

# MY ANGEL MOTHER

## (A Mother's Day Meditation)

*"All that I am, or ever hope to be, I owe to my angel mother."* - Abraham Lincoln

Honest Abe spoke the truth! Though his contact with his mother was very brief, she obviously had a profound influence upon his life. Someone summed up this truth by saying: "The hand that rocks the cradle, rules the world. Please consider:

**Nancy Hanks Lincoln**, the mother of Abraham Lincoln, was born in Hampshire County, Virginia on Feb. 5, 1784. She was an excellent seamstress and sewed everything from wedding dresses to funeral attire. She was known for her "work ethic, neatness, cheerfulness, and intelligence". She was also said to be deeply religious.

Nancy married a carpenter named Thomas Lincoln on June 12, 1806. They had three children. Sarah, born Feb. 10, 1807, Abraham, born Feb. 12, 1809, and Thomas, who died in infancy was born in 1811. Nancy read to her children even day from their family Bible.

In 1818 Nancy became ill with "milk sickness". This is a disease contracted by drinking milk from cows which have grazed on poisonous white snakeroot. As death drew near she called her children to her bedside and asked that they be good and kind to their father, to each other, and to the world. She died on Oct. 5, 1818. Abe was only nine years old at the time.

**Thomas Lincoln**, the father of Abraham Lincoln, was born January 6, 1778 in Rockingham County, Virginia. He moved to Hardin County, Kentucky, in 1802 and purchased a 238 acre farm the next year. He was said to be a responsible citizen who served as a jury member, a petitioner for a road, and guard for county prisoners. He taught many things to his son over the course of his life and died Jan. 17, 1851.

In summary:

- Nancy Lincoln died at 34 and had only 9 years to influence her son.
- Thomas died at 73 and had almost 42 years to influence his son.
- No contest! The mother's influence was greater.

Why?

It was Thomas Lincoln who cut down the trees and built the cabin. It was Thomas who protected the family from danger, and put food on the table. It was Thomas that gave stability to the household and was a key component to their survival. Our English word "husband" comes from a compound of two Anglo-Saxon words - "house" and "band". Touche! It is the husband who holds the household together. Without Thomas their household would probably have been torn apart. Why didn't Abe give his father more credit for having a positive influence on his life?

In traditional logic an "axiom" is a proposition that is not proved or demonstrated but considered to be self-evident. For some reason, it seems axiomatic that a mother is more appreciated than a father. Jacob, for example, listened to his mother and secured the blessing that rightfully belonged to his brother (Gen. 27). Solomon escaped execution and became king because he followed the instructions of his mother (1 Kings 1). Timothy's faith dwelt first in his grandmother Lois, and his mother Eunice (2 Tim. 1:5). In fact, the Bible consistently mentions the name of a king in association with his mother: (viz. Jeroboam - Zerual, Rehoboam - Naamah, Abijam - Maacha, Jehosophat - Azubah, Ahaziah - Athaliah, Jehoash - Zibiah, Amaziah - Jehoaddan, Azariah - Jeholiah, Jotham - Jerusha, Hezekiah - Abi, Manasseh - Hephzibah, etc.)

Public relations veteran Kristi Hughes points out that in 2008 Americans spent \$5.9 billion more on Mother's Day than on Father's Day. While we may not be to explain all the reasons for this disparity, successful retailers accept this as a fact of life.

It is, perhaps, even more important for the rest of us to also recognize this reality. Almost everyone looks upon his mother with the same wonder and admiration as did Abraham Lincoln. I certainly had an "angel mother" and most of you did too! Our mother's have shaped and tinted our lives in ways too numerous to mention. On this Mother's Day, and also on every other day, let us remember that all we are or ever hope to be we also owe to our angel mothers.