THE INDIANAPOLIS SUNDAY STAR - January 10, 1924

LIFE OF THE LINCOLNS WHILE LIVING IN COLES COUNTY, ILL.



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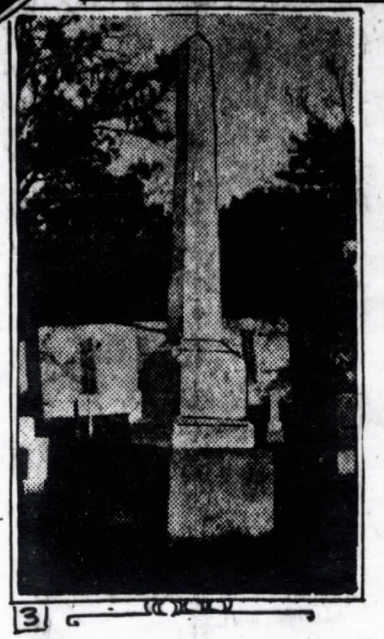

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(1) Monument in Charleston, Ill., indicating where Lincoln and Douglas held their fourth debate on Sept. 28, 1858. (2) House at Fifth and Jackson streets, Charleston, where reception was given for Lincoln just before his inauguration as President. (3) Grave of Thomas Lincoln, father of the President, in Gordon cemetery, ten miles south of Charleston.

IN the fall of 1831 there came to Coles county, Illinois, a poor and work-worn farmer, Thomas Lincoln, and his wife, Sarah Bush Johnston Lincoln. The couple had lived in Macon county, Illinois, but the life they had lived there was a continual round of hardships. It was at this time that their son, Abraham, decided to leave home and start life in the world alone.

Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln located in a district known as Goose-Nest Prairie, near the boundary line of Paradise and Pleasant Grove townships. Many other families had arrived before them and settled in this fertile section. The first work to be done by Mr. Lincoln was to build a cabin. The home life of the couple was exceedingly plain. They were content with the bare necessities of life.

Abraham became a lawyer. He often brought food and clothing to his parents. It was the poverty of the parents that stimulated him to do bigger things.

Farms Land for Couple.

A son of Mrs. Lincoln, by a former marriage, John Johnston, was called to the home of the couple. He was urged to take over the land and farm it. Thomas then built a cabin on another part of the tract of land and the couple lived in it until Mr. Lincoln died, Jan. 15,1851. They lived in Coles county two decades. Abraham was unable to be at the bedside of his father when death came.

The Lincolns were Baptists, but later became "Presbyterian-Baptists" as they were then called. Still later they left that group and joined the Christian church. They were members of the Christian church at the time of his death.

After the son was elected President he returned to Illinois to visit the grave of his father. He found the grave without a marker and had a monument made and erected over it. He was given an elaborte reception at the home of A. H. Chapman. The house in which the reception was held is still standing. Lincoln's mother lived with the Chapmans after the death of her husband.

The cabin in which Lincoln's parents lived is no longer standing in Coles county. Several years ago it was moved to the state Lincoln museum in Springfield. Farmers in the neighborhood in which the Lincolns lived gathered together a pile of rocks which marks the site on which the cabin stood.