five inches high, a slender, pale, sad and sensitive woman, with much in her nature that was truly heroic, and much that shrank from the rude life around her. A great man never drew his infant life from a purer or more womanly bosom than her own; and *Mr. Lincoln always looked back to her with an unspeakable affection.* Long after her sensitive heart and weary hands had crumbled into dust, and had climbed to life again in forest flowers, he said to a friend, with tears in his eyes: '*All that I am, or hope to be, I owe to my angel mother—blessings on her memory.*'"

"His character was planted in this Christian mother's life. Its roots were fed by this Christian mother's love; and those that have wondered at the truthfulness and earnestness of his mature character have only to remember that the *tree was true to the soil from which it sprang.*"

Even Herndon, who lifted up his heel against the son—mistakenly, no doubt—left on record a loving tribute to that mother, and he quotes from a friend, present at her deathbed, on October 5, 1818:

“The mother knew she was going to die, and called her children (Abe and Sarah) to her bedside. She was very weak, and the children leaned over while she gave her last message. Placing her feeble hand on little Abe’s head, she told him to be kind and good to his father and sister; to both she said ‘Be good to one another,’ expressing a hope that they might live *as they had been taught by her, to love their kindred and worship God.*”

Holland, again quoting from the White House, in Lincoln’s dark days, when he had buried his little Willie, says that after the funeral, when the Christian nurse expressed sympathy for him, Lincoln replied:

“I wish I had that childlike faith you speak of, and I trust He will give it to me.” And then he spoke of his mother, whom so many years before he had committed to the dust among the wilds of Indiana. In this hour of his great trial, the memory of her who had held him upon her bosom, and soothed his childish griefs, came back to him with tenderest recollections. *‘I remember her prayers,’* said he, *‘and they have always followed me. They have clung to me all my life.’*”

Isaac N. Arnold, Esq., was an intelligent, credible witness, an intimate friend, an attorney, and member of Congress, and had exceptional opportunities to know whereof he testified, and he says:

“No more reverent Christian than he ever sat in the executive chair, not excepting Washington. . . . From the time he left Springfield to his death he not only himself continually prayed for divine assistance, but continually asked the prayers of his friends for himself and his country. . . . Doubtless, like others, he passed through periods of doubt and perplexity, but *his faith in a Divine Providence began at his mother’s knee*, and ran through all the changes of his life.”

There is at least one more direct witness from whom you have quoted a remarkable incident—Father

Chiniquy—"The Apostle of Temperance of Canada." After describing his own deliverance from a criminal charge, based on perjured testimony before the court at Urbana, Illinois, in May, 1856, in which, after the adjournment of court at ten o'clock at night, the first day of the trial, his attorney, Lincoln, informed him that unless he could establish an alibi, he would be convicted in the morning, and added: "The only way to be sure of a favorable verdict tomorrow is that Almighty God would take our part, and show your innocence. *Go to Him and pray*, for He alone can save you," and when, at three o'clock, an unknown witness came and he was saved, that in Lincoln's talk with him in the morning, he said:

"The way you have been saved from their hand, the appearance of that young and intelligent Miss Moffat, who was really sent by God in the very hour of need, when, I confess it again, I thought everything was nearly lost, is one of the most extraordinary occurrences I ever saw. It makes me remember what I have too often forgotten, and *what my mother often told me when young—that our God is a prayer-hearing God. This good thought, sown into my young heart by that dear mother's hand, was just in my mind when I told you, 'Go and pray, God alone can save you.'* But I confess to you that I had not faith enough to believe that your prayer would be so quickly and so marvelously answered by the sudden appearance of that interesting young lady last night."

I repeat, I know of no man of prominence, who has not written his own autobiography, who has left more unimpeachable evidence as to where his spiritual anchor was fixed, and *who it was* that placed it. Neither his mother's character, nor her religious faith can be ignored in any proper study of the spiritual life of Abraham Lincoln.

It is true that you have not omitted entire reference to that mother. On page 86, when describing the

opportunities of the bleak environment, you say, "Herndon tells us of the fondness of the Hanks girls for camp-meetings, and describes one in which Nancy appears to have participated, a little time before her marriage. We have no reason to believe that was her last camp-meeting."

The facts that Herndon has left on record, are :

"The Hanks girls were great at camp-meetings."

"The Hanks girls were the finest singers and shouters in our county."

But even he seemed to hesitate to assert that it was Nancy Hanks that participated in the scene, at a certain Kentucky *camp-meeting*, fantastically described by his informant, an outsider, who, with his girl, stood upon a bench in order to look over into the altar, and to laugh at the shouting.

Notwithstanding this reference to camp-meetings, you had deliberately asserted, at the top of page 48: "It is a remarkable fact that the Lincoln family appears never at any time in its history, to have been strongly under the influence of Methodism."

Was it the Presbyterians or the hard shell Baptists that conducted camp-meetings in Kentucky during the first decade of 1800? I am somewhat in the dark, never having taught school in that state, even in the 80's, and not being specially educated in historical investigations.

To emphasize the fact that you make the statement deliberately, you add a note: "I do not forget that Thomas Lincoln and Nancy Hanks were married by Reverend Jesse Head, who was a Methodist preacher, but I do not find evidence that Mr. Head asserted any marked influence over them. Mr. Head was not only a minister, but a Justice of the Peace, and anti-slavery man, and a person of strong and righteous character.

I am not sure whether the fact that he performed the marriage is not due in some measure to the fact that he was about the court house, and a convenient minister to find."

This insinuation of a hasty marriage is unworthy, and of course unfounded and false. The record shows that the marriage bond was formally executed and filed two days before the wedding, and that the marriage was celebrated at the home of Richard Berry, and the infare at the home of her guardian, to both of which all the neighbors came, etc.

Is there any evidence that the active circuit rider, Rev. Jesse Head, "Deacon of the Methodist Episcopal Church" (as he signed himself), was in the habit of loafing around the court house? Where was this court house located?

At another place in your work, you admit that :

"I am inclined to think that the Hanks family had Methodist antecedents. Thomas and Nancy Lincoln were married by a Methodist preacher, Rev. Jesse Head. He is known to have been a foe of slavery, and there is some reason to think that the Lincoln family derived some part of its love of freedom from him."

There is no question of the correctness of these tardily admitted facts, and I am inclined to think that investigation would show that the hymns that Nancy Hanks sung were those of Charles Wesley, and that at the camp-meetings there were many sermons preached on Free Grace, and "Whosoever will," in short, that she was an ardent, devout, active Methodist.

Whether she was a Methodist or not is, in my view, unimportant. She was as the histories show, a loving, sincere, earnest, praying mother, who trained her boy in the way he should go, and any attempt to take from her her rightful crown of glory, and give it to any

preacher, or group of preachers, or cast it upon environment, will and should fail. Justice is due to her memory.

You have not written into any line the name of the denomination to which you belong, or the specific creed or doctrine to which you adhere. As a historian, of course, your personal views are entirely immaterial. A historian is expected to give all the facts without permitting his own views to influence the record by omissions, or otherwise. When a man undertakes, however, to record his own personal judgment, it is important to know what his personal beliefs are, as even unconsciously his mind may be warped thereby.

I have no reason for leaving anything to be read between the lines, and frankly say that I am a Methodist—a layman—and do not believe that my mind has been greatly warped by reading theology. It is not, however, my aim, and if you can comprehend it, it is not my wish or desire to prove that Lincoln was a Methodist.

I think Father Chiniquy came nearer the truth when he said that Lincoln was the embodiment of all which is more perfect and Christian in more than one denomination.

Personally, I believe that Lincoln's belief embodied more that was distinctively Methodist than Calvinist, and I do resent the slight you have attempted to place upon his mother.

Rev. Col. J. F. Jaquess—Conversion.

I respectfully submit that in your book you did injustice to my friend and former pastor, Rev. Edward L. Watson, D. D., now of Baltimore, in that you charge him with having reported hearsay details as direct testimony, and have done wrong to the memory

of Rev. Col. Jaquess in your assertion of the questionableness of the story as told by him, and wrong to the memory of Mr. Lincoln, in repeatedly asserting that his life, after 1847 (or even 1839), was not consistent with the truth of the events recited by Colonel Jaquess.

You have given over two pages to a subhead, "Was Abraham Lincoln a Methodist?"

Who did you ever know to claim that Lincoln was a Methodist?

In your book you say :

(1) "This question would seem to require no answer, yet it is one that should receive an answer, for claims have been made, and are still current, which *imply* that Lincoln was actually converted in the Methodist church, whose *doctrine* he accepted because Calvinism was repugnant to him; and that while he *continued* to attend the Presbyterian church, he was essentially a Methodist."

(2) "At a reunion of the Seventy-third Illinois Volunteers, held in Springfield on September 28 and 29, 1897, the colonel of that regiment, Rev. James F. Jaquess, D. D., related an incident in which he stated that while he was serving a Methodist church in Springfield *in 1839*, Mr. Lincoln attended *a series of revival services* held in that church, and was converted."

(3) "Twelve years later, in 1909, in connection with the Centenary Celebration of the birth of Lincoln, the story was reprinted, *with certain added details obtained* from the brother of Colonel Jaquess.

The death of Colonel Jaquess *and the additions made* by his brother give this incident its permanent form in the Christian Advocate article of November 11, 1909." (See appendix.)

(4) "That the story as told by Colonel Jaquess must have some element of truth I think beyond question; that it occurred exactly as he related it, I greatly doubt. The years between 1839 and 1897

numbered fifty-eight, and that is more than ample time for a man's memory to magnify and color incidents almost beyond recognition."

"The story as it is thus told lacks confirmatory evidence. *If* Lincoln was converted in a Methodist church in 1839 *and remained converted*, a considerable number of events which occurred in subsequent years might reasonably have been expected to have been otherwise than they really were. Each reader must judge for himself in the light of all that we know of Abraham Lincoln how much or how little of this story is to be accepted as literal fact. The present writer cannot say that he is convinced by the story."

(In Note)—"It is a story which it is *impossible to fit into* the life of Lincoln. In *Latest Light on Lincoln*, Page 396, Chapman says, 'There is every reason for giving this remarkable story unquestioning credence.' *On the contrary*, there is every good reason for questioning it at every essential point, and the questions do not evoke satisfactory answers."

After thus attempting to discount the story, and discredit both Dr. Watson and Colonel Jaquess, you published in full Dr. Watson's article of November 11, 1909, in the Appendix to your volume.

A careful reading of the article, even if not sympathetic, will show the many errors in your attempted repudiation of its truth. Dates are sometimes important, and every lawyer knows that testimony from memory as to dates is very unreliable, and usually practically worthless. It behooves a historian, therefore, to check up the dates, unless they are based specifically upon record.

The date that Rev. Jaquess preached the sermon upon "Ye must be born again"—which Mr. Lincoln listened to, and afterwards went to the parsonage where

Mr. Jaquess and his wife prayed with *him, was in May, 1847, not in 1839. I give simply the proper date, and will hereafter give the evidence that sustains it.

Mr. Jaquess' own story, as told by himself at the Eleventh Annual Reunion of the Survivors of the Seventy-third Regiment, held September 28 and 29, 1897, and which Dr. Watson correctly copied into his article of November 11, 1909, is as follows:

“Very soon after my second year's work as a minister in the Illinois conference, I was sent to Springfield. . . . It was one Sunday morning, a beautiful morning in May . . . the church happened to be filled that morning. It was a good sized church, but on that day all the seats were filled. I had chosen for my text the words, ‘Ye must be born again,’ and during the course of my sermon I laid particular stress on the word ‘*must*.’ Mr. Lincoln came in the church after the services had commenced, and there being no vacant seats, chairs were put in the altar in front of the pulpit and Mr. Lincoln and Governor French and wife sat in the altar during the entire services, Mr. Lincoln on my left and Governor French on my right, and I noticed that Mr. Lincoln appeared to be deeply interested in the sermon. A few days after that Sunday Mr. Lincoln called on me and informed me that he had been greatly impressed with my remarks on Sunday and that he had come to talk to me further on the matter. I invited him in, and my wife and I talked and prayed with him for hours. Now, I have seen many persons converted; I have seen hundreds brought to Christ, and if ever a person was converted, Abraham Lincoln was converted that night in my house. His wife was a Presbyterian, but from remarks he made to me he could not accept Calvinism. He never joined my church, but I will always believe that since that night Abraham Lincoln lived and died a Christian gentleman.”

Now, what is there in this story that is improbable, false, or inconsistent with the future life, habits and actions of Mr. Lincoln? What did he do after May, 1847, that was inconsistent with the most critical construction of Colonel Jaquess' statement?

Dr. Watson, in his article in the *Christian Advocate*, quoted this statement, word for word. He added nothing to it, except his own expression of pleasure that he was able to prove that Methodism had a hand in the making of the greatest American.

If you had read with care the first part of Dr. Watson's article, you would have seen that he was giving from memory the narrative told him personally by Colonel Jaquess twelve years before. There is not one syllable in the narrative admitted by Dr. Watson, to be "added details obtained from the brother of Colonel Jaquess," and your repeated assertion that Dr. Watson had reported "additions made by his brother" is wrong, and a wrong on your part to Dr. Watson.

That Dr. Watson had carried in his mind for twelve years without memoranda the narrative as clearly as stated, is really remarkable. He wrote it out in 1909 without having before him, very evidently, any memoranda of the incident,—not even the garbled accounts printed in the Minneapolis newspapers in May, 1897.

It appears that after Colonel Jaquess had told the incident to Dr. Watson, in May, 1897, that he was invited by him to attend the Minneapolis Ministers' Monday Meeting, which he did, and told to them there the same story that he related in September of the same year, before the soldiers' reunion in Springfield.

Dr. Watson having apparently partially prepared his article of 1909, discovered, after doing so, that the record was in the minutes of the proceedings of the reunion of the Regiment of 1897, and instead of re-

writing his own memory report, he says: "The narrative as told thus far is *as my memory recalls it*. Since writing it, the same, as told by Colonel Jaquess has recently been discovered by me in the minutes of the proceedings of the Eleventh Annual Reunion Survivors Seventy-third Regiment, Illinois Infantry Volunteers, page 30, a copy of which is before me," and he then quotes the record, both of which are before me.

As to the dates given by Dr. Watson from memory, there are three, only one of them is important—1894—the date that he came to Minneapolis, is correct; "1896," the date when he met Colonel Jaquess, should be 1897; and 1839 as the date of Colonel Jaquess' sermon that Lincoln listened to, should be 1847; but only one of them is important—1847.

If you had investigated the question, as a historian, before condemning it, you would have noticed this error in dates, because Colonel Jaquess was not a minister of the gospel in 1839. You will note that Colonel Jaquess says that the date that he came to Springfield was "very soon after my second year's work as a minister." The Illinois was a Spring conference. Methodist ministers were appointed annually, but never more than three years to the same place, and seldom more than two.

The year book of Depauw University—1884—gives Colonel Jaquess as an alumnus, with the following: "Graduated 1845, entered Illinois Conference; 1845 appointed to Shawneetown Circuit; 1846 Petersburg; 1847-48 Springfield; 1849 President Female College, Jackson; 1855 Paris Station; 1856 President College, Quincy, Illinois; . . . Address: London, England."

Hon. Augustus C. French was Governor of Illinois from December 9, 1846, to 1852, an irregular term,

caused by the Constitution being amended during his first term.

Lincoln was in Springfield in May, 1847, and until November, when he was absent for two years in Washington, D. C., in Congress.

This record does not contradict, but corroborates the story of Colonel Jaquess that in May, soon after his second year in the ministry, he had the opportunity of preaching a sermon to which Abraham Lincoln and Governor French and his wife might have listened. Did he? Who is the witness? Was he credible?

Let us look for a moment at your discounts:

(1) You assert that it is *implied* that Lincoln was actually converted in the Methodist church, whose *doctrine* he accepted, and that while he *continued* to attend the Presbyterian church, he was essentially a Methodist.

The record does not disclose any discussion of a distinctive "doctrine," accepted or otherwise. It was the necessity of a new birth that interested Lincoln. There was no *continuing* to attend the Presbyterian church, because Lincoln had not commenced in 1847, much less in 1839, according to your own record, to attend that church with his wife. It was not until after February 1, 1850, that he even became acquainted with Dr. James Smith, of Sacred Memory.

(2) You are wrong in asserting that, in 1897, before his comrades in Springfield, Rev. James F. Jaquess, D. D., related an incident in which he stated that "while he was serving a Methodist church in Springfield in 1839, Mr. Lincoln attended his service," etc. Colonel Jaquess pointed out the correct date, and a historian should not have perpetuated the erroneous date, given expressly from memory of a narrator, not

claiming to have been especially "trained in historical research."

(3) You are doubly wrong in asserting that "The story was reprinted *with certain added details obtained from the brother of Colonel Jaquess.*"

The brother added not a syllable, and even much less than a sympathetic reading of the article of November 11, 1909, would have shown this clearly, and that your assertions were a direct reflection on Dr. Watson.

(4) Your grounds for discrediting the story is the assumption that Colonel Jaquess had magnified and colored the incident almost beyond recognition during the fifty years that elapsed between the incident and the telling.

Stories grow by retelling. There is no evidence that Colonel Jaquess repeated the story more than three times, once to Dr. Watson, once to the Minneapolis ministers, and once to his comrades at their reunion.

Your questioning reflects on the character of Colonel Jaquess, and calls for a showing of the kind of man he really was, which I will aim to touch on hereafter.

Why Colonel Jaquess did not repeat this story over and over again during the fifty years, so that others who had written about Lincoln should have learned of it before 1897, is explained by the fact that Colonel Jaquess was not living in America at the time the questions were being raised as to the religious beliefs of Abraham Lincoln.

At the close of the war in 1866, he went into the Freedmen's Bureau, and until 1875 was engaged there and in work of restoration in the South. He then

became interested in business which took him to England, and for over twenty years he resided abroad.

The record only shows that he was able to attend two of the reunions of his regiment, at both of which he made the annual address.

In 1889 he came from London, expressly to attend that meeting, and after traveling 4,000 miles and meeting his comrades at their reunion, he stayed but twenty-four hours, and returned to meet pressing engagements in England.

The other time that he met with the regiment was in September, 1897, when he not only made the annual address, but related the incident in regard to Mr. Lincoln, which Dr. Watson quoted.

Bishop Fowler's oration, to which he referred, and which recalled the incident to his mind, was delivered first in Minneapolis in 1894, *not in 1904*, as you give the date on page 111. I had heard that admirable oration twice before 1904, and do not accept your attempted detractions. The Bishop, even if not having "had any training in or inclination toward historical investigation," had the advantage of being personally acquainted with Lincoln, and with many of his advisors.

Whether Dr. Jaquess had heard of the life of Lincoln by Herndon, or by Lamon, does not appear, but he had heard of Bishop Fowler's lecture, and as he says that that lecture reminded him that, "I happen to know something on that subject (Lincoln's religion) that very few persons know. My wife, who has been dead nearly two years, was the only witness of what I am going to state to you as having occurred," and then he narrates the occurrence to his comrades.

Your next statement is that the story, as it is thus told, lacks confirmatory evidence. The character of

Dr. Jaquess, then in his seventy-seventh year, would seem to be sufficient in itself; but you say that a considerable number of events which occurred in subsequent years might reasonably have been expected to have been otherwise than they really were, if Lincoln had been converted in a Methodist church.

What are those events? Is a definition of "conversion," as well as a definition of "infidelity" required?

You will note the language of Dr. Jaquess: "Now, I have seen many persons converted. I have seen hundreds brought to Christ, and if ever a person was converted, Abraham Lincoln was converted that night in my house. He never joined my church, but I will always believe that since that night Abraham Lincoln lived and died a Christian gentleman."

Was not this last true? In fact, is it not corroborated in every known event which occurred in Lincoln's life in subsequent years?

When Lincoln returned from Washington in 1849, Colonel Jaquess had gone from Springfield. Who his successor was I have not inquired.

Lincoln with his logical mind was not liable to attend church where the preaching was poor, and I know of no evidence that he attended any church after his return from Washington, until after February, 1850, when his wife attended, and in 1852 joined the Presbyterian church. He went with her to hear Dr. Smith, who was an able preacher. Dr. Smith did not claim, so far as your records show, that Mr. Lincoln was converted under his preaching, or in his church (he never joined it), and the most that can be claimed is that he enjoyed Dr. Smith's preaching—that he was helped by it, and that Dr. Smith with his book "The Christian's Defense," helped Lincoln to dissolve his doubts; he found the arguments "unanswerable."

It was a question of intellect and mind. Conversion rather is a matter of heart, I take it.

I have heard that Satan often comes back with old or new doubts after conversion. Lincoln seems to have been so assailed again in 1862, and it was an Episcopal rector who helped him. (Johnson on Lincoln the Christian, pp. 30-34.)

It seems to me that the story, as told by Colonel Jaquess, does fit into the life of Lincoln, and that there is no good reason for questioning any essential point of Colonel Jaquess' narrative.

You call New Salem Mr. Lincoln's *Alma Mater*—well and good. Mr. Lincoln came from his *Alma Mater* on his borrowed horse, with his mother's Bible, Aesop's Fables, and Pilgrim's Progress, but like many another young man, he evidently had been using his intellect and his reason while in that school, and came out with many unsolved doubts. He had, for the time being, gotten away from his mother's prayers, although he carried and read, and had memorized much of his mother's Bible, and the book and preaching of Dr. Smith was what was needed to help him over the doubts.

The evidence seems clear, aside from Colonel Jaquess' report, that somewhere between the time he alighted in front of Joshua's Speed's Store, April 15, 1837, and that February day in 1861, when he stood on the platform of the train, there had been a decided change of heart—a new birth—a conversion. His whole life shows it, and I know of no event subsequent to 1847 that contradicts the fact narrated by Colonel Jaquess.

That there was much unbelief in Springfield, as well as in New Salem, is evidenced by the fact that each of the three close friends of Lincoln—Herndon,

Lamon and Speed—believed himself to be an infidel.

After twenty-five years of such environment, Mr. Lincoln came forth on his way to the presidency, with his mother's Bible in his hand, a prayer upon his lips, and a firm faith in his heart that there was a prayer-hearing God, and that if the great God who assisted Washington, would be with and aid him, he would not fail in his allotted task.

Lincoln was converted just as Dr. Jaquess related.

It is interesting to note that Lincoln's closest friend, Joshua Speed, after his conversation with Lincoln in the Summer of 1864, upon belief in the Bible, overcame his skepticism and joined the Methodist Episcopal church.

You have deliberately so reflected upon Colonel Jaquess, "the Fighting Parson," that a slight acquaintance with him should be sought. You lay down as the first question in weighing testimony, "Is the witness credible?"

It is well. What kind of a man was Rev. James Frazier Jaquess, D. D., pastor of the Methodist Episcopal church, Springfield, from the Spring of 1847 until 1849?

Chapter 8, of the History of the "Preacher Regiment," sometimes called "The Methodist Regiment," which was enlisted by Colonel Jaquess, and commanded by him from Shilo to the end of the war, is devoted to the life of its colonel, was written by one who knew him well, and says of him as a preacher and teacher:

"During his whole career as a preacher and teacher, Mr. Jaquess was a man of strongly marked individuality. His address was polished and winning, his presence magnetic to a marked degree. He influenced all with whom he came in contact, and made friends by the thousand in all parts of the country. He was in great demand in the pulpit and

on the platform, his oratory being of the earnest, electric kind, that was popular with all classes of people, from the ripest scholar to the humblest laborer or frontiersman. He was never abashed in any company, and no man ever felt abashed in his. He took a living interest in all public affairs; but in his chosen sphere as a Christian minister he shone to unsurpassed advantage. Whenever it was announced that he was to preach, whether at a city church, a cross-road schoolhouse, or a backwoods camp-meeting, hundreds flocked to hear and went away to praise."

Just the man Lincoln would be expected to wish to hear, and to be willing to pay a quarter to be sure that he might not be bored by a journeyman.

After Shilo, he resigned as chaplain of the Sixth Illinois, and asked the privilege of raising and commanding a "Methodist Regiment" for the war. This regiment was unique, nearly all of the commissioned officers from the colonel down, and twenty of the privates, were licensed Methodist preachers, while something over 600 of the soldiers in the ranks were members of the Methodist Episcopal church. When mustered out, the record showed that it had been in ten battles, and many skirmishes, and of the 972 members, 215 had been killed or died of wounds or disease, while 182 had been discharged on account of wounds or disabilities; that its colonel had two horses killed under him in battle. His son of fourteen years was a drummer boy, captured and escaped, and is the subject of the romance, "The Boy of Chickamauga."

In 1864, when all at home were tired of the war, certain parties from the South were in Canada, at Niagara Falls, talking peace, and Horace Greeley was urging Lincoln to treat with them, and the Peace Party in the North was growing like a snowball upon a descending incline. Lincoln believed it would be desir-

able, if possible, to sound Jefferson Davis personally, and as he expressed it, "draw his fire."

Colonel Jaquess had proposed undertaking such a trip to General Rosencrans, who wrote to Lincoln, forwarding Jaquess' letter by J. R. Gilmore, the anti-slavery writer and lecturer, of Boston. Gilmore had three interviews with the President, who while anxious to obtain the information, said the trip, if made, must be taken on individual, unofficial responsibility, and that it would be dangerous, and finally Lincoln insisted that Gilmore accompany Jaquess. The trip was made.

They carried "terms" to be talked *to*, but under no circumstances to be known as dictated by Lincoln. These were characteristic—"Surrender, Union, Emancipation,—then Amnesty, Compensation for Slaves." Lincoln said, "I know Jaquess will be discreet. Explain to him why I can not see him personally. I don't want to hurt his feelings."

A two hour conference was had with Mr. Davis and Benjamin, his secretary of state.

A partial report was published in the September and December Atlantic Monthly, 1864, as "Our Visit to Richmond." The balance as "A Suppressed Chapter in History" in the same magazine, April, 1887. The result was that they drew from Davis personally the ultimatum, "We are not fighting for slavery, *we are fighting for independence*," and Lincoln said to Gilmore, "This may be worth as much to us as a half dozen battles. Jaquess was right, *God's hand is in it*. Publish a card of the result of your visit; get it into the Tribune; everybody is agog to hear your report. It will show the country that I didn't fight shy of Greeley's Niagara business without a reason."

The result of the visit was published all over the North, the Peace Party melted away and Lincoln was triumphantly re-elected.

When Gilmore was urging the President to give Jaquess an official standing for his trip, Lincoln said, "I know Jaquess. He feels that he is acting as God's servant and messenger, and he would recoil from anything like political finesse. We want to draw Davis' fire, but we must do it fairly."

Garfield, Chase, Sumner and Rosencrans all approved of Colonel Jaquess' action, and were with President Lincoln delighted with the result as a great service to the country.

Gilmore in his report in 1864, in the Atlantic, said of his companion: "A man more cool, more brave, more self-confident, more self-devoted than this quiet 'Western Parson,' it never was my fortune to encounter."

Now it was just thirty-three years from the time of Colonel Jaquess' return from Richmond with the word that war or disunion was the only terms possible, and the whole country was ringing with his name, that he related to his comrades in arms the story of Lincoln's visit to his parsonage in Springfield in 1847. He was then still vigorous and clear-headed, though in his seventy-seventh year. He was not the man either to magnify or exaggerate. *He was a credible witness*, and I submit that Dr. Chapman was correct when he recorded this incident "with complete assurance of its correctness," and that he was far more correct than you when he wrote in his *Latest Light on Lincoln*, "There is every reason for giving this remarkable story unquestioning credence."

I beg to enclose a copy of the photograph of the witness. I am informed by his niece, Miss Fanny M. Jaquess, Acting Secretary of the Woman's Christian Association of Minneapolis, that she understands the original was taken in 1889, on the occasion of the reunion that year.

Creed

You have compiled for Abraham Lincoln a "creed" of nine articles. I have no fault to find with any one article taken from his addresses, messages, proclamations, and personal letters, written by himself. Half truths by omission is a fault.

You say in regard to the selections you have made for your purpose:

"We might go much farther and could find a considerable body of additional material, but this is sufficient and more than sufficient *for our purpose*. In these utterances may be found something of the determinism that was hammered into Lincoln by *the early Baptist preachers* and riveted by James Smith, along with some of the humanitarianism of Parker and Channing, *and much which lay unstratified* in Lincoln's own mind but flowed spontaneously from his pen or dropped from his lips because it was *native* to his thinking and had come to be a component part of his life. Anyone who cares to do so may piece these utterances together and test his success in making a creed out of them. They lend themselves somewhat readily to such an arrangement."

As to the early preaching, you had already recorded that against it, "the boy Abe Lincoln rebelled," and that he only mimicked and ridiculed their hammering.

You have again forgotten his mother, and failed to give her credit for the "*much which lay unstratified* in Lincoln's own mind—which was *native* to his thinking and had come to be a component part of his life."

In your study of fourteen pages of the question of "Why did Lincoln never join the church?" you found yourself compelled to accept Lincoln's own answer, as established beyond any reasonable doubt, as being his own, and might, it seems to me, have been properly made an article of this constructed creed:

"I believe that whosoever loves the Lord, his God, with all his heart and soul, and mind and strength, and his neighbor as himself, is a Christian and should be admitted as a member of the visible church."

The testimony supporting this article in the reported language of Mr. Lincoln himself is:

"I have never united myself to any church, because I have found difficulty in giving my assent, without mental reservation, to the long, complicated statements of Christian doctrine which characterize their articles of belief and confessions of faith. When any church will inscribe over its altars, as its sole qualification for membership, the Saviour's condensed statement of the substance of both law and gospel, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbor as thyself,' that church will I join with all my heart and all my soul."

Whether you are right or not in your contention that the fault was not all with the churches, but that "Some share of the responsibility for his failure to unite with the church must belong to Lincoln himself," it would have been much fairer and seemed less partisan to not have omitted from a "creed" thrust upon him in the first person, this article again and again, announced by him and proven beyond a reasonable doubt by three credible witnesses, one of them Rev. Phineas D. Gurley, Presbyterian pastor, of Washington, one Hon. Henry C. Deming, Congressman for Connecticut, who testified to it June 8, 1865, before there was time to permit any growth or exaggeration.

You say "Lincoln lacked some of the finer feelings." He never lacked in scrupulous, conscientious honesty; he never tried to mislead a court or jury by suppressing material testimony, rather he ran away and washed his hands.

You entirely ignore the teaching of his mother, slight her as he never did, and yet repeat "though a Calvinist in his early training"—"The Calvinism which he inherited and heard through his childhood." Trained by whom? Inherited from whom? Heard where? Not at his mother's knee. I am sure your historical research has found no evidence that any such inheritance, training or teaching came from this mother.

The mother and the mother's influence can not be thus ignored in any "True Story of Lincoln's Life and Convictions."*

The People Called Methodists

Having, on page 48, asserted, for an evident purpose, as a statement of fact, "that the Lincoln family appears never at any time in its history to have been strongly under the influence of Methodism," thus slighting and ignoring entirely the mother, and your own statement on page 36, as to her participation before and after her marriage in camp-meetings in Kentucky, you again, on page 64, make the assertion that Lincoln's "association with Methodists was largely in the political arena, where he crossed swords three times with Peter Cartwright." This statement lacks historical accuracy.

After complimenting the Presiding Elder Cartwright, as a doughty hero of the cross, who exerted a mighty influence for good in early Illinois, you say:

*Note—In the "Outlook" of April 14, 1920, Lyman Abbott, reviewing Dr. Barton's book, says:

"Herndon says he was a fatalist—Barton that he was a Calvinist. He certainly was not a John Calvin Calvinist. John Calvin held that man had lost his freedom in the fall; and Abraham Lincoln's whole understanding of life was based on his belief in the free will, and therefore the moral responsibility of man."

“He, Lincoln, could not have failed to respect such men, but it is not altogether certain that he was tempted to love them.”

It is not altogether certain just what you mean by “them,” but I hold no brief for the Methodists; they need no defense.

I was impelled to write this letter by reason of the glaring injustice and wrong attempted to be done to Abraham Lincoln’s mother, and to my friend, Dr. Watson, and the memory of his friend, Dr. Jaquess. Both of these wrongs grated upon my sense of justice.

As to Lincoln’s love of Methodists, the history is too full to require citations. They and their influence were ever with his family and with him, in increasing numbers and force, from the cabin in Kentucky to the White House and the tomb, where Bishop Simpson pronounced the funeral oration.

The soul of Abraham Lincoln was too large to admit of prejudice or bickering over sects, doctrines, or dogmas. While he prayed, “God bless the Methodist church,” he added, “Bless all the churches,” and while at his invitation both Bishop Simpson and Bishop Janes prayed with him in the White House, so did his Quaker lady friend more than once, and he said to her, “I feel helped and strengthened by your prayers.”

He also found strength and help from the Episcopal rector, Francis Vinton, D. D., as well as from the prayers of Dr. Smith and Dr. Gurley, the pastors of his wife’s Presbyterian churches. He was one of the elect who learned of the doctrine by willing to do the will of his Master, and any attempt to contract that great soul to promote a dogma is unworthy and unseemly. Neither Dr. Smith nor Dr. Gurley ever made such an attempt, or intimated such a claim.

Bishop Simpson is the only one to whom it is known that Lincoln showed his proposed Emancipation

Proclamation before he read it to the Cabinet, and he suggested that there ought to be a recognition of God in that important paper, which may have led to Lincoln's accepting and adopting the last sentence in practically the language submitted by a member of his Cabinet.

Dr. Bowman, afterwards Bishop, was chaplain of the Senate during the last year of the war, and tells of Bishop Simpson being sent for by Lincoln on many occasions for consultation upon public matters, and that Lincoln held him in the highest esteem, and attached much importance to his counsel; never failed to attend upon his ministry, as he preached often in Washington, while Lincoln was in the White House, and Dr. Bowman gives this instance:

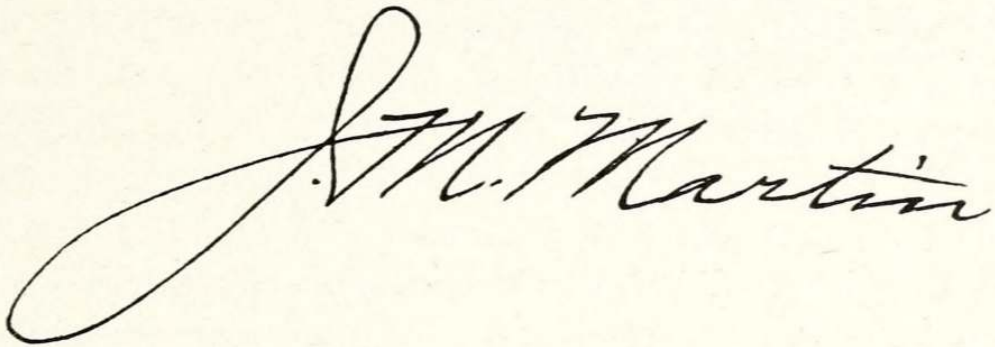
“On one occasion, with two or three friends, I was conversing with Mr. Lincoln, near the distant window in the ‘Blue Room,’ when, unexpectedly, the door opened and Bishop Simpson entered. Immediately the President raised both arms, and started for the bishop almost on a run. When he reached him he grasped him with both hands and exclaimed, ‘Why, Bishop Simpson, how glad I am to see you!’ In a few moments we retired, and left them alone. I afterwards learned that they spent several hours in private, and that this was one of the times when the bishop had been specially asked by the President to come to Washington for such an interview.”

The task would be endless to show the many cases where not only Lincoln was influenced by, but where it is “altogether certain that he was not only tempted but that he did love” such men,—among them Rev. Peter Akers, D. D., at the camp-meetings near the Salem church; Dr. Jaquess, in Springfield; Dr. Bowman, Bishop Janes and Bishop Simpson at Washington—but enough.

As I have said before, I have no desire to prove that Lincoln was a Methodist, nor have I any need to

defend the Methodist church or individual Methodists. This letter has been called forth by the injustice attempted to be done to the memory of Lincoln's angel mother, and the slight deliberately attempted to be placed upon my personal friend and former pastor, Dr. Watson, and I am, Sir,

Yours for an unbiased and true story of Lincoln's Spiritual Life and Convictions,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "J. M. Martin". The signature is written in dark ink on a light-colored background. The first letter "J" is large and loops around the "M". The "M" is also large and loops around the "A". The "A" is followed by "r", "t", "i", "n" in a fluid, connected cursive style.

405 Marquette Avenue.

APPENDIX

THE CONVERSION OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

By the REV. EDWARD L. WATSON.

The religion of Abraham Lincoln is so much in debate that I feel called upon to give the following narrative of an event of which little seems to be known—and which is of real importance in understanding the man. He has been called an infidel—an unbeliever of varying degrees of blatancy. That he was a Christian in the real sense of the term is plain from his life. That he was converted during a Methodist revival seems not to be a matter of common report. The personal element of this narrative is necessary to unfold the story. In 1894 I was appointed to the pastorate of the Hennepin Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church, Minneapolis, Minn., by Bishop Cyrus D. Foss, being transferred from Frederick, Md., a charge in Baltimore Conference. It was in October that we entered the parsonage, which was a double house, the other half being rented by the trustees. Shortly after our occupancy of the church house William B. Jacquess moved into the rented half of the property, and through this fact I became acquainted with Colonel James F. Jacquess, his brother. At this time Colonel Jacquess was an old man of eighty years or more, of commanding presence and wearing a long beard, which was as white as snow. His title grew out of the fact of his being the commanding officer of the Seventy-third Illinois Volunteer Infantry, known as the Preacher Regiment. Its name was given through the publication in the Cincinnati Commercial in September, 1862, of the roster of its officers:

Colonel—Rev. James F. Jacquess, D. D., late president of Quincy College.

Lieutenant Colonel—Rev. Benjamin F. Northcott.

Major—Rev. William A. Presson.

Captains—Company B, Rev. W. B. M. Colt; Company C, Rev. P. McNutt; Company F, Rev. George W. Montgomery; Company H, Rev. James I. Davidson; Company I, Rev. Peter Wallace; Company K, Rev. R. H. Laughlin.

Six or seven of the twenty lieutenants were also licensed Methodist preachers. Henry A. Castle, sergeant major, was the author of the article and a son-in-law, if I mistake not, of Colonel Jacquess.

The history of this regiment is, in brief, as follows: It was organized at the instance of Governor Dick Yates, under Colonel Jacquess, in August, 1862, at Camp Butler, in Illinois, and became part of General Buell's army. It fought nobly at Perryville, and in every battle in which the Army of the Cumberland was engaged, from October, 1862, to the rout of Hood's army at Nashville. Its dead were found at Murfreesboro, Chickamauga, Missionary Ridge, where Colonel Jacquess won especial distinction, and in the succession of battles from Chattanooga to the fall of Atlanta. It was frequently complimented by the commanding generals and was unsurpassed in bravery and endurance. It left the state one of the largest, and returned one of the smallest, having lost two-thirds of its men in its three years' service.

Colonel Jacquess was its only colonel and came home disabled by wounds received at Chickamauga, where two horses were shot under him. He refused to the last (1897) to receive a pension, until in his extreme old age, at the urgent request of the Society of the Survivors of the Seventy-third Illinois, he allowed

it to be applied for. He pathetically said: "My grandfathers were Revolutionary soldiers and you could get up a row if you mentioned pensions. My father and my uncles were in the War of 1812, and would take none. I had hoped not to receive one—but I am unable now to do anything, and it has been my desire, and not the fault of the government, that I have never received a pension." These words were spoken in 1897—and not long afterward Colonel Jacquess went to his reward.

Toward the end of the war President Lincoln sent Colonel Jacquess as a secret emissary to arrange for peace and the settlement of the slave question, so as to avert further shedding of blood. His adventures in this role are of thrilling interest. The foregoing is told to show the quality of the man whom it was my privilege to meet in 1896, when he was in extreme old age. The honors conferred upon him by President Lincoln and the confidence reposed in him grew out of events which preceded the war. This was no other than the conversion of Mr. Lincoln under the ministry of the Rev. James F. Jacquess, at Springfield, Ill., in the year 1839. The Rev. James F. Jacquess was stationed at this new town—then of but a few thousand inhabitants—in 1839, when Lincoln met him during a series of revival services conducted in the Methodist Episcopal Church. Lincoln had but recently come to the town—having removed from New Salem, which was in a decadent state. As a member of the legislature, Lincoln had been a chief agent in establishing the state capital at Springfield, and though in debt and exceedingly poor, he hoped to find friends and practice in the growing town. He was then thirty years of age, and had had few advantages of any sort. It was on a certain night, when the pastor preached from the text, "Ye must be born again," that Lincoln was

in attendance and was greatly interested. After the service he came round to the little parsonage, and, like another Nicodemus, asked, "How can these things be?" Mr. Jacquess explained as best he could the mystery of the new birth, and at Lincoln's request, he and his wife kneeled and prayed with the future President. It was not long before Mr. Lincoln expressed his sense of pardon and arose with peace in his heart.

The narrative, as told thus far, is as my memory recalled it. Since writing it, the same as told by Colonel Jacquess has recently been discovered by me in Minutes of the Proceedings of the Eleventh Annual Reunion Survivors Seventy-third Regiment, Illinois Infantry, Volunteers (page 30), a copy of which is before me. This meeting, the last (probably) that Colonel Jacquess attended, was held Tuesday and Wednesday, September 28, 29, 1897, in the Supreme Court room of the State Capitol Building, Springfield, Ill. To quote Colonel Jacquess: "The mention of Mr. Lincoln's name recalls to my mind an occurrence that perhaps I ought to mention. I notice that a number of lectures are being delivered recently on Abraham Lincoln. Bishop Fowler has a most splendid lecture on Abraham Lincoln, but they all, when they reach one point, run against a stone wall, and that is in reference to Mr. Lincoln's religious sentiments. I happen to know something on that subject that very few persons know. My wife, who has been dead nearly two years, was the only witness of what I am going to state to you as having occurred. Very soon after my second year's work as a minister in the Illinois Conference, I was sent to Springfield. There were ministers in the Illinois Conference who had been laboring for twenty-five years to get to Springfield, the capital of the state. When the legislature met, there were a great many people here, and it was thought to be a

matter of great glory among the ministers to be sent to Springfield. But I was not pleased with my assignment. I felt my inability to perform the work. I did not know what to do. I simply talked to the Lord about it, however, and told Him that unless I had help I was going to run away. I heard a voice saying to me 'Fear not,' and I understood it perfectly. Now I am coming to the point I want to make to you. I was standing at the parsonage door one Sunday morning, a beautiful morning in May, when a little boy came up to me and said: 'Mr. Lincoln sent me around to see if you was going to preach today.' Now, I had met Mr. Lincoln, but I never thought any more of Abe Lincoln than I did of any one else. I said to the boy: 'You go back and tell Mr. Lincoln that if he will come to church he will see whether I am going to preach or not.' The little fellow stood working his fingers and finally said: 'Mr. Lincoln told me he would give me a quarter if I would find out whether you are going to preach.' I did not want to rob the little fellow of his income, so I told him to tell Mr. Lincoln that I was going to try to preach. I was always ready and willing to accept any assistance that came along, and whenever a preacher, or one who had any pretense in that direction, would come along I would thrust him into my pulpit and make him preach, because I felt that anybody could do better than I could.

The church was filled that morning. It was a good-sized church, but on that day all the seats were filled. I had chosen for my text the words: 'Ye must be born again,' and during the course of my sermon I laid particular stress on the word 'must.' Mr. Lincoln came into the church after the services had commenced, and there being no vacant seats, chairs were put in the altar in front of the pulpit, and Mr. Lincoln and Governor French and wife sat in the altar during the

entire services, Mr. Lincoln on my left and Governor French on my right, and I noticed that Mr. Lincoln appeared to be deeply interested in the sermon. A few days after that Sunday Mr. Lincoln called on me and informed me that he had been greatly impressed with my remarks on Sunday and that he had come to talk with me further on the matter. I invited him in, and my wife and I talked and prayed with him for hours. Now, I have seen many persons converted; I have seen hundreds brought to Christ, and if ever a person was converted, Abraham Lincoln was converted that night in my house. His wife was a Presbyterian, but from remarks he made to me he could not accept Calvinism. He never joined my church, but I will always believe that since that night Abraham Lincoln lived and died a Christian gentleman."

Here ends the narrative of Colonel Jacquess. Now compare that which my memory preserved for the past thirteen years and the Colonel's own printed account, and the discrepancies are small. It is with pleasure I am able to confirm my memory by the words of the original narrator. It is with no small degree of pleasure that I am able to prove that Methodism had a hand in the making of the greatest American. Colonel James F. Jacquess has gone to his reward, but it is his honor to have been used by his Master to help in the spiritualization of the great man who piloted our national destinies in a time of exceeding peril. It is an honor to him, and through him to the denomination of which he was a distinguished member.

Baltimore, Md.

(The Christian Advocate—November 11, 1909.)



REV. COL. JAMES F. JAQUESS



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