

# LINCOLN FAMILY SETTLED IN BERKS

Public Ledger

Home Built in 1733 by President's Ancestor Is Still Used as Dwelling

OBJECTIVE OF TOURISTS  
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Reading, Oct. 2.—(AP)—A few miles east of Reading near the Philadelphia highway lies a low-roofed, thick-walled building once inhabited by ancestors of one of the world's most famous men.

Smoke still curls from its low squat chimney as it did nearly 200 years ago when slaves trod its floors; cows still graze in nearby pastures and a dog barks a greeting from the doorway just as another used to do when its owner walked up the path at the end of a day's work.

It is the home of Mordecai Lincoln, great-great-grandfather of Abraham Lincoln whose ancestors lived in Berks County near Reading for three generations. Little did they know those Negro slaves whose barefeet wore down the thresholds of the Lincoln homestead—that they worked for a man whose descendant would one day liberate their own progeny.

Today the building is owned by John B. Hoffman, a Socialist, who lives there, engaged in general farming and takes an active part in promulgating doctrines of Socialism by holding party meetings there twice a month.

Mordecai Lincoln migrated to Pennsylvania from New Jersey where he had engaged in the iron business. He first settled in Chester County where he continued the same line of work but in a short time moved to Berks County and built the home which still nestles in the hills eight miles from Reading.

Originally the gable end of the building contained a stone with the inscription "M. L. 1733," indicating the probable date of its erection.

During his Berks residence, the emancipator's ancestor was a justice of the peace and he also directed the laying out of the road from the Tulpehocken region to Olney, considered as one of the most famous roads of Colonial times. Historians say this road was a determining factor in the location of Reading on its present site.

John Lincoln, one of Mordecai's sons, was a tax collector of the county for the King of England and one of John Lincoln's sons, named Abraham, moved to Virginia with his father in 1765. Abraham's adventurous spirits took him further west where he was killed by Indians in 1786 on the borders of Kentucky and Tennessee. It was one of Abraham's sons—Thomas—who became the father of the Nation's President.

An interesting fact of Lincoln history in Berks County is the vari-

ation in the spelling of the last name. Pennsylvania Dutch neighbors of the family spelled it "Lincoln, Linckorn, Lincon and Lincoln." Mordecai Lincoln's name appears both as "Lincoln" and "Lincoln."

Thomas Lincoln, a son of Mordecai, the original settler in Pennsylvania, aspired to public office and was elected coroner, subsequently Sheriff and while serving in this capacity was called upon to hang a woman—Elizabeth Crowl—who had been convicted of infanticide. She was one of only three women ever executed in Berks County.

Historians relate that many of the Lincolns who lived in the old Berks County homestead possessed physical characteristics which were strikingly similar to the well-known features of their illustrious descendant—the same height and angularity, prominent nose and ears, overhanging eyebrows and sturdy chin.

Although that old building is still a private home it is visited annually by many tourists.

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Lincoln family  
BIOGRAPHY - Lincoln Mordecai