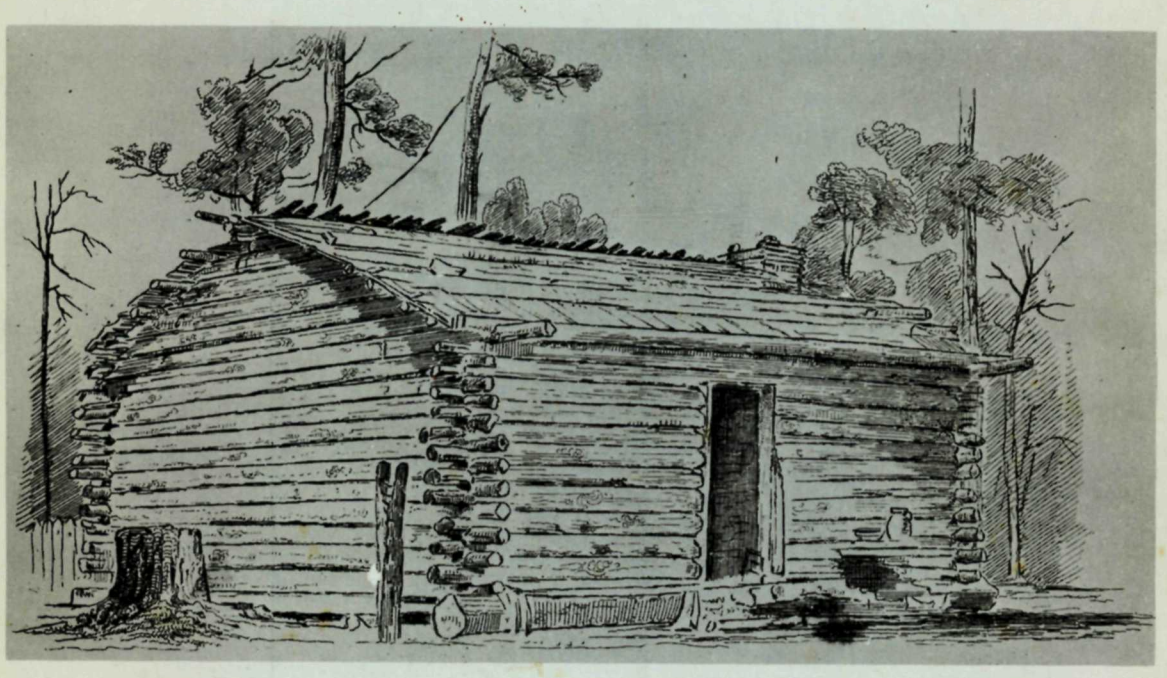
LINCOLN BOYHOOD

INDIANA



April 30, 1967

Lincoln Boyhood

As A Living Historical Farm

by

Edwin C.Bearss

DIVISION OF HISTORY

April 30, 1967

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction---------- 1

I. THE GEOGRAPHY OF SPENCER COUNTY, 1816-1830---------- 4

II. THE FARM - THE RESOURCES---------- 31

III. THE FARM - CLEARING AND CULTIVATING THE LAND ---------- 71

IV. THE FARM - CROPS RAISED BY THOMAS LINCOLN, 1816-1830------ 94

V. THE LINCOLN GARDEN OR VEGETABLE PATCH, 1816-1830----------108

VI. THE LINCOLN ORCHARD----------119

VII. FLOWERS FOUND ON THE LINCOLN FARM----------121

VIII. THE LINCOLN LIVESTOCK ----------123

IX. POULTRY----------137

X. ANIMALS AS PETS----------139

XI. THE LINCOLN CABINS AND OUTBUILDINGS ----------140

XII. HOUSEHOLD EFFECTS AND FURNISHINGS ----------166

XIII. FOOD SERVED AT THE LINCOLN TABLE----------169

XIV. OCCUPATIONS OTHER THAN FARMING----------172

Bibliography ----------175

LIST OF MAPS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

Plate		Following Page -
I	Historical Base Map, Spencer County, Indiana, 1816-1830, Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial----------	30
II	Land Entries, Spencer County, Indiana, May 6, 1807-February 28, 1830----------	42
III	Historical Base Map, Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial, Living Historical Farm----------	120
IV	Historical Base Map, Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial, Core-Area — Thomas Lincoln's Farm----------	147
V	Photograph made in 1860 of the Hewn-Log Cabin Built by the Lincolns in 1829. Courtesy Lincoln National Life Foundation----------	151
VI	Photograph made in 1865 of the Hewn-Log Cabin Built by the Lincolns in 1829. Courtesy Lincoln National Life Foundation----------	151
VII	Photograph made in 1869 of the Hewn-Log Cabin Built by the Lincolns in 1829. Courtesy Lincoln National Life Foundation----------	151
VIII	Drawing made by Bessie Harrel of the Hewn-Log Cabin for Redman T. Grigsby. Courtesy Lincoln National Life Foundation----------	153
IX	A View of the Lincoln Cabin Site in Lincoln City Schoolhouse Yard, Looking Southwest, 1927. Courtesy Indiana State Parks----------	154
X	A View of the Lincoln Cabin Site Area Taken in 1927, Looking North. Courtesy Indiana State Parks----------	154
XI	The Original Lincoln Cabin Hearthstones in Place as Uncovered in 1934. Courtesy Indiana State Parks-------	156

INTRODUCTION

This study was undertaken at the request of the Assistant Director for Operations and is designed to provide reliable information on which the Service can base a plan for developing the Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial as a living historical farm. All material, published and manuscript, in Washington, D. C. and Indiana repositories relating to Abraham Lincoln's Indiana years was reviewed. Travel accounts of persons visiting southwestern Indiana during the years 1806-1832 were studied, along with contemporary newspapers, gazetteers, guide books, and agricultural journals. County records on file in the Spencer County Courthouse at Rockport, Indiana, were examined. A fire which in 1833 destroyed the courthouse, along with most of the county records, hindered this phase of the project.

When this project was undertaken, it was hoped that a number of questions raised by Mr. Roy Appleman in his October 10, 1966, memorandum to the Chief, Division of Interpretation and Visitor Services, could be answered. The first of these related to the 20-acre tract Thomas Lincoln acquired from David Casebier. It was possible to correctly locate the Casebier tract, but it was impossible to ascertain the date of its acquisition by Lincoln. This tract, it turned out, was a narrow strip bounding the Lincoln 80 acres on the west. As such, it could not have formed the core of Thomas Lincoln's cultivated acreage during his Indiana Years, and, consequently, the

development of a living historical farm would not require its acquisition by the Service.

Sufficient information was collected to enable us to determine that the 40 acres farmed by the Lincolns in 1829 were located on the gentle slopes surrounding the cabin site. It is felt that this study has resolved the problem of how much land Thomas Lincoln cultivated, where it was located, and the crops grown, thereon.

Considerable time was devoted to locating the Lincoln cabins and outbuildings. We are satisfied that there were two cabins: (a) the first built in the winter of 1816-1817; and (b) the one built just before the Lincolns determined to migrate to Illinois. The Lincolns never lived in this second cabin. Information was gathered, evaluated, and conclusions reached which it is hoped will be of material assistance to the archeologists in their efforts to locate the sites of the Lincoln cabins and outbuildings.

If the Service determines that it is feasible to establish a living historical farm at Lincoln Boyhood, we agree with Mr. Appleman that it might be wise to remove and relocate the stone wall and bronze sill logs and fireplace. It would then be possible to reconstruct the Lincoln cabin and outbuildings. We agree with Superintendent Albert Banton that if the cabin is reconstructed, only an exterior restoration should be considered. My reasons for this conclusion are: (a) there is already an excellent exhibit in the Visitor Center of the interior of the cabin; and (b) additional personnel would be required to keep the cabin open.

While on a two-week trip to Indiana in connection with this project, I talked with a number of individuals about a living historical farm at Lincoln Boyhood National Monument. Among those with whom I discussed this subject were: Dr. Louis Warren of the Lincoln National Life Foundation; Hubert Hawkins, Executive Secretary of the Indiana Historical Society; Tom Emison, President, Indiana Historical Society; Dr. Donald F. Carmony, Professor of History at Indiana University and Editor of the Indiana Magazine of History; the Civil War Roundtable of Vanderburgh Courthouse; and officials of the Indiana State Parks Commission. All persons and groups with whom I discussed the subject were enthusiastic and felt that the development of a living historical farm at Lincoln Boyhood would provide the visitor with an outstanding historical experience.

I. THE GEOGRAPHY OF SPENCER COUNTY, 1816-1830

A. PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY

1. The County in 1830

Spencer County was organized in 1818. It was bounded on the north by Dubois County, on the west by Warrick, on the south by the Ohio River, and on the east by Perry County. Its greatest extent from northeast to southwest was about 34 miles, while its greatest extent from north to south was 24 miles, and from east to west 18 miles. It contained about 400 square miles, or 256,000 acres. In 1830 there were 3,187 inhabitants. Spencer County was entirely "a forest county, and generally level." The timber "most common in the county was gum, beech, poplar, hickory, walnut, ash, and various kinds of oak." The undergrowth was spice, dogwood, and hazel. The soil was "principally clay, covered, in some places, by a light loam, and near the Ohio river a small proportion of sand." Anderson River bounded the county on the east, and Little Pigeon creek on the west. The Sandy was "the only stream of note, in the interior of the county." Stone coal of a good quality was found in many places in the region. The staple products of the county were "oats, corn, grass, flour, hemp, tobacco, beef, pork, and poultry." Rockport was the

seat of justice.[1]

2. Principal Spencer County Rivers and Streams

a. Anderson River

Rising in southeastern Dubois County and flowing to the southwest, the Anderson River empties into the Ohio a short distance below Troy. The Anderson River was navigable for flatboats for 30 miles above its mouth. In addition, it provided "good mill seats." This river was "the most considerable stream" flowing into the Ohio between the Blue River and the Wabash. During the first decade of the Nineteenth Century, settlements were made on either side of the Anderson at its mouth and a crude ferry was operated across this narrow body of water.[2]

b. Little Pigeon Creek

Little Pigeon Creek was described by John Scott as "a mill stream which rises in the southwest corner of Dubois County and flows southwardly into Warrick, forming the dividing line between Spencer and Warrick, to the Ohio river."[3]

---

[1]John Scott, The Indiana Gazetteer or Topographical Dictionary... (Indianapolis, 1833), 163.

[2]Ibid., 31; Lincoln Lore, No. 951, June 30, 1947. Lincoln Lore is published and distributed by the Lincoln Life Foundation of Fort Wayne, Indiana.

[3]Scott, Indiana Gazetteer, 107.

B. HUMAN GEOGRAPHY

1. Roads and Traces, 1816-1832

a. Yellow Banks Trail

An Indian trail known as the "Yellow Banks Trail" started from the Ohio River, at Rockport, and ran north through Spencer, Warrick, and Pike Counties to the old Delaware Indian summer camp at the forks of White River.[1]

A fork of the Yellow Banks Trail entered Dubois County just north of present day Dale, and went north to Portersville, and into Daviess County.[2]

b. Rome Trace

The Rome Trace led northwest from the Ohio River. Going almost northwest from Rome, in Perry County, the trace passed from six to eight miles north and east of Cannelton, Tell City, and Troy.[3]

---

[1]George R. Wilson, "Early Indiana Trails and Surveys," Indiana Historical Society Publications (Indianapolis, 1919), Vol. VI, 384-389; "Map of the State of Indiana, compiled from the United States Surveys by S. D. King, Washington City." (New York, 1838). Cited hereinafter as Indiana Map.

[2]Wilson, "Early Indiana Trails and Surveys," IHSP, Vol. VI, 384-389.

[3]Ibid., 357-359; "Survey by Arthur Henrie, 1805," (files Cartographic Branch, National Archives, Record Group No. 49); Indiana Map.

c. "Indian Trace"

The "Indian Trace," which gave access to the Rome Trace, crossed Anderson River three miles southeast of Fulda, passed through Fulda, Maria Hill, and went north of Dale, almost to the southwest corner of Dubois County. Entering Pike County, this trace seems to have been lost at the Freeman line, two miles northeast of Pleasantville.[4]

d. Vincennes-Troy Road

From the Yellow Banks Trail, a pioneer road ran from near Countryville to the mouth of Anderson River. This was called the "Vincennes-Troy Road." It was the route taken by Thomas Lincoln when he came to Indiana from Kentucky, in 1816. Landing at the mouth of the Anderson River and trailing northwest across Spencer County to his farm, Lincoln shortened his mileage by both water and land. A pioneer road had been previously cut out for a large part of the way. At present day Santa Fe, the Lincolns turned west and cut their way down the south line of Carter Township to their new home. Subsequently, this trace opened by Lincoln became a township line road.[5]

---

[4] "Survey by Arthur Henrie, 1805" (files, Cartographic Branch, National Archives, Record Group No. 49).

[5] Wilson, "Early Indiana Trails and Surveys," IHSP, Vol. VI, 384-389.

According to J. Edward Murr, a local historian, a settler named Jesse Hoskins in 1815 had been employed to blaze "a trail from Troy to the village of Darlington, the county-seat [of Vanderburgh County]..., in order that 'the mail carrier might not get lost.' This blazed trail passed through the region where Gentryville was a little later laid out, and it was over this trail, a 'bridle path,' that Thomas Lincoln moved his family and household effects to his new home. A wagon had ... been procured for this purpose, although such vehicles were not at all common, for the first wagon brought to this part of the State was one by one John Small, a Kentuckian, in the year 1814."[6]

e. Road from Rockport to Newburg via Boyds Mills.[7]

f. Road from Rockport to Boonville via Midway.[8]

g. Road from Rockport to Troy.[9]

h. Road from Boonville to Portersville via Taylorsville.[10]

---

[6] J. Edward Murr, "Lincoln in Indiana," Indiana Magazine of History (Bloomington), Vol. XIII, No. 4, p. 321; Ward H. Lamon, The Life of Abraham Lincoln; from His Birth to His Inauguration as President (Boston, 1872), 20.

[7] Indiana Map.

[8] Ibid.

[9] Ibid.

[10] Ibid.; Records of the Warrick County Board of Justice, pp. 331, 341, 364.

i. Trace from Boonville to Huffman's Mill

This trace crossed the Yellow Banks Trail north of present day Chrisney and south of the Little Pigeon Meeting House.[11]

j. Road from Troy to Rome[12]

k. Road from Troy to the Rome Trace[13]

l. Road from Troy to Portersville[14]

m. Road from Jonesboro to Boonville[15]

The main roads in Jackson, Clay and Carter Townships at the time the Lincolns left Spencer County for Illinois, William Jones recalled, "were the Newburgh and Corydon road running west through Boonville by way of what is now Folsomville, and the one running south to Rockport.

"At the time the Lincolns moved to Illinois," he continued, "there was no possible road from this community leading north . . . .. It was some time after this that my father, William Jones, was appointed to throw up a road

---

[11] Indiana Map; Wilson, "Early Indiana Trails and Surveys," IHSP, Vol. VI, 384-389.

[12] Indiana Map.

[13] Ibid.

[14] Ibid.

[15] Ibid.

from what is now Gentryville toward Dale, across Pigeon bottoms, which at that time was impassable and very swampy . . . ."[16]

2. Physical Condition of the Roads and Traces

A road in a statute book or on a map was one thing; the actual road might be anything from a morass to a passable affair. Most of the roads were at best only cleared and partially graded paths, and at worst mere traces made "by one man on horseback following in the track of another, every rider making the way a little easier to find, until you came to some slash, or swampy place, where all trace was lost, and you got through as others had done, by guessing at the direction, after riding at hazard for miles until you stumbled on the track again."[17]

---

[16]W. L. Barker, "History of the Lincoln Route," Proceedings of the Southwestern Indiana Historical Society (Indianapolis, 1926), p. 48.

[17]R. Carlyle Buley, The Old Northwest: Pioneer Period, 1815-1840, (Bloomington, 1951), Vol. I, 462.

An early traveler observed: "The roads are merely narrow avenues through the woods; felling and rolling away the timber being, in most cases, all the labour which is bestowed upon them. Withered trees, and other blown down by the wind, lie across, forming obstructions in many parts. The few bridges which we do see are made of wood. In Indiana, the roads are opened and occasionally repaired by an assessment from every man who has lived thirty days in any particular county. In the present year [1820] this statute labour has been increased from two days' to six days' work; and the alteration is unpopular."[18]

3. The Route Followed by Thomas Lincoln and His Family on Their Migration from Kentucky to Indiana.

a. The Lincolns Cross the Ohio at Thompson's Ferry

There is considerable argument among local historians as to where the Lincolns crossed the Ohio River. Most scholars, however, believe that the Lincolns crossed the Ohio at Thompson's Ferry (also referred to as Anderson's Ferry).

R. Gerald McMurtry of the Lincoln Life Foundation in his documented article titled, "The Lincoln Migration from Kentucky to Indiana," has written, the Lincoln party "approached

---

[18]James Flint, Letters from America...(Edinburgh, 1822), 253. Reprinted in Thwaites (ed.), Early Western Travels, IX.

the Kentucky side of the Ohio River, opposite or nearly opposite the mouth of Anderson Creek [sic] . . .. The nearest village across from the Kentucky bank was Troy."[19]

Nearly all the early Lincoln historians referred to Thompson's Ferry, which was operated on the Ohio in the vicinity of the mouth of Anderson River, as the location of the crossing of the Lincolns. Records filed in the Breckinridge County Courthouse in Hardinsburg, Kentucky, reveal that a ferry was operated in the year 1816 on the Ohio River near the mouth of Anderson River. This ferry was called Thompson's Ferry.[20]

A study of the aids and guides to navigators published by Zodok Cramer in the period 1802-1817, and Samuel Cumings for 1822-1834 demonstrates that there was only one ferry along the reaches of the Ohio between Flint Island and Yellow Banks. In 1802 Cramer reported that at Anderson's Ferry, the channel was on the left side of the river.[21] Eleven years later, Cramer recorded that Anderson's Ferry was in the same position in relation to the channel.[22]

---

[19]R. G. McMurtry, "The Lincoln Migration from Kentucky to Indiana," Indiana Magazine of History, Vol. XXXIII, 408.

[20]Ibid., 409.

[21]Zodok Cramer, A New and Corrected Edition, The Ohio and Mississippi Navigator... (Pittsburgh, 1802), 44.

[22]Cramer, The Navigator: Containing Directions for Navigating the Monongahela, Allegheny, Ohio and Mississippi Rivers...(Pittsburgh, 1811), 132-133.

Cramer in 1817, the year after the Lincolns crossed from Kentucky into Indiana, described the Ohio River in considerable detail:

Flint Island, No. 67,

Here the channel is difficult. Keep the island on the left, hug it pretty close, and at its foot go as if you intended to make the left shore, after passing it in that direction, pull out quick towards the right shore to avoid an ugly sand bar lying to the left below. The Island No. 67 lies close to the left shore, and is about three quarters of a mile long.

The vessel TUSKARORA grounded on the island in the spring of 1808. While here she was ungenerously stript of her bolts, bands, rings &c. to the amount, it is said, of 2,000 dollars worth.

Clover creek, left side,

Deer creek, right side, in the lower part of the bend, half a mile below Deer creek, is a pile of dangerous rocks, 80 or 90 yards from the right shore, keep them well to your right hand at all times.

Anderson's river, right side,

Anderson's ferry, left side, a creek right side, one mile below the ferry is a small island, lying close into the right hand shore, channel left shore.

About five miles below Anderson's ferry is a large sand bar called Anderson's bar, putting out from the left shore—channel close to the right shore in low water.

Hanging Rock, right side,

This rock is called... The Lady Washington. It shows a bare perpendicular front of solid rock about 100 feet in height, commencing at the water's edge. It is the upper edge of a ridge of high ground, which ends here, extending half a mile on the river, having a flat country above and below it. A small distance above this rock a creek enters on the same side with it. Lady Washington would make a good site for a fort, having a fine command of the river above and below for several miles. Now ends

the river hills, a bluff now and then excepted, and the flat country commences.[23]

In 1822 Cumings, who had bought out Cramer, informed the men of the river:

> There is a bar on the left above Deer creek. Channel nearest the right shore until you are up with Deer creek, when you must keep to the left, to avoid a bad ledge, called Rock island, about three-quarters of a mile below Deer creek, and one-third from the right shore. After passing this ledge, keep about the middle of the river for four miles, when you must incline a little to the right, to avoid a low flat bar on the left: after passing it, keep about one-third from the left shore until you approach the town of Troy....
>
> Anderson's River, on the right
>
> This river, or creek, is more than half a mile below Troy, and it is the largest stream on the right between Blue River and the Wabash. After passing Anderson's river, keep about one-third from the right shore until you are up with the ferry (about a mile and a half below), then keep pretty close to the right shore for about three and a half miles, to avoid Anderson's bar on the left, which extends rather more than half across the river: when past it, shoot over to the left shore, toavoid a bar on the right about a mile below Anderson's bar.
>
> Bayou creek, on the right,
>
> When you approach Bayou creek keep in the middle of the river, and after passing it a mile, incline pretty well over towards the right shore, until you arrive within about half a mile of Honey Creek....

---

[23] Cramer, The Navigator, Containing Directions for Navigating the Monongahela, Allegheny, Ohio and Mississippi Rivers...(Pittsburgh, 1817), 115-116.

Rockport, on the right,

> So named from its being situated on a rock, which presents a high, bold front on the Ohio, and commands a romantic prospect of the river. "This town, which is just commenced, is the seat of justice for Spencer, one of the best counties of the state."[24]

According to Cramer and Cumings, the ferry was based on the Kentucky side of the Ohio. They located the ferry one and one-half miles below the mouth of Anderson River.

As early as 1802 Daniel Lewis had established a ferry from his farm on the Kentucky side of the Ohio River to the mouth of Crooked Creek on the Indiana side.[25] By 1816 this ferry was in possession of Hugh Thompson.[26]

Thomas Dean likewise located Thompson's Ferry. Writing in his journal for July 5, 1817, he reported, "we continued our voyage until we stopped for breakfast, then ran down to Anderson's Ferry (1 1/2 miles below Anderson River...), put in, and crossed over to the opposite shore to Troy to get good water. In the evening ran down about three miles, and with some difficulty got lodging on a floor."[27]

---

[24]Samuel Cumings, Western Navigator, ... (Philadelphia, 1822), 24-25.

[25]Breckinridge County (Ky.) Order Book, Feb. 16, 1804.

[26]Louis Warren, Lincoln's Youth: Indiana Years, Seven to Twenty-One, 1816-1830 (New York, 1959), 221.

[27]"Journal of Thomas Dean, A Voyage to Indiana in 1817," edited by John C. Dean, Indiana Historical Society Publication, VI, 290.

b. Route from Thompson's Ferry to Section 32, Township 4 South, Range 5 West

After leaving the Thompson Ferry landing, Thomas Lincoln traveled over what was then called the Vincennes-Troy road, which was one of the earliest trails used in approaching the old land office at Vincennes. This trace is now known as the Santa Fe Road, and it is believed the Lincolns followed this route from the mouth of Anderson Creek to a point within four miles of Section 32.[28]

2. Towns and Villages of Spencer and Perry Counties

John Scott and his Indiana Gazetteer published in 1833 described several of the areas' towns and villages.

a. Gentryville

Scott identified Gentryville as "a small village in Spencer county, 17 miles north of Rockport." It contained about "fifty inhabitants, two mercantile stores, and a number of mechanics."[29]

---

[28] McMurtry, "The Lincoln Migration from Kentucky to Indiana," Indiana Magazine of History, Vol. XXXIII, 414; C. T. Baker, "The Lincoln Family in Spencer County," Southwestern Indiana Historical Society Papers, (Evansville Central Library). The Perry County Court in October, 1815, had ordered the road overseers "to open a road from Troy to the Huricane, 12 feet wide, in such manner that carriages can conveniently pass and that they have the same completed by next November court." Perry County (Ind.) Circuit Court Order Book October Term, 1815. The Vincennes-Troy road is shown on the map of Indiana.

[29] Scott, Indiana Gazetteer, 75.

b. Rockport in 1833

Rockport in 1833 had a postoffice and was the seat of justice for Spencer County. It was situated on a high bluff on the Ohio River. "At this place were four mercantile stores, a tannery, a boat yard, two taverns, two blacksmiths' shops, three house joiners, three physicians, two shoemakers, a cabinet maker, and a tailor." The town had a population of about 250 persons.[30]

c. Troy

When Perry County was formed from Knox County in 1814, commissioners were appointed to establish the county seat, and the most available central location at that time seems to have been the McDaniel settlement. One hundred and twenty acres of land were offered as a gift by James McDaniel, Sr. and his son, James Jr., as a site for the new seat of Justice. Other donations of land and money were made by citizens of the community, and the new Perry County seat was named Troy. Who was responsible for reviving the name of the ancient maritime city at this time on the banks of the Ohio is not known. Francis Posey surveyed the town and ninety-six lots were laid off.

---

[30] Ibid., 151.

The first circuit court was held at Troy on July 3, 1815, the day before the "glorious Fourth" which was widely celebrated in the western country by the Revolutionary soldiers and their families who had settled there. For a time court was held in the home of the senior McDaniel. On November 6, 1815, there is an account of a court assembled in his home. It was not long, however, before Troy had constructed a new log courthouse. According to an Illustrated Historical Atlas of Indiana published in 1876, a newspaper was published at Troy in 1816 called the Troy Gazette. Inasmuch as this paper is not listed in the History and Bibliography of American Newspapers 1690-1820, its authenticity may be questioned.

A United States Postoffice was established at Troy in 1818; Daniel Irwin was the first postmaster. He was succeeded by Ruben Bates in 1823.[31]

Troy commanded a beautiful view of the river both upstream and downstream. Troy, besides a postoffice, contained two mercantile stores, a tavern, a carding machine, two physicians, a preacher, and a school. The town in 1830 had a population of 150.[32]

---

[31] Lincoln Lore, No. 951, June 30, 1947.

[32] Scott, Indiana Gazatteer, 174.

Duke Karl Bernhard, writing of his trip up the Ohio in April, 1826, reported:

> During the night, we stopped several times to take in wood, and once to repair the engine [of the General Neville]. An overhanging tree, which we approached to[o] nearly, gave us a powerful blow, and did much damage to the upper part of the vessel. The banks became constantly higher, and more picturesque in their appearance. They were frequently rocky; in several rocks we observed cavities, which with the houses built in front of them, produced a pleasing effect. Upon the right bank, was a little place called Troy; several settlements, composed of frame houses, instead of logs.[33]

d. Rome

John Woods, an Englishman, stopped off at Rome on September 6, 1820. He described what he saw in his Journal:

> At nine o'clock we reached Rome, the capital [sic] of Perry County, a town of Indiana, laid out in 1818; about twenty houses built, and building; a stone jail begun, the second floor laid with solid logs, ten or twelve inches thick, the roof not put on. We purchased sixteen pounds of very lean beef for a dollar; it was killed the evening before, and salted immediately, yet such was the heat of the weather it was scarcely eatable. No bacon, port, or vegetables to be procured.[34]

Prince Bernhard visited Rome six years later. He reported Rome was on the right bank of a little stream, Sinking Creek. On the left bank was another cluster of houses called Stevensport. The villages were connected by a wooden bridge, resting on a single high pier.[35]

---

[33] Karl Bernhard, Duke of Saxe-Weimer-Eisenach, Travels through North America during the years 1825 and 1826 (Philadelphia, 1828), Vol. I, p. 127.

[34] John Woods, Two Years' Residence in the Settlement on the English Prairie in the Illinois Country...(London, 1822), 246-247. Reprinted in Thwaites (ed.), Early Western Travels, X, 179-357.

[35] Bernhard, Travels Through North America, I, 127.

e. Jonesboro

The Jonesboro of Abraham Lincoln's day was the trading center for northwestern Spencer County. Two and one-half miles west of the Lincoln farm, and three-quarters of a mile west of Gentryville, Jonesboro was on a ridge which sloped away to the south and north. Jonesboro was settled by squatters.

William Jones ran a store in his double log house. The house had a loft and large lean-to. The springs, gushing out from the foot of the high rock bluff that marks the boundary of Little Pigeon bottom on the north, still provide an abundance of cold water for residents of the area.[36]

William Jones on July 15, 1915, recalled, "My father and Abraham Lincoln were very intimate friends and were both Whigs and Abraham Lincoln worked for my father in the store at Jonesboro, 3/4 miles west of where Gentryville now stands...."[37]

On July 28, 1915, Allen Gentry swore that he was James Gentry's son, and that he had often heard his father tell of the pioneers and first settlers of Gentryville. James had told his son that Colonel William Jones "settled just west of him about one mile on an adjoining farm and on the

---

[36]Grace J. Maas, "Jonesboro," paper read before the Southwestern Indiana Historical Society(Ehrmann Papers, Evansville Central Library).

[37]Barker, "History of the Lincoln Route," Proceedings of the Southwestern Indiana Historical Society, 1926, p. 47.

only road at that time running west, which road ran west by way of Boonville and on to the Ohio river at Newburgh."

Colonel Jones on his farm ran a "general store, which was known as Jones' Store, or Jonesboro." At that time, Gentry continued, Jones' store was the only store in the community and the settlers for miles around went there to trade.[38]

Robert Gentry corroborated his brother's statements.[39]

3. Little Pigeon Meeting House and Cemetery

Noah Gordon on May 29, 1818, entered the northeast quarter of Section 7, Township 5 South, Range 5 West.[40] On April 19, 1829, Noah and Nancy Gordon sold to John Romine for $1,800 the northeast quarter of Section 7, Township 5 South, Range 5 West.[41]

John and Hannah Romine on June 2, 1832, conveyed to the Trustees of the Little Pigeon Baptist Church for exclusive use of said church a "certain tract of land containing Two acres

---

[38] Ibid., 49-51.

[39] Ibid., 52-53.

[40] Tract Book, Spencer County, p. 67.

[41] Spencer County Deed Book, 1, p. 284.

lying and being a part of two sections" viz: Sections Six and Seven, Township Five South, Range Five West on which the meeting house now stands. The aforesaid tract was bounded as follows: beginning at the northwest corner and running south 16 poles to a stump; thence east 20 poles to a stake; thence north 16 poles to a stake; thence west 20 poles to the beginning, which was also a stake.[42]

In 1821 Thomas Lincoln was chosen to supervise the construction of the Little Pigeon Meeting House. Up to this time there had been no church building in that part of Spencer County. The Little Pigeon Baptist Church had been organized in 1816 in Warrick County, but it was not until March 13, 1819, that consideration was given to building a house of worship. On December 11, 1819, it was determined that "the meeting house be built at Brother [Noah] Gordon's." This was about a mile and one-half south of the Lincoln cabin. The selection was influenced by the nearby spring.[43]

A committee on March 10, 1821, agreed that the meeting house should be "30 x 26 feet, hewed logs, 8 feet in the upper story and 6 feet above the joists." The structure would be "a story

---

[42]Spencer County Deed Book G, 187.

[43]Warren, Lincoln's Youth, 86.

and a half high." While its proportions were not great, for that period and region it made a rather pretentious house of worship. The meeting house had two windows, each twenty by thirty-six inches, and was heated in extreme weather by means of two old-fashioned fireplaces. There were two mud and stick chimneys, one at each end of the building. Abraham Lincoln assisted his father and the other workers in erecting the house of worship.[44]

In 1823, seven years after Thomas Lincoln came to Indiana, he joined by letter the Little Pigeon Creek Baptist Church.[45]

On December 10, 1825, the Little Pigeon Creek Baptist Church ordered three of its members (Reuben Grigsby, William Barker, and Noah Gordon) " to Lay of[f] the burying ground." It was located on land next to the meeting house belonging to Gordon. Sarah Lincoln Grigsby died in childbirth on January 20, 1828. She and her stillborn baby were among the first to be buried in the new cemetery. She and her dead child were buried in the same walnut coffin which was drawn to the place of interment on a sled. A slab of sandstone inscribed with her initials marked her grave.[46]

---

[44] Ibid., 86-87; Murr, "Lincoln in Indiana," Indiana Magazine of History, Vol. XII, No. 4, p. 242. The fireplaces were built of brick by Thomas Turnham, the mold for which was fashioned by Thomas Lincoln without a particle of iron, only wooden pegs being used. Albert J. Beveridge, Abraham Lincoln, 1809-1858 (2 volumes, Boston, 1928), Vol. I, 71.

[45] Beveridge, Abraham Lincoln, I, 71.

[46] Warren, Lincoln's Youth, 174; Jonathan T. Hobson, Footprints of Abraham Lincoln...(Dayton, Ohio, 1909), 36-39.

The minute book of the Little Pigeon congregation shows that Thomas Lincoln helped to support his church. It contains but one record of subscriptions to the church, but we read there that Lincoln and others signed the list agreeing to deliver "at the meeting hoas in good marcharable produce" the articles annexed to their names. The produce was to be "corn wheat whiskey pork Linnen wool or any other article or material to do the work with." Lincoln's contribution was "corn manufactured pounds 24."[47]

4. Little Pigeon Schoolhouses

a. Crawford's Schoolhouse

The earliest schoolhouse in the Little Pigeon community stood on Noah Gordon's farm in Clay Township, adjacent to Carter Township on the south. There was an excellent spring there. This was a mile and one-half south of the Lincoln home in about the center of the scattered population then living near the headwaters of Little Pigeon Creek. It was a one-room building erected by subscribers to the school. The teacher was Andrew Crawford. The first record of his living in Spencer County is his commission as a justice of the peace, dated May 8, 1818.[48]

---

[47]Charles G. Vannest, Lincoln the Hoosier: Abraham Lincoln's Life in Indiana (St. Louis, 1928), 8.

[48]Warren, Lincoln's Youth, 81.

William Herndon recorded that Crawford's schoolhouse was about 200 yards east of the Little Pigeon Creek Meeting House Cemetery. At the time of his visit to the area, the schoolhouse had "long since rotted away and gone."[49]

b. Swaney's Schoolhouse

Lincoln's second school in Indiana was kept by James Swaney, ward of Azel W. Dorsey, who became Abraham's second teacher.[50]

At the age of 21, Swaney was hired for the school which was opened in a log building on John Hoskins' farm in the east half of the northwest quarter of Section 14, Township 5 South, Range 6 West, Jackson Township, Spencer County. The building, according to a statement made by John Hoskins many years later, was much like theone that was built near Little Pigeon Meeting House, "except that it had two chimneys instead of one." He added that he had torn down "the old schoolhouse long since and built a stable with the logs."[51]

Abraham's attendance at this school was irregular. Hoskins stated that to get there Abraham "had to travel four and a

---

[49]Emanuel Hertz, The Hidden Lincoln...(New York, 1938), 360.

[50]Warren, Lincoln's Youth, 81.

[51]Ibid., 102; John Santosuosso, "James Swaney," unpublished manuscript (files, Lincoln Boyhood NM). Dr. Warren is in error, as John Hoskins farmed the east half of the northwest quarter of Section 14. Joseph Hawkins' farm was located in Section 23, Township 5 South, Range 6 West.

half miles; and this going back and forth so great a distance occupied entirely too much of his time."[52]

c. Dorsey's Schoolhouse

The schoolhouse in which Azel Dorsey taught was near the Little Pigeon Meeting House. Before it was built classes may have been held in the church. The school building conformed to the general rule for pioneer schools, " a rude pole cabin with hug fire-place, rude floor of puncheons and seats of the same, and a window made by leaving out a log on the side to admit light, often covered with greased paper to keep out the wind." Dorsey's school has been more particularly described, "He presided in a small house near Little Pigeon Creek meeting-house, a mile and a half from the Lincoln cabin.... It was built of unhews logs, and had 'holes for windos,' in which 'greased paper' served for glass. The roof was just high enough for a man to stand erect."[53]

---

[52] Ibid.

[53] Warren, Lincoln's Youth, 127; William Herndon and Jesse W. Weik, Herndon's Life of Lincoln . . .with introduction by Paul M. Angle (New York , 1930), 32.

5. Spencer and Warrick County Grist Mills, 1816-1830

a. Mortars for Pounding Corn

There were no mills in this section of Indiana, except hand-mills, until the year 1812, at which time horse-mills were introduced. Flour mills were unnecessary, as at that time there was no wheat in the country, all bread for a number of years being made from Indian corn. Most of the settlers were compelled to pound their corn in mortars. The mortars used were made of large logs; the ends having been cut square. A fire was built in the center of one end, and kept burning until a cavity was made to a depth of from twelve to eighteen inches. Care was taken not to burn too near the outer part of the log. After burning to a sufficient depth, the charred wood was removed, leaving the mortar smooth and solid.[54]

b. Huffman's Mill

It was 15 miles from the Lincoln farm to Huffman's Mill. This mill was built in 1812 by George H. Huffman and operated later by his son Harrison, a friend of Lincoln's and still later by Harrison's son, Riley Huffman. Henry Brooner and David Turnham, playmates of Abraham Lincoln, stated, "we often went with Lincoln to Huffman's mill on Anderson River." As early as 1827 there was a well-kept road from Huffman's

---

[54] An Illustrated Historical Atlas of Spencer County, Indiana. From Actual Surveys under the direction of B. N. Griffing (Philadelphia, 1879), 10.

Mill to Fredonia.[58]

Huffman's Mill was a "tub-wheel mill with wooden gearing," and burrs fashioned from "flinty rocks from the surrounding country." It was housed in an "unhewed log structure." The mill house was constructed of "round logs cut from the ... forest."[56]

These statements are corroborated by an authority on Spencer County History. According to Edward Murr, the mills for grinding corn in the early days were crude affairs. The "horse-mill" was the first one introduced, small mills propelled by horses hitched to a "sweep." Later, and during the Indiana residence of the Lincolns, Huffman's watermill was erected on Anderson River.[57]

b. Gordon's Mill

Noah Gordon, who lived less than two miles from the Lincolns, built a horse-mill — the customers supplying their own horses — about 1818, and this was patronized by Tom Lincoln. It was at this mill that Abraham was kicked in

---

[55]Lincoln Lore, No. 902, July 22, 1946; Lamon, Life of Abraham Lincoln, 23.

[56]Warren, Lincoln's Youth, 45; Lemuel Q. Huffman, "A Paper Read Before the Perry County Historical Society, Huffman Mills, Oct. 5, 1924 (files, Evansville Central Library).

[57]Murr, "Lincoln in Indiana," Indiana Magazine of History, Vol. XIV, No. 2, p. 154.

the head by a horse.[58]

David Turnham recalled that Gordon's mill would only grind from fifteen to twenty bushels of corn a day. As there was very little wheat grown in Carter Township, Turnham continued, "when we did have wheat, we had to grind it in the mill described, and use it without bolting, as there were no bolts in the country. Abe and I had to do the milling, frequently going twice to get one grist."[59]

Information pinpointing mills at Huffman's and Gordon's casts suspicion on Dennis Hanks' statement to Herndon that "we had to go to the Ohio River seventeen miles to mill, and when we got there the mill was a poor concern; it was a little bit of band horse mill, the ground meal of which a hand could eat as fast as it was ground. The mill was close to Posey's."[60]

c. Troy Grist Mill

There was a grist mill in Troy.[61]

d. Uriah Lamar's Grist Mill

As early as 1817, Uriah Lamar started a "small grist-mill or 'corn-cracker' on Big Sandy Creek, though the mill was

---

[58]Warren, Lincoln's Youth, 45.

[59]Herndon and Weik, Life of Lincoln, 25; Lamon, Life of Abraham Lincoln, 23.

[60]Hertz, The Hidden Lincoln, 279.

[61]Warren, Lincoln's Youth, 45; Beveridge, Abraham Lincoln, I, 46.

operated by horsepower with a leather band." This mill continued in operation till about 1824.[62]

e. Norton's Grist Mill

James Norton operated a mill near Honey Creek.[63]

f. Benjamin Lamar's Grist Mill

Benjamin Lamar started a mill at today's Newtonville about 1820.[64]

g. George Taylor's Grist Mill

Shortly before the Lincolns moved to Illinois, George Taylor established a mill at Taylorsville.[65]

---

[62] History of Warrick, Spencer and Perry Counties, Indiana, From the Earliest Time to the Present, Together with Interesting Biographical Sketches, Reminiscences, Notes, Etc (Chicago, 1885), 263.

[63] Ibid.

[64] Ibid.

[65] Ibid., 272.

to Porterville
to Petersburg
Taylorsville
DUBOIS COUNTY
to Porterville
to Vincennes
DUBOIS COUNTY
SPENCER COUNTY
to Porterville
OLD INDIAN BOUNDARY
INDIAN TRAIL
YELLOW BANKS TRAIL
WARRICK COUNTY
SPENCER COUNTY
PERRY COUNTY
Hurricane Creek
Anderson River
Coles Creek
Pigeon Creek
Little Pigeon Creek
Crooked Creek
Barren Fork
Buckhorn Creek
Middle Fork
East Fork
Big Sandy Creek
Little Sandy Creek
Honey Creek
Bayou Creek
Windy Creek
to Boonville
to Rome
to Rome Trace
to Newburg
to Deer Creek
William Woods
J. Wright
Whitman
Turnham
Brooner
James' Gentry's
Lincoln
Hanks
Carter
Jonesboro Spring
Clark
Jones' Store
Gentry Gin
Cotton
L. Greathouse
J. Carter
John Phillips
Hart
Jonesboro
Baldwin's Blacksmith Shop
Whittinghill
Whittinghill's Mill
Little Pigeon Meeting House and Cemetery
Andrew Crawford
Shad Rack Hall
Tanyard
Hutfman's Mill
Noah Gordon
A.W. Dorsey
Richardson
Edwards
J. Crawford
A. Grigsby
R. Grigsby
Swaney's
Barker
Gonterman
Hardin
Austin Lincoln
Salt Licks
Midway
Ben Lamar
Taylor
Taylor's Ferry
Troy
Thompson's Ferry (Anderson's Ferry)
Uriah Lamar
Morton
Hammond
Ezekiel Ray
Sand Creek Landing
At this point, cane first seen by boatmen descending the Ohio
Rockport
Lady Washington Rock
OHIO RIVER
N
HISTORICAL BASE MAP
SPENCER COUNTY, INDIANA, 1816-1830
LINCOLN BOYHOOD HOME
NATIONAL MEMORIAL
LEGEND
Roads (principal)
Roads (township)
Trails
Streams
Villages
Houses
Schools
Mills
Church
The Lincoln route to Spencer County
0 1 2 3 Miles

II. THE FARM - THE RESOURCES

A. FARM BOUNDARIES

1. Title to the Thomas Lincoln Farm 1817 - 1871

a. Land in the Southwest Quarter of Section 32, Township 4 South, Range 5 West

While researching his biography of Abraham Lincoln, William Herndon wrote the General Land Office for information about the patent issued to Thomas Lincoln for his Indiana land. The General Land Office replied:

> I have the honor to state, pursuant to the Secretary's reference, that on the fifteenth of October, 1817, Mr. Thomas Lincoln then of Perry County, Indiana, entered under the old credit system, --
>
> 1. The South-west Quarter of Section 32, in township 4, South of Range 5 West, lying in Spencer County, Ind.
>
> 2. Afterwards the said Thomas Lincoln relinquished to the United States the east half of the said South-west Quarter; and the amount paid thereon was passed to his credit to complete payment of the west half of the South-west quarter of Section 32 in township 4, South of Range 5 West; and accordingly a patent was issued to Thomas Lincoln for the latter tract. The patent was dated June 6, 1827, and was signed by John Quincy Adams, then President of the United States, and counter-signed by George Graham, then Commissioner of the General Land Office.[1]

In traveling to the Vincennes Land Office, Thomas Lincoln had accompanied two of his neighbors (William Whitman and Noah Gordon). On October 15 the record shows that Lincoln

---

[1] Lincoln Lore, No. 413, March 8, 1937.

filed on two 80-acre tracts, composing the southwest quarter of Section 32, Township 4 South, Range 5 West. He made the required initial payment of $16 to secure his right to the land, and two months later he paid an additional $64, making a total of $80 or one-fourth of the purchase price of $320.00.[2]

An act approved by President James Monroe on March 2, 1821, provided that any freeholder could relinquish certain tracts to the government and receive credit to be applied as payment on the remainder of his holdings. On April 28, 1827, Thomas Lincoln, Thomas Barrett, and Thomas Carter arrived in Vincennes and each relinquished one half of his quarter section. Thomas Lincoln applied the credit on the total amount due on his remaining 80 acres, the west half of the southwest quarter. Many of Lincoln's neighbors also took advantage of this relinquishment act, because it allowed them to surrender the poorer and undeveloped part of their land for the same price per acre that the better part cost. Thus, Thomas was able to complete the payment for the one-half quarter section amounting to $110 by applying to it

---

[2]Tract Book, Vincennes District, No. VI, Vol. II, 296 (Archives Division, Indiana State Library). Here Lincoln is spelled Linkern. Receipt No. 9205, Records of the General Land Office (National Archives).

the relinquishment to which he had title amounting to $80. On June 6, 1827, President John Quincy Adams signed a patent for the west half of the southwest quarter of Section 32, Township 4 South, Range 5 West.[3]

This information about completing payment on the land he retained should settle the question about Thomas Lincoln's title to his Indiana farm. The fact that he relinquished part of his land after ten years has been used as evidence against his industry and good sense. A study of early land records for Spencer County demonstrates the opposite, because it proves that many settlers took advantage of the relinquishment act to secure patents to the best lands on which they had entered.

For an unknown sum on November 26, 1829, Charles Grigsby secured a bond from Thomas Lincoln for the 80-acre home tract. On February 20, 1830, a warranty deed was drawn in which "Thomas Lincoln and Sarah, his wife, for and in consideration of the sum of one hundred and twenty-five dollars to him in hand paid doth...sell, to said Charles Grigsby... the west half of the southwest quarter of Section thirty-two

---

[3]Receipts Nos. 8499 and 9205, Records of the General Land Office (National Archives); Records of Vincennes Land Office, Relinquishments, T4S, R5W (Spencer County, Archives Division, Indiana State Library).

in Township four south, Range five west, containing eighty acres...." To this deed Thomas signed his name and Sarah made her mark.[4]

Charles Grigsby on December 8, 1835, sold the 80 acres to Edley Brown for $200.[5] Brown held onto the farm for a little over one year. On February 4, 1837, Edley and Martha Brown sold the west half of the southwest quarter of Section 32 in Township 4 South, Range 5 West to James Sally for $240.[6] James and Mary Sally on January 11, 1838, sold to Joseph Gentry for $240 the west half of the southwest quarter of Section 32 in Township 4 South, Range 5 West, along with a 20-acre tract "taken from the east part of the east half of the southeast quarter of Section 31."[7]

Joseph and Mary Ann Gentry divided the Lincoln home tract and on December 3, 1850, sold for $100 the north 40 acres to Elijah Winkler.[8] Three years later, Gentry disposed of the south 40 acres to William Oskins.[9] James and Eliza Gentry having secured the

---

[4]Spencer County Deed Book 2, p. 51. The Spencer County Deed Books are on file in the Office of the County Clerk, Rockport, Indiana.

[5]Spencer County Deed Book 3, p. 86-87.

[6]Spencer County Deed Book 3, p. 482.

[7]Spencer County Deed Book 4, pp. 30-31.

[8]Spencer County Deed Book 14, p. 622.

[9]Spencer County Deed Book 15, p. 224. Oskins at this time also purchased from the Gentrys the west half of the northwest quarter of Section 5, Township 5 South, Range 5 West. The price paid for the 160 acres was $500.

north half of the west half of the southwest quarter of Section 32 from Elijah Winkler sold the tract to Oskins for $200 on December 24, 1853.[10]

William and Mary Oskins of Warrick County, Indiana, on April 29, 1859, sold to James Gentry for $1,300 the west half of the northwest quarter of Section 5, Township 5 South, Range 5 West, and the west half of the southwest quarter of Section 32, Township 4 South, Range 5 West.[11] Gentry on November 28, 1871, deeded to Henry Lewis, John Shellito, Robert Mitchell, and Charles West of Cincinnati the southwest quarter of Section 32, Township No. 4 South, Range 5 West; the west half of the southeast quarter of Section 32; the west one-half of the northwest quarter of Section No. 5, Township No. 5 South, Range 5 West. Gentry reserved to himself the "log house, known as the Lincoln House which stands on the west half of the first described tract of land and which was built by Abraham Lincoln and his father Thomas, and which has been heretofore sold."[12]

By this transaction, Lewis and his associates acquired the entire quarter section entered by Thomas Lincoln in 1817.

---

[10]Spencer County Deed Book 15, pp. 257, 450. James Gentry was Joseph's father. Lincoln Lore, No. 413, March 8, 1937.

[11]Spencer County Deed Book 19, p. 88.

[12]Spencer County Deed Book 33, p. 432.

The new owners sub-divided into town lots the tracts they had acquired from Gentry, except for the right-of-way previously granted, by James and Eliza Gentry to the Cincinnati, Rockport and Southwestern Railroad. The town of Lincoln City grew up on this site.[13]

b. Land in the Southeast Quarter, Section 31, Township 4 South, Range 5 West

While living on the west half of the southwest quarter of Section 32, Township 4 South, Range 5 West, Thomas Lincoln purchased from David Casebier 20 acres. Casebier on May 9, 1817, had entered the southeast quarter of Section 31, Township 4 South, Range 5 West. Dr. Louis Warren and other Lincoln scholars have assumed that the 20 acres Lincoln purchased from Casebier adjoined the northwest corner of his 80 acres. Warren also reports that the land purchased from Casebier was "partly if not all under cultivation...."[14] The northeast 20 acres of the Casebier tract is the best farm land in the immediate area, and this could have influenced Warren's reasoning. When questioned about the date Lincoln made his purchase of Casebier, Dr. Warren explained that he did not know, but that he had always assumed it was in 1827, the year Thomas Lincoln completed payment on his home tract.[15]

---

[13] Ibid.; Lincoln Lore, No. 413, March 8, 1937.

[14] Warren, Lincoln's Youth, 159; Lincoln Lore, No. 413, March 8, 1937.

[15] Personal Interview with Dr. Warren, January 16 & 17, 1967.

An examination of Spencer County land records proves that Casebier owned land in other sections of the county. No evidence can be found to prove that Casebier lived on or farmed the southeast quarter of Section 31. If he did not live in Section 31, it is doubtful that he would have farmed the southeast quarter.

When David Edwards entered the names of heads of families for Spencer County in the 1820 Census, Thomas Lincoln's and David Casebier's names appear on different pages. While this is not conclusive evidence, it indicates that Casebier probably lived in a different section of the county. Names on the enumerator's list before and after Lincoln's are those of individuals known to have resided in Carter and Clay Townships, while those before and after Casebier's are those of persons who had entered land in Grass and Hammond Townships.[16] In addition, no mention of Casebier is found in the minute book of the Little Pigeon Baptist Church.

A study of the Spencer County Deed Books gives a different picture of the land acquired by Lincoln from Casebier than that championed by Dr. Warren. According to a deed drawn on March 11, 1834, James Gentry "for and in consideration of the sum of one dollar to him in hand paid,

---

[16] Fourth National Census, Spencer County, State of Indiana. National Archives.

the receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged hath given, granted, bargained and sold... to the said Joseph Gentry" several tracts. One of these tracts were described as the east part of the southeast quarter of Section 31, "there being twenty acres of the said last quarter section of land sold by David Casebier to Lincoln...."[17]

James Gentry on January 5, 1836, sold to Edley Brown for $40 a tract "lying and being in the county of Spencer... and bounded as follows to wit: beginning at the full corner section thirty one running west 20 poles, thence north parallel with the section line for the quantity in Township 4 south of Range Five West containing 20 acres."[18] Commencing at the southeast corner of Section 31 the boundary of this tract would follow the section line westward for 330 feet. It would then run northward parallel with the north-south section line, 2,640 feet to the north boundary of the southeast quarter of Section 31. The boundary of the tract conveyed then ran eastward 320 feet along the quarter section line to the line dividing Sections 31 and 32. Thus the 20-acre tract Lincoln acquired from Casebier would be a narrow strip bounding the Lincoln farm on the west.

---

[17] Spencer County Deed Book 2, 241. Warren has suggested that when Lincoln moved to Illinois, he traded a few acres of land to John Romine for a horse and this may be the land. Lincoln Lore, No. 413, March 8, 1937.

On January 11, 1838, James and Mary Sally sold to Joseph Gentry for $240 two tracts. One of these was the west half of the southwest quarter of Section 32, Township 4 South, Range 5 West, and the other consisted of 20 acres to be taken from "the east part of the east half of the southeast quarter of Section 31, Township and Range aforesaid and being the 20 acres" conveyed by James Gentry to Edley Brown, and by Edley Brown to said Sally.[19]

c. Why did Lincoln Purchase the Casebier Tract?

A careful examination of the Spencer County Deed Books and Court Records, as well as primary and secondary source material covering the Lincolns' Indiana years fails to explain why or reveal when Thomas Lincoln purchased the 20-acre Casebier tract. Lincoln probably purchased this tract because it contained the spring from which his family secured its water. If true, Thomas Lincoln would have bought the 20-acre tract during his early Indiana years.

d. Arguments Why the Service Should Not Acquire the Casebier 20-Acre Tract

At present, the tracks of the Southern Railroad and most of the surviving buildings of Lincoln City are located on this 20-acre tract, consequently, its acquisition by the National Park Service would be costly. In addition, as

---

[19] Spencer County Deed Book 4, pp. 30-31.

the tract is a strip, it is doubtful whether Thomas Lincoln cultivated it in its entirety as indicated by Warren. If there were a field under cultivation on the home farm adjoining the 20-acre tract, it might have been extended westward into the land purchased of Casebier. Accordingly, the interpretive value of this tract would not be commensurate with its cost of acquisition.

2. The Relationship of Settlement to Environment in Spencer County for the Period 1807-1830.

A study of land entries for Harrison, Huff, Carter, Clay, Hammond, Jackson, and Grass Townships of Spencer County and Pigeon Township of Warrick County for the period 1807-1830 is enlightening. As expected, the first entries were made on the Ohio River, near the mouth of Anderson River. Between 80 and 90 percent of the entries for the period under consideration were made in the years 1817-1819. Very few entries were made in the years 1820-1830. A map locating the entries, with the information as to the individual making the entry and the date thereof, is found in the Lincoln Boyhood Master Plan, and this report.

Thomas Lincoln, like most of his fellow settlers, entered 160 acres. Lincoln made his initial payment on the southwest quarter of Section 32, T4S, R5W on October 15, 1817. Like many of his neighbors, Thomas Lincoln took advantage of the act approved March 2, 1821, providing that any freeholder could relinquish certain tracts of land to the government and receive credit to be applied as payment on the remainder of his holdings.

This law, as previously noted, would allow the settlers to surrender their poorer and undeveloped land for the same price per acre, $2, that the better part cost them. It was a good business deal and alert landholders took advantage of it. On April 28, 1827, Thomas Lincoln relinquished one half of his quarter section.

Many historians have argued that Thomas Lincoln was an improvident farmer at best, because the land he selected was on a knob, rather than in the fertile Little Pigeon Creek bottom, less than a mile north of his quarter section, or in the Buckhorn Creek bottom one mile to the southwest. Lincoln had good reasons for avoiding these bottoms. A study of the report filed by Surveyors Sandford and Henrie in 1805 demonstrates that these bottoms were wet and covered with briars and undergrowth. It would have been extremely difficult for the pioneers to have cleared and farmed these bottoms. In fact, only one entry was made prior to the 1840's in these bottoms. Once the bottoms were cleared and drained, they became the best farm lands in the area, but this was many years after the Lincolns had left Spencer County.

The Lincolns, like the other pioneers who settled in Carter, Clay, and Jackson Townships, settled on and farmed the ridges and knobs. There were several reasons for this behavior: (a) the ridges and knobs were easier to clear of trees and brush; (b) most of the early settlers of Spencer County, like the Lincolns, had migrated from Kentucky, where they had lived on and farmed knobs;

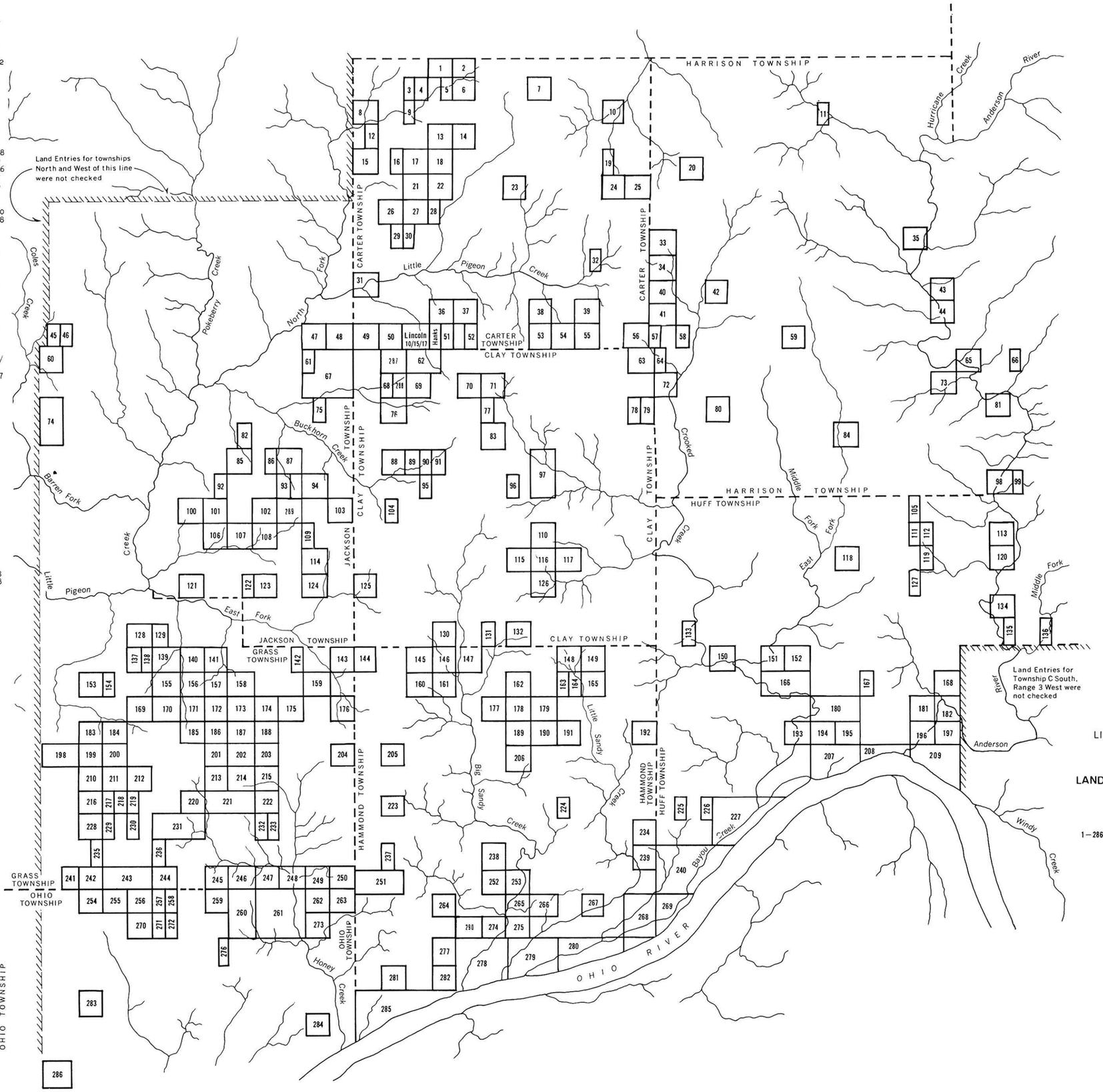
and (c) the pioneers believed that the bottoms harbored the miasma which brought sickness and death to the community.

Land entries throughout Spencer County for 1807-1830 follow an identical pattern to those found in Carter, Clay, and Jackson Townships. Except where there were unusual circumstances, the pioneers avoided the bottoms. The only areas where land was taken up during this period in the bottoms were on the Ohio and Anderson rivers. Here the prime consideration had been commerce, as both rivers were navigable. Many of the entries made along the Ohio were of a speculative nature.

By checking the Historical Base Map depicting "Land Entries in Spencer County, Indiana, 1807-1830," which accompanies this report, it will be apparent that there was a definite settlement pattern. The settlers, except for the speculators, avoided the bottom land, preferring the ridges and knobs.

NO.	NAME	DATE OF ENTRY
1	LINDSEY	5/18/18
2	MOORE	5/18/18
3	DERTON	9/19/19
4	HURST	5/18/18
5	DERTON	3/20/18
6	MORRIS	4/15/19
7	CESNA	6/12/19
8	J. JONES	4/17/17
9	JOHNSON	11/19/22
10	J. GENTRY	6/11/18
11	CROWDER	9/12/30
12	MEDCALF	5/15/18
13	MASON	2/18/19
14	MOORE	8/13/18
15	J. JONES	4/19/17
16	L. JONES	5/15/18
17	L. JONES	2/18/17
18	WINKLER	7/31/18
19	GREATHOUSE	1/1/18
20	WRIGHT	6/15/19
21	W. SMITH	12/28/18
22	W. SMITH	8/13/18
23	L. ALLEN	4/5/19
24	B. LEWIS	12/28/18
25	PETERS	6/11/18
26	J. JONES	4/22/18
27	J. JONES	6/22/17
28	LOWE	4/6/19
29	J. JONES	3/23/18
30	BLAIR	12/25/17
31	WOODS	4/4/17
32	J. WRIGHT	6/24/18
33	J. GENTRY	9/30/18
34	NO ENTRY	
35	WILLIAMS	10/29/19
36	TURNHAM	1/28/17
37	WHITMAN	10/15/17
38	GORDON	5/28/18
39	GORDON	5/28/18
40	WELLER	8/18/18
41	GREATHOUSE	6/15/18
42	MOORE	4/15/18
43	LEE	7/9/19
44	CROWDER	8/3/25
45	PHILLIPS	4/19/25
46	WRIGHT	2/11/24
47	BROONER	4/3/17
48	J. GENTRY	3/31/21
49	J. JONES	4/14/17
50	CASEBIER	5/4/17
51	BARRETT	9/17/17
52	CARTER	5/8/17
53	GORDON	9/17/17
54	GORDON	9/17/17
55	GORDON	10/15/17
56	W. WRIGHT	4/24/18
57	WRIGHT	4/14/19
58	GREATHOUSE	6/15/18
59	PURCELL	4/29/19
60	PHILLIPS	3/10/17
61	WHITTINGHILL	7/15/18
62	CARTER	11/8/17-10/13/18
63	SULLIVAN	6/24/18
64	FRY	6/16/23
65	CUMMINS	4/29/18
66	HASKINS	4/23/18
67	J. GENTRY	6/13/19-7/24/24
68	GORDON	9/10/17
69	GORDON	11/17/18
70	DAVISON	8/28/17
71	BANDEL	9/6/17
72	FRY	8/18/18
73	McKIN	7/3/27
74	STEPHENS	7/23/29
75	GORDON	8/20/23
76	GORDON	5/29/18
77	RICHARDSON	5/8/17
78	GREATHOUSE	-
79	GREATHOUSE	-
80	MASTERSON	6/1/18
81	HUFFMAN	7/17/15
82	STARKE	4/11/18
83	EDWARDS	6/21/17
84	SUMMER	4/29/18
85	STARKE	3/18/19
86	HOSKINS	3/1/19
87	GRIFFIN	3/8/19
88	R. GRIGSBY	1/2/16
89	R. GRIGSBY	9/3/18
90	A. GRIGSBY	9/3/28
91	CRAWFORD	10/3/26
92	BRISTOW	6/29/18
93	J. GENTRY	1/11/20
94	HARDIN	10/17/18
95	BARKER	9/20/24
96	WRIGHT	6/16/17
97	LEE	12/29/17
98	MILLER	5/23/15
99	MILLS	12/1/23
100	COHOON	10/14/18
101	ADAMS & BRISTOW	6/29/18
102	WAKEFIELD	9/2/18
103	GONTERMAN	6/29/18
104	R. GRIGSBY	1/15/18
105	A. LINCOLN	12/10/18
106	ADAMS	2/26/18
107	MORTON	4/1/18
108	HOSKINS	9/2/18
109	HARDIN	10/17/18
110	VANOMAN	9/21/18
111	SANDERS	4/18/23
112	SANDERS	4/18/23
113	HILL	10/28/18
114	J. GENTRY	11/7/18
115	LAMAR	12/29/17
116	MURRAH	10/28/15
117	MONROE	9/21/18
118	SANDERS	9/10/17
119	WAKEFIELD	6/14/27
120	CARTER	6/13/17
121	G. JONES	4/13/19
122	WRIGHT	9/17/28
123	BRISTOW	2/26/18
124	J. GENTRY	6/3/18
125	WRIGHT	8/26/18
126	HOSKINS	12/29/17
127	ROGERS	4/23/18
128	T. JONES	2/15/18
129	T. JONES	3/15/18
130	J. WRIGHT	2/17/17
131	CHILDRESS	11/15/19
132	OTT	6/9/18
133	MASTERSON	2/22/30
134	HOWARD	10/5/22
135	HOWARD	10/15/22
136	RICKS	4/23/28
137	BRISTOW	4/27/19
138	BRISTOW	3/18/18
139	DOWNING	3/19/19
140	G. JONES	4/23/18
141	H. JONES	8/15/18
142	J. GENTRY	4/3/18
143	CASEBIER	6/13/18
144	CASEBIER	6/3/18
145	E. & J. WRIGHT	9/13/17
146	PEARCE	10/29/18
147	E. LAMAR	1/12/19
148	RICHARDSON	10/22/16
149	POWELL	9/30/17
150	MASTERSON	2/15/16
151	DUDLEY	1/2/18
152	EMMICK	9/29/15
153	HOLMES	11/23/10
154	HOLMES	11/23/18
155	GARRISON	3/19/19
156	J. BROWN	10/6/19
157	W. JONES	2/26/18
158	BUNYON	2/24/19
159	DEWEES	3/15/19
160	RAY	7/10/17
161	RAY	9/30/17
162	OTT	6/18/18
163	WOODWARD	6/3/18
164	NO ENTRY	
165	VALENTINE	6/9/18
166	B. DUDLEY	1/2/18
167	TAYLOR	6/10/18
168	TAYLOR	5/23/15
169	W. JONES	10/5/25
170	OGDEN	9/15/18
171	HARRISON	8/14/18/
172	S. BROWN	10/6/17
173	YOUNG	10/15/17
174	HADLEY	4/19/18
175	J. BROWN	4/13/18
176	DEWEES	3/15/19
177	S. LAMAR	1/12/19
178	S. LAMAR	3/10/19
179	VALENTINE	6/19/18
180	B. DUDLEY	1/21/18
181	TAYLOR	6/21/18
182	CONNER	12/1/14
183	TENNISON	2/5/19
184	OGDEN	8/4/18
185	MARTIN	8/13/19
186	J. BROWN	4/3/18
187	HARMON	4/3/18
188	NO ENTRY	
189	B. LAMAR	5/5/17
190	B. LAMAR	12/1/14
191	W. WOOD	5/1/17
192	HORNBACH	3/29/19
193	EDWARDS	3/29/19
194	EDWARDS	2/27/15
195	NO ENTRY	
196	McDANIELS	12/1/14
197	McDANIELS	12/21/13
198	ROGERS	12/17/18
199	NO ENTRY	
200	HALE	2/10/19
201	RUSSELL	7/20/18
202	CARR	7/20/18
203	McCONNELL	11/16/21
204	PICKERILL	12/10/17
205	OGDEN	11/6/18
206	MURRAN	4/25/17
207	POSEY	4/17/11
208	TAYLOR	5/6/07
209	TAYLOR	5/6/07
210	ALLEN	6/29/18
211	HALE	1/14/19
212	MAINS	2/25/20
213	DAVIS	2/5/18
214	WAKEFIELD	9/30/18
215	WILSON	4/17/19
216	HARKER	8/3/18
217	NO ENTRY	
218	SMEATHERS	2/15/19
219	RUSK	3/18/19
220	CARR	7/20/18

NO.	NAME	DATE OF ENTRY
221	BEMISS	7/20/18
222	PICKERILL	4/3/18
223	R. GRIGSBY	5/15/18
224	RAMSOUR	5/ 5/19
225	EDWARDS	8/17/27
226	BATES	7/25/27
227	EDWARDS	6/9/17
228	HARRISON	2/10/19
229	MAINE	3/11/30
230	SMEATHERS	3/12/19
231	HACKLEMAN	9/6/19
232	SHROADS	1/13/19
233	SHROADS	12/10/19
234	EMMICK	11/15/18
235	GRASS	2/25/18
236	HACKLEMAN	6/2/21
237	W.LAMAR	9/1/19
238	HOWARD	2/26/18
239	EMMICK	11/15/18
240	D. LANE	3/13/18
241	OGDEN	9/15/18
242	MOORE	12/29/14
243	ALLENSWORTH	4/23/18
244	ALLENSWORTH	7/2/18
245	ALLENSWORTH	7/2/18
246	RAY	9/15/18
247	RAY	6/24/18
248	RICHEY	8/6/18
249	SANS	4/25/18
250	GRASS	2/25/18
251	HYMES	2/25/18
252	HOWARD	8/6/18
253	U. LAMAR	3/25/12
254	DAVISS	3/10/19
255	ALLENSWORTH	8/15/18
256	ALLENSWORTH	4/23/18
257	RICHARDSON	12/20/14
258	GRASS	2/26/18
259	BEMISS	5/20/18
260	HYMES	2/26/18
261	HYMES	2/26/18
262	MORTON	3/10/14
263	HYMES	2/26/18
264	KELLEY	5/22/16
265	MURRAH	3/23/16
266	KELLENS	4/18/16
267	EMMICK	11/15/19
268	D. LANE	4/20/18
269	BOON	4/6/18
270	BAIRD	2/25/10
271	GRASS	2/26/18
272	RAZER	5/10/18
273	BLACKFORD	3/9/18
274	HAMMOND	10/14/14
275	HAMMOND	2/21/18
276	CROWDER	9/12/20
277	BAIRD	8/18/16
278	BLACK	3/25/17
279	LANE	3/13/18
280	LANE	4/6/18
281	BARBER	7/28/19
282	RAY	7/5/14
283	WRIGHT	6/15/19
284	WILLIAMS	10/29/19
285	RAY	10/28/11
286	GENTRY	9/30/18
287	GREATHOUSE	8/28/17
288	HOWELL	9/6/17
289	BISHOP	9/2/18
290	HAMMOND	7/26/18



HISTORICAL BASE MAP
LINCOLN BOYHOOD NATIONAL MEMORIAL
LIVING HISTORICAL FARM

LAND ENTRIES — SPENCER COUNTY, INDIANA

May 6, 1807 — February 28, 1830

1—286 These numbers are keyed to a list accompanying the text, giving name and date for each entry, similar to the Lincoln and Hanks entries above.

All entries were taken from Tract Books 5-11, Indiana, Vincennes District, South and West, General Land Office.

These books are on file, Eastern States Office, Bureau of Land Management, 7980 Eastern Ave., Robin Building, Silver Springs, Maryland

B. GROUND COVER, 1816-1830

1. The Sandford-Henrie Survey

The field notes forwarded to the General Land Office by surveyors David Sandford and Arthur Henrie in 1805 provide a good description of the ground cover in the area where Thomas Lincoln settled 11 years later. As the surveying party worked its way northward, running the line between Sections 33 and 34, Township 4 South, Range 5 West, they recorded, "land on the first one half mile convenient for farming: Oak timber: the last half mile is very brushy."[1] As Sandford and Henrie continued the line northward between Sections 27 and 28, the area was described as "middling quality for farming: timber, white oak and hickory."[2] Henrie reported that between Sections 21 and 22, they crossed "good farming land, with oak timbered soil."[3]

Working their way west along the south boundary of Township 4 South, Range 5 West from the corner of Sections 33 and 34, Henrie observed that at 64.50 chains, they waded a brook ten links wide. When they set the corner post for Sections 32 and 33, they took bearings on a dogwood and hickory. The land,

---

[1]"Field Notes, South of Base Line and West of the Second Meridian, Indiana," Vol. II (National Archives, Cartographic Branch), 224.

[2]Ibid., 224.

[3]Ibid., 225.

once the timber (oak &c.) was cut, would be good for farming.[4] After locating the corner post, the surveyors ran the line between Sections 32 and 33. While the party set the corner post for Sections 28, 29, 32 and 33, Henrie took bearings on several black oaks. The land along this mile was "very glady and brushy intermixed with briers."[5]

Continuing northward, the party blazed the line separating Sections 28 and 29. At 48.75 chains, the surveyors forded Little Pigeon Creek. Along this mile, the vegetative cover was brush and briers. The soil was "glady."[6]

Running the south boundary of Section 32 (eleven years later, Thomas Lincoln was to enter on the southwest quarter of this section.), the surveyors started at the post set to mark the corner of Sections 32 and 33. At 40 chains Sandford set the half mile post, from which bearings were taken on a gum and black oak. At 45.50 chains a brook, eight links wide, flowing to the north was crossed; at 46.05 a brook 10 links wide, course northwest, was waded; a brook, 10 links wide, at 47.50 chains was crossed. At 80 chains the party set the corner post for Sections 31 and 32. The land along the boundary was

---

[4] Ibid., 227-228.

[5] Ibid., 228. To the surveyors, "glady" soil was swampy.

[6] Ibid., 228-229. It was no easy task in 1805, to keep a corps of surveyors in the field. For that reason, the surveying party worked a seven-day week. Sandford and Henrie and their crew made their survey

assessed as middling, the timber as oak and hickory.[7]

When they ran the line northward between Sections 31 and 32, the party set the half mile post at 40 chains, from which bearings were taken on two cherry trees. At 60.75 a brook, 12 links wide, flowing to the northwest was crossed. A post indicating the corner of Sections 29, 30, 31 and 32 was set at 80 chains. From this post sightings were taken on two black oaks. The land along this line was described as "flat, brushy, briery, wet soil." The trees were oaks.[8]

Moving eastward on a random line between Sections 29 and 32, Sandford reported the timber and land poor. At 80.74 chains the northwest line was intersected. Here the terrain was flat and covered with brush and briers.[9] After setting up the corner post, the surveyors had their people run the line westward between Sections 29 and 32. A temporary post was set at 40.37 chains from which bearings were taken on a dogwood and a sassafras.[10]

---

of Section 32 between sunrise and sunset on December 26. "Report by Committee to Bess Ehrmann, Jan. 12, 1926 (files, SIHS, Willard Library, Evansville, Indiana.
(Southwestern Indiana Historical Society, Evansville Indiana = SIHS)

[7]"Field Notes, South of Base Line and West of the Second Meridian, Indiana," Vol. 11, 231-232.

[8]Ibid., 232

[9]Ibid.

[10]Ibid., 233.

Proceeding westward, the surveyors ran the line separating Sections 30 and 31. At 40 chains a half mile post was set and bearings taken on two gums. Sandford and Henrie at 82.40 chains set the mile post and took sightings on an elm and a hickory. The land along the north line of Section 31 was wet and flat.[11]

The surveyors returned to the post set to make the southeast corner of Section 31 and proceeded west, marking the south boundary of Township 4 South, Range 5 West. At 40 chains the half mile post was set and bearings taken on a dogwood and hickory. At 61 chains a brook ten links wide, course northwest, was waded, and at 81.39 chains a post marking the southwest corner was positioned. The land along this mile was described as middling, and timbered with oak and hickory.[12]

When they surveyed Township 5 South, Range 5 West, Sandford and Henrie reported that in running the line between Sections 5 and 6 (Nancy Hanks Lincoln in October 1818 was laid to rest in the west half of the northwest quarter of Section No. 5), they walked northward from the post marking the corners of Sections 5, 6, 7 and 8. At 21 chains they crossed a brook, 6 links wide, flowing southwest. A half mile post from which bearings were taken on a hickory and a black walnut was set at 40 chains.

---

[11] Ibid.

[12] Ibid., 232

At 74.84 chains a post was set at the corner of Sections 5 and 6 from which bearings were taken on a hickory and black oak. The land, it was recorded, was "principally good farm land. Timber: white oak and hickory, underbrush and spicewood."[13]

When they blazed the line between Sections 4 and 5, the surveyors walked north. At 15.50 chains a brook, eight links wide, was encountered. Its course was northwest. The half mile post was set at 40 chains, from which bearings were taken on two white oaks. A post was positioned on the Township Line at 71 chains, and bearings were taken on a white oak and a hickory. Along this mile the terrain was hilly and brushy and the soil thin. The timber was white oak.[14]

In running the boundary between Sections 5 and 8, the surveyors traveled eastward. At 40 chains the quarter section post was set. Along this half mile, the land was described as "good for farming." The timber was white and black oak, and the underbrush spicewood.[15]

In addition to their general mention of oak, hickory, walnut brush, and briers, Sandford and Henrie selected individual trees within Section 32 as marks. Among these were: two elms, six and eight inches in diameter, a 24-inch white oak, a six-inch hickory, a ten-inch black walnut, and a four-inch cherry.[16]

---

[13] Ibid., 264.

[14] Ibid., 260.

[15] Ibid., 263.

[16] Ibid., 227-229.

Trees selected for bearings in Section 5 included: hickories, and black and white oaks.[17]

Sandford prepared field notes on the condition of the ground cover in 1805. Starting in the west with Section 31, he observed that the land was level barrens, open and wet with some oak and hickory. Section 32, where the Lincolns settled, he described as "land level, oak and hickory, medium growth is hazel and other brush very thick. The timber on this mile is chiefly destroyed by fire." Section 33 was described as mostly level, chiefly creek bottom, overflowed by high water. The next three sections of Township 4 South, Range 5 West, consisted of broken or uneven land mostly poor, of "second- or third-rate quality."[18]

2. Descriptions of Vegetative Cover in Southwestern Indiana in the Early 1800s.

Southern Indiana of the early 1800s was described by an Easterner as "covered with heavy timber — comprising oaks, beeches, ash, three kinds of nut trees, three to four feet in diameter with trunks fifty to sixty feet high — splendid

---

[17] "Survey Township No. V, South of the Base Line, Range No. V West of Meridian, Indiana, Surveyed by Arthur Henrie" (National Archives, Cartographic Branch).

[18] Warren, Lincoln's Youth, 20-21; "Record of Field Notes, South and West of the Second Principal Meridian" (Archives Division, Indiana State Library).

material for all kinds of cabinet work. Gum trees, hackberry, sycamore, persimmons, wild cherries, apples and plums, also wild grape vines of enormous diameter and heights...."

There were, he continued, " a large number ofmaple and sugar trees from two to three feet in diameter, and a kind of poplar...."[19]

An early settler observed that the lowlands of Perry County were so thick with underbrush that "one could scarcely get through." The pioneers called these thickets "roughs."[20]

In these bottoms the paw paw, spicewood, grapevine, and leatherwood grew so thick as to frighten any but the stoutest of hearts. Months and years of back breaking labor with brush hooks, brier scythes, mattocks, and other grubbing tools had to be spent, before the bottoms could be profitably farmed.[21]

Bottoms, such as these, were found a short distance to the north and to the southwest of the Lincoln farm. It was the 1840s and 1850s before the land bounding Little Pigeon Creek to the north and Buckhorn Creek to the southwest passed into private hands and was cultivated.

---

[19]Benjamin Thomas, Abraham Lincoln: A Biography (New York, 1952), 9.

[20]Warren, Lincoln's Youth, 20. Perry County bounded Spencer County on the east.

[21]Buley, The Old Northwest, I, 164.

Elias Pym Fordham, in making his way across southwestern Indiana in 1818, noted in his diary, "When, on the barren peak of some rocky hill, you catch a distant view, it generally is nothing but an undulating surface of impenetrable forest." As was the case with many travelers, Fordham was depressed by the thick and sombre woods, for he complained, "it is seldom that a view of two hundred yards in extent can be caught in Indiana," because "Indiana is a vast forest ... just penetrated in places by backwoods settlers who are half hunters, half farmers."[22]

In 1819 Adlard Welby measured an oak in southwestern Indiana and found it to be 24 feet in circumference four feet above the ground; others he observed were even larger. Thick grapevines wove a net among the trees.[23]

One settler described the country as "woods, woods, woods, as far as the world extends."[24]

It was not especially the great size of the trees which characterized the Indiana wilderness, but the almost impenetrable thickness of the growth. "Tall trees covered the whole country with their wide-spreading branches, depending on the ground, and the shrubbery below arose and united with the branches of the trees.

---

[22]Beveridge, Abraham Lincoln, I, 38.

[23]Ibid.

[24]Thomas, Abraham Lincoln, 8.

Huge grapevines, scorning to associate with the humble shrubs, like great serpents ascended and festooned the trees to the topmost branches, and thence, spreading in every direction, crept from tree to tree, tying and uniting the tops of a dozen together into an indistinguishable net-work of vegetation...."[25]

Abraham Lincoln recalled that he "never passed through a harder experience" than he did in going from Thompson's Ferry to the homesite.[26]

3. Recollections by People, Who Lived in the Area Contemporary with the Lincolns, as to the Vegetative Cover in the Period 1816-1830

Three of the people (Dennis Hanks, Elizabeth Crawford, and J. W. Whartman) interviewed by Herndon in 1865 recalled that a mighty forest of sycamore, black and white oak, box elder, crab apple, catalpa, elm, willow, hackberry, poplar, sugar-maple, ash, redbud, sweet-gum, hickory, beech, dogwood, and walnut stretched northward from the Ohio. These trees grew as "thickly as their great size would permit."[27]

---

[25]Warren, Lincoln's Youth, 27.

[26]Ibid., 20.

[27]Hertz, , The Hidden Lincoln, 214.

Dennis Hanks told Herndon, "I will just say to you that it was the Brushes Cuntry that I have ever seen in any New Cuntry,... all Kinds of under growth Spice wo[o]d...Shewmake Dogwood, grape Vines Matted to-Geather So that as the old Saying goes you could Drive a Butter Knife up to the Handle in it." By chance, the trees on the Lincoln knob might have been fewer, as sometimes is the case with these elevations.[28]

An early Spencer County historian recorded that when Nancy Hank Lincoln was laid to rest, she was buried in a "dense forest" south of the cabin. This forest, he continued, of "oak, walnut, hickory, and dogwood, stands as majestically as it did 60 years ago, when the grave received the remains...."[29]

4. Forest Products usedby the Lincolns

a. To Supplement Their Diet

Until such time as the pioneer could depend upon his own produce, the woods which furnished wild game could be depended on for items with which to vary the diet. Varieties of hickory nuts and black walnuts, chestnut and beechnuts, were plentiful in the hardwood belt of Spencer County. The hazelnut, shell bark, and pecan in some regions, and

---

[28]Beveridge, Abraham Lincoln, I, 40; Thomas, Abraham Lincoln, 9.

[29]Illustrated Historical Atlas — Spencer County, 10.

the paw paw, wild cherry, persimmon, wild-turkey pea, black and red haw, wild grape, (October and fox), plum and crab apples were widely distributed. Wild strawberries, June berries, mulberries, black dewberries, raspberries, and blackberries, the latter much larger than the domesticated berry, varied in quantity with different locations and seasons. In addition there were hops, herbs, and roots, some of which were called upon for emergency rations, others were used for teas, medicines and seasoning.[30]

The pioneer harvest began in early spring when the maple sap began to run, and at that time candy bars for the whole year were provided. Gatherings at the sugar camps were a social event of tremendous importance to all. The fire under the giant kettle had to be kept burning. Here the stock of candy molded in the form of sugar hearts, diamonds, or little scalloped pies was stored in great jars.[31]

The sassafras bush was one of the Lincoln children's favorite shrubs, and in the spring of the year its roots were dug up and the sassafras tea made from them was a drink not to be despised, either as a beverage or spring tonic.[32]

---

[30]Buley, The Old Northwest, I, 155

[31]Warren, Lincoln's Youth, 73; Lincoln Lore, No. 763, Nov. 22, 1943.

[32]Warren, Lincoln's Youth, 74; Lincoln Lore, No. 763, Nov. 22, 1943.

b. To Build Tools and Furniture

Several kinds of trees grown on the farm provided Thomas Lincoln with excellent lumber. The white oak was tough, dense, flexible, and easily split. The black locust was strong, heavy, not much subject to warping, and resisted the effects of the weather for a long time. Hickory was tough and elastic to a high degree, and was the wood generally used for handles to axes and other tools. Black walnut grew to a great size, and was considered a mark of the excellence of the soil on which it grew. In addition, the wood of this tree was a favorite for making furniture. The sugar maple was curled in its fibre, and was used to make stocks for rifles.[33]

5. Conclusions as to Ground Cover on the Lincoln Farm

We know from the report of the surveyors that Section 32 had been burned over prior to 1805. By the autumn of 1816, the forest would have reclaimed the area. Because of the forest fire, most of the timber would be second growth. A few forest giants would have survived the fire. While the surveyors did not state how long before their visit to the area the fire had occurred, we may assume that it could have

---

[33] Flint, Letters From America, 255-256.

been a number of years. If the fire had been of recent origin, we feel that they would have been more definite about it.

There would be an increase in underbrush and briers as one approached the northern and eastern boundaries of the Lincoln 100-acre tract. It is likely that the vegetative cover was not as profuse on the Lincoln knob, as elsewhere on the land Thomas Lincoln entered in October, 1817.

C. THE LINCOLN SPRING

A nearby, reliable source of water was an important criterion in selection of a cabin site. Notes made by Surveyors Sandford and Henrie in December, 1805, indicate that the land north of Section 32 was swampy. A branch of Little Pigeon Creek bisects Section 29. What a message this entry conveys, because a swamp was the natural environment of the snake root. A study of early land entries for Spencer County demonstrates that the pioneer took up land near swamps, creeks, ponds, or springs.

George R. Wilson, a man with 50 years' experience as a surveyor in Spencer and Dubois Counties, concluded in 1926 that "springs furnishing water suitable for drinking purposes" existed on the west side of Lincoln's 80 and on the east side of Casebier's 80 at "the junction of the soft and swampy soil with the clay soil of the surrounding high land." Such water was an asset to any tract. It is strange but good springs were not common in that part of Townships 4 and 5 South, Range 5 West. This may account in part for the land entries surrounding Lincoln's 80. After the first entries, the settlement was slow; many tracts were not taken until the early 1850s.[1]

---

[1]Report to Committee, Southwestern Indiana Historical Society, April, 1926 (files, Southwestern Indiana Historical Society, Willard Library, Evansville, Indiana).

In 1925 Dr. Warren visited the Lincoln farm for the purpose of investigating the water supply. He interviewed David Enlow, an old man, who reported that before the timber had been cut-off, he had "watered forty head of steers at the spring," just west of the cabin site on the land Lincoln obtained from Casebier. An elderly lady, whose family for a long time had been using the spring as a source of water, said she "could not remember it ever having run dry." Three Lincoln City homes located within 300 feet of the cabin site secured their water from three private wells, one of them within 50 feet of the site.[2]

Before the water table was lowered by the cutting off of the timber by the settlers, there was a brook, ten links wide, flowing to the northwest near the eastern boundary of the 160-acre tract on which Lincoln entered in 1817.[3]

Dennis Hanks is responsible for the confusion about the water supply on the Lincoln farm. He informed Herndon that Lincoln "riddled his land like a honeycomb' in search of good water."[4] When Hanks was interviewed by Eleanor Atkinson

---

[2]Warren, Lincoln's Youth, 222.

[3]Observations made by George R. Wilson from Surveyors' Original Field Notes, now in possession of Dr. Wilson's sister, Margaret Wilson, Jasper, Indiana.

[4]Lamon, Life of Abraham Lincoln, 21.

he changed his story, and said that the site of the home was "on a creek with a deer-lick handy, and a spring o' good water."[5]

A small log cabin might have been built over the spring. As the years passed, this cabin may have been enlarged, and used as a storehouse for vegetables, milk, and fruits. A pool of water would be provided just large enough for a gourd or bucket, but not large enough to permit the water to become warm in the summer or freeze in the winter.[6]

---

[5]Eleanor Atkinson, The Boyhood of Lincoln (New York, 1908), 15.

[6]Logan Esarey, The Indiana Home (Crawfordsville, 1943), 20-21.

D. SALT LICKS

1. Little Pigeon Creek Salt Licks

There were a dozen or more salt licks north of the Lincoln farm on Little Pigeon Creek. These licks were well known to hunters.[1]

2. Clay Township Salt Licks

On the map which he prepared in 1805 of his survey, Henrie pinpointed a Deer Lick in Section 25, Township 5 South, Range 5 West.[2]

3. Hammond Township Salt Licks

On the map which he prepared in 1805 of his survey, Henrie located a Deer Lick in Section 29, Township 6 South, Range 5 West.[3]

4. Value of Salt to the Settlers

Salt was more difficult to obtain than sugar and more important in the domestic economy of the frontier. It was needed not only for flavoring but in quantity for preserving meats. Salt was obtainable from the licks. At these places a hundred gallons of water boiled down produced about a bushel of salt.[4]

---

[1]Warren, Lincoln's Youth, 20; Lamon, Life of Abraham Lincoln, 21; "Lincoln Memorial State Park and Vicinity - Showing Original Land Entries," Map No. 2, Brown Bros. Lumber Co., Dale, Indiana.

[2]"Henrie's Map of Township V South, Range V West" (files, Cartographic Branch, National Archives).

[3]"Henrie's Map of Township VI South, Range V West" (files, Ibid.)

[4]Buley, The Old Northwest, I, 157.

E. SOUTHWESTERN INDIANA FAUNA, 1816-1830

1. Wild Animals

a. General Remarks

Among the wild animals observed in southwestern Indiana and on the English Prairie by John Woods in the period 1819-1820 were: bears, wolves, panthers, wild cats, foxes, opossums, raccoons, skunks, groundhogs, ground squirrels, tree squirrels, deer, buffalo, elk, beaver, otters, and rabbits. Bears and wolves, he reported, were not numerous. Of panthers he had seen none and heard but little. Wild cats were "often destructive to young hogs." Foxes were scarce, while raccoons and opossums were "plentiful." Skunks were not as numerous as opossums. Since coming to the area, Woods had seen only one groundhog. Squirrels, both ground and tree, were common. Deer were not very numerous. Woods, in his year's residence on the English Prairie, had seen about 100, but never more than five or six together. To the north of English Prairie were to be found buffalo and elk. Beavers and otters inhabited the rivers and streams. Rabbits were "tolerably plentiful."[1]

---

[1]Woods, Two Years' Residence, 287-290. Woods, an Englishman, reached the English Prairie in September 1819. The English Prairie was located about 20 miles west of Princeton.

A traveler passing through the region several years earlier than Woods wrote, "The forest is full of deer, antelope, bears, wolves, ground-hogs, hares, wild-cats, squirrels...," and he might have added that mink, weasels, skunks, raccoons, and opossums were also in abundance.[2]

b. Deer

David Turnham, a Lincoln neighbor, recalled, "there was a great many deer-licks; and Abe and myself would go to these licks and watch all night to kill deer, though Abe was not so fond of a gun or the sport as I was."[3]

c. Bears

Hunting was a sport and diversion indulged in by all pioneers. And although it did not seem to have appealed to Abe to any extent, he and his father occasionally joined the community bear hunts. Bears were a real threat to the farmer, for they took a heavy toll of his livestock and were a menace to human beings. Bear hunts

---

[2]John S. Duss, George Rapp and His Associates (New Harmony, 1914), 12.

[3]Herndon and Weik, Life of Lincoln, 22. Deer were slaughtered by the 1000s, and they not only provided meat for the table through the year, but the hides were serviceable for gloves, shoes, pants, shirts and suspenders. No animal outside the domesticated group ever contributed so much to the welfare of those living on the frontiers, the early hunters and settlers, as did the deer. Lincoln Lore, No. 73, Nov. 22, 1943.

were usually organized after some of these beasts had devastated a farmer's stock. In what may have been the last such hunt on Pigeon Creek nine beasts were killed. The most famous hunter in that region was Peter Brooner who lived near the Lincolns.[4]

Lincoln composed a poem many years after he left Indiana. One stanza read:

> When first my father settled here,
> 'Twas then the frontier line.
> The panther's scream filled night with fear,
> And bears preyed on the swine.[5]

d. Wild-Animals as Pets

Dennis Hanks recalled, "Me'n' Abe got'er a baby coon an' a turtle, an' tried to get a fawn but we couldn't ketch any."[6]

e. Wild Animals as a Source of Food

Luckily Thomas Lincoln, following his move to Little Pigeon Creek, did not have far to go to get sustenance for his family. Game filled the thickets that surrounded

---

[4]Warren, Lincoln's Youth, 38-39.

[5]Thomas, Abraham Lincoln, 9.

[6]Warren, Lincoln's Youth, 58.

the knob on which the cabin was built. "We did not have to go more than 4 or 5 hundred yards to kill deer, turkeys and other wild game," Dennis Hanks recalled in describing the winter of 1817-1818.[7]

During the first winter in Indiana, the woods provided the meat dishes for the Lincoln family — venison, rabbit, and squirrel.[8]

---

[7]Beveridge, Abraham Lincoln, I, 44.

[8]Warren, Lincoln's Youth, 75; Lincoln Lore, No. 763, Nov. 22, 1943, and No. 1235, Dec. 8, 1952.

F. SOUTHWESTERN INDIANA BIRDS, 1816-1830

1. Game Birds

a. General Remarks

Game birds were found every where. According to one traveler, wild turkeys, pigeons, ducks, geese, brant, partridges, quail, prairie chickens, and parakeets were found in such numbers "as to constitute a nuisance" in the wooded region north of the Ohio.[1]

b. Turkeys

One of Abe Lincoln's recollections of Indiana was a flock of wild turkeys that approached the new cabin. His father was not at home, and he asked his mother if he might use his father's gun. Permission granted, he stood inside the cabin and "shot through a crack and killed one of them."[2]

c. Carolina Parakeets

Carolina parakeets were found in profusion in southern Indiana, while Abraham Lincoln was growing up.[3]

---

[1] Buley, The Old Northwest, I, 149.

[2] Beveridge, Abraham Lincoln, I, 43-44; "Autobiography," in The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln (Rutgers, 1952-1955), Vol. IV, 2; Lincoln Lore, No. 763, Nov. 22, 1943.

[3] Maximilian, Prince of Wied, Travels in the Interior of North America ...(London, 1843), I, 168-169, 194-195. Reprinted in Thwaites (ed.), Early Western Travels, XXII.

d. Passenger Pigeons

Southern Indiana was a feeding and breeding ground for passenger pigeons, and Little Pigeon Creek is reputed to have been one of the great pigeon roosts.[4]

Shooting passenger pigeons would not have been much sport, but Thomas Lincoln undoubtedly shot some of them and other game birds and animals to supply his table. Lincoln had to hunt to get fresh meat, particularly during the early years in Indiana.[5]

e. Quail, Grouse, Pigeons, Wild Ducks, and Geese

According to Beveridge, "wild turkeys ran through the Indiana underbrush; there were grouse and quail; wild ducks and geese flew overhead. Incredible numbers of pigeons hid the sun, 'darkening the air like a thick passing cloud' and, when settling for the night, broke down stout branches of trees."[6]

2. Birds of the Wood and Marsh

Birds identified by visitors to the area included: turkey buzzards, doves, woodcocks, snipes, bluebirds, mocking birds, cardinals, yellow birds, humming birds, whippoorwills, blue jays, larks, woodpeckers, martins, and robins.[7]

[4]Harlow Lindley (compiler), Indiana as Seen by Early Travelers (Indiana Historical Collections, I, Indianapolis, 1916), 510.

[5]Warren, Lincoln's Youth, 38.

[6]Beveridge, Abraham Lincoln, I, 39.

[7]Woods, Two Years' Residence, 291-292.

G. SOUTHWESTERN INDIANA REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS, 1816-1830

1. Reptiles

a. Viperous

There were rattlesnakes and copperheads in Spencer County.[1]

b. Non-poisonous

Black, garter, and water snakes were seen in the area.[2]

2. Amphibians

a. Frogs and turtles

Large numbers of frogs and turtles were found in the Little Pigeon and Buckhorn creek watersheds.[3]

---

1. Woods, Two Years' Residence, 210; Murr, "Lincoln in Indiana," Indiana Magazine of History, Vol. XIV, No. 1, p. 33.

[2]Woods, Two Years' Residence, 210.

[3]Ibid., 290.

H. INSECTS

1. Pests

a. Mosquitoes

During the summer swarms of mosquitoes rose from the Little Pigeon Creek swamps north of the Lincoln farm.[1]

b. Flies

Large black flies buzzed and swarmed during the warm months.[2]

c. Ticks, Chiggers and Lice

In addition to the afflictions common to the pioneer period, the settlers of Spencer County had "without the modern conveniences of meeting his attacks," the wood tick and chigger. There were body and head lice.[3]

2. Useful

a. Bees

Sometimes during the winters, Lincoln and Hanks varied their hunting by a search for wild honey and "found bee trees all over the forest."[4]

---

[1]Thomas, Abraham Lincoln, 9; Beveridge, Abraham Lincoln, I, 39.

[2]Ibid.

[3]Murr, "Lincoln in Indiana," Indiana Magazine of History, Vol. XIV, No. 1, p. 33.

[4]Beveridge, Abraham Lincoln, I, 46.

The honey of the wild bee was valuable to the settlers. The honey bee was not a native but came into the woods from domestic hives. Unlike the housefly and rat, which followed settlement, the honeybee, by reason of its swarming and migrating tendencies, was usually a hundred or more miles in advance of the frontier.[5]

---

[5]Buley, The Old Northwest, I, 155.

I. FISH AND FISHING

Fish abounded in the Spencer County streams and rivers. Fishing with hook and line were considered too slow by the pioneers, the gig and seine were favored.[1]

---

[1]Buley, The Old Northwest, I, 149-150.

J. COMMENTS ON THE HEALTHFULNESS OF THE AREA

When Tom Lincoln selected his land, he failed to make proper inquiries about the healthfulness of the region. Probably he was unaware that malaria was prevalent and that ague and intermittent fevers paid annual visits. But even more devastating than these diseases was one that struck southern Indiana as soon as milk cows were brought into the wilderness. This mysterious and deadly malady called "milk sickness" by the settlers ravaged whole communities.[1]

---

[1]Warren, Lincoln's Youth, 51-52.

III. THE FARM —CLEARING AND CULTIVATING THE LAND

A. GENERALIZATIONS

Thomas Lincoln belonged to one of the three classes of pioneers who settled the "Old Northwest." First came the hunters, content with the rudest of shelters, a corn and pumpkin patch, a few hogs, and sometimes a cow. Hardly distinguishable from the hunters were the first settlers, half hunter, half farmer. These people, of whom Tom Lincoln was one, possessed more of the utensils for civilized life, but on the whole constituted a transition class who were equally likely to retrogress into the more primitive life by selling out their improvements and moving on, as to enter their land and join the permanent settlers, who followed them.

B. NUMBER OF ACRES CULTIVATED BY THE LINCOLNS

1. Recollections

In the spring of 1817, Thomas Lincoln, with what help young Abe could give him, hacked out a small clearing for a crop. Dennis Hanks recalled in 1865 that a field of about six acres was cleared on which a crop of corn was raised.[1]

After the arrival of Sarah Bush Lincoln and her three children, in the winter of 1819-1820, Tom Lincoln found he had eight mouths to feed. In addition to his carpentry work, Lincoln had to clear more land on which to raise crops.[2]

By 1824 Lincoln, reminisced Hanks in 1865, was raising "about 10 acres of corn and about 5 acres of wheat 2 acres of oates one acre of medow."[3]

David Turnham reported that "Thomas Lincoln had about 40 acres of land under cultivation when he left for Illinois."[4]

---

[1]Thomas, Abraham Lincoln, 10; Hertz, The Hidden Lincoln, 279; John G. Nicolay and John Hay, Abraham Lincoln, a History (10 vols. New York, 1890), I, 29; Beveridge, Abraham Lincoln, I, 46.

[2]Warren, Lincoln's Youth, 66.

[3]Beveridge, Abraham Lincoln, I, 65; Thomas, Abraham Lincoln, 10; Warren, Lincoln's Youth, 141.

[4]Warren, Lincoln's Youth, 205.

2. Evaluating the Evidence

Previous to the improvements in farm implements in the 1830s it required 24 long days of work for one man to plow, seed, and harvest ten acres of wheat, and 44 days to plow, plant, cultivate, and harvest ten acres of corn.[5]

If we assume that Lincoln in 1829 retained his 1824 ratio of corn to wheat, he would have raised 20 acres of corn and 10 acres of wheat on the 40 acres under cultivation. It would have required 112 man-days to plow, seed and harvest this acreage. As Abraham was living at home and could be expected to assist his father when needed, Thomas Lincoln could have farmed 40 acres with relative ease.

3. Clearing the Land

According to an early settler, the "first clearing was done in a 'hurry-up-and-get-in-a-crop' style." Two or three acres were all that could be cleared the first year, even with some help from a neighbor. These first clearings were called "eighteen inches and under." All trees under 18 inches in diameter were felled; those over that size were left standing. The smaller trees were then "cut up and piled around the

---

[5]Buley, The Old Northwest, I, 182.

standing trees. Grubs were dug out with a grubbin' hoe, and with the brush was piled on the log heaps."[6]

The burning of these piles killed the standing trees. A number of blackened and burned trunks were left standing in the field, and the farmers were compelled to plow around them. Brush was piled around the edge of the clearing to protect the growing corn from the family cow and the deer.

After the first year, clearing was done more systematically. The pioneers deadened the timber and left it standing a few years until it got dry enough to burn. Deadening a tree, or "girdlin'"as it was called, was cutting a ring around the tree with an ax. This shut off the sap from going up to the leaves. Most of the girdling was done in the summer.

Walnut, hickory, elm, and beech never put out leaves again after being girdled while in full leaf, but hackberry, sugar, and ash had to be piled around with brush and burned deeply, or they would shade the crops. Some farmers set fire to the

---

[6] Howard Johnson, A Home in the Woods: Oliver Johnson's Reminiscences of Early Marion County (Indianapolis, 1951), 153-154.

dead trees the winter following. If not fired, dead beech trees and sugar maples would begin to fall about the third year, but oak, poplar, and walnut would stand for several years.[7]

When the Lincolns cleared their farm, Abraham chopped out underbrush, while his father and Dennis Hanks felled and girdled the trees.[8]

4. Cultivating the Land

a. Contemporary Accounts

Ward H. Lamon, who knew Lincoln, reported, "the state of agriculture was what it always is where there is no market, either to sell or buy; where implements are few and primitive, and where there are no regular mechanics." The Carter Township "farmer 'tickled' two acres of ground in a day with his old shovel-plough, and got half a crop. He cut one acre with his sickle, while the modern machine lays down in neat row ten. With his flail and horse tramping, he thrashed out fifteen bushels of wheat; while the machine of to-day, with a few more hands, would turn out

---

[7]Buley, The Old Northwest, I, 162-163.

[8]Warren, Lincoln's Youth, 8.

three hundred and fifty. He 'fanned' and 'cleaned with a sheet.' When he wanted flour, he took his team and went to a 'horse-mill,' where he spent a whole day in converting fifteen bushels of grain."[9]

Europeans visiting the area were much more interested in writing of agricultural methods than the Americans. A number of these travelers have left excellent accounts of how the settlers cultivated their crops.

John Wood recorded:

> At daylight [September 8, 1820] we grounded on a sand bar for a few minutes; and at eight o'clock reached Troy, a small town of Indiana; and afterwards passed Anderson's river, from fifty to sixty yards wide.

Woods noted in his journal:

> The wind rising, obliged us to anchor a short distance below. I landed on the Indiana side, and walked three or four miles down the bank. I found a little cabin, situated on a small plantation, surrounded on all sides with high rocks, except against the river. The soil was so rich that the Indian corn was the largest I have ever seen; the owner said it was eighteen feet high, but I think he made the most of it. I picked up a stick about six foot long, and by measuring it with that and my own height, I should judge the highest of it was from fourteen to sixteen feet. There was great quantities of beans, pompions, and melons, running on and between the corn, all very luxuriant; in short, much larger than I ever saw before....
>
> I then went to the next cabin; most of the way very rocky, but there the country more open; the owner was winnowing wheat, by the wind without and fan. The wheat was very coarse; it was sown in

---

[9]Lamon, Life of Abraham Lincoln, 43-44.

> the spring; he said the land on the river was too rich for wheat, and subject to flood in the winter and spring; and when sown in the spring subject to rust or blight. But Indian corn came to high perfection.[10]

William Faux on October 29, 1818, witnessed a cornshucking near Washington, Indiana. He observed, "corn shucking means plucking the ears of Indian corn from the stalk, and then housing it in cribs, purposely made to keep it in, for winter's use. The stalk is left in the field; the leaves, while half green are stripped off, and tied up in bundles as hay for horses and cattle, and good food it is, much resembling in form the flags in English marshes."[11]

Duke Karl Bernhard in April, 1826, described the planting of corn in southwestern Indiana:

> There were furrows drawn diagonally across the field with the plough, each at a distance of two feet from the other; then other furrows at the same distance apart, at right angles with the first. A person goes behind the plough with a bag of corn, and in each crossing of the furrows he drops six grains. Another person with a shovel follows, and covers these grains with earth. When the young plants are half a foot high, they are ploughed between and the earth thrown up on both sides of the plants; and when they are two feet high this operation is repeated, to give them more firmness and to destroy the weeds.[12]

The mode of tilling the ground for the different kinds of grain, Prince Maximilian reported, "was with a plough, somewhat different than those in use in Germany." The oxen were hitched to the plough "by a very peculiar yoke," which

---

[10]Woods, Two Years' Residence, 248-249.

[11]William Faux, Memorable Days in America...(London, 1823), 205.

[12]Bernhard, Travels Through North America, Vol. II, 121.

consisted of "a long, thick, crooked piece of wood, which is laid horizontally over the necks of the two oxen, with two bows underneath, through which the heads of the animals are put."[13]

b. Cultivating the Land on a Living Historical Farm

In Spencer County in the period 1816-1830, beans, pumpkins, and melons were planted in the same field with the corn. The corn stalks, unlike today's hybrid varieties, grew to a great height. The corn stalks helped support the bean plants.

Agricultural implements were crude — the shovel plough, sickle, hoe and flail. Oxen pulled the ploughs.

5. Rail Fences

a. Location of

It has been impossible to pinpoint the location of the majority of the fences on the Lincoln farm. We doubt that the entire farm would have been enclosed, because the land to the north of the Lincoln farm had not been entered on. Thus, the Lincolns could, without any difficulty with their neighbors, utilize this area to run their livestock.

The fields under cultivation, the garden, and orchard would have been fenced to protect them from livestock

---

[13]Maxmilian, Maximilian's Travels, I, 185.

and deer. It is probable that the 40-acres under cultivation in 1829 included a good portion of the southern half of Thomas Lincoln's 100 acres.

We know that in 1860 the farm yard was fenced, and it is likely that it was during the later years of the Lincoln residence. We know that there was a fence bounding on the north the Township Trace, because Mrs. La Marr, a lady four years younger than Abe Lincoln, recalled that as Captain La Marr and several others were riding to the mill, they took the road leading past the Lincoln cabin. The riders observed a boy "perched upon the top of a staked-and-ridered fence, reading and so intently engaged that he did not notice their approach."[14] The boy was Abraham Lincoln.

b. Cutting Rails for Fences

As ground was cleared for cultivation, there was an urgent need for rail fences on the Lincoln farm. For splitting rails for the Virginia or "worm" rail fence, the necessary tools were several iron wedges, several wedges or gluts of dogwood, and a maul. For rails white ash, oak, chestnut, poplar, or walnut were felled by most settlers in winter when the sap was down. Cuts of ten or 12 feet in length were halved by starting the iron wedges in one end and inserting the gluts in the crack as it ran

---

[14]Murr, "Lincoln in Indiana," Indiana Magazine of History, Vol. XIV, No. 1, p. 69.

the length of the log. The halves in turn were split; the heartwood split out and perhaps laid aside for ground rails, and the rest worked into as many rails as the material allowed. A common hand could cut and split a hundred rails a day; a good man twice as many. Usually a flat rate of 25¢ a day was paid, but the laborer did piecework for a certain amount per hundred.[15]

c. Building a Rail Fence

In building rail fences, the man who laid the "worm" or bottom rail was careful to avoid using rails that were partly of the "sap wood." He employed a stick about 4 1/2 feet long, with which he located the corners of the fence. Laying down a rail, he set his stick on it a few inches from the end, and, sighting along the line of stakes, he moved the rail until the point upon which the stick stood and where the end of the next rail would be laid across that one was exactly in line with the stakes. Then moving along, he sighted again and, laying the stick down, he located the center of the next corner or crossing of the rail ends, exactly the length of the stick from the line, the next corner on the line again, and so on, alternately. It was a simple matter for those who followed to lay up the rails on that foundation. Usually a short flat piece of some durable wood, or a flat stone would be placed under each corner as a "ground chuck."[16]

---

[15] Warren, Lincoln's Youth, 143-144; Buley, The Old Northwest, I, 163-164.

[16] F. M. Wiley, Indianapolis News, Feb. 20, 1919.

d. Gates

Simple and effective gates were provided by bars, which were let down at one end for stock, or slid back out of the way for wagons.[17]

e. A Legal Fence as Described by Indiana Laws

The rail splitter was often retained to put up a fence and usually the contract called for getting out rails and fencing in a lot. The Revised Laws of Indiana defined a lawful fence as one:

> ...at least five feet and a half in height, the uppermost rail in each panel thereof supported by strong stakes, strongly set and fastened in the earth, so as to compose what is commonly called staking and ridering, otherwise the uppermost rail in each panel, shall be braced with two strong rails, poles, or stakes, locking each corner or angle thereof; and in all the foregoing materials, the apertures between the rails, pailings and [or] palisadoes with two feet from the surface of the earth, shall not be more than four inches, and the distance of two feet from the surface, the apertures between such rails, pailings or palisadoes, shall not be more than six inches; and that in all worm fences staked and ridered, and the worm shall be at least four feet six inches; and if locked as aforesaid, the worm shall be at least five feet....[18]

f. Rails Split by Abraham Lincoln

William Adams of Rockport, grandson of Josiah Crawford, recalled, "Grandfather employed young Abe to make rails for pens. These rails were longer than the ordinary 10-foot rails and larger. Abe notched the rails at the ends

---

[17]Buley, The Old Northwest, I, 163-164 .

[18]Revised Laws of Indiana, 1831, p. 225.

to make them fit close together." Adams reported that as a boy of eight in 1860, when there was a demand for rails split by Lincoln, he went "over the farm with grandfather ... searching for these rails. They were easily identified by their length and size and notches in the ends."[19]

6. Farm Wagons and Sleds

a. Wagons Used by the Lincolns in Indiana

Thomas Lincoln, according to Historian Murr, had a "chuck wagon," the woodwork being his own construction, but since it was "ironed off," it was a subject of considerable comment for such vehicles were exceedingly rare.[20]

In 1820, when Thomas Lincoln moved his bride and her three children to Indiana, he employed a wagon borrowed from his brother-in-law, Ralph Crume.[21]

Several weeks of preparation were necessary in 1830 after the three families made the decision to migrate to Illinois. Their "mode of conveyance was wagons...."

---

[19]Evansville Daily Journal, June 2, 1860.

[20]Murr, "Lincoln in Indiana," Indiana Magazine of History, XIV, No.2, p. 165.

[21]Warren, Lincoln's Youth, 64-65.

Probably three wagons had to be built, one for each family. According to a description of one of the vehicles, "There was not a nail or a piece of iron on it. The whole structure was fastened together with wooden pins and the tires were made of rawhide." The wheels of the wagons were solid without spokes, and were sawed from the ends of large logs.[22]

b. Descriptions of Contemporary Spencer County Wagons

D. H. Morgan, an authority on early Spencer County agriculture, has written that the first wagon was probably brought to what was to become Spencer County in 1814 by Issah Horton. The axles of the early Spencer County wagons extended from "the outer end of one hub to the outer end of the hub on the opposite side of the wagon. A narrow strip of iron was bent over the end of the axle and passed back so as to extend entirely through the hub to a bolt on the axle." On the outer end of each axle there was a hole for the linch pin. Hubs and wheels were very large. The beds were 14 feet long, four and one-half feet wide, and 30 inches deep. Every wagon was equipped with a bucket of tar which hung on a coupling pole immediately behind the

---

[22] Paducah Journal, May 26, 1860; Evansville Daily Journal, Journal 17, 1860; "Barker, History of the Lincoln Route," Proceedings of the Southeastern Indiana Historical Society, 1926, p. 49.

rear axle and was used to grease the axles.[23]

A man who attended Nancy Hanks Lincoln's funeral service related, "On a bright sabbath morning the settlers of the neighborhood gathered in. Some came in carts of the rudest construction, their wheels consisting of huge boles of forest trees and the product of axe and auger; some came on horseback, two or three upon a horse, others came in wagons drawn by oxen, and still others came on foot."[24]

Josiah and Elizabeth Crawford emigrated to Spencer County in 1826 and settled about a mile and a quarter west of today's Buffaloville. According to Josiah Crawford's grandson, the wagon in which they removed from Kentucky had very heavy running gears, with large hickory axles, with wooden spindles, the wheels held on the spindles by 1-inch linch pins. The wheels were very heavy, the rear wheels being much higher than the front ones. The bed was "constructed of a framework, boxed on the inside of the frame. The bed was large and instead of being rectangular in shape, the bottom curved upward

---

[23]D. H. Morgan, "Early Agriculture in Spencer County, Indiana," unpublished manuscript (files, Southeastern Indiana Historical Society, Evansville Central Library).

[24]Josiah G. Holland, The Life of Abraham Lincoln (Springfield, Mass., 1866), 29; Warren, Lincoln's Youth, 56.

from the center to the rear and from the ends, the sides curving upward to conform to the bottom, and also flaring outward, being wider in the center than at the ends. The bed was about two feet in depth."[25]

c. Sleds

Allen Brooner told Jonathan Hobson that a horse was hitched to the sled on which his mother's coffin was taken to the graveyard. (Mrs. Brooner died in October, 1818, and was buried near Nancy Hanks Lincoln.) The coffin with Nancy Hanks Lincoln's remains was hauled to the burial knob by a similar conveyance.[26]

Building a sled would not be much of a chore for a man with Thomas Lincoln's skill as a carpenter. He would first build a frame of white oak. This frame would be about ten feet in length by three and one-half feet in width, with a depth of about 18 inches. Holes of at least one inch in diameter would be drilled at one-foot intervals in the framing stringers that had been shaped to fit the runners. A clevis, with a hole about four inches across, would be secured to the toe of each stringer. A young 5-inch hickory would be felled. After

---

[25]Bess V. Ehrmann, Lincoln and His Neighbors (Rockport, 1948). The pages in this book are not numbered.

[26]Hobson, Footprints of Lincoln, 19.

one side had been hewn, the end would be thrust through the metal ring. The shaped side of the hickory would be forced against the stringer, and holes drilled. As soon as these holes were aligned with those in the stringer, wooden pegs of dry hickory would be inserted and driven, thus securing the green hickory runner to the frame. This operation would be repeated, and a hickory runner attached to the opposite stringer.

Standards would be attached to the bed of the frame. The length of the standards would regulate the size and type of load to be hauled in the sled.

These sleds could be used at all seasons of the year. They were especially useful for hauling wood, hay, corn stalks, and manure.[27]

Conclusions

An evaluation of the evidence leads to the conclusion that the Lincolns would have employed a sled for everyday use on the farm. A wagon would be employed when the family planned a major move.

---

[27]Interview with Roy Appleman, March 21, 1967. Mr. Appleman, as a young man, lived and worked on a farm in southern Ohio where sleds were used.

7. Farm Implements

a. General Comments

At first, the Indiana pioneer had only man-power farming and hand implements. There was the flintlock rifle, axe, maul and wedge, sledge, hoe, shovel, sickle, corn-knife, rake, fork, and flail. Crops were planted, cultivated, and threshed by hand.

Probably by 1810 came the mowing scythe, and the grain cradle by 1825, which supplanted the centuries-old sickle. Very early there were various crude home-made devices for scraping the kernels from corncobs. Sometimes the shelling was done by drawing the ear across the edge of a vessel of some type, but the more usual method was to rub off the kernels with the hands.

Undoubtedly the first agricultural implement in Indiana to be drawn by oxen was the heavy, clumsy, wooden moldboard plow, which was introduced by 1810.[28]

b. Farm Implements Known to have been Used by the Lincolns in Indiana

John Hanks recalled, "He [Abe] and I worked bare-footed, grubbed it, plowed, mowed, and cradled together, plowed corn, gathered it, and shucked corn."[29]

---

[28]W. C. Latta, Outline History of Indiana Agriculture (Lafayette, 1938), 107-110.

[29]Hertz, The Hidden Lincoln, 346.

Besides learning how to use the axe, Miss Ida M. Tarbell wrote, "Abe Lincoln drove the team, cut the elm and linn brush with which the stock was often fed, learned to handle the old shovel-plough, to wield the sickle, to thresh the wheat with a flail, to fan and clean it with a sheet, to go to the mill and turn the hard-earned grist into flour."[30]

c. Types of Farm Implement used on the Lincoln Farm

i. Plows

There were two types of plows used in southern Indiana while the Lincolns lived there. They were: (a) the bar-shave (also called the bull tongue) and (b) the shovel. The bar-shave had "a bar, on the land side, with a broad, flat shave running to a point at the forward end, attached to a colter, with a steel nose in front." The colter extended up through the wooden beam of the plow; two wooden handles, one attached to the beam and to the bar of the land side of the plow, and the other handle connected with a wooden mold board, which pressed out the dirt and partially turned it. It was connected with the other handle by wooden pins or rounds.

---

[30]Ida M. Tarbell, The Life of Abraham Lincoln ... (2 vols. New York, 1902), Vol. I, 25.

The bar-shave plow was cumbersome and unsatisfactory. It had a long beam, six feet or over; the bar was from two to three feet in length, and the handles raked far backward. The distance between the plowman and the bridles would, if seen in a modern field, lead to a great deal of good-natured guying.

Plowing with the bar-shave was hard work, for when the point of the long bar struck a root "the kick-up of the long geared machine was never to be forgotten."

A standing joke among the pioneers was that "a bar-shave would kick a man over the fence and kick him after he was over."[31]

The shovel-plow was the pioneer's favorite. With it he broke his corn ground and tilled his corn. His breaking shovel had a colter fitted to the beam, which dropped to the point of the plow at such an angle that whenever the plow struck an impediment it "jumped out of the ground and over the root and into the ground on the other side."[32]

---

[31] Morgan, "Early Agriculture in Spencer County"; D. D. Banta, Indianapolis News, June 14, 1888; Buley, The Old Northwest, I, 171, 172.

[32] Banta, Indianapolis News, June 14, 1888.

According to Dr. Buley, most pioneers, who migrated into Southwestern Indiana from the South, preferred the shovel (or jump plow as it was sometimes called.)[33]

When Thomas Lincoln moved to Indiana in 1816, he undoubtedly took along a steel point for his plow.[34]

ii. Hoes

In tilling his corn the pioneer farmer depended as much on the hoe as on the plow. It was the rule with nearly all to give "the crop at least one good hoeing," which meant that the field was gone over row by row, and the corn hoed hill by hill. Men soon became skilled in the use of the hoe. The new lands, after being cultivated for several years, saw an invasion of weeds. With the plow then in use, it was next to impossible to control their growth. This caused the pioneers to use the hoe. In wet years "pulling weeds" was a common mode of corn culture. On the knobs the crop with extra cultivation held its own, but in "the low places the weeds grew apace, and naught but pulling them up by the roots could save it from ruin."[35]

---

[33]Buley, The Old Northwest, I, 171, 172.

[34]Warren, Lincoln's Youth, 18.

[35]Banta, Indianapolis News, June 14, 1888.

iii. Harrows

A crude harrow consisting of a tree fork with proper angle of trunk for tongue and branch stubs for teeth could have served the Lincolns as a clod breaker, until a crossbar or a harrow of hewed oak and heavy wooden or iron pins could be constructed.[36] Behind the harrow was attached a "drag" to break the clods.

The connecting rings for both plow and harrow would be rawhide.[37]

iv. Flails

Farmers who, like Thomas Lincoln, raised but little grain threshed with the flail. The grain was cleaned by letting it fall in the wind or before a sheet fanned by two persons. Two men could flail and winnow a dozen bushels of wheat, or two or three times that amount of oats per day. Threshing and cleaning the crop of a ten-acre field was nearly an all-winter's job for one man.[38]

---

[36] Buley, The Old Northwest, I, 173.

[37] Warren, Lincoln's Youth, 141.

[38] Buley, The Old Northwest, I, 181.

v. Pitchforks

Pitchforks were usually formed from a young dogwood sapling, the bark stripped off and the two points sharpened for tines.[39]

vi. Rakes

Rakes could be made of deer horns,[40] but more often the settlers would employ a wood bar with wooden pegs set in, and handle attached.

vii. Shovels

Hickory, properly seasoned and shaped in the form of a large scoop, served as a shovel.[41]

viii. Cradles-Scythes

When grain was to be mowed, a cradle would be attached to the scythe. The cradle consisted of a frame with three or four wooden arms.

8. Axes and Wood-Clearing Implements

a. Comments on the Use of these Implements by the Lincolns

When he moved to Indiana, Thomas Lincoln took along his axe and other wood-clearing implements.[42]

While he disliked most work associated with the farm, Abe Lincoln loved the feel of an axe. One of his companions

---

[39] Warren, Lincoln's Youth, 141.

[40] Ibid.

[41] Ibid.

[42] Ibid.

observed, "My how he could chop! His ax would flash and bite into a sugar tree or sycamore, down it would come." Another recalled, "He was a master woodsman and could size up a tree that would work up well into rails at almost a glance."[43]

b. Axes and Wood-Clearing Tools used by the Lincolns

Besides his woodman's axe, Thomas Lincoln would have owned a broadax, adz, thin iron wedges (frows), drawing knife, auger, reaming tools, and a crosscut wood saw.[44]

---

[43] Ibid., 143.

[44] Buley, The Old Northwest, I, 166.

IV. THE FARM —CROPS RAISED BY THOMAS LINCOLN, 1816-1830

A. CROPS KNOWN TO HAVE BEEN GROWN BY THE LINCOLNS

1. Generalizations

Unless too far away, the first settlers usually depended upon outside sources for breadstuffs for the first year. Many southern Indiana pioneers made three-or-four-day trips to the Ohio for grain and meal. Pumpkins were often mixed with meal in such quantities that the product was hardly distinguishable from dried pumpkin.[1]

2. Corn

According to Nicolay and Hay, Thomas Lincoln during his early years in Indiana raised enough corn to support his family.[2]

"We raised corn mostly," Dennis Hanks recalled, "and some wheat —enough for a cake Sunday morning." Corn sold for ten cents, Hanks reported, and wheat for 25¢ per bushel.[3] Thomas Lincoln in 1824 grew ten acres of corn, Hanks told Herndon in 1865.[4]

Before removing from Indiana in 1830, Lincoln sold 400 or 500 bushels of corn to David Turnham.[5] A surplus of 400 to 500 bushels of corn after the winter's feeding indicates that his farm was reasonably productive. Certainly there was no lack of food for the family.

---

[1]Buley, The Old Northwest, I, 154.

[2]Nicolay and Hay, Abraham Lincoln, I, 30.

[3]Herndon and Weik, Life of Lincoln, 22.

[4]Beveridge, Abraham Lincoln, I, 65.

[5]David Turnham, Sept. 15, 1865, in Herndon-Weik Mss.

3. Wheat

Dennis Hanks informed Herndon that Thomas Lincoln in 1824 raised about 5 acres of wheat.[6]

4. Oats

Benjamin Thomas has written that the Lincolns raised oats. Dennis Hanks recalled that in 1824 Thomas Lincoln raised two acres of oats.[7]

5. Hay or Grass

According to Dennis Hanks, the Lincolns by 1824 were farming about 20 acres. About half of it was put in corn, the rest of it in wheat and oats, and "an acre of grass."[8]

6. Flax

Individuals questioned by Herndon and others regarding their recollections of the Lincolns in Indiana failed to mention the growing of flax. Accounts by travelers visiting southwestern Indiana contemporary with the Lincolns' residence are in accord that all settlers had a flax patch.[9] The settlers needed the flax for making clothing. All households spun flax for clothing and jeans.

---

[6]Herndon and Weik, Life of Lincoln, 22; Beveridge, Abraham Lincoln, I, 65.

[7]Thomas, Abraham Lincoln, 10; Beveridge, Abraham Lincoln, I, 65.

[8]Beveridge, Abraham Lincoln, I, 65.

[9]Maximilian, Maximilian's Travels, I, 183; Flint, Letters from America, 254; Illustrated Historical Atlas - Spencer County, 10.

7. Tobacco

Once again, persons interviewed by Herndon and others failed to recall that the Lincolns raised tobacco. Visitors to the area, however, agree that all settlers raised tobacco for their own use.[10]

8. Cotton

Residents of the area failed to report that the Lincolns grew any cotton. The Service, however, will be on safe ground in assuming that they did, because, according to travelers, all the settlers raised cotton for home consumption.[11] We know that James Gentry about 1824 built and operated a cotton gin.[12]

---

[10]Woods, Two Years' Residence, 247, 297-298; Maximilian, Maximilian's Travels, I, 183.

[11]Woods, Two Years' Residence, 250, 297.

[12]History of Warrick, Spencer and Perry Counties, Indiana, 366.

B. DESCRIPTIONS OF CROPS RAISED IN SOUTHWESTERN INDIANA AS REPORTED BY TRAVELERS VISITING THE AREA IN THE PERIOD, 1816-1832

1. Corn

Woods, who lived on the English Prairie, 20 miles west of Princeton, reported he had talked with farmers who bragged of growing corn that went 132 bushels to the acre, but that from 60 to 80 bushels per acre was "considered a good crop." As the land on Section 32 is not as fertile as that in the area where Woods resided, it is doubtful that Thomas Lincoln's yield would have approached 60 bushels per acre. Lincoln would have been satisfied with a yield of from 30 to 40 bushels per acre.

Continuing, Woods wrote:

> The husks that cover the corn-ears and the flags or leaves, are all good fodder. Horses, cattle, and sheep, all seem as fond of it as of the best hay. Horses and cattle will eat part of the stalk after the corn is ripe; but in a green state, they, and pigs, will eat it all up. Horses and pigs will eat the corn, and leave the cob...; but cattle will eat cob and all. The time of planting is from April to the middle of June; the middle of May is considered the most proper season. It is planted in rows, of about four feet in each direction; and after it is up they plough between the rows, first one way, and in a week or two in the other direction; a third ploughing is sometimes given to it. Between the corn they hoe up the weeds left near the corn that escape the plough; so that the land is made very clean. Generally two or three plants are left at each angle. Pompions [pumpkins] are often planted at the angles with the corn , but only in every fifth or sixth row, and at some distance apart in the rows. They also plant a small kind of French-bean with part of their corn, the stalks serving instead of ...[poles and stakes] for the beans to run on.

> There are several sorts of Indian corn, and of different colours; namely, white, red, yellow, mixt, &c. A small sort of yellow corn is ripe much sooner than most of the other sorts, but yields a smaller produce. White and yellow are the most common sorts, but there are several kinds of these. A good ear of corn contains from 14 to 20 rows, and from 40 to 50 grains of corn in each row. A hundred middling ears of corn will yield a bushel of clear corn.
>
> It [the corn] is gathered in October and November, when they only take off the ears; but as the ears are covered with a large husk, they carry them as they are to the corn-crib...[13]

The chief agricultural product of the New Harmony area, Prince Maximilian wrote at the time of his 1832 visit, is corn which grows to a height of twelve to thirteen feet. The ears were large and heavy; and he found some "weighing fourteen or fifteen ounces, and nearly three inches in diameter," on which he counted over 1,000 grains. The corn ripened in September, October, November, and December, and the stalks were often left standing through the winter, till wanted for use. There were fifteen varieties of this important plant. One kind, sweet corn, was particularly good when roasted "in an unripe state." Settlers were heard to boast that the best soil would yield 100 bushels of corn per acre.

At this time, he continued, "the corn sold at six and a half cents per bushel at Harmony; whereas, on the frontiers of Canada, two dollars was paid for it." Living was,

---

[13]Woods, Two Years' Residence, 298-300.

consequently, very cheap on the banks of the Wabash. The corn was brought to market in large wagons, drawn by four oxen.[14]

A traveler, passing through Perry County in 1840, reported, "I saw this summer a number of farms lying uncultivated and the houses tenantless which last autumn were covered with corn fields whose gigantic and thrifty stalks overtopped a man's head on horseback."[15]

2. Wheat

Woods reported in 1819 that about 200 acres of wheat had been harvested on the English Prairie. The amount of wheat and corn sown per acre by the settlers surprised Woods. One bushel of wheat, or two of oats, was the quantity usually sown. He supposed "the dryness of the seed, newness of the land, and its kindness in working, are the causes of so much less seed being required" than he had been accustomed to.

Much of the wheat sown in 1819 by the Americans was after the Indian corn. It was sown before the corn was gathered, and plowed in between the rows of corn; it was sown in September or early October.[16]

---

[14]Maximilian, Maximilian's Travels, I, 183.

[15]Evansville Journal, October 14, 1840.

[16]Woods, Two Years' Residence, 280, 294-295.

When the winter wheat was harvested, it was stacked in small stacks in the fields where it grew, with little or no covering, to dry and keep till the grain was threshed. Woods felt that this was "hazardous to the wheat," but the Americans said,"no."[17]

3. Oats

Describing the raising of oats on the English Prairie, Woods reported, "the oats I have seen this year [1819] were but indifferent; they were much hurt by the dry weather, and the quality of them is bad." He felt oats would never be "much cultivated in this country, unless it be on new prairie-land; and that for the sake of mellowing it, to prepare it for a crop of wheat or Indian corn" in the following year.

The Americans reaped and bound their oats "in the same manner as wheat. These bundles were piled in very small stacks, without any covering."[18]

Flint believed the hot, humid climate of the Ohio Valley was "unfavorable to the ripening" of the oats. The weight of oats in the Madison, Indiana area was about one-half of that of good grain in the British Isles.[19]

---

[17]Maximilian, Maximilian's Travels, I, 183; Woods, Two Years Residence,295.

[18]Woods, Two Years' Residence, 295-296.

[19]Flint, Letters from America, 254.

4. Flax

"Flax," Woods wrote, "is cultivated, on a small scale, by most Americans" for home use. It is sown in April, and after the flax is pulled, the land is often ploughed and sown with turnips.[20]

The inhabitants, Prince Maximilian observed, grew flax for home consumption.[21]

Flint reported that Indiana flax has strong stems and tops that forked too much. He believed thicker sowing would improve the quality.[22]

According to Spencer County historians of the Nineteenth Century, "Small patches of flax and cotton were raised by nearly all the settlers."[23]

5. Tobacco

Tobacco was raised in small quantities by most of his neighbors, Woods wrote, for "home consumption."[24]

Prince Maximilian commented in 1832 that the inhabitants of the New Harmony area grew some tobacco for their own use.

---

[20] Woods, Two Years' Residence, 296.

[21] Maximilian, Maximilian's Travels, I, 183.

[22] Flint, Letters from America, 254.

[23] Illustrated Historical Atlas — Spencer County, 10.

[24] Woods, Two Years' Residence, 297-298.

"Good tobacco," he complained, "is rarely to be met with in the United States." [25]

Travelers reported that the men of southeastern Indiana smoked "segars," and the married women pipes.[26]

6. Cotton

Cotton grown on the English Prairie, Woods reported, seldom exceeded two feet in height.[27]

Woods on September 9, 1820, reported that he visited a small farm on the Kentucky side near Rockport and "saw a small piece of land planted with cotton, just beginning to ripen." The person who owned the patch was from South Carolina. He told Woods that this cotton was as good as, if not better than, that grown in Carolina. Most of those with whom Woods spoke, however, held that in the deep South the cotton was better than that raised on the Ohio. These people were of the opinion that, except for home use, cotton growing in Indiana and Illinois was unprofitable.[28]

---

[25] Maximilian, Maximilian's Travels, I, 183.

[26] Woods, Two Years' Residence, 247.

[27] Ibid.

[28] Ibid.

C. ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS CONFRONTING SPENCER COUNTY FARMERS, 1816-1830

1. Enemies Whose Visits the Farmers Dreaded

Luck often went against the early agriculturist. Many causes combined to jeopardize the corn crop. It ran the risk of the late spring frosts and the early fall ones; it was liable to be injured by cut-worms, and there might be too much or too little rain. Woodpeckers swarming in the deadening[29] pulled up the sprouting plants and pecked into the roasting ears. Wild turkeys scratched up the nearby seeded corn and seldom failed to feed on the matured crop. Raccoons, as soon as the ears filled, invaded the fields. But the injury done by the squirrels —black and grey — was greater than all other causes combined.[30]

2. Damage Inflicted to the Corn by Squirrels

Squirrels swarmed through the woods, prowled the fields, and found hiding places in the deadening. As soon as the seed was covered, they began their raids, and kept it up until the grain was absorbed by the growing plant. From then till "earing time," they could do no harm, but no sooner were the grains formed on the cob than the squirrels returned.[31]

---

[29] A deadening was an area being cleared. The settlers would girdle the trees, thus cutting off the sap and causing the tree to die. The dead trees would be left standing, until they were felled, stacked, and burned. A deadening was an area being cleared in this manner.

[30] Banta, Indianapolis News, June 14, 1888.

[31] Ibid.

Flint, on June 29, 1819, visited a farm in the Jeffersonville area, east of the Lincoln farm. "The growth of Indian corn in this season luxuriant," he observed, "the only injury it has suffered arised from squirrels that gather a considerate quantity of the seed in many fields. Squirrels are not so excessively numerous in the uninhabited woods as in the vicinity of cultivated fields."[32]

---

[32]Flint, Letters from America, 254.

D. COMMENTS REGARDING CROPS THAT SHOULD BE RAISED ON THE PROPOSED LINCOLN BOYHOOD LIVING HISTORICAL FARM

1. Corn

Corn was the first crop raised by the Lincolns. Methods of cultivation as well as use of this grain was borrowed from the Indians, and the maize complex became as important a culture trait among the Indiana pioneers as it had been among the redmen. Corn cultivated with the hoe did well even on partially cleared land. New land, with the rich accumulation of humus and the addition of phosphate and other elements from the ashes of brush heaps, produced excellent yields.

The proper time for corn planting was when the oak or maple leaves were as large as "squirrel ears" or when the dogwood blossoms were fully expanded. Cultivation was often neglected and weeds and burrs frequently grew as tall as the corn.

Slight attention was paid to seed selection by the pioneers, and little was understood about the composition of the soil and the value of fertilizers. "Squaw" corn was the type commonly grown in the early period, but improved types such as "Hackberry" and "Gourd Seed" were soon offering more rows to the ear and more gallons of whiskey to the bushel. As they came from the south, the Lincolns probably shucked their corn.

Pumpkins and beans were planted in the same field with corn.[33]

---

33 Buley, The Old Northwest, I, 169, 174-176; Banta, Indianapolis News, June 14, 1888; Morgan, "Early Agriculture in Spencer County, Indiana."

2. Wheat

Soil such as that on the Lincoln farm was not too good for wheat. Seven to ten years were required for "new soil" to produce a good flour grain. Wheat sowed on new land produced lots of straw, but the grain was shriveled and musty; rust and smut were too much for it. Besides rust, the Hessian fly and the army worm were enemies to be faced by the Lincolns. Many of the weeds which later plagued the farmer, such as thistles, pigweed, and pigeon grass were uncommon in the early years on the frontier.

Wheat sown broadcast in cleared ground and harrowed in with a brush harrow would produce some kind of a crop, provided the ground was not too new. In land which had been cultivated for some time, wheat was usually sown after a summer fallow. Among the varieties of wheat that might have been sown by the Lincolns were: Red-chaff Bearded, Red Blue Stem, and Mediterranean.

Few, if any, Spencer County farmers in the 1820s raised wheat for the market. Most, however, grew enough so that they might have wheat bread on Sundays, when they had company, or when they wanted to make pies. When harvested, the wheat was stacked and allowed to remain in the straw until needed for flour.[34]

---

[34] Buley, The Old Northwest, I, 169-160, 176, 178; Morgan, "Early Agriculture in Spencer County, Indiana."

3. Oats and Grass

Oats and grass were sown by hand or by a broadcast seeder. While wheat was cut with a smooth-bladed reaping hook or the long narrow-bladed sickle, oats and grasses were felled with a scythe.[35]

4. Flax

Almost all Spencer County farmers put out a half acre or so of flax, so they could make their own linen. The flax was supposed to be sown on Good Friday. In late summer when it was ripe, the flax was pulled up by the roots and spread on the ground to dry. It was then bound in bundles and stored till fall, when it was again spread on the ground to allow the autumn rains to rot the inside or heart of the stalk.[36]

5. Cotton and Tobacco

Travel accounts, as well as early histories of Spencer County, are in unison in reporting that all the area pioneers had small cotton and tobacco patches for home consumption. There is no reason that the Lincolns would have been different. We know that Thomas Lincoln used tobacco. The Lincoln cotton and tobacco patches would be in the same area as the garden.[37]

---

[35] Ibid.

[36] Johnson, A Home in the Woods, 167; Buley, The Old Northwest, I, 203; Morgan, "Early Agriculture in Spencer County, Indiana."

[37] Morgan, "Early Agriculture in Spencer County, Indiana;" Illustrated Historical Atlas —Spencer County, 10; Johnson, Home in the Woods, 165.

V. THE LINCOLN GARDEN OR VEGETABLE PATCH, 1816-1830

A. DID THE LINCOLNS HAVE A GARDEN ?

Dennis Hanks recalled in 1865 that Thomas Lincoln had a garden.[1] As further evidence, we have Abraham's story of the cow getting into his parents' garden "and making and committing depredation."[2]

B. VEGETABLES KNOWN TO HAVE BEEN RAISED BY THE LINCOLNS

1. Potatoes

Potatoes in the early Indiana years were the only vegetable raised in any quantity, and there were times when they were the only vegetable on the table. Not only were they all the Lincolns had for dinner sometimes, but one of their neighbors recalled a visit when raw potatoes, pared and washed were passed around instead of apples or other fruit. They even served as a kind of pioneer "chauffrette"—being baked and given to the children to carry in their hands as they started to school or on distant errands.[3]

For supper, Wesley Hall reported, the Lincolns had "corn cakes, baked potatoes and fried bacon."[4]

---

[1]Beveridge, Abraham Lincoln, I, 46.

[2]Undated clipping from Louisville Courier-Journal (files, Lincoln National Life Foundation).

[3]Tarbell, Life of Lincoln, I, 23.

[4]Murr, "Lincoln in Indiana," Indiana Magazine of History, Vol. XIII, No. 4, pp. 324-325.

2. Melons

Some neighbor boys raided the Lincoln watermelon patch, and one of them recalled, "we got the melons, went through the corn to the fence, got over. All at once to our surprise and mortification Lincoln came among us, on us, goodnaturedly said,'Boy, now I've got you.' Sat down with us, cracked jokes, told stories, helped eat the melons."[5]

3. Turnips

When he spent a night with the Lincolns, Hall recalled that Mrs. Lincoln was "hollerin' out a big turnip." This turnip, he continued, would serve as a grease lamp.[6]

C. VEGETABLES THE LINCOLNS WOULD HAVE GROWN

1. Generalizations

A few of the common vegetables were planted by the settlers almost as soon as the corn crop, but generally the vegetable area was likely to remain a patch rather than become a garden. That there was considerable interest in products other than potatoes and turnips is evidenced by the frequent notices of large vegetables in the period newspapers. There are articles describing huge turnips, radishes, tomatoes, beets, rutabagas, and cucumbers.

---

[5]Joseph C. Richardson to Herndon, Sept. 14, 1865, in Herndon-Weik Mss; Hertz, The Hidden Lincoln, I, 23.

[6]Murr, "Lincoln in Indiana," Indiana Magazine of History, Vol. XIII, No. 4, p. 324.

Professor Buley, an authority on the area and period, has written, "into the corn patch went some pumpkin seed, and a vegetable patch usually close to the cabin was given to potatoes, beans, asparagus, rhubarb, lettuce, peas, cucumbers, cabbages, and other common vegetables. The tomato, when grown, was used only to garnish the platter."[7]

The garden or vegetable patch had to provide accessories necessary to the preservation and seasoning of food - sage, peppers, thyme, mints, mustard, horse-radish, tansy, and other herbs.[8]

In the New Harmony area, Maximilian observed a "great variety of culinary vegetables."[9]

In the first warm days of March a brush pile would be burned, and in the mingled ashes and soil, cabbage, tobacco and pepper seeds would be planted. The tender plants would be covered to protect them from the frost. As soon as all danger of frost had passed and the "sign got in the head," these plants were transplanted or "set out" in the garden.[10]

---

[7]Buley, The Old Northwest, I, 157, 217-218.

[8]Ibid., 218.

[9]Maximilian, Maximilian's Travels, I, 183.

[10]Esarey, The Indiana Home, 22.

2. Asparagus

"Asparagus," John Woods reported, "did well" in southwestern Indiana and southeastern Illinois.[11]

3. Beans

Small beans, of the kidney variety, were cultivated by the Indiana pioneers. They were generally planted "to climb on the corn, and are of many sorts, and different colours. There are some dwarf ones, called bunch-beans...." Beans and vegetables, an English farmer reported, had to be planted thinner than at home, so "the earth may be moved between them, as they then receive much more benefit from the heavy dews of this country than when the ground is hard."[12]

4. Broom-Corn

Broom-corn,the seed of which was much like that of the "crop-seed," was planted "in rows on the sides of corn-fields," and was frequently plowed between. It resembled Indian corn, but was more slender. This corn was useful for poultry, and the stalks or fibres made excellent brooms.[13]

5. Cabbages.

Cabbages grew well. According to one traveler, "the Americans plant a large backward sort, and make but one sowing and planting...in a year. In the fall they dig them up and bury them

---

[11]Woods, Two Years' Residence, 305.

[12]Ibid., 304-305.

[13]Ibid., 302.

in the ground, or rather, they plant them underneath it; as they dig a deep trench, and set a row of cabbages with their roots in it, then, bending the outward leaves over the top of the cabbage, cover them with earth, and thus preserve them in the most severe frosts of this country." There would be early "Winnigstadt" cabbages for summer use and big "Drumheads" for consumption in the fall and winter.[14]

6. Cucumbers

A Spencer County resident in August, 1822, wrote, "There are plenty of cucumbers...."[15] Woods agreed, writing that cucumbers thrived in the area.[16]

7. Egg Plant

John Morgan of Spencer County wrote his wife on August 5, 1822, that there was plenty of egg plant in the garden.[17]

8. Gourds

According to Professor Buley, "Gourd seeds were usually among the items most cherished by the housewife going into a new country. Hardshelled squashes often served the same purpose...."[18]

---

[14] Ibid., 305; Esarey, The Indiana Home, 22.

[15] John Morgan to wife, Aug. 5, 1822 (files, Lincoln National Life Foundation).

[16] Woods, Two Years' Residence, 306.

[17] Morgan to Wife, Aug. 5, 1822 (files, Lincoln National Life Foundation).

[18] Buley, The Old Northwest, I, 148.

A great variety of gourds were raised by the settlers. One type, with a hard rind, served the settlers as bottles, pans, ladles, and funnels. By cutting off the end next the tail, a bottle was formed; the pulp and seeds could be easily shaken or washed out. By slicing off the neck, a pan or jar was made. By cutting a slice from one side a ladle; and, lastly, by cutting off the top, and the end of the neck near the tail, a funnel was formed. Gourds held water well, and would last a considerable time.[19]

Some gourds were huge and were capable of holding from a peck to a bushel. For some reason rats, mice, and squirrels would not gnaw through the hard shell of the dry gourd, consequently, they made safe receptacles for seed corn and other seeds that had to be stored during the winter. There was an old saying in Spencer County that happy was the man with "whiskey in the demijohn and sugar in the gourd."[20]

9. Herbs

Herbs encountered by John Woods included: balm, capsicum, horehound, horseradish, pennyroyal, fennel, coriander, peppermint, spearmint, sage, snake-root, gentian, genseng, sumach and sassafras. Many of the herbs were collected in the woods and swamps.[21]

---

[19]Woods, Two Years' Residence, 305-306.

[20]Morgan,"Early Agriculture in Spencer, County, Indiana;" Woods, Two Years' Residence, 303.

[21]Woods, Two Years' Residence, 303.

10. Lettuce

Woods recorded that lettuce thrived on the English Prairie.[22] The Southwestern Indiana settlers usually set out several rows of lettuce and raddishes.[23]

11. Onions

"Onions are two years coming to perfection," Woods observed, "the first year they are sown very thick, and the next they are transplanted, at about eight inches apart, when they grow to a middling size. Prairie onions (garlic) are common in moist situations, and are very good early in the spring, but soon get hard; the roots are small."[24]

12. Parsley

Parsley was grown in the area.[25]

---

[22] Ibid., 306.

[23] Esarey, The Indiana Home, 22.

[24] Ibid., 305.

[25] Ibid., 306.

13. Indian Peas

Woods reported that a few Indian Peas were raised. In leaf and blossom they resembled the kidney bean; the pods were long, and contained from nine to 16 peas in each.[26]

14. Potatoes

Potatoes were extensively cultivated, but, Prince Maximilian wrote, they "are by no means so good and mealy as in Germany."[27]

Woods recorded that he had "seen no sweet potatoes; but Irish, or common potatoes, grow tolerably in a wet season, but in a dry summer came to little." Some potatoes were planted in April, but those intended for winter use not until June.[28]

15. Pumpkins

Pumpkins were highly prized by the pioneers, and grew to "an immense size, and weigh from 40 to 60 lbs." Cattle, hogs, and poultry were "fond" of pumpkins.[29] The housewife used the pumpkins in a number of ways. They made tasty pies, or they could be stewed, put on plates, buttered and eaten.

---

[26] Ibid., 304-305. The Indian peas, Wood related, "resemble but little either peas or beans."

[27] Maximilian, Maximilian's Travels, I, 183.

[28] Woods, Two Years' Residence, 304.

[29] Ibid., 301.

An Indiana pioneer recalled, "Sometimes mother fried pumpkin. It was stewed, spread on clapboards and dried before the fire for winter use. We also made pumpkin molasses. The punkin was allowed to freeze, then the juice was squeezed out and boiled down. While mother was dryin' the punkin I would beg a little of her, run it through the cullender, dry it before the fire, cut it into small strips and role it into tight rolls. This was called punkin leather. It was mighty handy to slip in your pocket and nibble on at school."[30]

16. Radishes

Radishes thrived in southwestern Indiana.[31]

17. Shallots

Shallots grew to "great perfection," and were planted by the settlers in preference to onions.[32]

---

[30]Johnson, A Home in the Woods, 164-165.

[31]Woods, Two Years' Residence, 306; Esarey, The Indiana Home, 22.

[32]Woods, Two Years' Residence, 305.

18. Turnips

"Common turnips," Woods reported, "are sometimes sown after a crop of flax; the time of sowing the beginning of August, but many of the Americans are very particular as to the age of the moon, and this and many other things.... Hoeing turnips is not practiced by them."[33]

19. Watermelons and Melons

There were "many sorts of sweet melons, and much difference of size in the various kinds." Woods had observed, "musk, of a large size; and nut-meg, a smaller one; and a small pale-coloured melon of a rich taste;" but there were other varieties with which, he confessed, he was unacquainted. Watermelons were numerous and of "vast size;" some, he supposed weighing "twenty pounds."[34]

20. Tomatoes

Tomatoes were believed to be poisonous. Many of the pioneers raised tomatoes for ornamental purposes.[35]

---

[33] Ibid., 301-302.

[34] Ibid., 307.

[35] Johnson, A Home in the Woods, 164.

D. LOCATION OF THE LINCOLN GARDEN OR VEGETABLE PATCH

The garden or vegetable patch would have been on the knob, close to the cabin. As the outbuildings were behind the cabin, it is probable that the garden was immediately southwest of the cabin. To protect the garden from livestock, it would have been fenced.

E. WORKING THE GARDEN

It was a universal custom for the women to tend the garden, just as they always milked the family cow.[36]

---

[36] Ibid.

VI. THE LINCOLN ORCHARD

A. EXISTENCE OF—

When Herndon visited the homesite in September 1865, he observed, "It has an orchard on it, part of which Abraham Lincoln planted with his own hands." Moreover, he continued, he "saw five or six old, old apple trees."[1]

B. DESCRIPTIONS BY TRAVELERS OF ORCHARDS THAT COULD HAVE BEEN SIMILAR TO THE LINCOLNS'

Orchards in the Jeffersonville area, east of the Lincoln farm, Flint wrote:

> ...are abundantly productive, and yield apples of the largest size; but little care is taken in selecting or in grafting from varieties of the best flavour. Small crab apples are the most acid, and produce the finest cider. Pears are scarcely to be seen. Peaches of the best and worst qualities are to be met with. The trees bear on the third summer after the seed is sown, and although no attention is paid to rearing them the fruit is excessively plentiful, and is sometimes sold at twenty-five cents...per bushel. A rancid sort of spirit is distilled from them, known here by the name peach brandy. Cherries are small. Wild cherry trees grow to a great height in the woods.... Gooseberries and currants are scarce and small.[2]

Discussing fruit, grown in and around New Harmony, Prince Maximilian reported, "There are abundance of apples, but not many pears, which do not thrive; peaches are good, and very productive; quantities fall to the ground, where they are consumed by the hogs; plums and cherries are rarely grown; the latter are not so good as in Europe, but very fruitful. The vine was formerly cultivated, but it is now quite neglected."[3]

---

[1] Hertz, The Hidden Lincoln, 357.

[2] Flint, Letters from America, 254-255.

[3] Maximilian, Maximilian's Travels, I, 183.

On September 7, 1819, Woods and his party landed near Rockport, and "got near a bushel of peaches for ten-pence."[4]

C. TREES LIKELY TO HAVE BEEN FOUND IN THE LINCOLN ORCHARD

Besides the apple trees reported by Herndon, the Lincolns would have set out a few plum, peach, and pear trees. While the early apples were not Jonathans, Grimes Golden, King Daviss, Stark's Delicious, and Missouri Pippins, the pioneers enjoyed them.[5]

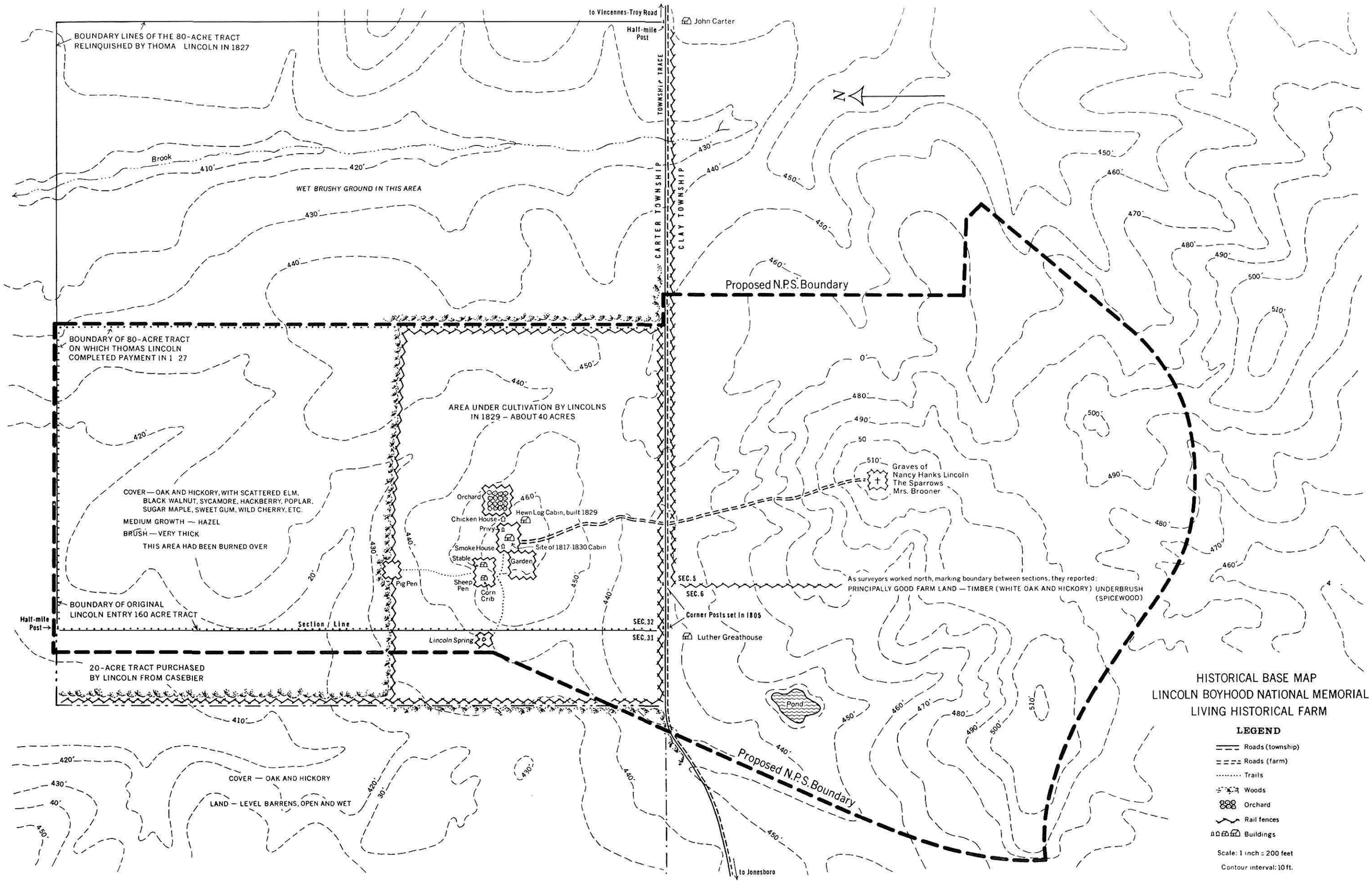
D. PROBABLE LOCATION OF THE ORCHARD

The orchard would have been on the knob, east of the cabin.

---

[4]Woods, Two Years' Residence, 247.

[5]Buley, The Old Northwest, I, 158, 217-218; "Morgan, Early Agriculture in Spencer County, Indiana."


to Vincennes-Troy Road
Half-mile Post
John Carter
BOUNDARY LINES OF THE 80-ACRE TRACT RELINQUISHED BY THOMA LINCOLN IN 1827
TOWNSHIP TRACE
CARTER TOWNSHIP
CLAY TOWNSHIP
N
Brook
WET BRUSHY GROUND IN THIS AREA
Proposed N.P.S. Boundary
BOUNDARY OF 80-ACRE TRACT ON WHICH THOMAS LINCOLN COMPLETED PAYMENT IN 1 27
AREA UNDER CULTIVATION BY LINCOLNS IN 1829 – ABOUT 40 ACRES
COVER — OAK AND HICKORY, WITH SCATTERED ELM, BLACK WALNUT, SYCAMORE, HACKBERRY, POPLAR, SUGAR MAPLE, SWEET GUM, WILD CHERRY, ETC.
MEDIUM GROWTH — HAZEL
BRUSH — VERY THICK
THIS AREA HAD BEEN BURNED OVER
Orchard
Chicken House
Hewn Log Cabin, built 1829
Privy
Smoke House
Site of 1817-1830 Cabin
Stable
Garden
Pig Pen
Sheep Pen
Corn Crib
Graves of Nancy Hanks Lincoln The Sparrows Mrs. Brooner
BOUNDARY OF ORIGINAL LINCOLN ENTRY 160 ACRE TRACT
Half-mile Post
Section Line
SEC. 32
SEC. 31
SEC. 5
SEC. 6
As surveyors worked north, marking boundary between sections, they reported:
PRINCIPALLY GOOD FARM LAND — TIMBER (WHITE OAK AND HICKORY) UNDERBRUSH (SPICEWOOD)
Corner Posts set in 1805
Luther Greathouse
Lincoln Spring
20-ACRE TRACT PURCHASED BY LINCOLN FROM CASEBIER
Pond
COVER — OAK AND HICKORY
LAND — LEVEL BARRENS, OPEN AND WET
Proposed N.P.S. Boundary
to Jonesboro
HISTORICAL BASE MAP
LINCOLN BOYHOOD NATIONAL MEMORIAL
LIVING HISTORICAL FARM
LEGEND
Roads (township)
Roads (farm)
Trails
Woods
Orchard
Rail fences
Buildings
Scale: 1 inch = 200 feet
Contour interval: 10 ft.

VII. FLOWERS FOUND ON THE LINCOLN FARM

A. GARDEN FLOWERS

1. Kinds

Mrs. Elizabeth Crawford wrote Herndon on May 3, 1866, that in the period 1826-1830, the settlers of Carter and Clay Townships grew: The sweet pink, the poppy, the marigold, the larkspur, the touch-me-not, the pretty-by-night, the lady-in-the-green, the sword lily, the flower bean, the holly-hock, the bachelor's button (which the girls strung and hung in their houses as ornaments), roses (sweet and damask), the pinny, the old maid's eyes, the velvet pink, the mullen pink, the garden Sweet William, and the carolina pink.[1]

Joseph Gentry recalled in 1895 that there had been flowers and rose bushes growing near the Lincoln cabin.[2]

2. Location

The flowers and rose bushes would be planted in front of the cabin. To afford a measure of protection, they would be inside the yard. Flowers would be planted on either side of the walk, leading from the cabin door to the gate entering the yard.[3]

---

[1] Hertz, The Hidden Lincoln, 294; Warren, Lincoln's Youth, 160.

[2] George H. Honig, "The Environment of Abraham Lincoln in Indiana," paper read before the Southwestern Indiana Historical Society at Princeton, Nov. 17, 1925 (Iglehart Collection, Willard Library).

[3] Esarey, The Indiana Home, 25.

B. WILD FLOWERS

According to Mrs. Crawford, the following wildflowers grew in the area: "wild Sweet William, wild pink, lady slipper, wild roses, butterfly weed, wild honeysuckle, blue flag, yellow flag, swamp lily, and many others."[4]

---

[4] Hertz, The Hidden Lincoln, 294.

VIII. THE LINCOLN LIVESTOCK

A. LIVESTOCK THE LINCOLNS BROUGHT WITH THEM TO INDIANA

1. Horses

According to Dr. McMurtry, "The type of conveyance used to transport Thomas Lincoln and his family to Indiana, is not known. In all likelihood, the conveyance was drawn by horses, with a few head of cattle driven along on foot." Thomas Lincoln listed for taxes four head of horses, and it is unreasonable to believe that he would dispose of them because of the migration. Several biographers have drawn upon their imaginations and stated that "the Lincolns packed their belongings upon three horses, while another says, two horses were borrowed to carry their household effects. One biographer describes a spring-wagon drawn by two horses, in which was seated upon a bed of straw Nancy Hanks Lincoln and her daughter Sarah." Numerous affidavits are on file, stating that Thomas Lincoln had a cart (two-wheeled wagon) drawn by oxen, a cow, and a saddle horse that constituted the mode of conveyance.

There is no documentary evidence that would lead one to believe that Thomas Lincoln ever owned oxen while living in Kentucky. The fact that he owned four horses would certainly

indicate that he would not have used oxen.[1]

One of Tom Lincoln's new neighbors recalled, he "came in a horse wagon, cut his way to his farm with an ax felling the trees as he went."[2]

2. Cattle

At least one cow was taken along to Indiana, possibly the one Thomas Lincoln had purchased at auction two years before, as a heifer, for $9.42.[3]

According to an article published by McClure's Newspaper Syndicate in 1923, the Lincolns took with them to Indiana "a cow or two."[4]

---

[1]McMurtry, R. Gerald, "The Lincoln Migration from Kentucky to Indiana," Indiana Magazine of History, Vol. XXXIII, 394; Warren, Lincoln's Youth, 16-17; Hardin County (Ky) Tax Book, 1815. Nicolay and Hay in their Abraham Lincoln, a History, I, 28, state that "...the backs of two borrowed horses sufficed for the load." For variations of this tradition see Beveridge, Abraham Lincoln I, 41;Carl Sandburg, Abe Grows Up (New York, 1926), 67-68. Of the 104 (tithables) taxpayers shown in the Commissioner's Book for 1815, only six other residents of Hardin County had as many horses as Thomas Lincoln.

When the Lincoln family moved to Indiana, it is likely that they retained their interest in horses, but the new country in which they made their home afforded few opportunities to engage in the popular Kentucky sport of horse racing. Lincoln Lore, No. 1442, April, 1958.

[2]Nathaniel Grigsby to Herndon, Sept. 12, 1865, in Herndon-Weik Mss.

[3]Warren, Lincoln's Youth, 18.

[4]"The Move to Indiana," McClure Newspaper Syndicate, April 15, 1923.

B. LIVESTOCK THE LINCOLNS OWNED IN INDIANA

1. Horses

It is reported that Abraham Lincoln in 1827 rode across country to Princeton on "a flea-bitten gray mare, with a bunch of wool which his mother had sent along to be carded."[5]

When Abraham was old enough, Senator Beveridge wrote, he was sent to the mill with a bag of corn and "these journeys left upon his mind the most pleasing recollections of his boyhood. Thomas Lincoln had ... a horse or two, and trips to the mill were made bareback with the sack of grain or meal carried in front of the rider."[6]

Further evidence that Thomas Lincoln owned horses is found in the story that while Abe and John Johnston were plowing one day, an enormous "chin fly" attacked their horse. This caused him to stampede around the field at "a very lively gait."[7]

While wagons for the move to Illinois were being built, animals to pull them had to be acquired. Apparently, there were two yoke of oxen for each of two wagons, and two teams of horses for the third. Oxen in Spencer County at that time brought about $25 a yoke, while a pair of horses would bring twice that amount. Two of the oxen were purchased from Shadrach Hall, father of Wesley Hall, and two from William Wood. This would indicate that the

---

[5] Warren, Lincoln's Youth, 137; Jesse W. Weik, Indianapolis Star, Feb.7,1909.

[6] Beveridge, Abraham Lincoln, I, 62.

[7] Warren, Lincoln's Youth, 141.

Lincolns in 1830 owned four oxen. The horses undoubtedly were from Tom Lincoln's stock. In addition, there were two saddle horses used by the party.[8]

2. Cattle

Early in the fall of 1818 it was discovered that one of Tom Lincoln's cows had the "trembles."[9]

Thomas Lincoln, Dennis Hanks told Herndon, kept some livestock. "We Raised Sheep and Cattle But they Did not fecth Much [.] Cows and calfes was onely worth 6 Dollars [,] Corn 10 cts wheat 25 [cents] at that time."[10]

A story told about Abraham Lincoln in Indiana serves to confirm that his father owned cattle. A calf owned by Thomas Lincoln was mired in a swamp and drowned. Abe was told by his father to take the skin down to Hammond's Tannery, near today's Grandview, and have it properly treated. Abe told Hammond that "his father wanted his hide tanned."[11]

---

[8] Ibid., 207.

[9] Ibid., 53.

[10] Beveridge, Abraham Lincoln, I, 65.

[11] Grandview Monitor, October 14, 1926.

3. Oxen

Joseph Gentry recalled:

> The father of the President purchased of [my] father a yoke of steers, one of which was very wild, and much disliked the Lincoln premises, and would, when an opportunity offered, return to the Gentry farm. On one of these occasions, barefooted and with a hickory club about three feet long, young Lincoln went after it. In response to the question of how he expected to handle the wild steer, he said he would ride it. With caution he approached it, and laying a heavy piece of timber upon its neck under pretense of a yoke, he suddenly sprang upon the animal, and called to old man Gentry to "open the bars." This being done away dashed the steer down the hillside through hazelbrush, while young Lincoln held on to its neck, guiding it with the club. This broke the animal from leaving home.[12]

One aged resident told Francis M. Van Natter, "Abe would work hard when he had to do it. See that bottom land down there!" he exclaimed, pointing a trembling hand at a field of corn in shock. "Well, sir, Abe Lincoln had worked many a day down there with his yoke of oxen. His old plow had a wooden mold board and a steel point. He had a paddle to keep it cleaned off."[13]

John Hanks stated that when Thomas Lincoln came to Macon County, Illinois, he owned "four yoke of oxen." This, taken in conjunction with information that prior to moving to Illinois Lincoln purchased two yoke of oxen from his neighbors, indicates

---

[12]Story told by Joseph Gentry (files, Lincoln Life Foundation).

[13]Francis Van Natter, "Lincoln in the Hoosier State," National Republic, Feb., 1931.

that in 1830 Thomas owned two yoke of oxen. Mrs. Harriet Chapman, daughter of Dennis and Elizabeth Hanks, made the trip as a four-year-old, testified late in her life, that the party had "three covered wagons, two drawn by oxen, and one by horses, and two saddle horses."[14]

4. Hogs

Thomas Lincoln, according to Dennis Hanks, in the spring of 1817 returned to Kentucky for his swine. On his return to Indiana, he was accompanied by Thomas Sparrow and Dennis Hanks. Dennis told Herndon that "he [Lincoln] Drove his Stalk Hoggs to Poseys and there left them in the Beach Mast." But alas for the pigs and Lincoln's hope of pork! "I and Sparrow started home [to Kentucky] and we had Not Ben at home Not More than a week tell here cum all the Hoggs [.] A Bare had got a Mung them [and] Killed one this was a Bout 80 miles the[y] Cum."[15]

Thomas Lincoln, preparatory to moving to Illinois, sold his stock and grain. David Turnham recalled, "I bought the hogs and corn of Thomas Lincoln when he was leaving for Illinois; bought about 100 hogs and 4 or 5 hundred bushels of corn[.] paid 10 cts. per bushel for the corn, hogs lumped."[16]

---

[14] "Autobiography," prepared for Scripps, in Collected Works, IV, 63; The Lincoln Way. Report of the Board of Trustees of the Illinois State Historical Library on the Investigations Made by C. M. Thompson (Springfield, 1913),18-22; Murr, "Lincoln in Indiana," Indiana Magazine of History, Vol. XIV. No. 2, pp 165-166.

[15] Beveridge, Abraham Lincoln, I, 44.

[16] David Turnham, Sept. 15, 1865, in Herndon-Weik Mss.

It is therefore safe to conclude that the Lincolns kept hogs, as well as several head of horses and cattle. The abundance of several kinds of nuts, hazelnuts especially on the Lincoln tract, made it possible for the hogs to live on the mast through the winter.[17] Cured bacon and ham were one of the few products produced on the pioneer farm that could be sold. Flatboats carried these products down the Mississippi for sale.

5. Sheep

"In the afternoon of a particularly warm, dry day, in August, 1827, John M. Lockwood recalled, "a tall, beardless, long-legged boy about my own age, dressed in a suit of well-worn brown jeans, the trousers of which he had long before outgrown, and wearing a woolen hat and coarse, heavy, plaincut leather shoes of the style then in vogue among the backwoods people came riding up to" our mill in Princeton. "Behind him, tied over the horse's back, was a bunch of wool, which, after dismounting, he carried across the road and dropped at my feet, asking if it could be carded. This boy was Abraham Lincoln."[18]

---

[17] Warren, Lincoln's Youth, 141.

[18] From paper read by Lotta E. Erwin before the May 27, 1925 meeting of the Southwestern Indiana Historical Society (files, Evansville Central Library).

C. TRAVELERS' DESCRIPTIONS OF LIVESTOCK RAISED IN SOUTHWESTERN INDIANA, 1816-1832.

1. Horses

Most of the horses in Indiana and Illinois, according to John Woods, were of "Spanish origin; they are light and clean, but not very handsome; their coats are fine, when kept up and well cleaned, but this is seldom the case; active but not good in the collar, being too light for heavy draught."[19]

Describing horses seen in and around Vincennes, William Faux wrote, they are nearly "all mean, wild, deformed, halfgrown, dwarfish things, and much in taste and tune with their riders."[20]

2. Cattle

Woods reported that the cattle were of "various sorts, but on the whole pretty good; some of them are handsome, and with a little care and expense an excellent breed might be raised." Cows were permitted to run in the woods, and return to their calves mornings and evenings, when they were milked by the women. The calves were suckled at the same time.[21]

---

[19] Woods, Two Years' Residence, 281.

[20] Faux, Memorable Days in America, 212.

[21] Woods, Two Years' Residence, 281.

According to Prince Maximilian, next to agriculture the breeding of cattle was the principal occupation of the Indiana backwoodsmen. The cattle were "very fine," and "kept in the open air day and night, amidst ice and snow, with which their backs"were covered. The same could be said of the horses. On cold moonlight nights, Maximilian had seen," these animals standing in the street, near their master's dwelling, as if they hoped to be let in." The livestock was generally fed corn in the morning, while "a woman usually appears at an early hour, in her plaid, to milk the cows."

The Indiana cattle were "large and hardy, and do not differ in figure or colour from those of Germany." No fodder was fed them in winter. The cattle, when snow was on the ground, were fed corn stalks. No clover or other forage was cultivated, so the cattle and horses had to subsist on straw, the bark of trees, and the"green reed, miegia, which forms a thick underwood in the forests on the Wabash." Everywhere one saw the bark and twigs gnawed, and even the fruit trees were often damaged in this manner. "Horses and cattle frequently starved to death in the winter." "I was told," he continued, "that the animals gnaw, in preference, the nettle-tree..., the hackberry..., and the sugar maple. All the beef in this country is of a bad quality, because, as I have said, no forage is cultivated."[22]

---

[22]Maximilian, Maximilian's Travels, I, 184-185.

The poorest farmer or the richest landowner kept from one to a dozen milk cows, fed on pasturage in summer, and on hay, straw, fodder, or possibly some root crop in winter. Besides milk, the cows provided butter and soft cheese — smearcase.[23]

To identify their livestock, the settlers cropped their ears "by cutting and notching them, in all possible directions and forms, to the great disfigurement of many of them." Yet these marks were absolutely necessary in this "wild country, where every person's stock ran at large; and they are not sometimes seen by their owners for several months...."[24]

Butchering cattle and sheep was not such a big event as hog killing. By staggering the butchering in a community, a reasonable supply of beef and mutton could be made available in all except the hottest months.[25]

3. Hogs

Faux reported that hogs were "every where in great abundance." They seemed more than "half wild, and at the approach of man, fly or run like deer at the sight of an Indian rifle. Throughout the western regions they looked starved to death."[26]

---

[23] Buley, The Old Northwest, I, 158, 216-217.

[24] Woods, Two Years' Residence, 282-283.

[25] Buley, The Old Northwest, I, 216.

[26] Faux, Memorable Days in America, 212.

The breeding of swine, Prince Maximilian wrote in 1832, "furnishes the principal supply for food and exportation." Large quantities of pork were shipped to New Orleans. Great numbers of swine were seen in the woods of Indiana, "far from all human dwellings, where they grow very fat by the abundance of oak and beech mast." They had a reddish brown color, with round black spots. These swine were "quite wild, which everybody is at liberty to shoot." The hogs were never housed, even in the vicinity of New Harmony. "We observed them," Maximilian continued, "in our excursions, in the depth of winter, when the young ones often perish with cold; and we also saw them eaten by the mothers. Dead swine were lying about in all directions, partly devoured by others. The negligence and want of feeling with which the animals are treated is very great."[27]

4. Sheep

"The sheep of this country," Woods wrote, "and indeed of the whole of America, as far as I have seen, are mean, when compared to those of England. They are of different sorts, but much mixed. If I can judge of their origin, I think the Lincolnshire and Welsh sheep are the nearest to their original breeds; but many of them have had a little Merino blood mixed with them of late years...."

---

[27]Maximilian, Maximilian's Travels, I, 184.

Few of the American flocks exceeded twenty. Most of the settlers who kept a few, shut them up at night to protect them from wolves.

"The Americans keep sheep for the sake of their wool," Woods continued,"which is manufactured into various articles of clothings and at most of their cabins you may see carding, spinning, and weaving going forward."[28]

D. NUMBER, KIND, AND BREED OF LIVESTOCK FOUND ON THE LINCOLN FARM

1. Horses

Thomas Lincoln would have owned at least three and not more than six horses while living in Spencer County. These horses would have been used for work as well as riding. In general, the pioneers' horses would be of inferior quality — small, scrawny, and ungainly in appearance. New England stock, mostly degenerate English breeds, was particularly poor. Horses with a strain of thoroughbred blood brought from Virginia and Kentucky by settlers like the Lincolns would be somewhat better, particularly for saddle purposes. Since much of the heavy work was done by oxen, no great interest was shown in the development of draft animals.[29]

---

[28] Woods, Two Years' Residence, 283-284.

[29] Buley, The Old Northwest, I, 191-192.

2. Cattle

There were several milk cows and calves on the farm. They would be "neat cattle of the common stock." Neat cattle were a mixture of every breed, "small, shortbodied, thin and coarse-haired, steep-rumped, slab-sided, having little aptitude to fatten, or to lay the fat on the right place." Types developed locally and names never became standardized. Some were good milkers as far as quantity, but could not produce more than three pounds of butter per week. Calves were small and of slow growth, averaging about 700 to 900 pounds at five years.[30]

3. Oxen

Thomas Lincoln, during most of his Indiana years, would have owned and worked one yoke of oxen. Oxen, a pioneer recalled, were:

> ...mighty good for plowing a new wild piece of land. They were slow, but they could stand the heavy work better'n horses. They wasn't so fretful in a new ground full of stumps and roots. They moved slow and careful, keeping the same gait all day long, which made it easy on the plow and plowman. They could be turned out to look for their food and would browse on what a horse would hungry on.

Oxen were less trouble to hitch up than horses. The only gear you had to bother with was a yoke and log chain.[31]

---

[30] Ibid., 189; Morgan, "Early Agriculture in Spencer County, Indiana."

[31] Johnson, A Home in the Woods, 158-159.

4. Hogs

Thomas Lincoln in 1830 owned 100 hogs. His hogs were of the razorback variety. These long-legged, long-bodied, long-nosed creatures with short, straight-up ears were adapted to their environment, and ordinarily were left to forage for themselves. In years of poor mast they lived on roots — particularly of slippery elm, or snake — and other provender. When fattened they never averaged over 200 pounds gross weight. This type of hog has held its own in Arkansas and Mississippi long after the merits of improved breeds were demonstrated.[32]

5. Sheep

The Lincolns in their later Indiana years raised sheep. About a dozen sheep, having characteristics of the Lincoln and Welsh Mountain breeds, would be seen on the Lincoln farm.[33]

---

[32] Ibid., 278; Buley, The Old Northwest, I, 188.

[33] Woods, Two Years' Residence, 283-284.

IX. POULTRY

A. POULTRY THE LINCOLNS TOOK WITH THEM TO INDIANA

1. Chickens

According to Miss Tarbell, the Lincolns, when they moved to Indiana, took with them several hens.[1]

B. POULTRY RAISING IN SOUTHWESTERN INDIANA, 1816-1832

Prince Maximilian in 1832 saw "plenty of geese and domestic fowls, but only a few tame ducks" in the New Harmony area.[2]

Most of the settlers, Woods reported, kept "fowls, geese, and ducks." Very few guineas or domestic turkeys were seen on the English Prairie. Chickens were "in great abundance.... A dozen eggs is, generally, the price of one chicken." Geese and ducks were kept by the Americans for their feathers, and not for sale or to eat. Their feathers were used by the pioneers in their pillows and featherbeds. They picked them six or eight times a year, "nearly naked except their wings; they look extremely bad for some time after they are picked...."

Chicken feathers the settlers did not save. Geese and duck feathers sold for 50 cents per pound.[3]

---

[1] "The Move to Indiana," McClure Newspaper Syndicate, April 15, 1923.

[2] Maximilian, Maximilian's Travels, I, 185.

[3] Woods, Two Years' Residence, 286-287.

C. POULTRY FOUND ON THE LINCOLN FARM

1. Chickens

The Lincolns would have had several dozen fowl. By 1816 chickens were "tolerably plentiful" in Spencer County.[4]

2. Geese

The Lincolns would have had about a dozen geese.[5]

---

[4]Morgan, "Early Agriculture in Spencer County, Indiana;" Buley, The Old Northwest, I, 158.

[5]Buley, The Old Northwest, I, 158.

X. ANIMALS AS PETS

A. PETS THE LINCOLNS TOOK WITH THEM TO INDIANA

1. Dogs

A dog was taken along on the move to Indiana.[1]

B. PETS KNOWN TO HAVE BELONGED TO THE LINCOLNS IN INDIANA

1. Dogs

Abraham Lincoln liked to relate a "coon story." His father had at home a little yellow housedog, "Which," he remarked, "invariably gave the alarm if the boys undertook to slip away unobserved after night had set in — as they often times did — to go coon hunting."[2]

2. Cats

"My Earliest recollection of Abe," Matilda Johnston wrote, "is... carrying water about one mile — a pet cat following him to the spring."[3]

C. PETS FOR THE FARM

If the living historical farm is to reflect conditions in the period 1816-1830, there should be several mongrel dogs and a number of alley cats.

---

[1] "The Move to Indiana," McClure Newspaper Syndicate, April 15, 1923; Illustrated Historical Atlas — Spencer County, 10.

[2] Herndon and Weik, Life of Lincoln, 23.

[3] Beveridge, Abraham Lincoln, I, 61.

XI. THE LINCOLN CABINS AND OUTBUILDINGS

A. THE HALF-FACED CAMP

1. When Erected

Thomas Lincoln in the fall of 1816 made a preliminary trip to Indiana to select a homesite. He determined that "a quarter section of land in Hurricane Township, Perry County," would answer his needs. When he had made his choice, he followed the practice of marking his tract by piling up brush at the four corners and erecting some kind of modest improvement, such as a hunter's half-faced camp, near the place where the cabin was to be built.[1]

2. How Constructed

To shelter his family while a cabin was built, Thomas Lincoln had erected a "half-faced camp."[2] Beveridge, along with other historians, has recorded that the "half-faced camp" was similar to those thrown up by hunters for protection against the weather, and not unlike those "sometimes found in sugar camps of the early 20th Century." A pole was laid from branch to branch of two convenient trees; a few feet opposite these trees two stout saplings forked at the top, the bottom ends sharpened, were thrust into the ground. Another pole, parallel

---

[1] Warren, Lincoln's Youth, 16. Perry County was divided in 1818, and its western section became Spencer County. At the same time, the township in which the Lincoln farm was located was designated Carter Township.

[2] Tarbell, Life of Abraham Lincoln, I, 22; Nicolay and Hay, Abraham Lincoln, I, 24; Murr, "Lincoln in Indiana," Indiana Magazine of History, XII, No. 4, pp. 319-320; Herndon and Weik, Life of Lincoln, 21.

with the first, was laid in the crotches, and the frame was completed by still two other poles fixed upon the ends of those already placed. On three sides poles were piled upon one another; and a roof was contrived of poles, brush, and leaves.

One side of the structure, which was only 14 feet wide, was not enclosed. Before this open side, a fire, started by steel and tinder, was kept burning, upon which cooking was done. The fire also furnished such heat as the inhabitants of the half-faced camp could get. At times, because of the caprices of the wind, the heat from the fire would be accompanied by the smoke. At night, the blaze kept wild beasts from those who slept beneath the roof of brush. The loose, unhardened earth was a floor, on which leaves were thickly strewn. Over these was spread such bedding as had been brought, skins for the most part and possibly a blanket.[3]

The half-faced camp was erected on the knob on which the cabin was to be raised. Dennis Hanks recalled that about 40 rods separated the Lincoln cabin and the half-faced camp. C. C. Schreeder in his manuscript titled, "The Lincolns and their Home in Spencer County, Indiana," found in the Ehrmann papers, indicates that about 30 yards separated the half-faced

---

[3]Beveridge, Abraham Lincoln, I, 42-43; Herndon and Weik, Life of Lincoln, 21; Buley, The Old Northwest, I, 142.

Page 142 was missing from the print edition.

who, many years later, recalled that the Lincolns lived in the "half-faced camp" through the winter and spring of 1816-1817.[6]

We do know that the Sparrows and Dennis Hanks occupied that "Darne Little half face camp" during the winter of 1817-1818.[7] Undoubtedly, the Lincoln family lived in the half-faced camp erected by Thomas on his first trip to Indiana until such time as a cabin was raised. The period involved may have been as little as a few days or as much as several months.

Of course every one knows Thomas Lincoln never lived in a half-faced camp in Kentucky. Neither did he live in a "forbidding hovel" for "an entire year" in Indiana as alleged by Herndon. In Abraham Lincoln's own testimony it can be shown that he never lived in a place of this kind at any time.

The complete refutation of this story is found in an autobiographical sketch which Abraham Lincoln prepared for John Locke Scripps in June 1860. Lincoln wrote out the sketch in the third person and it contains this reminiscence: "From this place (Kentucky) he removed to what is now Spencer County, Indiana, in the autumn of 1816, Abraham then being in his eighth year . . .. A few days before the completion of his eighth year, in the absence of his father, a flock of wild turkeys approached the new log cabin, and Abraham with a rifle-gun, standing inside, shot through the crack and killed one of them.

The incident of the turkey shooting occurred some few days previous to February 12, 1817. The Lincolns had been in the state at that time less that two months, and as Lincoln states precisely, they were living in the "new log cabin," not in a three-faced camp or hovel but a log cabin . Lincoln Lore, No. 557, Dec. 11, 1939.

[6] Beveridge, Abraham Lincoln, I, 45.

[7] Ibid.

B. THE FIRST LINCOLN CABIN

1. When Built

As the harvest season was over by the time the Lincolns reached Section 32, the settlers would have been free to assist in the cabin-raising. Thomas Lincoln was experienced in cabin building, having helped in erecting many in Kentucky, including two or three of his own. The construction of a cabin was not a time-consuming enterprise. One family, reached central Indiana about the same time as the Lincolns, reported, "Arrived on Tuesday, cut logs for the cabin on Wednesday, raised the barn on Thursday, clapboards from an old sugar camp put on Friday and Saturday made the crude furniture to go to housekeeping."[8]

If we are to believe Abraham Lincoln's autobiography prepared by John Lock Scripps in 1860, the Lincolns had moved into the cabin before his eighth birthday.

2. Appearance

By the time the Sparrows and Hanks moved to Indiana in the fall of 1817, Dennis recalled, "Lincoln had Bilt another cabin...." This cabin was of the usual type, round logs with bark on and roof of poles and slabs. It was larger than any

---

[8]Warren, Lincoln's Youth, 21; Johnson, A Home in the Woods, 149-151.

the Lincoln family had heretofore lived in, being eighteen feet wide and twenty feet long; and it was high enough for a loft beneath the roof, reached by pegs driven in the log walls. The floor of the loft was of clapboard and the children slept on this.[9]

According to Hanks, the cabin had one room, with loft above. For a time there was no window, door, or floor; not even the traditional deer-skin hung before the exit; there was no oiled paper over the opening for light; there were no puncheons covering the ground. The lights were made from "the leaf coming off from the hogs' fat. This was good and mellow light and lasted well."[10]

A typical southwestern Indiana log cabin similar to that occupied by the Lincolns would be 18 x 20 feet and eight feet high from floor to rafter. The unhewn logs with bark on were about 12 inches in diameter, so the heavy timbers needed would total 16 pieces, 20 feet in length for the front and back, 16 pieces 18 feet long for the ends, plus a few more of various lengths to fill in the gables. About 40 logs would be used in building the cabin. Before starting to erect the cabin, four cornerstones were established and two side logs hewed on one side were positioned on these stones. Properly notched

---

[9]Hertz, The Hidden Lincoln, 278, 279; Beveridge, Abraham Lincoln, I, 45.

[10]Ibid.; Tarbell, Life of Abraham Lincoln, I, 22.

logs were then put in place, one on top of the other. Smaller poles were utilized for the roof and clapboards three or four feet long split from straight grained cuts were used as a covering and kept in place by weight poles which extended the width of the roof over each succeeding course of clapboards. Spaces for a door, window, and fireplace were cut out of the logs and a stick chimney built. The fireplace was covered with a "stiff mud and daubed over the chinking on both the inside and outside of the cabin."[11]

3. Improvements made After the Arrival of Sarah Bush Lincoln

Sarah Bush Lincoln recalled, "When we landed in Indiana, Mr. Lincoln had erected a good log cabin, tolerably comfortable.... The country was wild and desolate."[12]

Following Sarah Bush Lincoln's arrival in Indiana, Thomas Lincoln and Dennis Hanks renovated the cabin. Puncheons for the floor were split and smoothed. Besides putting in a floor in the cabin, they finished the roof and put in a door. The children were washed, combed and "dressed ... up," so as to look "more human," the cabin cleansed, decent bedding put on. "Bedsteads made... of poles and clapboards." The fireplace was overhauled, ample cooking utensils installed; while Thomas put

---

[11] Lincoln Lore, No.1235, Dec. 8, 1952; Basil Hall, Forty Etchings... (Edinburgh, 1829), plate No. xxii; Morgan, "Early Agriculture in Spencer County, Indiana." Very few hewn log cabins were raised in Spencer County before 1830. History of Warwick, Spencer and Perry Counties, Indiana, 411.

[12] Warren, Lincoln's Youth, 65; Hertz, The Hidden Lincoln, 350.

together a "proper table, better stool," and a chair or two.[13]

The cabin arrangements were adjusted to the new family's needs. Abraham now shared the loft not only with Dennis Hanks but also with John Johnston. The three girls – Sarah, Elizabeth, and Matilda – slept in the new bed Thomas built in the cabin.[14]

According to Dennis Hanks, Sarah Bush Lincoln on her arrival in Spencer County had him place one of Tom's carpenter benches near the horse trough. After the boys had filled the trough with water from the spring, she "put out a big gourd full o' soft soap, an' another one to dip water with, an' told us boys to wash fur dinner."[15]

By the time that some of Sarah Bush Lincoln's grandchildren were beginning to walk, she had had the interior of the cabin whitewashed.[16]

4. Location of—

The cabin stood on top of a knob, not far from the half-faced camp. The site was "admirable." Because of the elevation, the cabin site would be "dry and healthful." The cabin faced the trace along which Thomas Lincoln had hewed his way westward from the Vincennes-Troy road.[17]

---

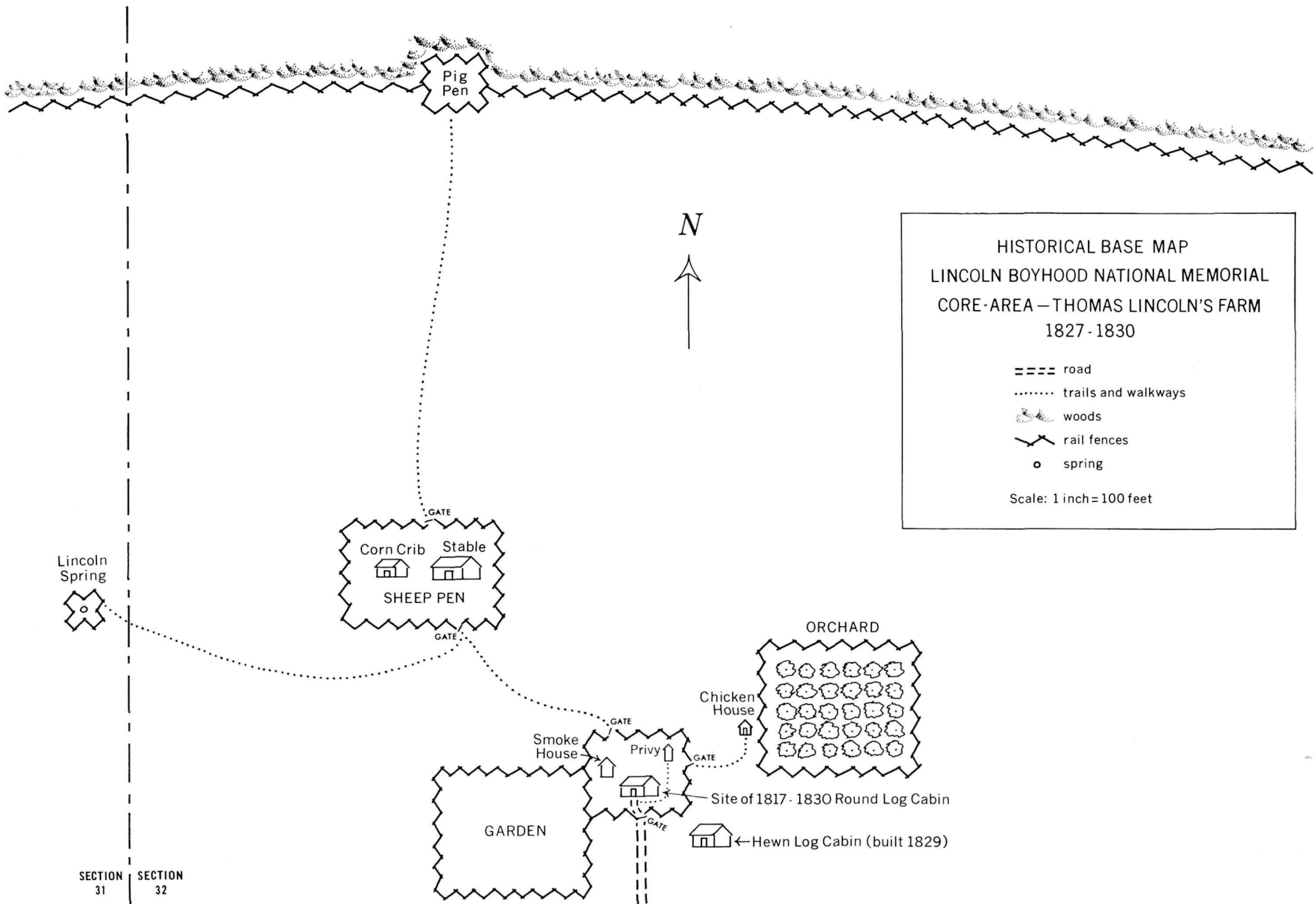
[13]Beveridge, Abraham Lincoln, I, 59; Herndon and Weik, Life of Lincoln, 29. Few Spencer County cabins had floors before 1830. Morgan, "Early Agriculture in Spencer County, Indiana."

[14]Warren, Lincoln's Youth, 75.

[15]Atkinson, Boyhood of Lincoln, 22.

[16]Warren, Lincoln's Youth, 194; Atkinson, Boyhood of Lincoln, 23.

[17]Warren, Lincoln's Youth, 21; Murr, "Lincoln in Indiana," Indiana


Pig Pen
N
HISTORICAL BASE MAP
LINCOLN BOYHOOD NATIONAL MEMORIAL
CORE-AREA — THOMAS LINCOLN'S FARM
1827-1830
road
trails and walkways
woods
rail fences
spring
Scale: 1 inch = 100 feet
GATE
Corn Crib
Stable
SHEEP PEN
Lincoln Spring
ORCHARD
Chicken House
Smoke House
Privy
Site of 1817-1830 Round Log Cabin
GARDEN
Hewn Log Cabin (built 1829)
SECTION 31
SECTION 32

5. Speculation as to What Became of the Cabin

The cabin had disappeared by 1860. In that year a photographer visited the farm and took a picture of a hewn-log cabin, which he identified as Lincoln's home in Indiana. Mrs. Wayne Hevron of Lincoln City told Joe E. Wiebe, Custodian of Nancy Hanks Lincoln Burial Grounds, that the first Lincoln cabin had "burned down when a Mr. Hevron lived there." Hevron was one of her husband's relatives. [18]

One of the Gentrys told Wiebe that the old Lincoln cabin was northwest of the marker erected in 1917.[19]

C. CABIN BUILT BY THE LINCOLNS IN LATE 1829

1. When Erected

Thomas Lincoln, during his Indiana years, erected three dwellings on the knob. At the time of his first visit, he had built a half-faced camp. Upon the arrival of the Lincoln family in late 1816, Thomas, assisted by his neighbors, put up a typical pioneer log cabin in which the family lived for 14 years. The hewn-log cabin started by Abe and his father in the

---

Magazine of History, XIII, No. 4, P. 319, and XIV, No. 2, p. 165; Barton, Life of Abraham Lincoln, I, 13.

[18] "Joe E. Wiebe's Notebook." Wiebe was custodian of the Nancy Hanks Lincoln Burial Ground in the 1930s.

[19] Ibid., 46.

fall of 1829 was never completed or occupied by the Lincoln family, though it is the building usually identified as the Lincoln family home. There is dependable evidence that while they built it, the Lincolns never lived in it.[20]

Soon after his 1829 discussion with Abraham Lincoln about the possibility of his becoming a steamboat pilot, Mr. Wood recalled that "he saw Lincoln whip-sawing lumber, and on asking him what he intended doing with this, Wood was told that the elder Lincoln was 'planning to erect a new house in the spring!.'"[21]

2. How Constructed

When he visited the Lincoln farm on September 14, 1865, Herndon reported:

> The house is a one-story hewed log one, porch in front; it is not the house that L. lived in, though he built it. The old house — the first and second are gone — fronts south, chimney at east and, has two rooms, the east and west one, stands on a knoll or knob about 50 feet above the road and about 150 yards north of the road.[22]

Abe Lincoln, Herndon continued, hewed the logs of this house for his father, "one door north and one south, two rooms, plank partitions, one window, two rooms; it has been

---

[20]Warren, Lincoln's Youth, 203-204.

[21]Murr, "Lincoln in Indiana," Indiana Magazine of History, Vol. XIV, No. 2, p. 150; Warren, Lincoln's Youth, 203; Hertz, The Hidden Lincoln, 365; Van Natter, "Lincoln in the Hoosier State," National Republic, Feb., 1931.

[22]Hertz, The Hidden Lincoln, 357.

moved from its original position, placed further south than the old one; it is not as Lincoln left, it was not completed by Thomas."[23]

While the farm belonged to James Gentry, the building was occupied by a tenant named John Hevron. Much of the area, except the acres under cultivation, was still heavily wooded.[24]

James Atlas Jones, who had lived in the second Lincoln cabin in 1862, recalled in 1927 that he and two others had been engaged by Atwell Morgan to farm the southwest quarter of Section 32.

According to Jones, the Lincoln cabin was a hewn-log structure and it could be "called a 'Mansion' (it was so called in that day), but it was not a two-story cabin." At that time it had two windows on the south side. There was a door on the south side and another opposite on the north side, so that when both doors were open you could see through the house into the backyard. There was a porch on the south elevation facing the knob about a quarter of a mile away, where Nancy Hanks Lincoln was buried.

---

[23] Ibid., 358.

[24] Ibid., 357.

There were two rooms, Jones continued, "in the east room on the north end was a kitchen, and on the east side was the fireplace."[25]

C. C. Schroeder, who visited the Lincoln farm in 1874, reported that the cabin was of hewn logs, 12 x 24 feet, with two rooms, a front and back door, two front windows, and a puncheon floor. Its stick and clay chimney was at the east end of the dwelling. This house stood a few feet in front of a log cabin.

The hewn-log building had stood until 1874, when it was sold to Captain William Revis of Evansville, Indiana, who tore it down and shipped it by rail to Rockport, and then on barges to Cincinnati, where it was worked up into relics and sold to the public.[26]

During the years between Lincoln's nomination for President in 1860 and 1874 when the cabin was taken down, a number of photographs were made of the structure. Claims were voiced by a number of individuals that this was the cabin raised by Thomas Lincoln following his migration to Indiana. Copies of a number of these photographs accompany this report.[27]

---

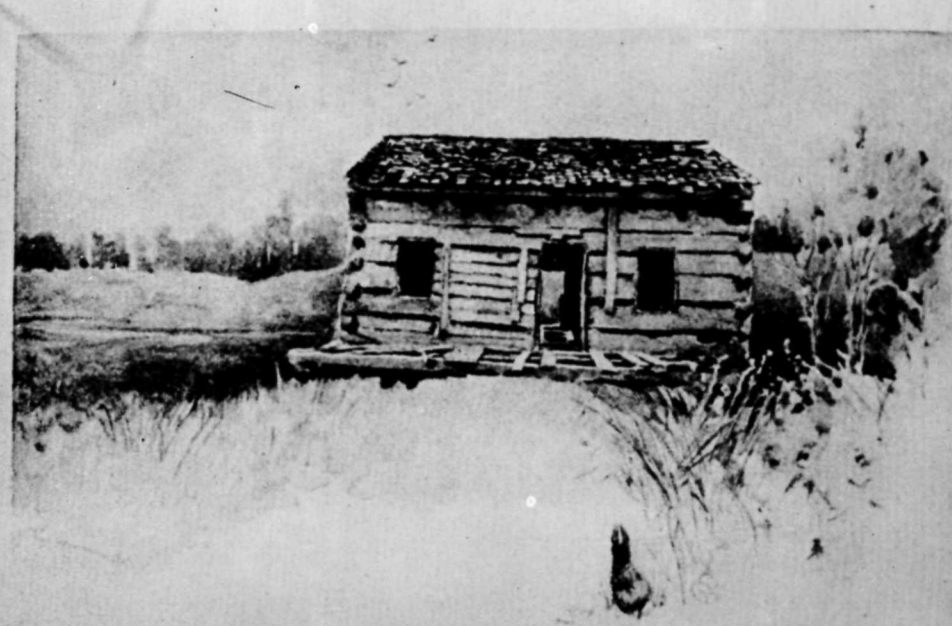
[25]George H. Honig, "An Interview with James Atlas Jones on the Lincoln Cabin in Spencer County," Indiana Historical Bulletin, Vol. VI, 37-38.

[26]Schreeder, "The Lincolns and Their Home in Spencer County, Indiana."

[27]Schreeder claimed that Redmon T. Grigsby had Bessie Harrel prepare the drawing of the cabin which accompanies this report.

HEWN-LOG CABIN BUILT IN 1829 BY THE LINCOLNS. PHOTOGRAPH 1860.

HEWN-LOG CABIN BUILT IN 1829 BY THE LINCOLNS. PHOTOGRAPH 1865.



ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S INDIANA HOME.

After an old photograph showing the cabin as it appeared in 1869. Thomas Lincoln built this house in 1817, and moved into it about a year after he reached his farm. At first it had neither windows, door, nor floor; but after the advent of Sally Bush Lincoln it was greatly improved. When he decided to leave Indiana he was preparing the lumber for a better house.

HEWN-LOG CABIN BUILT IN 1829 BY THE LINCOLNS. PHOTOGRAPH 1869. PLATE VII

3. Location of the Hewn-Log Cabin

The cabin erected by the Lincolns in 1829, John Hanks reported, stood on the knob, a short distance south of the first cabin.[28]

James Atlas Jones told Honig in 1927 that when both doors of the hewn-log cabin were open "it was possible to see from the front of the log cabin into the backyard, and glimpse part of another smaller cabin of un-hewn logs. It was about 10 by 12 or 12 by 14 feet, about half the size of the larger cabin, standing about five feet of ground between the two buildings. This smaller cabin was on a line with the east side of the cabin and stood directly north of it."

Honig interrupted, "Is this smaller cabin the first one built by Thomas Lincoln and the one in which Nancy Hanks lived and died?"

Jones was uncertain, but he was inclined to believe that Nancy Hanks had died in the smaller cabin.[29]

This cabin, because of its small size, could not have been the one erected by Thomas Lincoln in the winter of 1816-1817. If built by the Lincolns, it would have been the smokehouse.

---

[28] Hertz, The Hidden Lincoln, 346.

[29] Honig, "An Interview with James Atlas Jones on the Lincoln Cabin in Spencer County, " Indiana Historical Bulletin, Vol. VI, 37-38.

4. Comments Regarding the Locations of the Lincoln Cabins

Reports locating the second cabin in its relationship to the first dwelling are contradictory. They are in agreement on one point, however, that the cabin raised in 1829 was on the knob south of the structure built in the winter of 1816-1817. Herndon, who visited the farm in September, 1865, has written that the hewn-log cabin had been moved after the Lincolns had migrated to Illinois. He reported that the structure had been "moved from its original position, placed further south than the old one...." In addition, Herndon reports that the first cabin was no longer standing. One of the Gentrys told Wiebe in the 1930s that the old Lincoln cabin was northwest of the stone marker, pinpointing the site of the hewn-log cabin.

Atlas Jones, recalling events that had happened 65 years before, told Honig that there had been a cabin built of "unhewn log" about five feet north of the hewn-log structure. When pressed, he expressed some uncertainty whether this was the original Lincoln cabin. In describing the dimensions of this cabin, Jones reduced them from 18 x 20 feet to 10 x 12 or 12 x 14 feet. A study of the Harrel drawing shows a structure in rear of the house. If this is the cabin to which Jones referred, it cannot be the original Lincoln cabin, because: (a) it is built of hewn logs; (b) its longer elevation is north and south and not east and west; (c) and it is too small.

DRAWING BY HARREL OF HEWN-LOG CABIN.

PLATE VIII

5. Occupation of the Hewn-log Cabin by the Lincolns

John Hanks in 1865 told Herndon that while the Lincolns had raised the hewn-log cabin, they had never lived in it.[30] General James Veatch recalled that Charles Grigsby was the "first occupant of the house left by the Lincolns."[31]

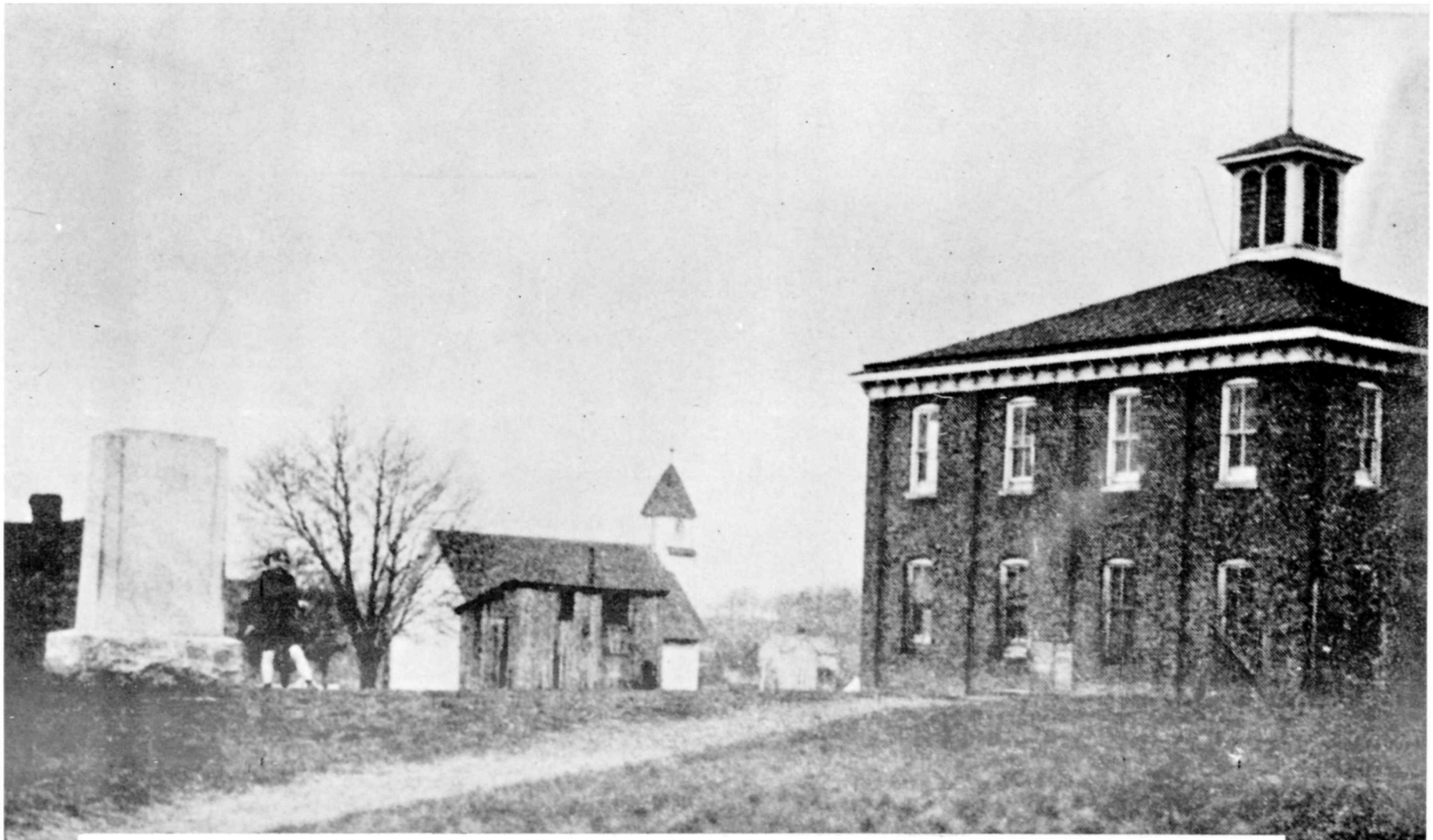
6. Evaluation as to Location of the First Lincoln Cabin

In view of the statement made by John Hanks and Herndon's account of his visit to the site, I feel the first Lincoln cabin would have been located on the highest point of the knob. The drainage factor supports this conclusion.

---

[30] Hertz, The Hidden Lincoln, 346.

[31] Veatch to Fortune, Sept. 21, 1881 (files, Ehrmann Collection, Evansville Central Library).



VIEW OF LINCOLN CABIN SITE, LOOKING SOUTHWEST. PHOTOGRAPH 1927.

PLATE IX

VIEW OF LINCOLN CABIN SITE, LOOKING NORTH. PHOTOGRAPH 1927.

PLATE X

D. LOCATION OF THE BRONZE FIREPLACE AND SILL LOGS

1. Locating the Site

On March 12, 1917, Davis Enlow, Joseph Gentry, and a Mr. LaMarr, each of whom had been familiar with the location of the hewn-log cabin before it was removed in 1874, agreed on the approximate location of the four walls. Joseph Gentry, to prove his contention as to the location of the fireplace, had a spade full of ground removed and uncovered three or four of the original hearthstones and some bits of crockery, etc. On April 28, 1917, a stone marker was erected on the spot and dedicated. This cabin site was on a knob then in the heart of Lincoln City, approximately one-fourth mile north of the top of the knob on which is located Nancy Hanks' grave.[32]

2. Appearance of the Site in 1927

In 1927 the cabin site was in the center of the play yard in back of the Lincoln City Schoolhouse. Outhouses for the school children were located a few feet north and either side of the 1917 stone marker. A backstop for school games was situated a few feet southeast of the site, and the stone marker was used as home base for games. The play ground was muddy in wet weather and dusty in dry.

---

[32] The Indiana Lincoln Memorial in Spencer County, Indiana, a Report by the Indiana Lincoln Union (Indianapolis, 1938), 14, 69.

There was a small dwelling in need of repair and paint in the play yard, and a woodshed in danger of collapse. Directly in the rear of the play yard was an ill-defined fence line separating a farm yard, containing a pig sty, and outhouse, a barn, and a chicken coop. To the west similar conditions existed, and to the east, separated by some little open space and a paved street, was another farm yard with outbuildings.[33] (Photographs taken of the stone marker at this time accompany this report.)

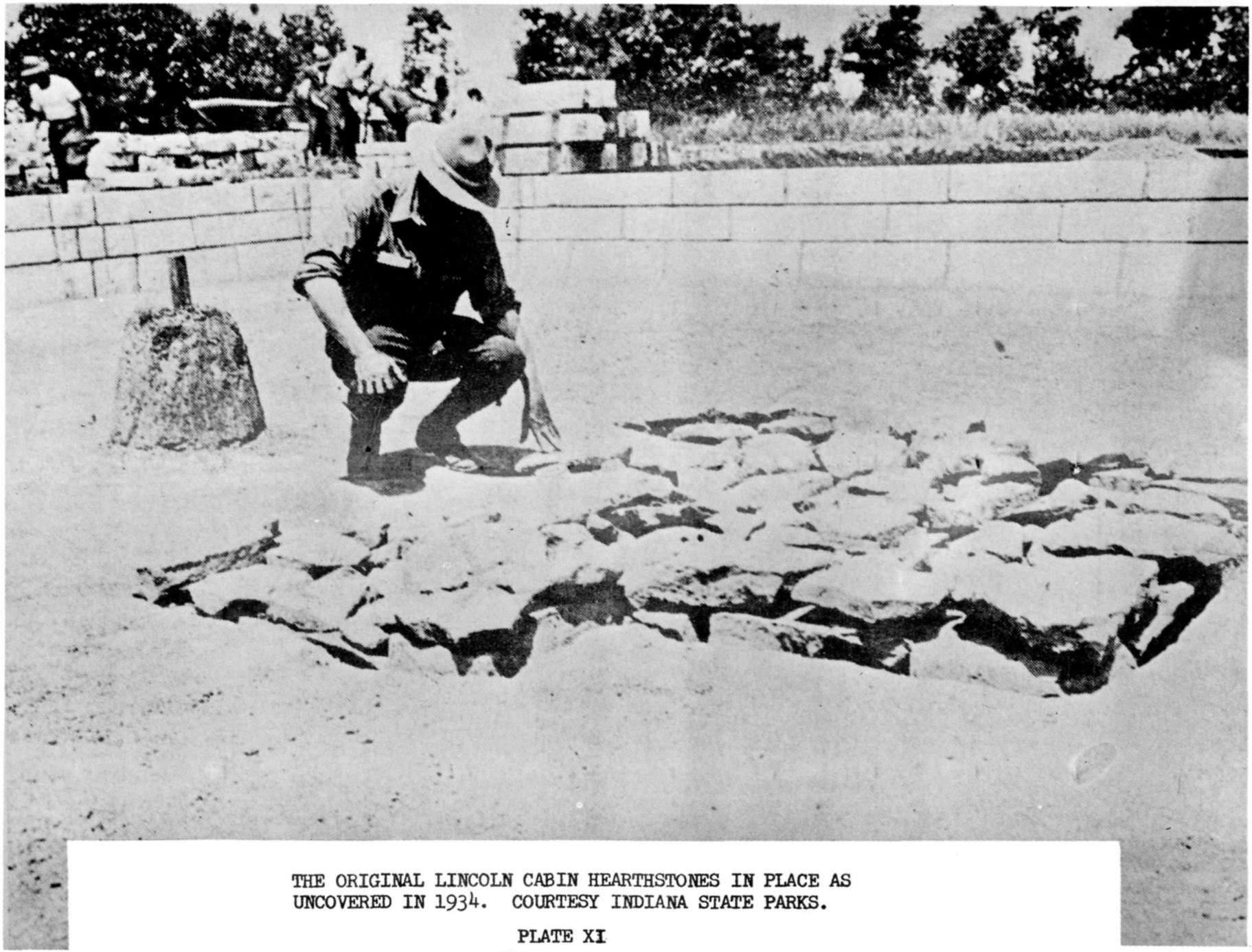
3. Uncovering the Hearthstones

In 1934 the stone marker at the cabin site was removed by the CCC to its planned position on the "Trail of 12 Stones." While excavating for the "true grade of the original cabin floor," the hearthstones were uncovered at a depth of 10 to 12 inches. These stones, about 150 in all, were of sandstone. The hearth had been formed by three layers of stones, each about 18 inches square and five to six inches in thickness, and it was "T" shaped, indicating that they had formed the base of the chimney as well as the hearth. After being uncovered, and before being removed, the stones were photographed.[34] (A photograph of the hearthstones as uncovered accompanies this report.)

---

[33] Ibid., 17-18; Barton, Life of Abraham Lincoln, I, 113.

[34] Lincoln Indiana Memorial, 46; "Indiana's Memorial to Abraham Lincoln," Outdoor Indiana, July, 1934, pp. 12-13.



THE ORIGINAL LINCOLN CABIN HEARTHSTONES IN PLACE AS UNCOVERED IN 1934. COURTESY INDIANA STATE PARKS.

PLATE XI

4. Positioning the Bronze Fireplace and Sill Logs

In 1936 the bronze fireplace and sill logs, which had been cast in Munich, Germany, by the International Art Foundries, were positioned on the site occupied by the hewn-log cabin in the period 1860-1874.[35]

E. THE VARNER CABIN

1. Location of

The Varner cabin was built in the summer of 1839 by John Varner. Varner on May 16, 1839, had entered on the east one-half of the northeast quarter of Section 7, Township 5 South, Range 5 West.[36]

2. Relocation

William Hartloff of Lamar, Indiana, gave the Varner cabin to the State on December 19, 1931. On Monday, July 25, 1932, the Varner cabin was moved to Lincoln City and exhibited near the site of the Lincoln cabin. Sometime prior to the positioning of the bronze fireplace and sill logs, the Varner cabin was removed to Spring Mill State Park.[37]

---

[35] Lincoln Indiana Memorial, 36-37, 46.

[36] "Wiebe's Notebook."

[37] Ibid., 99.

F. OUTBUILDINGS ON THE LINCOLN FARM

1. Stable

Wesley Hall, whose father operated a tanyard about four miles east of the Lincoln cabin, recalled that the Lincolns had a "pole stable."[38]

In the rush to erect a cabin and open a clearing, little time or labor was spent on outbuildings. For the few head of livestock the Lincolns owned, a shed-like lean-to structure of poles and grass would have sufficed at first. Later as the clearings were enlarged, crops made, and stock multiplied, this might have been replaced by a stable or barn of rough logs. Cross sections of hollow sycamores, given a bottom, were used as grain bins, or inverted as out- or well-houses. Split and supplied with ends they provided water troughs.[39]

According to John Woods, stables were built along the same lines as cabins, except they were "sometimes carried higher, to allow room for a hay-loft; some have a rack, but this is not common among the Americans, as, generally, they only have a manger, which is frequently made out of a hollow tree, the ends being stopped with wood or clay."[40]

---

[38] Murr, "Lincoln in Indiana," Indiana Magazine of History, Vol. XIII, No. 4, 324.

[39] Buley, The Old Northwest, I, 165.

[40] Woods, Two Years' Residence, 280.

2. Corn Cribs

Corn-cribs were built the same as cabins, except that they were elevated on logs, "so as to stand hollow some distance from the earth; the bottom is made of cleft pieces, laid pretty close. They are built of different lengths and widths, but about six feet on the inside is deemed wide enough, as corn will dry in them better than if wider." The roof is drawn in on one side, which two lengths of boards will cover. "As they lay the top pretty flat, they must at times take off the greater part, or the whole of the boards, when filling them with Indian corn ears.... When full, or the whole growth of the year put in, the boards are put on, and the weight poles again laid on." Should a heavy shower occur, while the crib was being filled, no harm would result, because the bottom and sides not being daubed, permitted the water to seep and the corn to dry rapidly. Woods had paid $15 for a crib capable of holding 600 bushels of corn on the cob. The settlers, he observed, never shelled their corn until it was ready for use or market. Even so, most of the corn sold in Princeton was in the cob.[41]

---

[41] Ibid., 279.

3. Chicken House

According to Dennis Hanks, Tom Lincoln built a chicken house for his second wife.[42]

A neighbor recalled that he once saw young Abe "pick up and walk away with a chicken house made of poles, pinned together and covered, that weighed at least six hundred pounds, if not more."[43]

The chicken houses, a traveler reported, were built along the same lines as the settlers' cabins.[44]

4. Smoke House

Travelers reported that smoke houses were very common. They were built "much as dwelling-houses, only straighter, and not often mudded. Some cross-pieces are put on the joists to hang bacon on." Woods had had one built. It cost 23 dollars, and was about "eighteen feet square and nine feet high."[45]

The structure which is seen behind the hewn-log house in the Harrel drawing is probably a smoke house.

5. Pig Pens

When pigs were shut up to be fattened, it was customary to pen them up with a rail fence. One corner of the pen

---

[42] Atkinson, Boyhood of Lincoln, 23.

[43] Warren, Lincoln's Youth, 135.

[44] Woods, Two Years' Residence, 280.

[45] Ibid., 278.

could be covered to protect the swine from the elements. Usually, however, the hogs were left to the "mercy of the wind and weather."[46]

Josiah Crawford's grandson recalled, to protect "the pigs, lambs and poultry at night" from wild animals, it was necessary to pen them up. "Grandfather employed young Abe to make rails for pens. These rails were longer than the ordinary ten-foot fence-rails. Abe notched the rails at the ends to make them fit close together."[47]

6. Sheep Pens

To protect their sheep from the depredations of wolves, the Lincolns at night would have kept them confined in log pens.[48]

7. Privy

Ordinary toilets were performed just outside or inside the kitchen door, where the wooden or tin basin, a battered mirror, and a comb on a string were kept. For bathing there was the "crick" in warm weather, and in winter a bath was not lightly undertaken. Small privies were located at some distance for

---

[46] Johnson, A Home in the Woods, 278; Woods, Two Years' Residence, 279-280.

[47] Ehrmann, Lincoln and His Neighbors.

[48] Buley, The Old Northwest, I, 159; Maximilian, Maximilian's Travels, I 185; Illustrated Historical Atlas — Spencer County, 10.

the convenience of women and children, but were frequently disdained by the males who in "true pioneer contempt of log cabin days viewed this as too restrictive or effeminate."[49]

8. Yard

Filth was provided by numerous chickens and geese which had the freedom of the yard, if not the house, and by dogs or barnyard animals. Paths of gravel or walks of solid material were rare, drains were unheard of and in the wet periods, house-surroundings as well as the barnyard were apt to be a muddy combination of soil, dung, and dishwater.[50] If there were any walks, they would be made of flat stones. These walks would lead to the front gate and spring.[51]

9. Bird Houses

A traveler reported that the "Americans frequently fix boxes on poles, or on the cabin, in which the black-martins build."[52]

---

[49] Buley, The Old Northwest, I, 233.

[50] Ibid., 234.

[51] Esarey, The Indiana Home, 25.

[52] Woods, Two Years' Residence, 291-292.

G. POSSIBLE LOCATION OF LINCOLN OUTBUILDINGS

1. Location of Lincoln Stable and Corn Crib

It is felt that the stable and corn crib would be about 200 feet northwest of the cabin raised by the Lincolns in the winter of 1816-1817. Our reasons for reaching this conclusion are:

a. Photographs taken of the hewn-log cabin in the period 1860-1874 located the outbuildings at that time to the northwest of the building. Although the Lincoln outbuildings had probably disappeared by that time, the structures that replaced them would have been erected on or near the same sites.

b. Because of the drainage factor, the stable would be at a lower elevation than the dwelling.

c. The stable would have been near the spring because:

(1) it would be easy to drive them to the trough; and

(2) if water had to be carried to animals which were penned, distance would not be a deterrent.

2. Location of the Smoke House

The smoke house would be immediately behind the cabin. Our reasons for reaching this conclusion are:

a. Photographs taken of the hewn-log cabin and the Harrel drawing locate a structure answering the description of a smoke house close behind the dwelling. It is likely that the Lincoln smoke house would have occupied a similar site in relation to the Lincoln cabin.

b. For security purposes it was customary to locate the smoke house adjacent to the cabin.

3. Location of the Chicken House

The chicken house would be about 50-75 feet northeast of the cabin. Our reasons for this conclusion are:

a. The chicken house, for reasons of security, might have been considerably closer to the cabin than the stable.

b. While the men would have worked in and around the stable area, the women would have been in charge of feeding the poultry and collecting the eggs.

4. Location of the Sheep Pen

We feel the sheep pen would have been adjacent to the stable and corn crib. Our reasons for reaching this conclusion are:

a. A combination sheep pen and barn yard would reduce the amount of fencing required to a marked degree.

b. With the stable and corn crib close at hand, it would greatly reduce the labor required to feed the animals during inclement weather.

c. The presence of horses, oxen, and cattle would deter raids on the pen by wolves.

5. Possible Location of the Pig Pen

We feel that the Lincoln pig pen would be northwest of the cabin, adjacent to the section of the farm not under cultivation. Our reasons for reaching this conclusion are:

a. The corn crib should be within easy walking distance. In addition, it would be easier for Thomas Lincoln and the other males to walk down hill with their buckets of corn and slop for the hogs.

b. By utilizing part of the fence separating the cultivated and forested sections of the farm for the pen, an economy in fencing could be effected.

c. If the pen were located on the line between the forested and cultivated portions of the farm, the hogs could still feed on the mast.

6. Possible Location of the Privy

We feel that the Lincoln privy would be about 75 feet north of the cabin. Our reasons for reaching this conclusion are:

a. The privy would be behind and at a lower elevation than the cabin.

b. The privy would be within easy walking distance of the cabin.

c. The privy would not be on the same slope as the spring.

XII. HOUSEHOLD EFFECTS AND FURNISHINGS

A. HOUSEHOLD EFFECTS AND FURNISHINGS TAKEN ALONG TO INDIANA IN 1816

1. Kitchen Ware

Two days after their wedding Thomas and Nancy Lincoln made their first purchase at the "Bleakley & Montgomery Store, buying '1/2 set knives and forks' and '3 skanes silk.' Later they acquired at a sale 'a dish and plates' for $2.68 and 'basin and spoon' which cost them $3.24."[1]

2. Furnishings and Household Effects

"The household stores and personal effects that were taken along," McMurtry records, probably consisted of furniture of home manufacture made by Thomas Lincoln, "clothing, a feather-bed, home-woven 'Kiverlids,' kitchen utensils, a loom, a spinning wheel and light farming equipments." In all probability, the cabinet-making, wood-working tools of Thomas Lincoln were carefully placed in a safe corner of the wagon, and it is reasonable to conclude that food and camping equipment were carried along to facilitate the rigors of pioneer travel.[2]

---

[1] Warren, Lincoln's Youth, 9.

[2] McMurtry, "The Lincoln Migration from Kentucky to Indiana", Indiana Magazine of History, Vol. XXXIII, 395; Warren, Lincoln's Youth, 18. According to Warren, the Lincolns had brought with them a spinning wheel, a skillet or spider, a Dutch oven, a large kettle, and small pans. A few wooden bowls, pewter dishes, knives and forks, and a few simple utensils completed their cooking and dining equipment. Besides the light from the fireplace, they may have had candles or a simple lamp made by lighting a wick which was placed in a cup of bear's grease. Warren, Lincoln's Youth, 23.

B. HOUSEHOLD EFFECTS AND FURNITURE BROUGHT TO INDIANA BY SARAH BUSH LINCOLN

When Sarah Bush Lincoln prepared to move to Indiana, she and her husband loaded into the wagon a bureau, a table, a set of chairs, a clothespress, bedclothes, a feather bed, and kitchenware — pots, pans, and skillets.[3]

C. FURNITURE BUILT BY THOMAS LINCOLN FOR HIS INDIANA HOME

1. Bedsteads

After the cabin had been completed, Tom Lincoln built a pole bedstead in one of the corners opposite the fireplace. At the proper height from the floor holes were made between the logs to receive the side poles, and a corner post set out on the floor to which these poles could be attached. Slats were then laid across the side poles to hold the mattress made of corn husks or leaves. On top of this Nancy Hanks Lincoln laid the feather-bed brought from Kentucky.[4]

2. Tables, Chairs, Benches, and Stools

Tables, chairs, benches, and stools were probably of the rudest sort — rough slabs of wood in which holes were bored and legs fitted in.[5]

---

[3]Warren, Lincoln's Youth, 64; Beveridge, Abraham Lincoln, I, 58; Herndon and Weik, Life of Lincoln, 28. According to Beveridge, the bureau cost 45 dollars in K[entucky].

[4]Warren, Lincoln's Youth, 23.

[5]Tarbell, Life of Lincoln, I, 22-23; Herndon and Weik, Life of Lincoln, 23-24.

3. Loom

Dennis Hanks recalled that Sarah Bush Lincoln had Tom build her a loom.[6]

4. Cupboard

John Hanks recalled, "When Abe and I returned to the house from work he would go to the cupboard, snatch a piece of corn-bread, take down a book, sit down, cock his legs as high as his head, and read."[7]

D. GENERALIZATIONS REGARDING HOUSEHOLD ITEMS FOUND IN THE LINCOLN CABIN

Among household utensils, the most important were the cooking irons. Were the pioneer wife possessed of a "bulbous iron pot with a flare at the top to hold the lid, a heavy iron frying pan with three legs, usually known as a spider, another deeper pan, or oven, often with rounded bottom and a lid with curled-up edges to hold the hot coals on top, she was well equipped." A few knives were the only other implements absolutely necessary. Serviceable bowls, piggins, firkins, and keelers could, in the absence of coopers or woodenware makers, be made by hollowing out cuts of maple with fire and tools; trenchers and platters were made from poplar, buck-eye, or basswood; spoons, paddles, and forks from various hardwoods.[8]

---

[6]Atkinson, Boyhood of Lincoln, 23.

[7]Nicolay and Hay, Abraham Lincoln, I, 30; Herndon and Weik, Life of Lincoln, 39.

[8]Buley, The Old Northwest, I, 147.

XIII. FOOD SERVED AT THE LINCOLN TABLE

A. PROVISIONS TAKEN TO INDIANA

When they migrated to Indiana, the Lincolns took along "cured meats" prepared at a recent hog-killing, corn, both shelled and ground; and seed corn for the spring planting.[1]

B. PREPARATION OF FOOD IN SOUTHWESTERN INDIANA

1. Meat

The preparation and preservation of meat figured prominently in the frontier economy. Hogs could not always find a market or bring a profit if they reached it, but the lean, mast-fed animal, or the not-too-fat farm product would always fill the jars and barrels with sausage, headcheese, and pickled pork, and the rafters and beams with salt cured and hickory smoked hams and bacon.[2]

2. Corn

When the corn matured, it was pounded into samp in a mortar made of a log burned out at one end, grated into meal by rubbing over a strip of "tin" punched full of rough-edged holes, or ground by hand between two stones. From the meal came the corn dodger, pone, and "johnny cake."

---

[1] Warren, Lincoln's Youth, 18.

[2] Buley, The Old Northwest, I, 213; Warren, Lincoln's Youth, 141; Herndon and Weik, Life of Lincoln, 21; Johnson , A Home in the Woods, 278. The abundance of several kinds of nuts, especially hazel,on the Lincoln tract made it possible for the hogs to live on the mast through the winter.

Whole corn grains soaked in water and pounded free of the outer shell in a wooden mortar, or, better still, treated in lye water made from wood ashes, produced hominy.[3]

3. Wheat

The difficulty of raising and milling wheat was greater. Indeed, in many places in the west the first flour cake was an historic event. Corn-dodger was the every-day bread of the Lincoln household, the wheat cake being a treat reserved for Sundays.[4]

4. Coffee and Tea

Coffee and tea were rare and expensive luxuries for the table. Makeshift beverages were made from the materials at hand — from the bohea plant, sassafras roots, and various herbs; ersatz coffee was brewed from parched corn, wheat, or browned bread crumbs.[5]

---

[3]Buley, The Old Northwest, I, 154-155; Barton, Life of Abraham Lincoln I, 134-135. In Indiana as in Kentucky the principal crop of the pioneer was corn. It began to be an article of food as soon as the ears were ready for roasting.

Primitive methods of cooking prevailed in isolated areas in southern Indiana for 50 years after the Lincolns left. George R. Wilson of Dubois County recalled that in the 1880s he "ate Johnny cake baked on a clean ash board set before an open fireplace and bacon fried on the blade of a garden hoe." Warren, Lincoln's Youth, 238.

[4]Tarbell, Life of Lincoln, I, 23.

[5]Buley, The Old Northwest, I, 30.

5. Generalizations

The food was prepared in the rudest fashion, for the supply of both groceries and cooking utensils was limited. Groceries were frequently wanting. The most important cooking utensil was the Dutch oven. An indispensable article in the primitive kitchen outfit was the "gritter."[6]

Food was mostly of meat, with some corn or wheat broken in stump mortars. Generally, the cooking was poor and insufficient, frying in grease being a favorite method.[7]

C. A TYPICAL LINCOLN MEAL

According to travelers, the usual meal partaken on stopping at the home of an Indiana settler in the 1820s would consist of: "stewed pumpkin and cabbage, parched-corn coffee, a bit of salt pork and hominy, or venison bones and corn bred."[8]

---

[6] Ibid., 23-24.

[7] Beveridge, Abraham Lincoln, I, 50-51.

[8] Buley, The Old Northwest, I, 30.

XIV. OCCUPATIONS OTHER THAN FARMING

A. THOMAS LINCOLN AS A CARPENTER

Upon reaching Indiana, Thomas Lincoln continued his Kentucky occupations, and one of his new neighbors recalled, he "was a carpenter by trade, relied upon it for a living, not on farming." Dennis Hanks stated, his carpenter's tools were " wonder to the hull deestrict." William Wood remembered, "Thomas Lincoln, often and at various times worked for me, made cupboards, &c., other household furniture; built my house, made floors, ran up the stairs, did all the inside work for my house."

David Turnham reported," I have a cupboard in my house which Thomas Lincoln made for me about 1821 or 1822. It is about 2 1/2 feet high, 1 1/2 feet wide, has six drawers and is made of walnut and poplar, the boards used are whipsawed."

There are extant eight corner cupboards allegedly made by Lincoln. They vary little in construction, most of them made from the same pattern. They are of walnut or cherry, about seven feet tall, and weigh about 300 pounds.[1]

Dennis Hanks recalled that after Nancy Hanks' death, "We still kept up hunting and farming it. Mr. Lincoln ... was a cabinet-maker and house-joiner, &c., he worked at his trade in the winter at odd times..."[2]

---

[1] Warren, Lincoln's Youth, 140; ————————, "The Lincolns, Hoosier Pioneers," Indiana Magazine of History, Vol. XXXVIII, 257.

[2] Hertz, The Hidden Lincoln, 280.

From 1820 to 1825, Hanks continued, Mr. Lincoln and Mrs. Lincoln each worked ahead at their own business. "Thomas at framing, cabinet-making, hunting; she at cooking, washing, sewing, weaving, &c., &c. . . ."[3]

Tom Lincoln made furniture for other settlers besides Woods and Turnham such as Josiah Crawford who had one low room 15 foot square. Sometimes Abraham helped his father in his carpentering, although he disliked hammer and drawing-knife more than he did plough and hoe. The father and son built a wagon for James Gentry, we are told, constructing the vehicle "entirely out of wood, even to hickory rims to the wheels."[4]

A man with Thomas Lincoln's skill as a carpenter would have made gates, carts, wheelbarrows, plow frames, single- and double-trees, ox yokes, wooden shovels, hay forks, troughs, benches, woodhorses, tool handles, stirring paddles, rakes mortars, flails, cradles for mowing, swinging knives, flax brakes, wagons, chests, beds, chairs, carved butter molds, and possibly cooperage work.[5]

---

[3] Ibid., 281.

[4] Beveridge, Abraham Lincoln, I, 60-61.

[5] Buley, The Old Northwest, I, 165-166.

B. SPINNING YARN

Sheep shearing in the spring provided the Lincolns with another home-manufacturing process. The fleece was washed, scoured to rid it of yolk and natural feltings, hand picked for dirt, straws, and burrs, greased, then carded on a pair of hand cards.[6]

C. COLLECTING MAPLE SUGAR

"Maple sugar," Prince Maximilian reported, "is manufactured in great abundance in Indiana." In 1810, 50,000 pounds were made in the state for sale, and in 1832 maple sugar was selling for seven to eight cents per pound.[7] The Lincolns undoubtedly engaged in this trade.

---

[6] Ibid., 204.

[7] Maximilian, Maximilian's Travels, I, 183-184.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

PRIMARY SOURCES

Manuscript Material

Bleakley, Robert and Montgomery, William, Elizabethtown (KY.) Merchants, 2 Day Books and 1 Ledger, 1805-1809, Lincoln National Life Foundation, Fort Wayne, Indiana.

Brown, Ora, Collection of Lincolniana, Dale, Indiana. Collection is exhibited at Santa Claus (Ind.) Post Office Museum.

"Field Notes, South of Base Line and West of the Second Meridian, Indiana," Vol. II. National Archives, Cartographic Branch.

Fourth National Census, Spencer County, State of Indiana. National Archives.

Gentry, Joseph, "Story by -." Files, Lincoln National Life Foundation.

Little Pigeon Church Minute Book, 1816-1840. Illinois State Historical Library, Springfield. A transcript of this is in the Indiana Division, Indiana State Library.

Morgan, John, to Wife, August 5, 1822. Files, Lincoln National Life Foundation.

Receipts Nos. 8499 and 9205, Records of the General Land Office. National Archives; Records of the Vincennes Land Office, Relinquishments, T4S, R5W. Spencer County Archives Division, Indiana State Library.

Receipt No. 9205, Records of the General Land Office. National Archives.

"Survey Township, No. V, South of the Base Line, Range No. V West of Meridian, Indiana. Surveyed by Arthur Henrie." National Archives, Cartographic Branch.

Richardson, Joseph C. to Herndon, Sept. 14, 1865. In Herndon-Weik Mss.

Tract Book, Vincennes District, No. VI, Vol. II, 296. Archives Division, Indiana State Library.

Turnham, David, Sept. 15, 1865. In Herndon-Weik Mss.

Veatch to Fortune, Sept. 21, 1881. Files, Ehrmann Collection, Evansville Central Library.

County Records

Breckinridge County (Ky.) Order Book, Feb. 16, 1804.

Elizabethtown (Ky.) Academy, Record Book I, Town Hall, Elizabethtown, Kentucky.

Elizabethtown (Ky.) Minutes of the Board of Trustees, No. 1, Town Hall, Elizabethtown, Kentucky.

Spencer County, Indiana, Court Order Books, Rockport, Indiana

Spencer County, Indiana, Deed Books, Rockport, Indiana

Spencer County, Indiana, Marriage Register, Rockport, Indiana.

Spencer County, Indiana, Tract Books, Rockport, Indiana.

Spencer County, Indiana, Will and Probate Books, Rockport, Indiana.

Records of the Warrick County Board of Justice, Boonville, Indiana

Maps

"Henrie's Map of Township V South, Range V West," Cartographic Branch, National Archives.

"Henrie's Map of Township VI South, Range V West," Cartographic Branch, National Archives.

"Lincoln Memorial State Park and Vicinity -- Showing Original Land Entries," Map No. 2, Brown Bros. Lumber Co., Dale, Indiana.

Atlases and Gazetteers

Cramer, Zodok, A New and Corrected Edition, the Ohio and Mississippi Navigator..., Pittsburgh, 1802.

Cramer, Zodok, The Navigator: Containing Directions for Navigating the Monongahela, Allegheny, Ohio and Mississippi Rivers ..., Pittsburgh, 1811.

Cumings, Samuel, Western Navigator..., Philadelphia, 1822.

An Illustrated Historical Atlas of Spencer County, Indiana, From Actual Surveys under the direction of B. N. Griffing, Philadelphia, 1879, 10.

Scott, John, The Indiana Gazetteer or Topographical Dictionary..., Indianapolis, 1833.

Travel Accounts

Audubon, John James, The Birds of America, London, 1827, 38.

Bernhard, Karl, Duke of Saxe-Weimer-Essenach, Travels through North America, during the years 1825 and 1826, 2 Volumes, Philadelphia, 1828.

Flint, James, Letters from America..., Edinburgh, 1822. Reprinted in Thwaites (ed.), Early Western Travels. IX.

Hall, Basil, Forty Etchings...,Edinburgh, 1820.

"Journal of Thomas Dean, A Voyage to Indiana in 1817," edited by Jean C. Dean, Indiana Historical Society. Publications, VI.

Lindley, Harlow (comp.), Indiana as Seen by Early Travelers, Indianapolis, 1916.

Maximilian, Prince of Wied, Travels in the Interior of North America, ...,3 Vols. London, 1843. Reprinted in Thwaites (ed.) Early Western Travels, XXII.

Woods, John, Two Years' Residence in the Settlement on the English Prairie, in the Illinois Country..., London, 1822. Reprinted in Thwaites (ed.), Early Western Travels, X.

Government Publications

Executive Proceedings of the State of Indiana 1816-1836, edited by Dorothy Riker, Indiana Historical Collections, XXIX, Indianapolis, 1947.

Revised Laws of Indiana, 1831.

SECONDARY SOURCES

Biographies

Atkinson, Eleanor, The Boyhood of Lincoln, New York, 1908.

Barrett, Joseph H., Abraham Lincoln and His Presidency, 2 volumes, Cincinnati, 1904.

Barrett, Joseph H., Life of Abraham Lincoln..., New York, 1865.

Beveridge, Albert J., Abraham Lincoln 1809-1858, 2 volumes, Boston and New York, 1928.

Browne, Robert H., Abraham Lincoln and Men of Historic Times, 2 volumes, New York, 1901.

Ehrmann, Bess V., Lincoln and His Neighbors, Rockport, 1948.

Ehrmann, Bess V., The Missing Chapter in the Life of Abraham Lincoln..., Chicago, 1938.

Herndon, William H., and Weik, Jesse W., Herndon's Life of Lincoln..., with an introduction b y Paul M. Angle. A. & C. Boni, New York, 1930.

Hertz, Emmanuel, The Hidden Lincoln from the Letters and Papers of William H. Herndon, New York, 1938.

Hobson, Jonathan T., Footprints of Abraham Lincoln..., Dayton, Ohio, 1909.

Holland, Josiah G., The Life of Abraham Lincoln, Springfield, Mass., 1866.

Howells, William Dean, Life of Abraham Lincoln, Springfield, Illinois, 1938.

Lamon, Ward H., The Life of Abraham Lincoln; from His Birth to His Inauguration as President, Boston, 1872.

Nicolay, John G. and Hay, John, Abraham Lincoln, a History, 10 volumes, New York, 1890.

Sandburg, Carl, Abe Lincoln Grows Up, New York, 1926.

Tarbell, Ida M., In the Footsteps of the Lincolns, New York and London, 1924.

Tarbell, Ida M., The Early Life of Abraham Lincoln, New York, 1996.

Thayer, William M., The Pioneer Boy and How He Became President, Boston, 1864.

Thomas, Benjamin, Abraham Lincoln: A Biography, New York, 1952.

Van Natter, Francis A., Lincoln's Boyhood: A Chronicle of His Indiana Years, Washington, 1963.

Vannest, Charles G., Lincoln the Hoosier: Abraham Lincoln's Life in Indiana, St. Louis and Chicago, 1928.

Warren, Louis A., Lincoln's Youth: Indiana Years, Seven to Twenty-One, 1816-1830, New York, 1959.

Articles in Historical Journels

Armstrong, Ida D., "The Lincolns in Spencer County," Indiana Historical Commission, Bulletin No. 18, October 1923.

Barker, W. L., "History of the Lincoln Route," Proceedings of the Southwestern Indiana Historical Society, Indianapolis, 1926.

Honig, George H., "An Interview with James Atlas Jones on the Lincoln Cabin in Spencer County," Indiana Historical Bulletin, Vol. VI, Indianapolis.

Iglehart, John E., "Some Correspondence between Lincoln Historians and This Society," Indiana Historical Commission Bulletin 18, October 1923.

McMurtry, R. G., "The Lincoln Migration from Kentucky to Indiana," Indiana Magazine of History, Vol. XXXIII, Bloomington, 1938.

Murr, J. Edward, "Lincoln in Indiana," Indiana Magazine of History, Volumes XIII and XIV, Bloomington, 1917-18.

Van Natter, Francis, "Lincoln in the Hoosier State," National Republic, Feb. 1931.

State and Local Histories

Banta, David D., A Historical Sketch of Johnson County, Indiana, Chicago, 1881.

Buley, R. Carlyle, The Old Northwest; Pioneer Period, 1815-1840, 2 vols., Bloomington, 1951.

Cockrum, William M., A Pioneer History of Indiana, Oakland City, Indiana, 1907.

De la Hunt, Thomas J., Perry County, A History, Indianapolis, 1916.

Duss, John S., George Rapp and His Associates, Indianapolis, 1914.

Esarey, Logan, The Indiana Home, Crawfordsville, Indiana, 1943.

Hall, Arthur F., The Lincoln Memorial Way through Indiana, Indianapolis, 1932.

History of Warrick, Spencer, and Perry Counties, Indiana, From the Earliest Time to the Present, Together with Interesting Biographical Sketches, Reminiscences, Notes, etc, Chicago, 1885.

Journal of Agricultural Research, Washington, D. C., Vol. XXXV, No. 6.

Latta, W. C., Outline of History of Indiana Agriculture, LaFayette, 1938.

The Indiana Lincoln Memorial in Spencer County, Indiana, A Report by the Indiana Lincoln Union, Indianapolis, 1938.

Manuscript Material

Baker, C. T., "The Lincoln Family in Spencer County," Southwestern Indiana Historical Society Papers, Evansville Central Library.

Honig, George H. "The Environment of Abraham Lincoln in Indiana," paper read before the Southwestern Indiana Historical Society at Princeton, Nov. 17, 1925. Iglehart Collection, Willard Library.

Huffman, Lemuel Q., "A Paper Read Before the Perry County Historical Society, Huffman Mills, Oct. 5, 1924." Evansville Central Library.

Maas, Grace J., "Jonesboro," paper read before the Southwestern Indiana Historical Society. Ehrmann Papers, Evansville Central Library.

Morgan, D. H., "Early Agriculture in Spencer County, Indiana," Southeastern Indiana Historical Society Papers, Evansville Central Library.

Report to Committee, Southwestern Indiana Historical Society, April, 1926, Southwestern Indiana Historical Society Papers, Willard Library, Evansville, Indiana.

Santosuosso, John, "James Swaney," Files, Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial.

Schreeder, C. C., "The Lincolns and Their Home in Spencer County, Indiana," Southwestern Indiana Historical Society Papers, Evansville Central Library.

Wiebe's Notebook, Files, Lincoln Boyhood National Monument.

Wilson, George R., "Observations made by George R. Wilson from Surveyors Original Field Notes," now in possession of Mr. Wilson's sister, Margaret Wilson, Jasper, Indiana.

Newspapers and Periodicals

Evansville (Ind.) Courier and Journal, 1928-1939.

Evansville (Ind.) Enquirer, 1860-1861.

Evansville (Ind.) Journal, 1840-1890.

Grandview (Ind.) Monitor, 1926-1938.

Indianapolis Journal, 1879.

Indianapolis News, 1888.

Indianapolis Star, 1903.

Indianapolis Times, 1922.

Lincoln Lore, Fort Wayne, Ind., April 15, 1929-1967.

McClure Newspaper Syndicate, 1923.

Paducah (Ky.) Journal, 1860.

Outdoor Indiana, 1934.