



Lincoln Lore

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THE LINCOLN COUNTRY OF KENTUCKY

Over a period of many years *Lincoln Lore* has featured in different issues of the bulletin the historic sites, monuments, statues, libraries and museums connected with the Lincoln family in Kentucky, Indiana, Illinois and Washington, D. C., as well as those associated with the president's ancestors in Massachusetts, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Virginia.

Due to the fact that many of the early issues of *Lincoln Lore* which featured these historic places are out of print, and as a result of the discovery or re-development of additional historic Lincoln sites and the establishment of Lincoln libraries and museums, this issue is a new compilation of information pertaining to the Lincoln country of Kentucky.

Most of the Kentucky sites have been appropriately marked and adequately protected. Other sites have been inadequately marked or not marked at all. Some of the more obscure sites are located on private property accessible only by country roads. Lincoln history, it appears, was sometimes made off the beaten paths.

Those who are interested in a study of the Kentucky Lincolns will note that one important site is not mentioned in this compilation; namely, the location of the Thomas Lincoln cabin home in Elizabethtown. In this village Thomas Lincoln and Nancy Hanks set up house-keeping and their first child, Sarah, Abraham Lincoln's only sister, was born on February 10, 1807. Samuel Haycraft, Jr., in his history of Elizabethtown, written in 1869, stated that Thomas Lincoln erected a dwelling in Elizabethtown which was then still standing. All efforts to definitely locate the site, through documentary records, have ended in failure.

One of the finest private collections of Lincolniana in Kentucky, or in any other state for that matter, is the property of William H. Townsend, a Lexington attorney. This collection consists of hundreds of original letters, documents, manuscripts, photographs, lithographs, rare books, relics and oil paintings. This original material is

supplemented with a fine working library and its owner is considered one of the leading Lincoln authors and is a recognized authority on the subject. The Townsend collection is particularly outstanding for its many Mary Todd Lincoln letters and material concerning the Helms, Clays and other collateral and associate families. One outstanding item in the Townsend collection is an oil painting of Robert Smith Todd by Matthew H. Jouett. This major collection has not been treated in this compilation because it is privately owned and is not on exhibit.

All of the Lincoln sites, monuments, statues, libraries and museums of Kentucky are arranged alphabetically under counties. Consequently, this method of arrangement does not take into account the importance of the site, the chronology of events or the geographical location. However, enough information is given regarding each place to enable one to determine their geographical location by the use of road maps.

The editor is indebted to several people who assisted in the compilation of this information, namely: William H. Townsend, Lexington; J. Winston Coleman, Jr., Lexington; Sam W. Moore, Greensburg; Richard H. Hill, Louisville; John W. Muir, Bardstown; Mildred Hines, Berea; Eugenia Blackburn, Frankfort; W. A. Wentworth, Frankfort; Hugh O. Potter, Owensboro; Howard E. Gardner, Hodgenville; Nellie B. Hoke, Elizabethtown; Mary E. Carver, Louisville; Ernest L. Wright, Jr.; Hodgenville; Joe Gafford, Elizabethtown; Ross R. Hopkins, Hodgenville; Fred Howard, Hodgenville; Claude Williams, Hodgenville; and Louis A. Warren, Fort Wayne, Indiana.

BELL COUNTY

Cumberland Gap (The Gateway to the West)

Cumberland Gap, one of America's historic gateways, is a gigantic notch in the last tier of barrier mountains westward where Kentucky, Virginia and Tennessee now join. The Lincolns, the Hankses and the Todds were among the brave pioneer families who trudged through this majestic mountain pass enroute to the Kentucky country. Thomas Lincoln with his family passed through the gap as a child in 1782 and Nancy Hanks, a babe in arms, migrated with her family through this pass at a later but undetermined date. There are no markers attesting to these facts. Cumberland Gap, now a National Historical Park, is located on highway U. S. 25E about two miles south of Middleboro. About two miles south of the Cumberland Gap National Historical Park at Harrogate, Tennessee, is Lincoln Memorial University (chartered 1897) named in honor of the sixteenth president. Here is located one of the major collections of Lincolniana in the nation.

FAYETTE COUNTY

Farm of Thomas Lincoln (Uncle of Abraham Lincoln's Father)

Thomas Lincoln, the younger brother of Captain Abraham Lincoln, purchased in 1792 the 290 acre farm of Lewis Craig on the south fork of Elkhorn Creek. This farm, located five miles from the town of Lexington, was of the richest soil and was one of the most inviting spots in the Bluegrass region. Despite the Bluegrass farm, a comfortable home, slaves and a stillhouse, this great uncle of the sixteenth president suffered violent



From the Lincoln National Life Foundation
Entrance gate to the Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historic site.

domestic conflicts with his wife and family and died in obscurity in the year 1820. Many members of his family eventually left Kentucky and were never acquainted with their distinguished kinsman. The Thomas Lincoln farm is located on highway 68 at the settlement of South Elkhorn, five miles south of Lexington, on the Lexington-Harrodsburg Pike.

Mary Todd's Birthplace (Lexington)

A Kentucky highway marker at 501 West Short Street calls attention to Mary Todd's birthplace with the following statement: "On this site Mary Todd, wife of Abraham Lincoln was born December 13, 1818 and here spent her childhood." The nine room residence, with an ell in the rear, was erected by Robert S. Todd about 1813, on a lot belonging to the Major Robert Parker estate, adjoining his mother-in-law's place on the east (Grandma Parker's house is still standing). The building was a two-story, red brick house fronting on West Short Street. In this house Robert S. Todd and Eliza Parker went to housekeeping and here most of their seven children were born. The old house was later acquired by the St. Paul Catholic Church as a residence for the priest. For a good many years Father Barry, undoubtedly the most outstanding of all the Lexington Catholic priests, lived here until the old house was torn down in the mid 1880's. The present rectory was built upon the birthplace site. The brick in the old Todd home, together with much of the woodwork, and several mantel pieces and perhaps the stairway were used to build the superintendent's lodge at the entrance to the Calvary Catholic Cemetery on West Main Street, just opposite the Lexington Cemetery.

Home of Mary Todd—1832 to 1839 (Lexington)

In early November, 1847, congressman-elect Lincoln, his wife and two children visited the home of his father-in-law, Robert Smith Todd, in Lexington enroute to Washington, D. C., for the opening session of Congress. The house located at 574 West Main Street is today privately owned by Sterling D. Coke and is used as Republican Headquarters. The old house has an ell and with it there are eight or nine rooms. There are two signs identifying the Mary Todd Lincoln house. One is a bronze plaque on the front of the building, and the other is a highway marker on a steel pipe set into the sidewalk. The house is not open to visitors. The November, 1847 Lexington visit was not Lincoln's first. On August 25, 1841, with Joshua Fry Speed, Lincoln visited Lexington to see Speed's fiancée. Lincoln's third visit to Lexington was made with his family during the week of October 18, 1849. Lincoln, undoubtedly, visited in other Todd homes in or around Lexington. "Ellerslie" (home of General Robert Todd and grandfather of Mrs. Lincoln), which was razed in 1947, stood about one and one-half miles east of Lexington, on the Richmond Pike, opposite the Lexington Water Company's No. 1 reservoir. "Buena Vista" (summer home of Robert S. Todd), which was razed in 1947 or 1948 was located eighteen miles from Lexington, on the Leestown Pike in Franklin County.

Ward's Academy (Lexington)

When Mary Todd was about eight years old she entered the academy of Dr. John Ward, which was located in a large two-story building (still standing) on the southwest corner of Market and Second Streets. The Rev. John Ward, was the rector of Christ Episcopal Church. At fourteen years of age Mary Todd finished the preparatory course at Dr. Ward's and was ready to enter the select boarding school of Madame Victorie LeClere Mentelle. The Mentelle school for girls was located on a rolling tract of woodland opposite "Ashland" on the Richmond Pike. Mary Todd was enrolled for four years in this institution. Ward's Academy is better known as Dr. Ridgely's House. It is a brick house, erected around 1800-1805. Dr. Frederick Ridgely was an early member of the Transylvania Medical Faculty and one of the founders of the Lexington Public Library. In recent years the building was remodeled and fitted as a medical clinic. Since December, 1958, the Christian Churches of Kentucky have made it their headquarters. There is no marker on or near the building. A small bronze plate on the front of the building states that it was the early home of Dr. Ridgely.

FRANKLIN COUNTY

Lincoln Statue (Frankfort)

On November 8, 1911, a standing Lincoln statue depicting "The President" by Adolph A. Weinman was unveiled in the rotunda of the State House of Kentucky at Frankfort. It was presented to the state by J. B. Speed of Louisville and President William Howard Taft gave the dedicatory address.

Old State House Museum (Kentucky State Historical Society)

The Lincoln material in the Old State House Museum in Frankfort is extremely limited. The collection consists of the fragmented breech of the cannon that was fired and exploded in Morganfield in 1840, when Lincoln delivered a campaign speech for William Henry Harrison, curios, photographs, Currier & Ives prints and oil portraits. The outstanding item of the collection is a Lincoln portrait by Charles Sneed Williams.

GREEN COUNTY

Green County Court House (Greensburg)

Lincoln land transactions are recorded in the Green County Court House (the oldest court house west of the Alleghanies—built 1786). One such item dated September 5, 1798, indicates that one Thomas Lincoln entered a land grant of 100 acres of second rate land by virtue of his having improved the same agreeably to an act of the Assembly entitled, "An act for encouraging and granting relief to settlers" and etc. Warrant No. 1044 describes the land on the waters of Mathis Creek. Other court records pertain to many of Lincoln's contemporaries who settled in Sangamon County, Illinois.

Site of Nathaniel Owens Home

The eight-room brick house of Nathaniel Owens, the first high-sheriff of Green County and father of Mary Owens, Lincoln's New Salem, Illinois, sweetheart, was built in 1797. It was razed in 1959. In this home was held the school known as "Brush Creek Academy" where the Owens children and Mentor Graham (Lincoln's so-called tutor) received their formal education. The site is located between Hodgenville and Greensburg, one mile south of the community called Allendale and a half mile east of Kentucky highway 61. The site is approximately eight miles north of Greensburg.

School Where Mentor Graham Taught (Greensburg)

The original Greensburg School house where Mentor Graham (Lincoln's tutor) taught from 1818 to 1823 is believed to be a part of the building in which Monroe Shreves now lives. It is located two city blocks directly west of the public square of Greensburg.

HANCOCK COUNTY

Squire Samuel W. Pate Home

Lincoln's first encounter with Kentucky law was near Lewisport at the home of Samuel W. Pate. The sixteen-year-old Lincoln, then a resident of Indiana operated a ferry boat on the Ohio River without a license. His competitors, John T. and Len Dill, seized him and brought him before the Justice of the Peace. After consulting the statutes, Lincoln was released by Squire Pate from the charge. The defendant had never ferried passengers across the Ohio River—only to the middle of the stream where they boarded steamboats. There is no documentary evidence attesting to this incident in Lincoln's life. The site is not marked. The Pate farm is owned by Eli Gregory. The home is located on highway 334 about fourteen miles from Hawesville.

Thompson's Ferry Site

Hugh Thompson's ferry opposite Troy, Indiana, was the point on the Ohio River where the Lincoln family left Kentucky soil for Indiana. This crossing of the Ohio was in the late fall of 1816. Thomas Lincoln's family at that time consisted of his wife, and two children, Sarah and Abraham. A marker attesting to these facts of the Lincoln migration would be most appropriate.

HARDIN COUNTY

Mill Creek Farm

On September 2, 1803, Thomas Lincoln purchased a 238 acre farm on Mill Creek. The purchase price was 118 pounds (current money of Virginia). After this purchase Lincoln's father resided from time to time on the



From the Lincoln National Life Foundation

The birthplace memorial building in which is enshrined the traditional Lincoln cabin.

farm two or three years before his marriage to Nancy Hanks. In fact, it appears that Thomas and Nancy resided on the Mill Creek farm after their marriage until the bridegroom could complete a cabin in Elizabethtown. The original Mill Creek cabin is no longer in existence but its location is established and some of the original foundation and chimney stones may have been preserved. On October 27, 1814 Lincoln sold the Mill Creek farm of 200 acres (a mistake was made in a deed call by either the surveyor or county court clerk) for 100 pounds. The Mill Creek farm, now broken up into several tracts, is located on highway 434, about six miles north of Elizabethtown.

Mill Creek Cemetery

The widow of the president's paternal grandfather, Bathsheba Lincoln died while residing at the home of her daughter, Nancy Lincoln Brumfield and is buried in the Mill Creek Cemetery. Her grave has been identified by descendants of Mrs. Brumfield, whose burial is marked with a grave stone properly inscribed. The small stone on the grave of the widow Lincoln bears no inscription. On May 16, 1960, the State of Illinois presented to the Hardin County Historical Society for the people of the Commonwealth of Kentucky an imposing memorial marker honoring Bathsheba Lincoln. This cemetery located twelve miles north of Elizabethtown (route no. 31W) is now within the Fort Knox Military Reservation. Permission to visit the cemetery should be secured from the military authorities.

Hardin County Court House (Elizabethtown)

The Hardin County Court House located in the center of the public square at Elizabethtown is a repository for many court documents relative to the Lincoln family. Some of the early documents bearing the signature of Thomas Lincoln, the father of the sixteenth president are on exhibit in the county clerk's office. These records are the chief Kentucky source of documentary Lincolniana.

Haycraft's Mill and Raceway Site (Elizabethtown)

When Thomas Lincoln was old enough to work he left his family, and his first job of any importance, after enlisting in an expedition to fight the Indians, was the building of a mill and raceway in Elizabethtown for Samuel Haycraft, Sr. Records indicate that young Lincoln was in Hardin County as early as July, 1796 and was earning three shillings a day at the mill-site. The incomplete records of Haycraft indicate that the minimum sum received for this labor was twenty-six (Virginia) pounds. For many years that portion of Central Avenue leading off directly from Elizabethtown's main thoroughfare (highway 31W) was called Race Street. An appropriate marker in the vicinity of Valley Creek and Central Avenue (Race Street) giving the information pertaining to Thomas Lincoln's labor would reflect credit to Lincoln's father.

Patton House Site (Elizabethtown)

The Samuel Patton house in Elizabethtown, in which the father of the president married Sarah Bush Johnston on December 2, 1819 was razed in 1922 and a large brick garage building was erected upon the site. The new building known as Marion's Garage, located on North Main Street (just off the public square) is appropriately marked with a bronze tablet. The house in the year 1819 belonged to the Hon. Benjamin Chapeze, a distinguished lawyer and member of the Elizabethtown bar, who was likely residing there with his family at the time of the Lincoln-Johnston nuptials.

Site of Sarah Bush Johnston Cabin (Elizabethtown)

Lincoln's step-mother, the widow of Daniel Johnston (married Thomas Lincoln on December 2, 1819) in 1818 purchased from Samuel Haycraft a small plot of land, just over the Haycraft line (the property west of the line was developed by Andrew Hynes) which was then outside the city limits of Elizabethtown. The deed to this lot is recorded in Deed Book G., page 213 in the files of the Hardin County Court. The price paid for the tract was \$25. This lot had a small cabin erected upon it in which she lived. While living in this home she accepted the marriage proposal of Thomas Lincoln. While residing in Indiana in the year 1829, Sarah disposed of her Elizabethtown property by sale to Thomas J. Wathen (Deed Book L. page 219) for the sum of \$125. This transaction was her last contact with the community of her birth. The site of the cabin was in the rear of lot 26 on Main Street between Poplar Street and Dixie Avenue (highway 31W). No marker has ever been erected to identify this site.

Grave of Ben Hardin Helm (Elizabethtown)

Confederate General Ben Hardin Helm, the son of Kentucky governor, John Larue Helm and brother-in-law of Abraham Lincoln (he married Emily Todd, a half-sister of Mrs. Lincoln) lies buried in an Elizabethtown cemetery. On September 20, 1863 Brigadier General Helm, Commander of the Orphan Brigade, fell mortally wounded on the battlefield of Chickamauga. He was buried in Atlanta but on September 19, 1884 his remains were reinterred in the family burying ground at the Helm place, about one mile north of the Elizabethtown public square on highway 31W. Helm was born at "Edgewood" the home of Senator Ben Hardin, his maternal grandfather, located at the head of Fifth Street in Bardstown.

JEFFERSON COUNTY

Jefferson County Court House (Louisville)

The Jefferson County Court House located between Fifth and Sixth and Jefferson and Market Streets is a repository for many court documents relative to the land holdings of Captain Abraham Lincoln, the grandfather of the sixteenth president.



From the Lincoln National Life Foundation

The traditional Lincoln cabin enshrined within the memorial building.

Long Run Cemetery

The Long Run Baptist Church burial ground which was once within Captain Abraham Lincoln's 400 acre tract contains the unmarked remains of the president's grandfather. Only the foundation of the original church remains. Jefferson County has purchased the Long Run ruins (third church burned December 24, 1960) and will preserve them as a historic shrine. The site is located about eighteen miles from Louisville where the Louisville-Lexington Road crosses the stream known as Long Run. A highway marker located at the point where the Long Run Road enters U. S. highway 60 bears the following inscription: "Two miles northeast of here Abraham Lincoln, grandfather of the President, was massacred by Indians in May, 1786. Long Run Baptist Church, standing on the Lincoln land grant, marks the traditional site of the pioneer's grave." Recent excavations have revealed that Captain Abraham Lincoln's remains were not interred under the Long Run Baptist Church building.

Site of Hughes Station

The site of Hughes Station is important in the Lincoln story as the president's grandfather was killed by the Indians near that settlement in 1786. This fort was located adjacent to the Long Run Cemetery where Captain Abraham Lincoln was buried. The site of Captain Lincoln's cabin and spring in the vicinity of Hughes Station has been located, however, because of the danger of Indian attack it is believed that the Lincoln family resided in the fort. A marker at this site would be of interest to Kentucky historians as well as those who delve into the facts of Lincoln's life.

Farmington (Louisville)

In the month of August, 1841, Lincoln visited his friend, Joshua Fry Speed, and spent several days with him. "Farmington," the plantation home of John and Lucy Speed, has been restored by the Historic Homes Foundation, Inc., and the guest room where Lincoln stayed has been identified. The house was built in 1810 from plans drawn by Thomas Jefferson, and it was formerly opened to the public in April, 1959. This was also the home of James Speed, who served as attorney-general in Lincoln's cabinet. "Farmington" is open every day except Mondays, Christmas and New Year's Day. The hours are from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Sunday 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. "Farmington" is located just off the intersection of the Bardstown Road with the Watterson Expressway.

Lincoln Statue (Louisville)

The replica heroic bronze statue of Lincoln which might be called "The Candidate" by George Gray Barnard was unveiled October 26, 1922 and stands on the west side of the Louisville Free Public Library. The original statue stands in Lytle Park, East Fourth Street, Cincinnati, Ohio. It was unveiled on March 31, 1917. A replica of the same statue is also located in Platt Field Park in Manchester, England. It was dedicated in the fall of 1919. When this statue was first unveiled it created a bitter controversy and it was called by many critics "a calamity in bronze." It was the sculptor's idea "to depict a humble man of the soil, the worker and the thinker as well as the soulful Lincoln."

The J. B. Speed Art Museum (Louisville)

Two major Lincoln items are on display in the J. B. Speed Art Museum; namely, a Thomas Lincoln corner cupboard and an inscribed photograph. The cupboard was acquired through J. O. Dever of Summit, Hardin County, Kentucky, whose family owned it for something like a century or more. Various affidavits certify the authenticity of the piece. It is made of black walnut and put together with wooden pegs. Inside the upper part of the hutch appears the initials T. L. and the date 1814. The photograph of Abraham Lincoln is inscribed to Mrs. Lucy G. Speed, the mother of Joshua F. Speed whom Lincoln visited in August and September, 1841. The inscription follows: "For Mrs. Lucy G. Speed, from whose pious hand I accepted the present of an Oxford Bible twenty years ago. A. Lincoln. Washington, D. C. October 3, 1861." Other items include miscellaneous Lincoln relics, statuary, letters and manuscripts, and the 1862 oil painting of Lincoln by Nicola Marschall. An excellent oil

portrait of Lincoln's Attorney General, James Speed by Benoni Irwin (1840-1896) is also on exhibit. The museum is open to the public from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. weekdays and from 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Sundays. It is closed on Mondays and every day during the months of August and September. The museum is located at 2035 South Third Street.

LARUE COUNTY

Larue County Court House (Hodgenville)

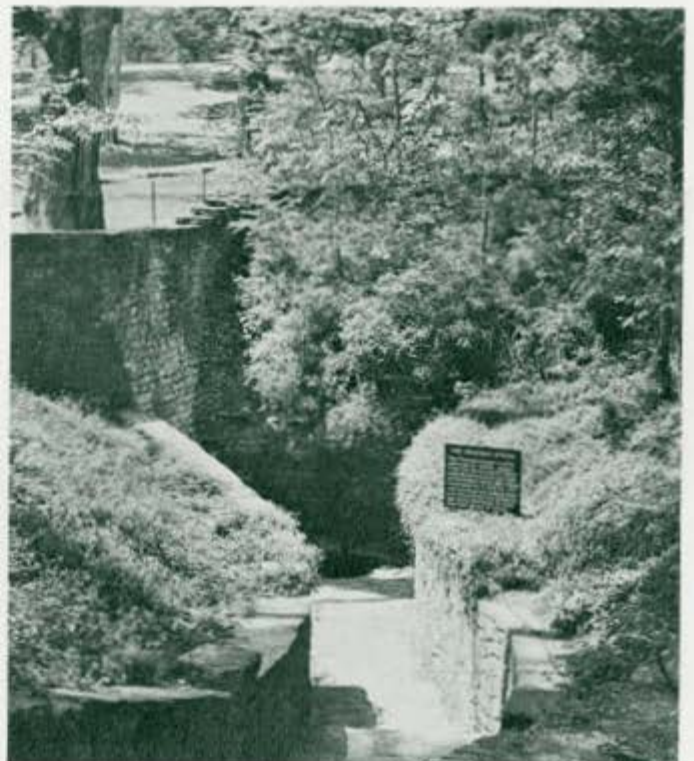
In 1843 Larue County was formed out of a part of Hardin County and all the land transactions after that date relative to the Sinking Spring (birthplace) and Knob Creek farms are on record in this court house. The land records relative to the Sinking Spring farm have been invaluable to the National Park Service in establishing the boundaries of the original Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historic Site.

Lincoln Statue (Hodgenville)

In the public square of the county seat town of Hodgenville is the seated statue of President Lincoln by Adolph A. Weinman. It was financed by Hodgenville and Larue County citizens with the help of Robert Lincoln, the president's oldest son. The major portion of the cost, however, was obtained through appropriations made by the General Assembly of Kentucky and by Congress. The statue was unveiled on May 31, 1909. A replica of this bronze statue stands before the Administration Building, on the campus of the University of Wisconsin, at Madison. It was dedicated on June 24, 1919.

Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historic Site

Thomas Lincoln purchased the Sinking Spring farm located on the South Fork of Nolin River on December 12, 1808. He paid \$200 for the 300 acre (an 1837 survey revealed 348½ acres) tract. One hundred sixteen and one-half acres of this land (nearly 100 acres of which were included in the original Lincoln farm) comprises the present Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historic Site. On September 8, 1959, the name of the park was changed to Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historic Site. This area contains the memorial building, the site of the traditional Lincoln birthplace, the sinking spring and the ancient boundary oak tree. This farm was deeded to the United States Government in 1916 by the Lincoln Farm Association and since 1933 has been administered by the National Park Service of the



From the Lincoln National Life Foundation
The sinking spring on the Lincoln birthplace farm located in close proximity to the boundary oak tree.

Department of the Interior. The Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historic Site is located approximately three miles south of Hodgenville on U.S. highways 31E and 61.

Reception Center (Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historic Site)

A reception center in the Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historic Site was constructed in 1959 and it contains maps, charts, dioramas, and relics pertaining to the Lincoln birthplace farm. A lecture room is also provided with a motion picture projection of the pertinent facts pertaining to this historic site. The most valuable relic on display is the Thomas Lincoln family Bible.

The Birthplace Memorial Building

The memorial building housing the Lincoln cabin which is situated on the 116½ acre tract which now comprises the Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historic Site was designed by John Russell Pope and built of Connecticut pink granite and Tennessee marble. It was constructed by the Lincoln Farm Association in the years 1909-1911 through funds raised by popular subscription. The cornerstone of the building was laid by President Theodore Roosevelt on February 12, 1909. The chief address at the dedication of the building was delivered by President William Howard Taft on November 9, 1911. When the park with all its improvements was deeded to the United States, President Woodrow Wilson made the acceptance speech, in behalf of the government and of the people of the United States on Labor Day, 1916.

The Birthplace Cabin

The log cabin in the memorial building situated in the Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historic Site is a traditional structure. It is impossible to say with certainty that it is the original cabin. The history of the cabin from 1861 to the present day is fairly clear but its history prior to 1861 is obscure and not conclusive. The precise location of the cabin is also a matter of conjecture. There is good reason to believe that the cabin was located at the foot of the knoll where the memorial building is located, only a short distance from the sinking spring. The general location of the birthplace cabin, however, is without question. Lincoln made several statements concerning the place of his birth. On June 4, 1860, Lincoln wrote Samuel Haycraft that, "As my parents have told me, I was born on Nolin, very much nearer Hodgen's mill than the Knob Creek place is." While sponsors of about fifteen rival birthplaces have set forth claims the statement made by Lincoln, in an autobiographical sketch for Hicks (June 14, 1860), namely: "I was born February 12, 1809, in then Hardin County, Kentucky, at a point within the now recently formed county of Larue, a mile, or a mile and a half (actually three miles) from where Hodgenville now is . . . It was on Nolin Creek," should end for all time the controversy regarding the place of the sixteenth president's birth.

The Corner Oak

As early as 1805 this giant white oak tree served to mark the corner of the 348½ acre tract of land known as the Sinking Spring or Rock Spring farm which Thomas Lincoln purchased on December 12, 1808. This is the farm where Abraham Lincoln was born on February 12, 1809 and this is the only tree now living which looked down upon the birth of the sixteenth president. The tree is six feet in diameter, about ninety feet tall and has a spread of one hundred and fifteen feet. It is estimated to be three hundred years old.

The Sinking Spring

In pioneer days the Lincoln birthplace farm spring was known for miles around as Sinking Spring, Cave Spring and Rock Spring. Over the centuries its continual flow has created a lime stone cave, about seven feet high, seven feet wide and fifteen feet long. Before the improvements were made in the Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historic Site it overhung with branches of huge trees and its banks were covered with wild vines. It is located in close proximity to the boundary oak tree.

"The Bigg Hill"

Thomas Lincoln was appointed a county surveyor on May 13, 1816, to oversee that part of the road leading "from Nolin to Bardstown, which lies between the Bigg (Muldraugh's) Hill and the Rolling Fork." The order of appointment also designated certain men who were to "assist said Lincoln in keeping the said road in repair." The records reveal that the road was kept open under Lincoln's supervision. If a tablet or marker should be erected at the foot of the "Bigg Hill" (highway 31E) it would contribute much to the prestige of Lincoln's father.

Stone Spring House

The stone spring house on the Gustavus Ovesen farm (now owned by Claude Williams), two miles east of Hodgenville on the Bardstown Road (Route 31E), is the only Kentucky building now standing which Lincoln as a boy remembered. In 1863, a Hodgenville resident, Dr. Jesse Rodman, visited President Lincoln in the White House. Lincoln told Rodman that the two objects which were most impressed upon his memory were "a big tree somewhere on Nolin (perhaps a giant oak near Buffalo) and the stone house." This building was constructed in 1800 and its walls are thick enough to be used for a fortification.

Knob Creek Farm

The 238 acre Knob Creek farm was the Kentucky home which Abraham Lincoln remembered when he was interviewed about his childhood days. In a letter addressed to Samuel Haycraft, June 4, 1860, Lincoln wrote: "The place on Knob Creek . . . I remember very well . . . My earliest recollection . . . is of the Knob Creek place." Thomas Lincoln and his family moved to this farm in 1811, when Abraham was but two years old and remained there until the late fall of 1816. Dr. Jesse Rodman, a resident of Hodgenville visited Lincoln in the White House in 1863 and the president made this statement: "I remember that old home very well. Our farm was composed of three fields. It lay in the valley surrounded by high hills and deep gorges. Sometimes when there came a big rain in the hills the water would come down through the gorges and spread all over the farm. The last thing that I remember doing there was one Saturday afternoon; the other boys planted the corn in what we called the big field; it contained seven acres and I dropped the pumpkin seed. I dropped two seeds every other hill and every other row. The next Saturday morning there came a big rain in the hills, it did not rain a drop in the valley but the water coming down through the gorges washed ground, corn, pumpkin seed and all clear off the field." It is believed that the Knob Creek farm was assigned to Thomas Lincoln for a money consideration but before a deed could be made the title was in litigation. A portion of the farm, the tract which was most likely the cabin site, is the property of Chester Howard. This is the only tract of land on which Abraham Lincoln lived for any considerable span of time which has not become in part at least, a national shrine. The present owner in 1931 constructed a typical log cabin on the traditional site of the Lincoln home. This important historic site is located seven miles northeast of Hodgenville on highway 31E.

Redmond Burial Ground

Since the fall of 1933 a grave in the Redmond family cemetery, in the Knob Creek section of Larue County, has been identified as being that of Thomas Lincoln, Jr., the infant brother of Abraham Lincoln. A stone over the grave with the inscription "T. L." was unearthed, and evidence points strongly to the fact that it marks the grave of Thomas and Nancy Lincoln's youngest child. The original stone is the property of W. G. Miller. There is now a new marker on the grave placed there by the Boy Scouts of Des Moines, Iowa. The cemetery, almost inaccessible by car, is located seven miles north of Hodgenville. From highway 31E take highway 84 and at the first dirt road to the left drive one and one-half miles.

LINCOLN COUNTY

Lincoln County Court House (Stanford)

The Lincoln County Court House (named for Benjamin Lincoln, a Revolutionary War general) is a repository for several land office treasury warrants (numbers 3333 and 3335) which provide for a survey of "800 acres of land in the County of Lincoln, lying on Green River about six miles below Green River Lick" for Abraham Lincoln, the grandfather of the president. After the division in 1806 of Lincoln County, the former lands of Abraham Lincoln were thrown into Casey County. The land was later sold to Christopher Riffe on October 12, 1784. Other records pertaining to Grandfather Lincoln's land transactions are to be found in this court house.

MADISON COUNTY

Berea College Library (Berea)

In a separate alcove, in the Berea College Library, a Lincoln library is maintained, along with a collection of photographs, paintings and manuscripts. One original letter written at Springfield, Illinois, by Lincoln to William Dickson, dated July 26, 1851, is on exhibit. Perhaps the most outstanding item in the Berea collection is the original oil painting "The Boy Lincoln," by Eastman Johnson.

MERCER COUNTY

Lincoln Marriage Temple (Harrodsburg)

The Lincoln cabin in which Thomas Lincoln and Nancy Hanks were married, originally located on the Richard Berry farm at Beechland in Washington County, is housed in a Lincoln Marriage Temple at Harrodsburg in the Pioneer Memorial State Park. The cabin stands enshrined just outside the stockade of the reproduced Old Fort Harrod. The Marriage Temple was dedicated on June 12, 1931. The dedicatory address was delivered by William Nuckles Doak, Secretary of Labor. The temple was a gift of Mrs. Edmund Burke Ball, of Muncie, Indiana, to the Commonwealth of Kentucky, in memory of her parents, the Reverend Marion Crosley and M. Adelia Swift Crosley. Harrodsburg is located on highways 68 and 127.

Lincoln Room in Mansion Museum (Harrodsburg)

In close connection and forming a part of the Lincoln Marriage Temple shrine is the Lincoln Room located in the Mansion Museum of the Pioneer Memorial State Park. This collection of books, relics, pictures, and documents gives Harrodsburg the distinction of having one of the first Lincoln library-museums in the state.

Mercer County Court House (Harrodsburg)

The Mercer County Court House is a repository for many court documents relative to Lincoln's maternal ancestry, namely; the Hanks, Sparrows and related families. The most important document in the court records is the controversial "wid-oy" Lucey Hanks affirmation dated April 26, 1790. The point of contention is that if Lucy Hanks was a widow then Nancy Hanks was of legitimate birth.

NELSON COUNTY

Site of Lincoln Log Cabin School House (Athertonville)

It is possible to locate the site of the first log school building which Lincoln attended as a boy. Documentary evidence is available which will definitely locate the school building as early as 1800. One important court order specified that "The road from Rolling Fork was to intersect the old road near a school house on Knob Creek." This historic site is located two miles north of the Knob Creek farm on highway 31E. On the exact site is a two car garage bearing a Boy Scout sign, "Blab Blab School Site."

Nelson County Court House (Bardstown)

The Nelson County Court House located in the center of the public square at Bardstown is a repository for many court documents relative to the Lincoln and Hanks families. One exceptionally important document which is filed in the county clerk's office is an appraisalment of the estate of Captain Abraham Lincoln dated 1789.

Monastic Cemetery of our Lady of Gethsemani

Zachariah Riney, Lincoln's first school teacher died in the year 1859. The location of his grave is unknown, but his remains were interred in the graveyard (a section reserved for the laity) of the Trappist Brotherhood within the monastery enclosure. It would seem fitting to erect a marker in this cemetery attesting to the fact that Zachariah Riney first started Abraham Lincoln on the way to intellectual achievement. The Monastic Cemetery of Our Lady of Gethsemani is twelve miles south of Bardstown. From highway 31E take highway 247, a distance of three miles.

UNION COUNTY

Morganfield

Abraham Lincoln made one political speech in Kentucky in 1840 during the presidential campaign of Harrison and Tyler. The date is believed to be September 8. While in Morganfield, Lincoln and a Whig delegation from Shawneetown, Illinois, were guests of George W. Riddell. The site of the hotel where Lincoln was entertained at dinner and the place where he made the campaign speech should be commemorated with bronze markers. The breech of the exploded cannon which was fired at this political meeting is now on display in the Old State House Museum at Frankfort.

WASHINGTON COUNTY

Lincoln Homestead State Park

The Lincoln Homestead State Park was dedicated in 1934, (re-dedicated in 1943) and contains among other things a replica of the Widow Lincoln home and the original Francis Berry home. One of the most interesting things to be noted in this park is the original spring from which the Lincolns got their water. This state park is located six miles north of Springfield, off Kentucky highway 55.

Washington County Court House (Springfield)

The Washington County Court House located at the intersection of Main and Cross Streets in Springfield is a repository for several valuable early records pertaining to the Lincoln family. In the county clerk's office is the marriage bond of Thomas Lincoln, signed by him and Richard Berry, Jr., and the minister's certificate by the Reverend Jesse Head, who performed the ceremony on June 12, 1806. Other records include tax lists and original signatures and marriage bonds of other members of the Lincoln family.

Berry Home Site

The actual site of the Richard Berry cabin where the Lincoln marriage ceremony was performed on June 12, 1806 is without a marker. The original cabin has been removed and preserved at Harrodsburg. Such a tablet or marker would also serve the double purpose of identifying the early home of Nancy Hanks, Lincoln's mother. This historic site is situated only a short distance from the Lincoln Homestead State Park.



From the Lincoln National Life Foundation
A replica log cabin on the traditional site of the Knob Creek Lincoln farm.