

SAYS RECORD SHOWS LINCOLN A BAPTIST.

Kentucky Official Finds Abraham's Parents Enrolled in an Indiana Church.

HIS SISTER BURIED THERE

Thomas Lincoln Recorded in Little Pigeon Church Minutes as One of Its Pillars.

LINCOLN CITY, Ind., Oct. 30.—Rolling back the mists of a century and offering the deerskin-bound records of Little Pigeon Baptist Church, near here, as the missing link of Abraham Lincoln's religion. Thomas B. McGregor, Assistant Attorney General of the State of Kentucky, has given to America substantial evidence that Abraham Lincoln was reared in the simple faith of the "hard-shelled" Baptist church.

Much of the mystery of Lincoln's religion and that of his parents, for over a half century a mooted question, has been evaporated by the findings of Mr. McGregor in the little old deerskin book of Little Pigeon Church.

There is no record of Abraham Lincoln's affiliation with any church denomination, but Mr. McGregor's story of Thomas Lincoln, moderator and pillar of the little Baptist church, proves conclusively, Mr. McGregor says, that the Lincoln family were Baptists.

"Parents of Abraham Lincoln deserve a fairer estimate than has been allotted them by most of the biographers of Lincoln," said Mr. McGregor, "and the story, as told by the records that are still to be found in the archives of Little Pigeon Church, near Lincoln City, Spender County, Ind., of the devotion paid by the parents of Lincoln to Him who guided the lad of Pigeon Creek in the hour of the nation's travail, goes far to give to them their true estimate. In fact, they were well-to-do pioneers of their day, of sturdy ancestral stock; owned a farm, domestic animals, tools and a family Bible; neighborly, sacrificing and active church-going members.

Church Founded in 1816.

"Pigeon Creek Church was founded on June 8, 1816, the year that Thomas Lincoln and his family moved from Kentucky and settled on Little Pigeon Creek in what was then Warrick County, Indiana Territory. It was then, as now, the chief church in that vicinity. When the meeting house was built, its site was selected about a mile west of Thomas Lincoln's home, the church building today occupying practically the same place. When Lincoln's mother died she was buried between their home and the church, the graveyard not having been at that time started at the church; but when Lincoln's sister, Sarah Grisby, died, in 1828, she was buried at the church burying ground, where her grave is yet to be seen, marked by a rough stone.

"This church, with its continuous existence since 1816, has only two books containing its records and minutes; the first covering the period from 1816 to 1840. It is in this book that we find Abraham Lincoln's father, stepmother and sister were active members of the hard-shelled Baptist Church of Pigeon Creek, and this book, with its deerskin cover, the hair still remaining, not only reveals in its crude historic way the true religion of Lincoln's parents but gives us the best insight yet found to his own religious views.

"Thomas Lincoln and Nancy Hanks were married by a Methodist minister of the name of Jesse Head, but soon afterward they were united with one of the churches of the Baptist Licking-Locust Association of Regular Baptist Churches in Kentucky, and when Nancy Lincoln died in Indiana, Abraham, by his own efforts, had their Kentucky pastor, Elder David Elkins, come to their wilderness home and preach his mother's funeral sermon.

"After Thomas Lincoln had married Sally Bush Johnson he sent back to his Kentucky church and obtained his letter of fellowship and, as the minutes on June 1, 1823, show, he united with the Pigeon Creek church by this letter and his wife by experience. From that date until they moved to Illinois in 1830, their names appear frequently in the minutes of the church proceedings, Thomas being one of the pillars of the church, acting as moderator, on committees to investigate the conduct of brethren and sisters, and messenger to associations, bearing the letters of Pigeon Creek to her sister churches.

Record of Affiliation.

"The historic minute which records the affiliation of Thomas Lincoln and his wife with this little pioneer church follows:

June the 7, 1823.

The church met and after prayer proceeded to business.

1st, Inquired for fellowship.

2nd, Invited members of sister churches to seats with us.

3rd, Opened a dore for the reception of members.

4th, Received Brother Thomas Linkhon by letter and * * *

7th, Received Brother John Wire by Relation and Sister Linkhon and Thomas Carter by Experance.

"Thomas Lincoln was not in such poor circumstances but that he always donated to the needs of his church," said Mr. McGregor in offering the following copy of an agreement to build a new chimney on the meeting house:

"We, the undersigned, do agree one

with another to pay the several somes next our names in produce this Fall, to be delivered betwixt the first & 20 of December, the produce, as follows: Corn, wheat, whiskey, soft linnen wool or any other article, a material to do the work with, the produce will be delivered at William Barkers in good mercantile produce."

"Signed with other names is:

"Thomas Lincoln, white corn, manufactured, pounds, 24."

"Thus," continued Mr. McGregor,

"we have revealed to us the religion of Abraham Lincoln's parents, his sister Sarah and of himself. He was raised in the simple hard-shelled faith, which, in after years, never left him.

"We have no record of Thomas Lincoln or his wife ever uniting with any church after they moved to Illinois in 1830."