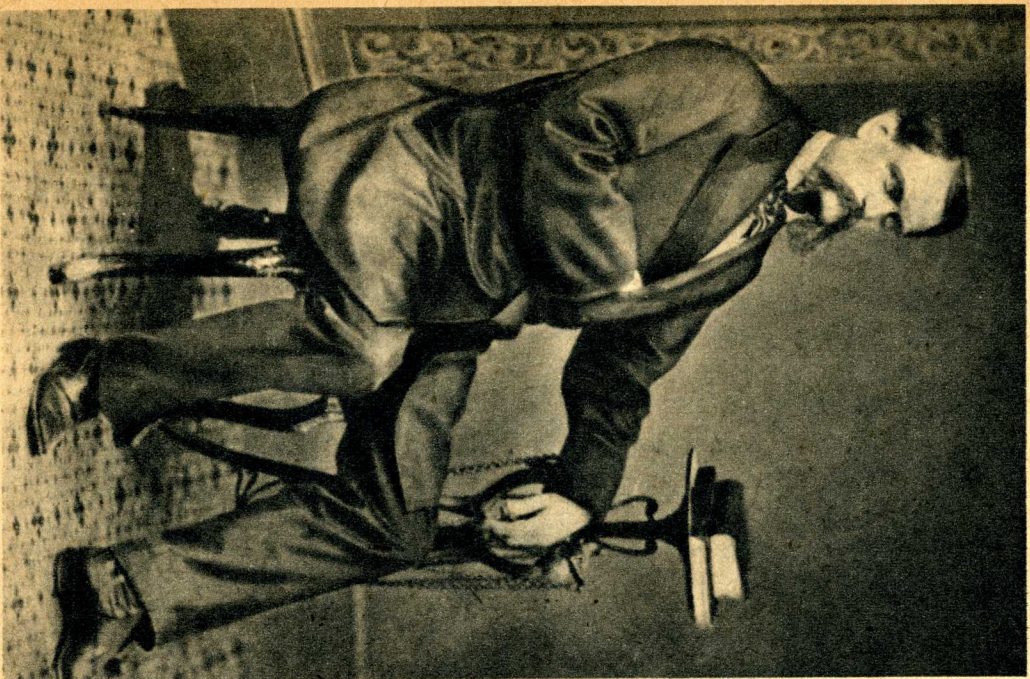


He Was Vice President At 35

Breckinridge was also a Confederate stalwart



John Breckinridge was an important man in 1854, even if he did pose like this for a photo.

WHEN Kentucky-born Abraham Lincoln captured the Presidency in the four-cornered race of 1860, one of his defeated opponents—John C. Breckinridge—was from Lexington, Ky.—the home of Mrs. Lincoln.

Grandson of the attorney general under President Jefferson, Breckinridge was born in Fayette County in 1821. He studied law at Transylvania, the alma mater of the President in whose cabinet he was later to serve—Jefferson Davis.

Breckinridge sought office for the first time when he ran for the legislature, as a Democrat in a predominantly Whig district, and was elected.

So grateful was he in 1853 to Owen County, for giving him a large enough majority to elect him to Congress, Breckinridge gave his son the unique name of Owen County Breckinridge.

He was the youngest vice president in American history, being elected on the same ticket with James Buchanan at 35.

The 1860 election was a phenomenal one. The Republicans nominated Lincoln, and the Democratic Party split, the northern wing nominating Stephen A. Douglas, and the southern wing, the pro-slavery Breckinridge. A fourth party nominated John Bell. Kentucky returned a plurality for Bell. Breckinridge ran second.

At the outbreak of the Civil War, Breckinridge cast his lot with the South, acting first as general. Two months before the war closed, President Davis appointed him secretary of war.

Upon the collapse of the Confederacy, he fled the country and lived abroad until pardoned by the President. During his last six years, Breckinridge practiced law in Lexington. He died in 1875 and is buried in the Lexington Cemetery.