Rineyville Ky

May 27--91

H. C. Whitney Esqr

Eglantine Cottage Beachmont Mass

Dear Sir:

I have just arrived here behind time and find your favor of the 9th awaiting me which I hadten to answer.

I think I have heretofore given you about all I know certain about the Lincoln family; I am not able too tell you just where, in N C, Abraham Lincoln married Mary Shipley, and dont think I can ascertain as I am the oldest living desendent of that branch of the Lincoln family that was raised here and the only person now living in full possession, with perfect memory of all the traditionary history of the family here in Ky and further back.

In regard to the illegitimacy Nancy Hanks spoken of by you it is all newes to me and I dont believe a word of it, but still I have no means of finding out. My information has always been that Nancy Hanks mother was a Bery and she married a Hanks who was the father of Nancy, he died in Virginia and his widow married Sparrow and died and Richard Bery raised Nancy. I had an uncle John N. Hill who died in this neighborhood eight years ago at the age of a hundred years, he was one of the most intelligent and best posted men in Ky History I ever knew in my life and this was his version of the relationship as well as that of my grand-father Brumfield and grandmother Nancy Lincoln Brumfield

Uncle John Hill was not related to the Lincoln family and of course had nothing to cover up or conceal, he lived in Washington County in his young days right by the side of the Lincoln and Bery families and was at the weading when Thomas Lincoln and Nancy Hanks were married.

Digital Image, 2011, The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library

The Hill and Lincoln families were prominent families in Washington Co and very intimate and it looks strange to me that if Nancy Hanks was illegitimate that Uncle Hill did not know something about it.

When Lincoln was nominated for president there were quite a number of old men living in this neighborhood, among the rest Old Mr. Riney who lived only two miles from where I am now writing to whom the president went to school in this (Hardin) County, these old men all knew the Lincoln and Bery families and took great delight in rehersing the many questions that have since been of so much importance to historians and it is very indeed that none of them ever even hinted that Nancy Hanks, a woman they all knew, was out of wedlock, they all spoke of her as a very bright intelligent woman and very popular in her neighborhood.

These old men always told me that my uncle Mordecai Lincoln was a very smart man and was exceeding popular and was but was a sporting man and somewhat recless, they also told me that uncle Thomas (father the president) had as they termed it good strong hors sense and was a very quiet sort of a man, he was a cabinet maker which at that day was a good trade as all furniture was then made by hand, he was a thrifty man when he lived in the county, he owned a farm and lived on it when Abraham was born and aferwards moved to Elizabethtown and bought property and lived there until he sold both farm and town property and moved to Spencer Co Ind.

When Mr. Lincoln was nominated for president it was reported and published that he was an illegitimate child and was the son of Abraham Enlow who was then living, it was also said that Thomas Lincoln and Nancy Hanks were never married but none of these reports started here but were all cleared up here to the entire satisfaction of every body, we had the marriage certificate and cerifyed copy of the licens published

Digital Image, 2011, The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library.

stands. The Creek then ran into the river much lower down than now and the fort was near Main and first Streets which was then the mouth of the Creek, it has been turned into the River above and built over since my recollection.

I cant tell you just what part of North Carolina my ancesters lived in, but understand it to be in the North part of the state, they first went from Virginia down there and lived there a while and then came to Ky. The newspaper article stating that my great grandfather Lincoln was killed on Lincolns Run is altogether wrong, he was killed at Beargrass fort as I got it directly from my Grand mother who was in the fort at the time and knew what she was taking about.

While the elder Abraham lived in the fort he entered 500 acres of land on Floyds Fork of Salt River in what is now Bullett Vounty Ky after his death Mordecai being the oldest son hired all the land under the Virginia law which then governed Ky and the family after Indian hostilities had ceased moved to Washington County Ky and settled near Springfield an a small Creek which took the name of Lincolns Run; they lived there until the children were all married, then my great-grand mother Mary Shipley Lincoln moved with my Grand father ~~William~~ Wm Brumfield who married her daughter Nancy, to Hardin County Ky and lived the balance of her long life with him and died when I was a good big boy at the age of 110 years and is buried at Old Mill Creek burrying ground.

Now as to Nancy Hanks I have always understood she was an orphan girl and raised by Richard Bery, her uncle, I always understood her mothers name was Bery, Richard Bery married a Shipley a sister to my great-grand mother Lincoln My family never knew anything about Nancy Hanks being illegitimate. The Abraham Lincoln who married Hannah Winters was a desendent of Samuel Lincoln as you will see the names Abraham

Digital Image, 2011, The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library.

Rineyville, Ky.

June 3rd, 1892.

H. C. Whitney, Esqr.,

Eglantine College,

Beachmont, Mass.

Dear Sir:

I have recently spent a few days in Elizabethtown, the old Ky. home of Uncle Thomas Lincoln, while there I had a long talk with my old friend Hon. S. H. Bush who is a nephew to President Lincoln's stepmother; he told me that when Uncle Thomas came back after the death of his first wife, Nancy Hanks, and proposed marriage to his aunt who was then a widow Johnson she told him she would be perfectly willing to marry him as she had known him a long time and felt that the marriage would be congenial and happy, but it would be impossible for her to even think of marrying and leaving the state as she was considerably in debt and she could not think of leaving the state while in debt. Uncle Thomas told her that need make no difference as he had plenty of money and would take care of her financial affairs, and when he had ascertained the amount of her indebtedness and the names of the parties to whom the money was due he went around and redeemed all her paper and presented to her and told her when she showed so much honor about debts he was more fully satisfied than ever that she would make him a good wife; she said as he had displayed so much generosity in her behalf she was willing then to marry and go with him to Spencer Co., Ind.

This second wife of Thomas Lincoln has a vast relationship living in this (Handin) County among them the nephew from whom the above was obtained, also a niece, Mrs. M. H. Cofer whose husband died a few years ago and was at the time of his death Chief Justice of

Digital Image, 2011, The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library.