



Ben Harrison Camp No. 356

Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War - Department of Indiana

Nancy Hanks Lincoln

Nancy Hanks Lincoln (February 5, 1784 – October 5, 1818) was the mother of U.S. President Abraham Lincoln (February 12, 1809 – April 15, 1865). Her marriage to Thomas Lincoln also produced a daughter, Sarah (February 10, 1807 – January 20, 1828), and a son, Thomas Jr. (died in infancy, 1812). When Nancy and Thomas had been married for just over 10 years, the family moved from Kentucky to Perry County, Indiana in 1816. Nancy Lincoln died from milk sickness at the Little Pigeon Creek Community in Spencer County when Abraham was nine years old.

On June 12, 1806, Hanks married Thomas Lincoln at Beechland, the home of Richard Berry, by Reverend Jesse Head. Nancy was brought to the home to work as a seamstress by her friend Polly Ewing Berry, the wife of Richard Berry Jr. since October 10, 1794. Polly was a friend of Nancy's from Mercer County, Kentucky and Richard Berry, Jr. was a good friend of Thomas Lincoln. Lincoln proposed to her in his childhood home at what is now Lincoln Homestead State Park or in the Francis Berry house in front of the fireplace.

Nancy's marriage bond was signed by Richard Berry, Jr. who identified himself as her guardian. Per a biographer, "The title had no legal significance, Berry having never been so appointed, and Nancy Hanks was then of age. But of him to call himself 'guardian' was a courtesy customary under such circumstances" [no father able to sign the marriage bond]. A record of their marriage license is held at the county courthouse.

The young family lived in what was then Hardin County, Kentucky (now LaRue). After 1811, on the Knob Creek Farm. Neighbors reported that Nancy Hanks Lincoln was "superior" to her husband, a mild yet strong personality who taught young Abraham his letters as well as the extraordinary sweetness and forbearance he was known for all his life. In 1816, the year that Indiana became the 19th state, the Lincoln family moved to Spencer County in southern Indiana and proceeded to homestead at Little Pigeon Creek Settlement (now Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial). (Source: Wikipedia)

In Fraternity, Charity, and Loyalty,

Jim Floyd, *Patriotic Instructor*

