

JEFFERSON DAVIS,  
AMERICAN



William J. Cooper, Jr.



Alfred A. Knopf

New York

2000

Vaina  
forceful personality  
lack of civility  
unnecessarily abrasive

Davis - a wealthy man -  
35 to 46,000 a year  
average income  
61500 yrs.

Joseph and Vaina didn't  
always get along. She was  
jealous for her husband's attention

Lee - 1861 - 1865  
53 to 57 yrs. old

Ft. Bragg  
Kenner, LA  
SLIDEL, LA.

John Breckenridge  
V.P. under Buchanan  
Sec. of War under Davis

Congress  
Cabinet - 1853 - 1857  
Senate - 1857 - 1861  
Slaves - 1835 Pemberton only slave  
1840 - 35  
during 40's - 72

final antebellum decade 113  
Slave jury  
forbade corporal  
punishment

609. William Cooper  
Jefferson Davis, American  
Taped: January 31, 2001 (11a)  
Aired: 4/8/01  
Tape #: 113,292



b. June 3, 1808 - Christian County, Ky. Wed Jan 31 11a.m.  
named for Jefferson - he was 10th child  
Baptist - Welsh D. Dec 6, 1889

What about the bad eye

July 1828 - leaves West Point - not been home for 5 years.  
stationed Ft. Crawford, Wis. meets Sarah Knox Taylor

June 17, 1835 - marries Zachary Taylor's daughter in Louisville - he was 27  
dies 3 months later of malaria.

<sup>p45</sup> Varina - 17 yrs old - J.D. 35 - 2 1/2 yrs. younger than her mother  
Wedding Feb 26, 1845 at the Brins  
elected to Congress in Nov.

Oregon/Cal. Mexican War Texas became state 1845  
Battle of Buena Vista - wounded foot

1847 - Polk names Davis as Brig. General - returned it down p162  
(named Senator) - leaves Varina at home - unhappy with her  
(he's 39 1/2 yrs old)  
1853 - Secretary of War - Pierce Admin.

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Feb 4, 1861 - 11 states meet in Montgomery  
Constitutional convention  
Confederate States of America  
electoral college  
Unicameral Congress  
Confederate Constitution - affirmed slavery and state's right  
Davis triumphed easily - no one else got votes  
goes to Montgomery - doesn't return to Buena Vista for 7 years



He says throughout the book - He never advocated  
secession

father fought in Revolution

3 brothers fought with Jackson at New Orleans  
Davis entered West Point at 16

1848

The Wilmot Proviso - northern Democrats insisted on it

2. Taylor runs as a Whig - Lewis Cass for Dem  
Popular Sovereignty

Dred Scott

John Calhoun - what was his impact  
Wilmot Proviso - prohibit slavery in any state taken or purchased from Mexico  
Missouri Compromise - blocked slavery north of  $36^{\circ} 30'$



Foots and Davis had altercation - Christmas day  
1847  
pistols in the room - 2 yrs. later in New Orleans  
another flare-up  
issue was popular  
sovereignty

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first child born 1852 - Samuel Emory Davis

his eye problem - Type I herpes simplex virus

Governor contest - Foots and Quitman pummeled each other  
1857 - Davis resigned from Senate - runs for Governor  
against Foots.

States Rights vs. Union Party  
Davis denounced compromise of 1850

Sec. of War - immediate staff - 11 (p250)  
Army 10,417

Winfield Scott ran for Pres (Union) 1852 - kept his commission  
Pierce (Brig Gen) assigned to Scott's command

went to Senate after 4 years as Sec. of War  
Davis tried to belittle Win. Scott - Soup story - Vanini's  
dinner party (p254)

At. Senate 4:30 A.M. April 12, 1861

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The Dred Scott decision  
John Brown's Raid at Harpers Ferry  
What did Davis think of Blacks fighting for Confederacy



BOOKNOTES  
2001-04-08

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PUBLISHED BY ALFRED A. KNOPF

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Published in the United States by Alfred A. Knopf, a division of Random House, Inc.,  
New York, and simultaneously in Canada by Random House of Canada Limited, Toronto.  
Distributed by Random House, Inc., New York.

www.aaknopf.com

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Cooper, William J. (William James), Jr.  
Jefferson Davis, American / William J. Cooper, Jr.—1st ed.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references (p. ) and index.

ISBN 0-394-56916-4

1. Davis, Jefferson, 1808-1889. 2. Presidents—Confederate States of  
America—Biography. 3. Confederate States of America—Biography.  
4. Statesmen—United States—Biography. I. Title.

E467.I.D26 C66 2000

973.7'13'092—dc21

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00-062006

Manufactured in the United States of America  
First Edition

FRONTISPIECE:

Jefferson Davis, c. 1860 (photograph by Mathew Brady).  
Courtesy Library of Congress

Jan 5, 1861 - a caucus of senators from states  
moving toward secession called for a creation of  
a Southern Confederacy



Davis' West Point day - courts martial  
finished 163 out of 208

How many men who had been active in government  
in the north moved to join Southern government?

Ft. Monroe Conference - Lincoln and Seward participated

Feb 5, 1865 5 men met on Lincoln's steamer  
mission failed.

Did Davis ever meet Lincoln - he called Lincoln  
"His Majesty Abraham the First"

Davis against 13th Amendment - Abolition Slavery

Davis was willing to sever Slavery for European Recognition

P287-88

1858 - Le Compton

Senator William Seward  
visits daily

Feb 13 -

Davis laid up for 2 months  
depressed - painful illness  
eye inflamed - darkened rooms



Relationships with two generals - at odds with  
p623 Pierre Beauregard  
Joseph Johnston

Jubal Early - Southern Historical Society

Jubal Benjamin

1885 - T.R. associated Davis with Benedict Arnold

Book of his New England Speeches to Countess Albert Brown  
named his son Joseph instead of William - upset Virginia  
Virginia had no use for Joseph letting him know  
how she felt

Jefferson  $\Delta$  Virginia Rigid Triangle  
Joseph



Andrew Johnson accused J.P. of complicity in Lincoln's death  
Fortress Monroe - in prison - visited by Taylor - brother-in-law  
shackled before prison

\* Sarah Dorsey - she dies 1879  
at Beauvoir - where Davis lived - Varina  
a contemporary didn't want to go there but did and  
got along with Sarah especially when Varina turned ill.

1876 - David - became Pres. of International Chamber of Commerce  
he was 68 - has a 12 year old daughter (Winnie)

Canadian stay - Montreal and Lennoxville - small hotel (P576)  
fell down stairs - broke two ribs  
moved to London  
Paris  
Joseph dies at about 86  
Back to U.S. - Memphis  
Peabody Hotel  
Varina's health  
son Billy dies at 11

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Mounting criticism of Davis - 1865 P508  
becomes an inviting target

- ① erred in retaining Gen. Joseph Johnston
- ② mismanaged western war
- ③ had interfered with Generals in the field

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The end of Davis' presidency P 534  
Acme near Irwinville May 10, 1865



1881 - Rise and Fall  
is published - Davis  
takes possession of  
Brieffield

Ben Montgomery -  
a slave  
Davis never thought they  
could succeed

Became President  
of Cowling Life  
Memphis  
Resigned Aug 25, 1873

Has no money

1875 - Started working  
on book - Rise and Fall  
4 years - working on book

(neuralgia  
bronchial difficulties  
eye disease -  
problems - right hip  
all interrupted process)

2 volumes 1881  
one - 200 pages  
two - 800 pages