

LINCOLN LORE

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THE KNOB CREEK FARM—PLAYGROUND OF LINCOLN

The Knob Creek farm was the Kentucky home which Abraham Lincoln remembered when he was interviewed about his childhood days. In writing to an old acquaintance of his father's he said, "The place on Knob Creek, I remember very well." Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln moved to this farm in 1811, when Abraham was but two years old and remained there until the late fall of 1816.

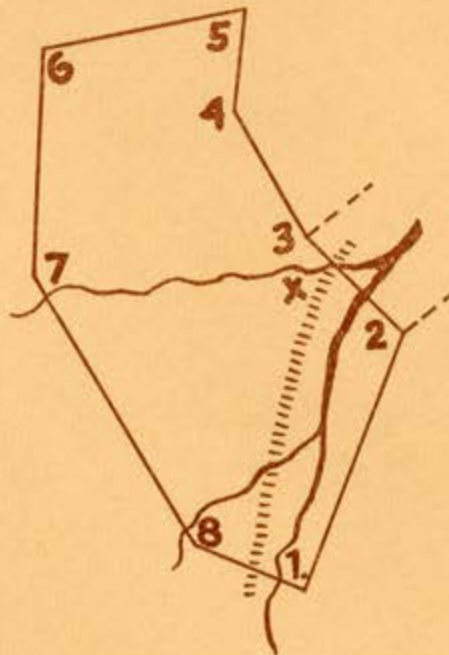
Under what terms Thomas Lincoln gained possession of this 238 acre farm we have not been able to discover. He was taxed for a portion of it at least, and was also made a defendant, and later a co-defendant, in a suit of ejectment brought against him. The most likely supposition is that George Lindsey assigned 238 acres to Thomas Lincoln for a money consideration and was to hold the deed until such a time as the payment would be completed. Before a deed had been made, however, the land was in litigation. Following is the boundary calls for the tract:

Knob Creek, 228 Acre Tract

1. Beginning with two sugar trees North 19 degrees, East 141 poles to a dogwood tree and ash tree corner to a 100 acre tract.
2. North 48 degrees, West 74 poles to a beech tree.
3. North 29 degrees, West 65 poles to a poplar tree on the east side of a hill.
4. North 58 poles to an ash tree.
5. South 76 degrees, West 105 poles to a white ash tree.
6. South 117 poles to a stake.
7. South 31 degrees, East 168 poles to a sugar tree.
8. South 70 degrees, East 54 poles to the beginning.

On the first day of January, 1815, a Bill of Ejectment was brought against Thomas Lincoln and nine of his neighbors who were occupying tracts of land within a ten thousand acre survey. The plaintiffs, who lived in Philadelphia were Abraham Sheridan, Thomas Stout, and Hannah Rhodes, heirs of Thomas Middleton, under whom they claimed a prior right to the property. Out of the nine defendants, Thomas Lincoln was selected as the one against whom litigation should be

taken first for a test case. In the bill of exceptions filed with this suit, it is apparent that Thomas Lincoln did not have a clear title to all this land as George Lindsey was made a co-defendant and is called the "Landlord of said Lincoln."



KNOB CREEK FARM

x—Site of cabin.

Numerals—Corners of survey noted in text.

River—Knob Creek.

Road—Old Cumberland Road, Louisville to Nashville.

Thomas Lincoln moved from the place to Indiana in the late fall of 1816, while the land was still in litigation and just before leaving he paid his lawyer for services rendered in the suit. The case continued in the courts until the June term, 1818, when a jury with Robert Bell as foreman brought in a verdict in favor of Lincoln and Lindsey for \$17.89½, the costs in the suit, and which also revoked the claim that had been brought against their property. Failing to get the plaintiffs' representative, Kennady, to pay the claim, Lincoln probably through his Kentucky attorney, brought suit against the original plaintiffs, May 17, 1819. In September, 1820, a verdict was rendered and I. W. Larue was foreman of the jury which found for Lincoln and his damages were placed

at \$21.36. This suit also dragged on until May, 1821, when an endorsement shows the Philadelphia defendants to be non-inhabitants. It is doubtful if Thomas Lincoln, then living in Indiana, ever was able to collect any of the expenditures. The story about his having sold the farm for several barrels of whiskey, while the title to the farm was in question, is undoubtedly pure fiction.

With the claim of Mr. Middleton's heirs disposed of, the changes in title to the Knob Creek farm can now be traced from the original patent to the present owner.

By virtue of a treasurer warrant No. 13319, James Love, on June 1, 1790, became the possessor of two hundred and thirty-eight acres of land on Knob Creek. He assigned this piece of property to George Lindsey on May 24, 1802. Lincoln probably acquired the property in May, 1811, but after the litigation over the title evidently it reverted to Lindsey.

Lindsey attempted to sell the property to John Price but it was again thrown into litigation and was finally sold by a court commissioner to William Bush.

Charles Boone later secured the property from Bush but the date on which the transaction took place has not been learned. In 1846, Boone sold three tracts of land to Nicholas Rapier, among them the Lincoln tract. Nicholas Rapier disposed of the large area of land including the Lincoln tract to Charles Rapier. John W. Crady purchased three hundred and eight acres including the Lincoln tract of two hundred and thirty-eight acres from Charles Rapier on March 23, 1911.

The present owner, Chester Howard, acquired the property from Crady and has built a log cabin on the traditional site of the Lincoln home.

This is now the only tract of land on which Abraham Lincoln lived for any considerable space of time which has not become in part at least, a national shrine. This was the playground of Lincoln and by far the most picturesque of all of the Lincoln homes. It is hoped that some day this farm, too, may become a national reservation.