

**ABRAHAM LINCOLN BIRTHPLACE  
NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE**

**HISTORIC RESOURCE STUDY  
2001**

**NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
SOUTHEAST REGIONAL OFFICE  
CULTURAL RESOURCES STEWARDSHIP**

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## Foreword

We are pleased to make available this historic resource study, as part of our ongoing effort to provide comprehensive documentation for the historic structures and landscapes of National Park Service units in the Southeast Region. Following a field survey of park resources and extensive research, the project team updated the park's List of Classified Structures, developed historic contexts, and prepared a draft Historic Resource Study (HRS) in 1993. In 2000, Historian Brian F. Coffey updated the draft and prepared it for publication. Many individuals and institutions contributed to the successful completion of this work. We would particularly like to thank Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historic Site Superintendent Kenneth E. Apschnikat, Former Superintendent Karren Brown, and Chief of Operations Gary Talley. This study was made possible through a cooperative agreement with the Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation.

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July 2001

**FIGURE CREDITS**

Fig. 1: National Park Service (NPS); Fig. 2: Historic American Building Survey (HABS); Fig. 3: adapted from Meredith, p. 85; Fig. 4: NPS; Fig. 5: adapted from Eastern Acorn Press, *Abraham Lincoln*, p. 6; Fig. 6: adapted from Meredith, p. 356; Fig. 7: Eastern Acorn Press, *The Assassination of Abraham Lincoln*, p. 29; Figs. 8-9: adapted from Peterson, pp. 28, 111; Fig. 10: Eastern Acorn Press, *Abraham Lincoln*, p. 37; Figs. 11-12: adapted from Peterson, pp. 55, 58; Fig. 13-16: adapted from G. Peterson, pl. 1, II, IV, VI; Figs. 17-26: Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historic Site (ABLI) archives; Fig. 27: adapted from John M. Bryan, ed., *Robert Mills: Architect*, p. 161; Figs. 28-31: adapted from Marvin Trachtenberg & Isabelle Hyman, *Architecture*, pp. 63, 145; Fig. 32: adapted from Sturgis, p. 861; Fig. 33: adapted from Shivers, p. 6; Fig. 34: adapted from John M. Bryan, ed., *Robert Mills, Architect*, pl. 4; Fig. 36: adapted from Laird, p. 140; Figs. 37-39: adapted from Bedford, pp. 14, 119; Fig. 40: adapted from *Collier's Weekly* 40 (February 15, 1908); Figs. 41-43, ABLI archives; Fig. 44: HABS; Fig. 45: adapted from Laird, p. 126; Fig. 46: ALBI archives; Figs. 47-51: HABS; Historical Base Map: James Marshall Womack III, National Park Service.

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## **INTRODUCTION: DESCRIPTION OF THE ABRAHAM LINCOLN BIRTHPLACE NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE**

### **CONTEMPORARY DESCRIPTION**

Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historic Site (Site) commemorates the birthplace of Abraham Lincoln, sixteenth president of the United States. The Site contains 116.5 acres, representing approximately one-third of a 348.5-acre farm along the South Fork of Nolin Creek that was purchased by Lincoln's father, Thomas Lincoln, in 1808.<sup>1</sup> On the Site is a Beaux-Arts classical granite and marble memorial building containing the traditional Lincoln birth cabin. A notable natural feature on the Site is a spring that emerges from a rock ledge and flows into a deep sinkhole. The spring is adjacent to the knoll on which the Memorial Building is located. Roughly triangular in shape, the Site is located in the rolling hill country of LaRue County, Kentucky, three miles south of Hodgenville, the county seat, and approximately 50 miles south of Louisville (see Figure 1).<sup>2</sup> U.S. Highway 31E/Kentucky Highway 61 bisects the Site on a north-south axis.

The Site lies in the extreme eastern portion of the Pennyroyal, an approximately 8,000-square-mile physiographic region in west-central Kentucky. The Pennyroyal is part of the Highland Rim section of the Interior Low Plateau physiographic province. The Pennyroyal is a karst region, the topography of which is produced by the dissolution of soluble limestone by water and characterized by underground streams and caves, sinkholes (dolines), small ponds, long valleys, rolling hills, and occasional steep ridges and stone escarpments. Approximately seven miles east of the Site, Muldraugh's Hill, a large limestone escarpment, marks the eastern boundary both of the Pennyroyal and the karst region. Soil fertility varies considerably with the terrain. The most fertile LaRue County areas are the watershed of the Nolin River and the bottomlands of the Rolling Fork River, which forms the county's eastern boundary. LaRue County retains a predominantly rural character; farms of fewer than two hundred acres raising crops of wheat, tobacco, soybeans, and corn are typical. The northeastern and southeastern portions of the county are heavily forested.<sup>3</sup>

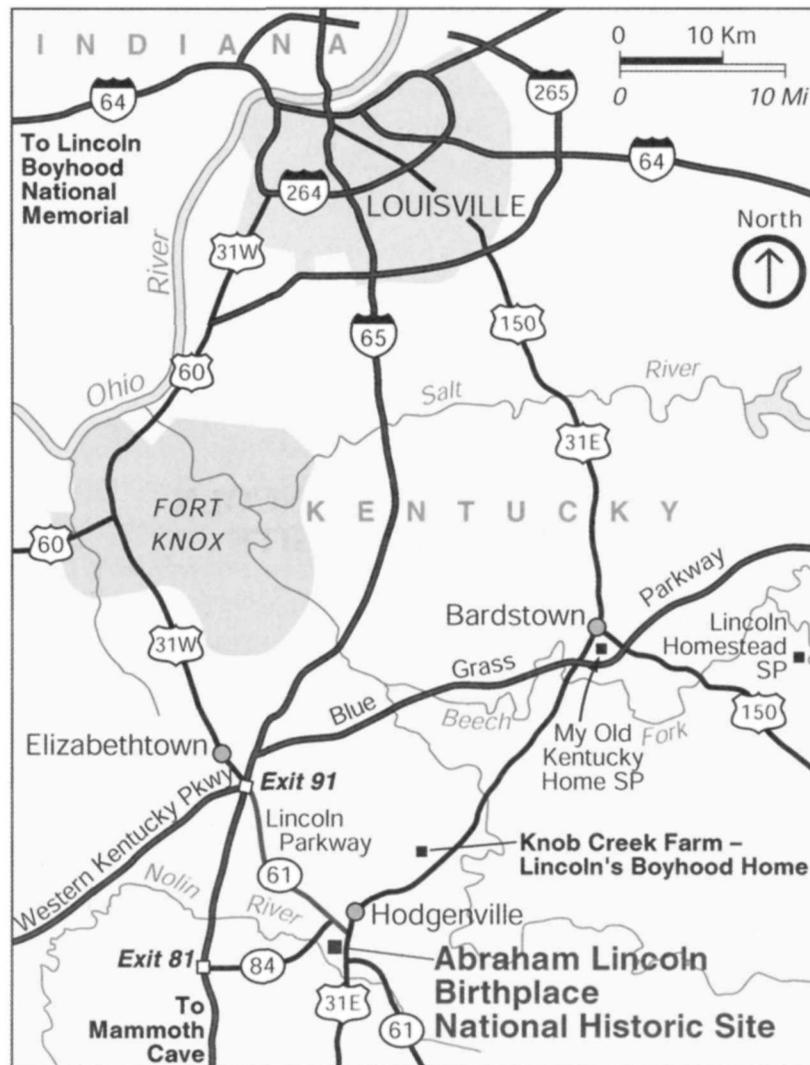


Figure 1. Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historic Site vicinity map, 1999

### **HISTORIC DESCRIPTION AND DEVELOPMENTAL CHRONOLOGY OF THE ABRAHAM LINCOLN BIRTHPLACE NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE**

The farm Thomas Lincoln and his wife Nancy moved to in 1808 was just within the borders of “the Barrens,” a four-hundred-square-mile subregion of the Pennyroyal that Native Americans had burned repeatedly to create grazing land for game. Tall grasses dominated the Barrens, with scattered trees present only along stream courses. Locally known as the Sinking Spring Farm, the Lincoln property contained a large spring that flowed through a limestone channel, dropped into a sinkhole, and disappeared into the earth. On high ground close to the spring, the elder Lincoln constructed a log cabin, where his son Abraham was born on February 12, 1809.<sup>4</sup> The young

Lincoln lived on the Sinking Spring Farm for only two years; in 1811, after a legal dispute centering on land patents, the Lincolns moved to a 230-acre farm on Knob Creek, approximately ten miles northeast.<sup>5</sup>

The idea for a memorial at Lincoln's birthplace was established by the Lincoln Farm Association (LFA), a nonprofit organization formed by Robert Collier, publisher of *Collier's Weekly*. In 1905, the LFA purchased a 110-acre portion of the original Lincoln Sinking Spring Farm intending to create a national memorial to Lincoln. The LFA also purchased a set of logs identified by some local residents as coming from the original Lincoln birth cabin. The birth cabin had been dismantled sometime prior to 1865, and a local tradition held that some of the logs were removed and used to construct a nearby house. By 1905, the logs associated with the Lincoln birth cabin were in storage in New York.<sup>6</sup>

The LFA commissioned architect John Russell Pope to design a memorial building on the knoll near the spring, identified by some as the site of the birth cabin. The Memorial Building, completed in 1911, was carefully sited within a formal, designed landscape that featured a terraced approach leading from a court. Upon the building's completion, the LFA removed the logs from storage, moved them into the Memorial Building, and erected them into a cabin which in their view approximated the appearance of the original Lincoln birth cabin. In 1916, the LFA donated the cabin, Memorial Building, and surrounding 110 acres to the Federal government, which established the Abraham Lincoln National Park. The War Department administered the park until August 10, 1933, when it was transferred to the National Park Service (NPS). The park was designated a national historical park August 11, 1939, and was renamed the Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historic Site on September 8, 1959. The NPS expanded the park's boundaries with the purchase of approximately 5.25 acres, authorized May 27, 1949, and another addition, authorized April 11, 1972.<sup>7</sup> In 1998, Congress authorized the Secretary of the Interior to acquire the approximately 228 acres of land and the cultural and natural resources of the historic Knob Creek Farm.

Development of the Site after 1916 focused on areas other than the Memorial Building and terraces. In the late 1920s, the War Department constructed limestone steps and walls at the Sinking Spring, built a parking area, and created a formal, rectangular plaza in place of the unpaved court. The current appearance of the memorial landscape thus partially reflects the original 1911 design, as well as later War Department alterations intended to improve visitor access and give the court a more finished

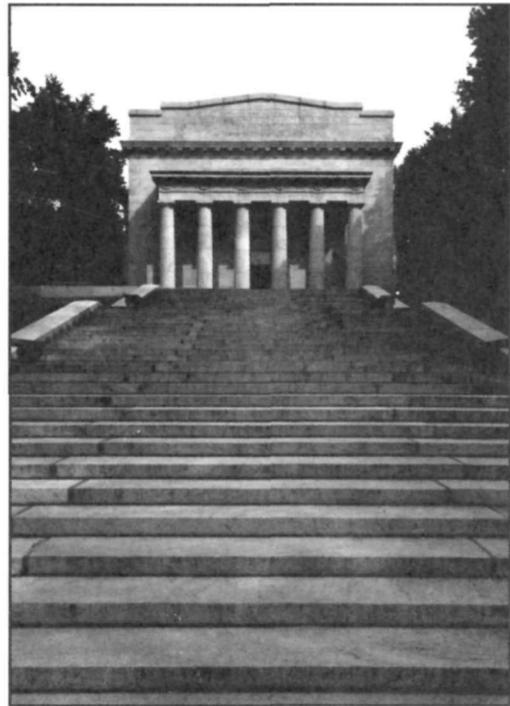


Figure 2. Memorial Building and Steps, 1987

appearance. Some historic materials have been replaced—notably, the tree species flanking the terraces and the flagstone pavers of the plaza, but the formal, ceremonial aspects of the approach to the Memorial Building are unchanged. Beyond the immediate area of the Memorial Building, secondary growth forest covers about half the Site, with the rest consisting of expansive mowed lawns. The Site also includes a 1959 Mission 66 visitor center and two employee residences, two small stone maintenance buildings constructed by the War Department, and a maintenance garage. The visitor center contains interpretive exhibits on the Lincoln family, including Thomas and Nancy Lincoln's Bible. Southwest of the Memorial Building is the former site of the Boundary Oak, a large white oak frequently cited in land surveys. In 1949, NPS acquired six acres surrounding the Boundary Oak, which died in 1976.<sup>8</sup> East of U.S. 31E lie park recreational facilities, including a picnic area with a restroom building and pavilion, several forest trails, and an environmental study area. Some commercial development, including motels and a convenience store, has occurred north of the park, and the potential exists for further development both north and south of the park boundary.

#### **SCOPE AND PURPOSE OF HISTORIC RESOURCE STUDY**

The Historic Resource Study (HRS) identifies and evaluates, using National Register criteria, the historic resources within the park. The study establishes and documents historic contexts associated with the park and evaluates the extent to which the historic resources represent those contexts. The completed HRS will serve as a tool for future Site planning, resource management, and the continuing development of interpretive programs at the park.

The Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historic Site was entered on the National Register of Historic Places October 15, 1966. National Register documentation for the Site was accepted December 17, 1977. Currently, the National Register boundary encompasses the entire Site. National Register additional documentation that will be prepared from this HRS will retain the Site boundary as the National Register district boundary. The Memorial Building, terraces, court, stone walls and paths, and Sinking Spring, developed by the LFA and the War Department between 1909 and 1933, constitute the core of the memorial landscape, but the Site itself was all part of the historic Thomas Lincoln farm. The goal of the LFA was to set aside the entire Site as a memorial to Lincoln, although only a portion of it was given a more formal treatment. In the 1950s, NPS removed a number of buildings—the Creal House, a picnic pavilion, and a comfort station—from the Site and reconfigured parking areas to accommodate a new visitor center.

#### **SUMMARY OF IDENTIFICATION AND EVALUATION METHODS**

##### ***Survey Methodology***

Goals of the historic resource survey of the park are to 1) update the List of Classified Structures (LCS) database for the park for use by park management; 2) prepare a Historic Resource Study for the park; 3) update the park's National Register documentation; and 4) assemble a comprehensive structural survey consisting of completed Kentucky State Heritage Council survey forms, when applicable, and a photographic record for each structure built prior to 1950 and considered eligible for listing in the National Register. This will be used in complying with Sections 106 and 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966.

Initially, the survey team examined building files, maintenance records, historic research compiled by the park staff, and maps located at the park headquarters. The field survey of the park yielded information on the present condition of the historic resources. Additionally, the team reviewed archival materials at the Southeast Regional Office of the National Park Service. Research with primary and secondary sources was conducted at the park library and research libraries to obtain information relating to Lincoln's life and legacy and the creation and development of the Site.

#### **DETERMINATION OF HISTORIC CONTEXTS**

This study assesses eligibility and evaluates historic integrity of the Site's historic resources within two historic contexts identified and refined by the survey team. These contexts relate to historic themes identified by the National Park Service and the Kentucky Heritage Council. The thematic framework of the NPS is outlined in *Revision of the National Park Service's Thematic Framework, 1996*. Kentucky historic contexts are developed within an overall framework that employs three elements: geographic area, time period, and theme. The NPS thematic framework uses similar historical building blocks: people, time, and place, in addition to eight overlapping themes and associated topics, several of which are relevant to this HRS. The following four chapters form this study:

Chapter One: The Importance of Abraham Lincoln and his Birthplace

Chapter Two: Lincoln Commemoration and the Creation and Development of the Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historic Site, 1865-1935

Chapter Three: The American Public Memorial and the Design and Construction of the Lincoln Birthplace Memorial, 1906-1911

Chapter Four: Management Recommendations

Because Abraham Lincoln is one of America's most famous historic figures, Chapter One serves as an overview of his life, his national significance, and how each relates to his Kentucky birthplace; it is not a historic context in itself. Chapter Two and Chapter Three represent the two historic contexts noted above. Chapter Two relates to NPS theme II "Creating Social Institutions and Movements," specifically, that theme's topic of "clubs and organizations." The topic of "recreational activities" is also addressed in the chapter. Chapter Three relates to NPS theme III "Expressing Cultural Values," and addresses the topics of "architecture, landscape architecture, and urban design," "educational and intellectual currents," and "popular and traditional culture." Chapter Two begins in 1865, the year of Lincoln's death, when commemorative activity began, and ends in 1935, which marked the completion of major development activity at the Site during the historic period. Chapter Three begins in 1906, the year the Lincoln Farm Association was formed, and ends in 1911, the year of dedication of the Memorial Building. Within the Kentucky

historic context framework, the two contexts developed for the HRS relate to the geographic area of the Pennyroyal. Chapter Two relates to the time periods 1865-1918 (Kentucky in the Age of Industrialization) and 1918-1945 (Between the Wars), while Chapter Three relates to the 1865-1918 period only. Kentucky has not identified commemoration as a general theme; aspects of Chapter Two relate to the broad Kentucky themes of commerce and transportation. Chapter Three relates to the Kentucky themes of architecture and landscape.

Four historic contexts developed for a National Register nomination for the LaRue County Multiple Resource Area also proved useful in developing contexts for the HRS. These contexts are The Growth and Development of LaRue County, ca. 1780-1865; The Growth and Development of LaRue County, 1865-1940; The Growth and Development of Hodgenville, 1865-1940; and Lincoln Iconography, 1909-1940.<sup>9</sup>

### **HISTORICAL BASE MAP DISCUSSION**

The Historical Base Map depicts the existing contributing and noncontributing resources of the park, as well as roads, trails, parking areas, and visitor facilities. The boundary of the park corresponds with that of the National Register District. The original National Register nomination addressed only the Traditional Birthplace Cabin and the Memorial Building. Future updates of National Register documentation should address the other park features noted in the HRS, especially the Memorial Building landscape. The park's Mission 66-era structures should also be addressed in any future cultural resource documentation.

## NOTES

1. Benjamin P. Thomas, *Abraham Lincoln: A Biography* (New York: Modern Library, 1968), 7; Louis A. Warren, *Lincoln's Parenthood and Childhood* (New York: Century Co., 1926), 75; *The National Parks: Index 1991* (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, Office of Public Affairs and Division of Publications, 1991), 41. As is noted in Chapter One of this study, Thomas Lincoln never held clear title to the Sinking Spring Farm.
2. LaRue County was created in 1843 from a portion of Hardin County (Philip Thomason, "LaRue County Multiple Resource Area," Draft National Register of Historic Places Documentation Form, November 19, 1990, E3).
3. Federal Writers' Project, *Kentucky: A Guide to the Bluegrass State*, American Guide Series, sponsored by the University of Kentucky and the Works Project Administration (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1939), 10-11; Thomason, E1-E3; Albert J. Beveridge, *Abraham Lincoln: 1809-1858*, vol. I (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), 26-27.
4. Thomas, 7; Warren, 87; Beveridge, vol. I, 3-4, 23-25.
5. Mark E. Neely, Jr., *The Abraham Lincoln Encyclopedia* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1982), 188; Warren, 11-12. Thomas Lincoln leased a portion of the Knob Creek farm only in 1815, but county commissioners' tax books indicate that he occupied the farm as a renter beginning in 1811 (Warren, 109-11).
6. Gloria Peterson, *An Administrative History of Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historic Site* (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, Division of History, 1968), 19-23; Roy Hays, "Is the Abraham Lincoln Birthplace Cabin Authentic?" *The Abraham Lincoln Quarterly* 5 (September 1948): 152-53.
7. Peterson, 30, 33-4; *The National Parks: Index 1991*, 41.
8. "Statement for Management, Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Park" (National Park Service, Hodgenville, Kentucky, April 25, 1989, Typescript), 10-11.
9. Thomason, E1.

## CHAPTER ONE: THE IMPORTANCE OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN AND HIS BIRTHPLACE

Abraham Lincoln occupies a towering position in American history and folklore. As president during the Civil War from March 1861 to April 1865, Lincoln guided the nation through its severest test. Vilified by opponents during his presidency, Lincoln quickly became one of the most venerated American leaders following his assassination on April 14, 1865.<sup>1</sup> Real as Lincoln's achievements were—winning the war, preserving the Union, and emancipating a race—he occupies an even more exalted position in American mythology. As historian and Lincoln biographer Stephen B. Oates observed, the Lincoln of myth perfectly embodies quintessential American virtues: “honesty, unpretentiousness, tolerance, hard work, a capacity to forgive, a compassion for the underdog, a clear-sighted vision of right and wrong, a dedication to God and country, and an abiding concern for all.”<sup>2</sup> For over a century, the desire to understand the origin of these virtues has inevitably led Lincoln biographers, as well as the general public, to Kentucky's Sinking Spring Farm; thus the place of Lincoln's birth and first two years of life remains historically significant, both as a site of pilgrimage and as an important and enduring place in the American imagination.

### LINCOLN'S FRONTIER BACKGROUND

Lincoln's obscure birth in a frontier log cabin and his backwoods upbringing became central elements in the Lincoln story. Lincoln cultivated an image of himself as a self-made man, because it had strong voter appeal in mid-nineteenth-century Illinois. After 1865, the story of Lincoln's journey from a log cabin to the White House was told and retold until it came to exemplify the best

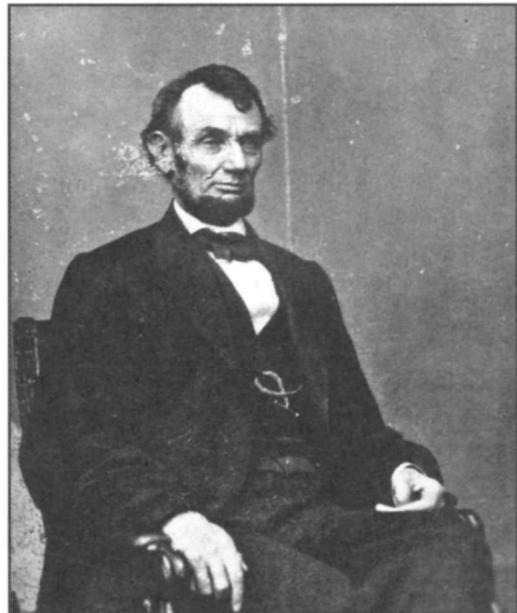


Figure 3. President Lincoln as photographed by Mathew Brady, 1861



evidence that he ever worked this farm. Thomas Lincoln married Nancy Hanks in 1806, and built a log house on one of two lots that he owned in Elizabethtown. He worked briefly as a carpenter in Elizabethtown before purchasing the Sinking Spring Farm in December 1808 for \$200 cash and the assumption of a small debt due a previous owner.<sup>6</sup> The property was two to three miles south of Hodgen's Mill, established in the 1790s, which became the nucleus of the town of Hodgenville. Thomas Lincoln's farm had generally poor soil and only a few scattered trees, but its freshwater spring and upland location were good inducements for settlement. Lincoln farmed a small portion of his acreage and continued to do carpentry jobs, likely for the many farmers nearby that Tom and Nancy knew before they moved from Elizabethtown.<sup>7</sup> Thomas Lincoln's ownership of this land became more of a legal struggle than an agricultural one, and a prior claim asserted in a lawsuit filed by a Richard Mather deprived the Lincolns of their Sinking Spring Farm after they had lived there only two years.

In 1811, the Lincolns moved to a 230-acre farm on Knob Creek owned by a George Lindsey. Having spent money for legal counsel in the ongoing Mather lawsuit, Thomas could only afford to lease 30 acres of the Lindsey tract; he selected the bottomland portion of it on which to establish yet another farm. Knob Creek is a tributary of the Rolling Fork River, and the creek valley on this new farm contained some of the best farmland in Hardin County. A well-traveled road from Bardstown, Kentucky, to Nashville, Tennessee, ran through the property. Abraham Lincoln's earliest recollections were of the Knob Creek place.<sup>8</sup>

Far from being an impoverished vagabond, Thomas Lincoln during these Kentucky years was a respected community member and a successful farmer and carpenter. Had they been able to secure clear title, the Lincolns might well have stayed at the Sinking Spring Farm.<sup>9</sup> After being forced off that farm, Lincoln continued legal action until the case was settled against him in 1815. His only recourse in 1811 was to find a place nearby where he could raise his family and continue to argue his case in the Hardin Circuit Court. Thomas Lincoln had title problems with all three of his Kentucky farms. When he sold the Mill Creek farm in 1814, he lost money because it turned out to be smaller than he had believed. Thomas abandoned the Sinking Spring Farm against his wishes, and in 1815, an out-of-state claimant sought to eject him from the Knob Creek farm. Ironically, Thomas Lincoln became a competent land surveyor during this time; unfortunately he never was able to survey Kentucky land that he owned. Frustrated over the tangled status of Kentucky land titles, Thomas moved his family to Indiana in 1817, when Abraham was seven.<sup>10</sup> The federal government under the provisions of the Ordinance of 1785 had surveyed Indiana, making Indiana titles more secure. It is just possible that his father's problems with land titles had some influence on Abraham Lincoln's later decisions to learn surveying and become an attorney.

### **LINCOLN'S EARLY LIFE**

One element of the Lincoln legend is accurate: Lincoln received limited formal schooling—amounting to perhaps one year in total—in the remote rural communities of Kentucky, Indiana, and Illinois where he was reared. Lincoln grew to manhood in Indiana, working on his father's farm and doing odd jobs for neighbors. He early showed a preference for intellectual over manual labor and a driving ambition to better himself. Making his home in New Salem, Illinois, from 1831 to 1837,

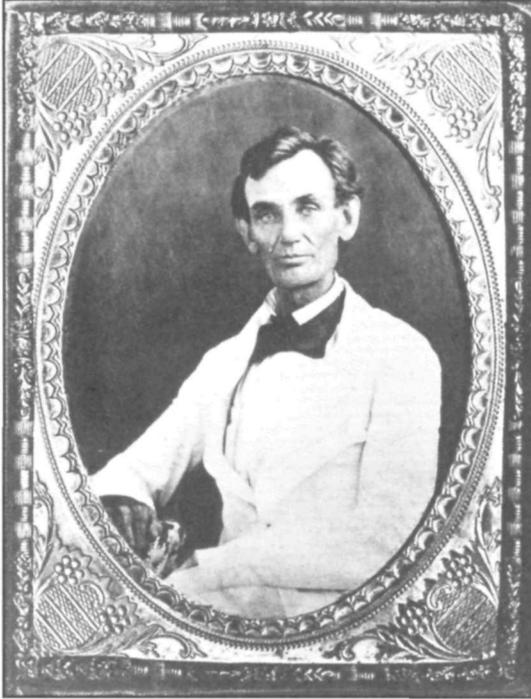


Figure 5. The lawyer Abraham Lincoln, 1858

Lincoln read the law while keeping a store and in 1834 was elected to the state legislature at the age of twenty-five. Lincoln rapidly rose to a leadership position within the Whig Party in Illinois, becoming minority leader in the legislature and directing the successful effort to move the state capital from Vandalia to Springfield, which was Lincoln's home from 1837 to 1861.<sup>11</sup>

Lincoln was admitted to the bar in 1836 and began a legal career that, along with politics, became the main professional interest of his life. As a lawyer, Lincoln had his share of divorce cases, property disputes, and criminal trials. By the 1850s, however, Lincoln was widely recognized as one of the ablest appellate court advocates in Illinois. He argued 243 cases before the Illinois Supreme Court, including important suits on behalf of the Illinois Central Railroad for which he received large fees. Lincoln served a single term in the U.S. House

of Representatives, in 1847-1849, under an informal arrangement with other prominent Sangamon County Whigs, who agreed to rotate the seat among them.<sup>12</sup>

In the early 1850s, Lincoln devoted himself to his lucrative law practice and was relatively inactive politically. The 1854 repeal of the Missouri Compromise reopened the volatile debate over slavery in the territories. Lincoln, in common with hundreds of thousands of "free-soil" advocates across the Midwest, plunged himself into political action. A new party committed to preventing slavery's extension and calling itself the Republican Party, arose in the Midwest in the summer of 1854 and rapidly gained adherents. The Whig Party, always a minority party in Illinois, began to split over the slavery issue, and Lincoln distanced himself from it. In 1856, he became an energetic member of the Republican Party. The first Republican presidential convention in 1856 nominated John C. Frémont, the Western explorer. Lincoln attracted national attention by garnering 110 votes for the vice-presidential nomination, which ultimately went to William Dayton of Ohio.<sup>13</sup>

Receiving the Republican nomination for U.S. Senator in 1858, Lincoln engaged in a series of debates with Stephen A. Douglas, the Democrat candidate, in seven Illinois cities. The debates centered on the issue of slavery extension and were closely followed across the nation. Throughout the debates, Lincoln branded slavery an injustice and opposed its spread, while distancing himself from abolitionist doctrines. Douglas, who had presidential ambitions, attempted to mollify free-soil Illinois voters without antagonizing the South, and Lincoln exploited the contradictions in Douglas's position. Douglas supported the right of slaveholders to take slaves to the territories, yet contended that territorial governments could effectively bar slavery through

hostile legislation. Douglas won the Senate seat<sup>14</sup> by emphasizing the latter point, but his stance angered Democrats in the slave states.<sup>15</sup>

By the late 1850s, the Whig Party had virtually disappeared, and the Democrat Party was fracturing over the slavery question. In 1860, Douglas was the presidential candidate of the northern Democrats, while John C. Breckinridge of Kentucky was the choice of the southern branch of the party. A group of former Know-Nothings and diehard Whigs formed the Constitutional Union Party and nominated John Bell of Tennessee. The Republicans convened their nominating convention in Chicago, with the Illinois delegation promoting favorite son Lincoln. Better-known Republicans—William Seward of New York, Salmon Chase of Ohio, Simon Cameron of Pennsylvania, and Edward Bates of Missouri—contested the nomination with Lincoln. The convention nominated Lincoln on the third ballot, largely because he had fewer liabilities than the other candidates.<sup>16</sup>

### LINCOLN AS PRESIDENT

The presidential election of 1860 was actually two separate regional contests. Lincoln vied with Douglas for northern votes, while Breckinridge and Bell contested for the South. The electoral arithmetic and strong free-soil sentiment in the North favored the Republicans; Lincoln won with a clear majority in electoral votes, but only forty percent of the popular vote. Believing that the Republican victory augured the end of slavery, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas seceded from the Union before Lincoln's inauguration and established the Confederate States of America. Upon assuming office on March 4, 1861, Lincoln decided to assert the Federal government's sovereignty by resupplying the besieged U.S. Army garrison at Fort Sumter in the harbor of Charleston, South Carolina. The Confederate government ordered an attack on the fort, signaling its intention to fight for its independence and igniting the Civil War. Following the Union surrender of Fort Sumter on April 14, 1861, Virginia, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Arkansas joined the Confederacy.<sup>17</sup>

As a minority president of a war-torn republic, Lincoln faced enormous difficulties: raising and equipping armies, finding competent generals, and maintaining civilian morale. The U.S. Constitution made no provision for dealing with rebellious states, and Lincoln frequently improvised, relying on a broad interpretation of his war powers. Particularly controversial was his jailing of suspected southern sympathizers without charges, in defiance of Federal court decisions. Lincoln demonstrated considerable political skill by maintaining popular support for the war despite disastrous defeats for Federal armies and mounting casualties.<sup>18</sup>

Union war strategy focused on blockading southern ports, controlling the Mississippi River, and invading the southern states. Through the first three years of the war, Union armies advanced steadily in the West, but failed to capture the Confederate capital at Richmond, Virginia. Lincoln aimed to preserve the Union and was willing at first to protect slavery if it furthered that goal. As the war dragged on and the importance of slave labor to the southern war effort increased, Lincoln and the Republican Party moved to adopt emancipation as a war policy. Lincoln decided in July 1862 to free slaves in the rebellious states but awaited favorable military news to act. At the Battle of Antietam in western Maryland (September 17, 1862), the Army of the Potomac under General



Figure 6. President Lincoln meets with General McClellan at Antietam, 1862

George McClellan turned back General Robert E. Lee's Confederate Army of Northern Virginia. Within days, Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, freeing slaves in the states still engaged in rebellion as of January 1, 1863. De facto freedom for blacks already prevailed in areas liberated by Union troops; the proclamation was designed to undermine Southern resistance, encourage blacks to rally to the Federal effort, and keep England from recognizing the Confederacy.<sup>19</sup>

Two Federal victories in early July 1863 marked a turning point in the war. Union General Ulysses S. Grant occupied Vicksburg, Mississippi, on July 4, 1863, giving the Federals complete control of the Mississippi River and depriving the Confederacy of reinforcements and supplies from Texas, Arkansas, and most of Louisiana. In the east, General George Meade repulsed Lee's second invasion of the North at the Battle of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania (July 1-3, 1863). Although the North would continue to suffer setbacks and terrible casualties, the tide was running in its favor.<sup>20</sup>

The 1864 presidential election year tested both Lincoln's leadership and northern commitment to the war. Federal control of the Mississippi and an increasingly effective naval blockade put severe strains on the Confederacy. In March 1864, Lincoln promoted Grant to the rank of lieutenant general and made him general in chief of all Federal armies. Grant moved east to personally supervise the operations of the Army of the Potomac and put General William T. Sherman in charge of all western armies. Grant ordered simultaneous advances by the Army of the Potomac on Richmond and by three combined western armies under Sherman's personal command into

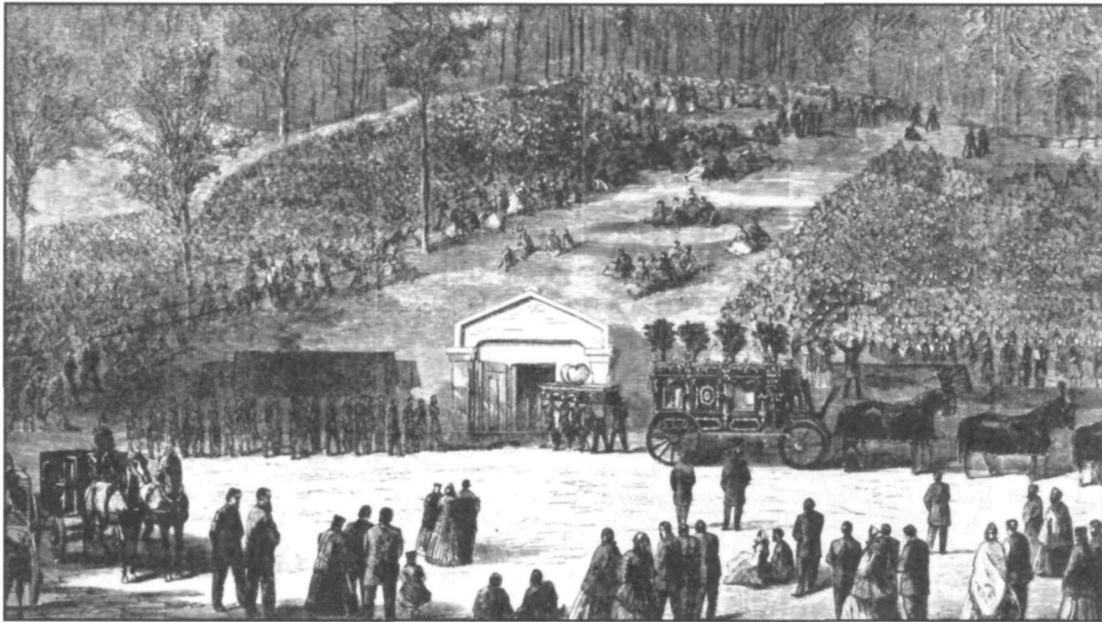


Figure 7. This 1865 woodcut from *Harper's Weekly* depicts the scene at Lincoln's interment at Oak Ridge Cemetery near Springfield, Illinois.

Georgia. The Confederacy aimed to hold off the northern armies until after the November election, hoping that a Democrat willing to negotiate southern independence would defeat Lincoln.<sup>21</sup>

Northern civilian morale was strained during the spring and summer of 1864. Grant pushed Lee back in Virginia while Sherman repeatedly outmaneuvered his Confederate foe in north Georgia, but at the cost of 90,000 overall Union casualties in four months. In August 1864, trench warfare outside Petersburg held Grant in check, while Sherman besieged Atlanta. Four years of war seemed to have brought a stalemate, and northern antiwar sentiment mounted. Lincoln's July 1864 draft call for 500,000 more troops added to northern gloom. In this climate, Lincoln anticipated losing the election to Democrat George McClellan. Then Atlanta fell on September 1, 1864, providing a huge boost to northern morale and a corresponding southern letdown. Believing that a final military victory was at hand, northern voters gave the Republicans an overwhelming victory in November.<sup>22</sup>

Vindicated at the polls, Lincoln and the Republican Party pursued the war to a successful conclusion. Sherman's army marched through Georgia and South Carolina, confiscating or destroying anything of value to the Confederacy. Richmond fell in early April 1865; Lee surrendered the Army of Northern Virginia at Appomattox Courthouse on April 9. Lincoln was given little time to formulate his plans for reconstructing the South. On April 14, 1865, Good Friday, Lincoln attended a performance at Ford's Theatre. John Wilkes Booth, an actor and fanatical southern sympathizer, burst into the president's box and shot him. Carried to the Petersen house across Tenth Street from the theater, Lincoln died shortly after seven a.m. the next day.<sup>23</sup>

The news of Lincoln's assassination instantly tempered northern euphoria at the war's end with grief and anger. The conversion of Lincoln from an outstanding, if embattled, wartime leader to a sainted martyr to the Union cause began almost immediately. As described below in Chapter Two, Lincoln's reputation steadily grew following his death; his rise from humble beginnings to momentous presidential achievements commanded the respect of millions. The site of Lincoln's birth in Kentucky was meaningful, not only as the birthplace of a famous American, but as a symbol of the unlimited possibilities of American life. The memorial at the Lincoln farm commemorates Lincoln the man and much of what he came to symbolize for Americans.

## NOTES

1. Stephen B. Oates, *With Malice Toward None: The Life of Abraham Lincoln* (New York: Harper & Row, 1977), 431-32
2. Stephen B. Oates, *Abraham Lincoln: The Man Behind the Myths* (New York: Harper & Row, 1984), 16.
3. Thomas, 7; Oates, *With Malice Toward None*, 5-6; Thomas L. Purvis, "The Making of a Myth: Abraham Lincoln's Family Background in the Perspective of Jacksonian Politics," *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society* 75 (Summer 1982): 149-50.
4. Thomas, 4-5; Thomason, E2-E3.
5. The money for this purchase came from the sale of land inherited by Thomas and Mordecai Lincoln from their father (Beveridge, vol. I, 12).
6. Property records indicate that Thomas Lincoln believed he had purchased a 300-acre farm; a survey of the property in 1837 revealed that the tract actually contained 348.5 acres (Warren, 83-87).
7. Kent Masterson Brown, "Report on The Title of Thomas Lincoln to, And The History of, The Lincoln Boyhood Home Along Knob Creek in LaRue County, Kentucky" (Atlanta: National Park Service, Southeast Regional Office, 1998), 31.
8. Brown, 33.
9. Kent Brown convincingly argues that Thomas Lincoln was a "victim" of David Vance, one of four people involved in the 1808 Sinking Spring Farm transaction. Vance, who never appeared at the Hardin Circuit Court to testify in his defense, already had four pending lawsuits against him relating to land deals (Brown, 21).
10. In notes supplied to a journalist in 1860 for a campaign biography, Abraham Lincoln wrote that the family's removal to Indiana "was partly on account of slavery, but chiefly on account of the difficulty in land titles in Ky." "Autobiography Written for John L. Scripps," *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, Roy P. Basler, ed. (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1953), IV: 61-62.
11. James G. Randall, "Abraham Lincoln," in *Dictionary of American Biography*, ed. Dumas Malone (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1946), 243-44.
12. Randall, 244-45.
13. Randall, 246-47; Oates, *With Malice Toward None*, 127-28.
14. State legislatures chose U.S. senators in this period; Douglas prevailed because the Democrats maintained control of the Illinois legislature.
15. Randall, 248-49.
16. Randall, 248-49.
17. James M. McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 223, 234-35, 271-74, 278-83; Randall, 249-51.
18. Randall, 251-52.
19. McPherson, 333-34, 557-58; Oates, *With Malice Toward None*, 317-33. Abolitionist sentiment was strong in Britain, which had outlawed slavery in its empire in 1833 (John Hope Franklin, *From Slavery to Freedom: A History of Negro Americans* [New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1967], 347).
20. Oates, *With Malice Toward None*, 352-53.
21. McPherson, 718-22; Oates, *With Malice Toward None*, 383-85.
22. McPherson, 773-75, 788-91, 805-6; Oates, *With Malice Toward None*, 387-97, 400-1.
23. McPherson, 846-50; Oates, *With Malice Toward None*, 420-33.

## **CHAPTER TWO: LINCOLN COMMEMORATION AND THE CREATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE ABRAHAM LINCOLN BIRTHPLACE NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE, 1865-1935**

### **NATIONAL LINCOLN COMMEMORATION, 1865-1922**

The growing veneration of Lincoln in the half century after his death, which resulted in the 1911 dedication of a memorial at his birthplace, had a number of sources. The first assassination of an American president, coming on the heels of a bloody Civil War, shocked the American public. In the highly emotional atmosphere of spring 1865, Americans began the apotheosis of Lincoln. The martyred president personified the self-sacrifice, idealism, and resoluteness that had preserved the republic through four years of war. The postwar decades then brought sweeping changes—Reconstruction of the South, industrialization, mechanization, urbanization, and increased immigration—that profoundly altered traditional patterns of American life. One response to this torrent of change was a romantic idealization of the past, especially the supposedly simpler, purer agrarian life. Lincoln's frontier upbringing exemplified this largely bygone rural way of life. Additionally, the self-reliant, self-made man was an idol of the postbellum age, and Lincoln was an example in politics as much as Andrew Carnegie was in industry. Finally, the years between 1875 and 1890 brought numerous centennial celebrations of the nation's founding.<sup>1</sup> These centennials helped engender an enhanced regard for the past and resulted in efforts to create memorials to, and preserve sites associated with, famous Americans.

### **LINCOLN'S IMAGE IN THE POSTWAR PERIOD**

The near deification of Lincoln began almost immediately after his death.<sup>2</sup> Already exhausted by the trials of the Civil War, Americans vented their emotions following Lincoln's assassination in an "orgy of grief."<sup>3</sup> Lincoln quickly became the symbol of the nation's sacrifices during the war. The controversies surrounding Lincoln's conduct of the war and the virulent personal attacks on him were forgotten, and Americans celebrated his idealism, fairness, compassion, devotion to duty, and vision of the future. Lincoln was compared to George Washington and praised as the second savior of the republic. Clergymen and others stressed Lincoln's Christ-like attributes; details of Lincoln's life—an obscure birth, a carpenter father, and assassination on Good Friday—inevitably reinforced the connection.<sup>4</sup>

Linked by telegraph, newspapers, and mass-circulation weeklies, millions across the North participated in the protracted mourning over Lincoln that included thousands of local memorial services featuring orations and eulogies, commemorative poetry, and a ceremonial funeral trip. After lying in state in Washington, Lincoln's remains were carried on a special train on a two-week journey back to Springfield. As a symbolic gesture, the train reversed the route Lincoln took to Washington in 1861. In Baltimore, Harrisburg, Philadelphia, New York, Albany, Buffalo, Cleveland, Columbus, Indianapolis, and Chicago, Lincoln's casket was removed from the train and placed on a black-draped catafalque. Hundreds of thousands filed past the casket while choirs sang hymns and church bells tolled. The train slowed to five miles per hour at dozens of smaller places to allow assembled citizens to pay their respects.<sup>5</sup>

Walt Whitman's 1865 poem, "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd," which lauded Lincoln as "the sweetest, wisest soul of all my days and lands," was one of hundreds of verse tributes.<sup>6</sup> Herman Melville, Julia Ward Howe, William Cullen Bryant, James Russell Lowell, and Oliver Wendell Holmes also wrote memorial poems. An entire volume of *Poetical Tributes* (1865) included the work of poets from all the northern states, seven southern states, and three

foreign countries. Letters of the period routinely referred to Lincoln as the "Great Emancipator" or the "Great Martyr."<sup>7</sup>

Biographical treatments abetted the apotheosis of Lincoln. Two themes emerged in Lincoln biographies following his death. One took its cue from the eulogies and emphasized Lincoln's high principles and saintliness; the other stressed his backwoods western origins. Josiah G. Holland's depiction of Lincoln as a martyr-saint endowed with all the Christian virtues, contained in his 1866 *Life of Abraham Lincoln*, proved immensely popular; the book sold more than 100,000 copies. In Holland's view, Lincoln was a model youth who rose on the strength of his merit and high ideals. Holland characterized Lincoln as "savior of the republic, emancipator of a race, true Christian, true man."<sup>8</sup> The portrayal of Lincoln as a combination of Christ and George



Figure 8. Engraving entitled *Abraham Lincoln the Martyr Victorious* by John Sartain, 1865

Washington was echoed in dozens of other nineteenth-century biographies.<sup>9</sup>

Disgusted by the popularity of a sentimental, idealized view of Lincoln, William H. Herndon, Lincoln's friend and his law partner from 1844 to 1861, devoted himself to presenting a more down-to-earth portrait. Herndon did a vast amount of research to supplement his personal recollections, combing court records and interviewing and corresponding with dozens of persons in Illinois, Indiana, and Kentucky. Herndon leased his research materials to Lincoln's friend and sometime bodyguard Ward H. Lamon for Lamon's 1872 *Life of Abraham Lincoln*, largely ghost-written by Chauncey Black. After many delays, *Herndon's Lincoln: The True Story of a Great Life*, written in collaboration with Jesse Weik, appeared in 1889. Both Lamon and Herndon emphasized the ambitious, folksy, irreverent, story-telling Lincoln: a true son of the western prairie. Herndon was most reliable on events he witnessed; he did not critically evaluate material supplied by others. Although Herndon's book sold poorly, his portrait had a lasting impact on the popular conception of Lincoln.<sup>10</sup> Toward the end of the nineteenth century the two images of Lincoln began to merge into a composite. Lincoln became the embodiment of an American ideal that combined frontier earthiness and Christian virtue, shrewdness and saintliness, ambition and nobility of soul.<sup>11</sup>

#### POSTWAR AMERICAN ROMANTICISM

Lincoln's heroic reputation contrasted sharply with the materialism, corruption, and generally undistinguished political leadership of the postwar decades. Characterized variously as "The Gilded Age," "The Age of Excess," and the "Great Barbecue," the 1865-1890 period was one of great economic and social upheaval, unprecedented extremes of wealth and poverty, and widespread political corruption. Many of the changes associated with the postwar years were well underway when Lincoln died. The huge northern Civil War armies had required a rapid expansion of industry and financial institutions, and graft in wartime supply contracts foreshadowed later scandals. Rapid industrialization continued after the war, and America changed from a nation of small, isolated, rural communities to a more urban-oriented and economically and culturally unified country. This transformation was largely the result of transportation and communication advances: a transcontinental rail net, improved telegraphs, mass-circulation periodicals, and the telephone. America was also becoming more crowded; the population more than doubled from 36 million in 1865 to 76 million in 1900.<sup>12</sup>

Industrialization and the growing mechanization and commercialization of agriculture increased American wealth and changed the character of American life. Industrial production rose by 1200 percent between 1850 and 1900, while farmers increasingly shifted from subsistence crops to marketable staples like wheat, corn, cotton, and tobacco. Laissez-faire was the ruling economic philosophy, and most policies of the national Republican and Democrat parties on tariffs, railroads, banking, and immigration encouraged industrial expansion. Individuals amassed huge fortunes from railroads, iron and steel, textiles, food processing, petroleum, and financial manipulation.<sup>13</sup> Broad segments of the public lionized the self-made industrial tycoon, exemplified by Andrew Carnegie, the Scottish immigrant who rose from bobbin boy in a textile mill to presidency of the largest American steel producer. Carnegie and other millionaires combined philanthropy with lavish spending on fine houses and ostentatious entertaining.<sup>14</sup>

Urbanization and increased immigration accompanied industrial growth. Before the war, cities had been largely mercantile centers; postwar urban growth was tied to industrial expansion. The number of cities of 100,000 or more inhabitants rose from nine in 1860 to fifty in 1910. By 1900, one-third of the population was classified as urban, i.e., living in cities of 8,000 or more. The cities attracted millions of European immigrants. By the 1890s, the sources of immigration had largely shifted from Great Britain, Germany, and Scandinavia to southern and eastern Europe. Although some immigrants farmed, the majority congregated in urban areas, taking low-paid industrial and service jobs. Many native-born Americans found the religion, customs, and appearance of these new immigrants alien and grew anxious over the changing ethnic make-up of the country.<sup>15</sup>

Postwar politics were characterized by intense partisanship, an absence of idealism and strong leadership, and substantial graft. In 1905, historian Henry Adams observed that “One might search the whole list of Congress, judiciary, and executive during the twenty-five years 1870 to 1895, and find little but damaged reputation.”<sup>16</sup> Governmental corruption reached a nadir in the 1870s. The Democrat Tweed Ring, led by New York Mayor William M. Tweed, looted as much as \$100 million from the public treasury between 1868 and 1871. One scandal after another implicating cabinet secretaries and White House staff marred President Grant’s administrations (1869-1877). Throughout the postwar period, some Republicans traded on the memory of Lincoln for political gain. A succession of relatively weak postwar presidents only added luster to Lincoln’s image.<sup>17</sup>

As an antidote to the economic, social, and political upheavals of the postwar decades, many Americans sought escape in sentimental romances. Romances took many forms: there was the romance of the self-made man celebrated in Horatio Alger’s many novels and the romance of exotic times and places, exemplified by the phenomenal popularity of novels like *Ben-Hur* (1880). In a country increasingly national, urban, industrial, and class-stratified, millions viewed the local, agrarian, seemingly egalitarian American past through the mists of sentiment. As historian Robert H. Wiebe has put it, “the peculiar ethical value of an agricultural life, long taken for granted by so many Americans, now became one of their obsessions.”<sup>18</sup> Beginning in the 1880s, highly romanticized depictions of the antebellum South, the Colonial period, the frontier, and rural life frequently appeared in popular novels and poems.<sup>19</sup>

The allegedly wholesome, self-sufficient pioneer experience exemplified by Lincoln’s early life was a popular theme in fiction. James Allen Lane’s novel, *The Choir Invisible* (1897), the saga of an eighteenth-century Kentucky schoolmaster, sold more than 250,000 copies. Lincoln himself appeared as a character in historical novels as early as 1888 (*The McVeys* and *The Graysons*). As the centennial of Lincoln’s birth approached, fictional treatments multiplied. Lincoln was a central character of *The Crisis* (1901), a historical romance by Winston Churchill that sold one million copies. Fictional depictions of Lincoln followed the biographies, emphasizing the upright backwoods lawyer and the wise wartime president.<sup>20</sup>

The log cabin was an object of special veneration in romanticized depictions of frontier life. Birth in a log cabin became associated with the positive qualities of simplicity, egalitarianism, democracy, self-sufficiency, and upward mobility. The log cabin was a symbol of the unlimited possibilities for advancement considered inherent in American life. The log cabin made its first appearance as a political symbol in General William Henry Harrison’s successful presidential



Fig 9. Painting entitled *Boyhood of Lincoln* by Eastman Johnson, 1868

campaign in 1840. On the Whig ticket that year were Harrison, the hero of the 1811 Battle of Tippecanoe, and John Tyler. An opposition newspaper's derogatory comment about General Harrison's alleged willingness to sit in his cabin drinking hard cider while collecting a pension was converted into a major campaign theme. Famous for the slogan, "Tippecanoe and Tyler Too," the 1840 Whig campaign adopted a populist tone and featured the image of the log cabin on floats, badges, books, quilts, and glass plates.<sup>21</sup>

Lincoln exhibited ambivalence about his log cabin background; he realized its political attractiveness to western voters, but almost never spoke of it to friends. In the 1860 presidential election, the Republican Party borrowed a page from the Harrison campaign, touting Lincoln as a prairie-bred man of the people. To Lincoln's embarrassment, his party promoted him as "Honest Abe, the Rail-Splitter." Campaign literature emphasized Lincoln's obscure birth in a log cabin and his pioneer upbringing, reinforcing the popular association of the log cabin with democratic virtues.<sup>22</sup>

The adulation of Lincoln in the later nineteenth century coincided with increased interest in historic preservation and commemoration. George Washington and Lincoln, linked in the public mind as, respectively, the father and savior of the nation, were the focus of a number of preservation efforts. One of the earliest American historic preservation efforts was the 1850s campaign to make a national shrine of George Washington's house, Mount Vernon. This campaign was the work of a private group, the Mount Vernon Ladies Association, which purchased the house and two hundred acres in 1858. In the same year, the State of Virginia accepted the gift of a small tract that included the former site of Wakefield, Washington's birthplace in Westmoreland County, Virginia. In 1882, the state donated the property to the Federal government, which erected a granite obelisk commemorating Washington's birth in 1895-1896.<sup>23</sup>



Figure 10. A circa 1890 photo of the “Goose Nest Prairie Cabin” in Illinois. This was one of several log cabins associated with the early life of Abraham Lincoln.

historical appreciation manifested itself in efforts to preserve Independence Hall in Philadelphia, Washington’s headquarters at Valley Forge, Pennsylvania, the powder magazine at Williamsburg, Virginia, and Andrew Jackson’s Tennessee home, the Hermitage.<sup>24</sup> Campaigns to preserve historic sites associated with Lincoln’s life began in the 1880s.

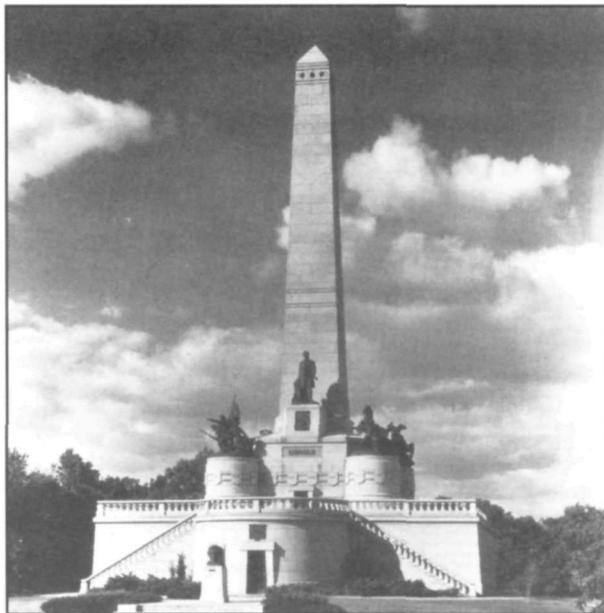


Figure 11. Lincoln National Monument, Springfield, Illinois. Designed by Larkin G. Mead, 1874

Another event that revived interest in the American past was the Centennial Exposition, held in Philadelphia from May to November 1876, to mark the one-hundredth anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. The centennial year provided an occasion for Americans to re-examine their history. The events of the Revolutionary period received great attention, and a re-created Colonial house was a popular exhibit at the exposition. Many of the eight million exposition visitors went away with a new interest in, and enthusiasm for, the American past. This greater

#### EARLY LINCOLN COMMEMORATION

The first major Lincoln commemorative project to be completed was his tomb in Springfield. In April 1865, a group of Illinois residents formed the National Lincoln Monument Association to plan Lincoln’s burial in Springfield. At Mrs. Lincoln’s request, suburban Oak Ridge Cemetery was selected as the site of the tomb. Larkin G. Mead, a Vermont sculptor, won an 1868 design competition sponsored by the association, and work on the tomb began the following year. Lincoln’s remains were placed in the tomb in September 1871, and the tomb was dedicated in October 1874, upon the completion of Mead’s bronze statue of Lincoln. Between 1877 and 1883, four bronze military groups representing the infantry, artillery, cavalry, and navy were

added to the base. In 1895, the National Lincoln Monument Association donated the tomb to the State of Illinois. To correct foundation problems, the state rebuilt the tomb in 1900-1901, adding 37 feet to the height of the obelisk.<sup>25</sup>

The Federal government acquired Ford's Theatre through legislation enacted April 7, 1866, to prevent any inappropriate use of the assassination site. The government used the building for offices and storage until 1932, when it was converted to a museum displaying Lincoln memorabilia. The building was transferred to the National Park Service August 10, 1933. The NPS restored the theatre to its 1865 appearance in the 1960s, reopening it for theatrical performances and tours in 1968. The site was redesignated the Ford's Theatre National Historic Site in 1970.<sup>26</sup>

A number of American cities erected commemorative Lincoln statues between 1868 and 1900. Three statues were unveiled in Washington, D.C., in Judiciary Square (Lot Flannery, 1868), the Capitol Rotunda (Vinnie Ream, 1871), and Lincoln Park (Thomas Ball, 1876). Other notable Lincoln sculptures appeared in Brooklyn (Henry K. Brown, 1869), New York City (Henry K. Brown, 1870), Philadelphia (Randolph Rogers, 1871), and Chicago (Augustus Saint-Gaudens, 1887). Typically, these monuments featured a bronze statue mounted on a pedestal. Congress appropriated funds for the statue in the Capitol; private subscriptions or bequests paid for the other works.<sup>27</sup>

During the 1880s and 1890s, Lincoln's home of seventeen years in Springfield and the house in Washington where he died became historic sites open to the public. In 1883, Osborn H.

Oldroyd, a collector of Lincoln memorabilia, rented Lincoln's home in Springfield and opened it to the public as a museum. Lincoln's son Robert Todd Lincoln in 1887 conveyed the house to a board of trustees established by the State of Illinois. The state maintained the site until Congress authorized the Lincoln Home National Historic Site on August 18, 1971. In 1892, the private Memorial Association of the District of Columbia rented the Petersen house on Tenth Street where Lincoln died. Congress authorized the House Where Lincoln Died National Historic Site on June 11, 1896; it was consolidated into the Ford's Theatre National Historic Site on June 23, 1970.<sup>28</sup>

Surprisingly, no monuments to Lincoln other than statues were raised in the nation's capital in the nineteenth century. Of the three statues that were dedicated, however, the Freedmen's Monument by Boston sculptor Thomas Ball is notable for being funded mostly by African Americans, many of whom had served with Black regiments during the Civil War.<sup>29</sup> Dedicated in 1876, the statue depicts a



Figure 12. Freedmen's Monument, Washington, D.C., by Thomas Ball, 1876

benevolent Lincoln, his left arm outstretched over a slave rising from a kneeling position. In his other hand Lincoln holds the proclamation itself. Explicitly adopting the theme of “the great emancipator,” the statue’s unveiling was accompanied by a speech from Frederick Douglass who tactfully noted that the slave’s emancipation was not wholly the result of Lincoln’s morality, love, and grace, but was also driven by political imperatives.<sup>29</sup> Douglas likely was trying to temper the statue’s overtly paternalistic imagery of Lincoln and the kneeling slave with the less romantic realities of emancipation and reconstruction.

As early as 1867, Congress authorized a Lincoln Memorial Association to raise private funds for a monument in Washington, D.C. Nothing resulted from this effort or from numerous other proposals and bills introduced through the rest of the century. The pace of commemorative activity quickened as the 1909 centennial of Lincoln’s birth approached. In 1901, the U.S. Senate established a commission (known as the McMillan Commission in honor of its principal sponsor, Michigan Senator James McMillan) to prepare a comprehensive city plan for the capital. Commission members were architects Daniel Burnham and Charles F. McKim, landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., and sculptor Augustus Saint-Gaudens. A key recommendation of the 1902 McMillan Commission Plan was for a Lincoln memorial to be erected on reclaimed marsh land at the western end of the Mall on axis with the Capitol and the Washington Monument. Congressional authorization for the memorial finally came in 1911, and the Greek-temple form Lincoln Memorial, designed by architect Henry Bacon, was dedicated in 1922.<sup>30</sup> Significantly, proposals for a Lincoln memorial in Washington were being debated in the same years that the Lincoln Farm Association was promoting its plan for a memorial at the birth farm in Kentucky.

### **COMMEMORATING LINCOLN IN KENTUCKY, 1895-1935**

Efforts to commemorate Lincoln in Kentucky lagged behind those occurring in other states, such as Illinois and New York, and in Washington, D.C. Ambivalent feelings toward Lincoln and the Union, during and immediately after the war, likely stifled within the state the kind of emotional and monumental tributes that northern populations exhibited following the assassination. However, as the Lincoln Centennial approached, commemorative efforts in Kentucky stirred. Both local and outside interests pursued commemorative ventures in the state; commercial profitability inspired some efforts, and others represented patriotic fervor and admiration for a venerated public figure.

In summer 1861, Kentucky occupied an awkward position in the Union. As one of three border states, Kentucky shared many traits with its Confederate neighbors. Kentucky’s population was large, totaling over 1.15 million, and included about 220,000 slaves. This large population in a southern alliance could have greatly benefited the Confederacy, which fought against a much larger northern populace. Lincoln recognized Kentucky’s strategic geographical importance and the potential for a southern alliance due to the state’s agricultural economy and dependence on slave labor. Lincoln also knew that Kentucky voters had not generously supported his presidential bid.<sup>31</sup>

After Sumter and southern secession, Kentucky claimed neutrality. Lincoln agreed to honor this position even though he knew that Kentucky allowed Confederate goods to be channeled through the state to Tennessee, an action that nullified the state’s neutrality. In an effort to win the

support of Kentucky, Lincoln ignored these activities. However, after the August 1861 state elections revealed strong Unionist support, Lincoln vigorously enforced pro-Unionist policies and banned all trade with the Confederacy. Shortly thereafter, the Union flag flew over the state capitol and many southern supporters, including the governor, left the state. Ultimately, Kentucky loyalties remained split throughout the war, although politically, the state sided with the north. By war's end, Kentucky had sent over 40,000 men to the Confederacy and 100,000 men had fought for the Union.<sup>32</sup>

Lincoln maintained many ties to Kentucky, both emotionally and physically, throughout his life. Although the Lincoln family had left Kentucky over forty years before the war, many Kentuckians had settled southern Illinois; Lincoln's wife was Kentuckian by birth; and several close Lincoln associates, including his good friend Joshua Speed, were Kentuckians.<sup>33</sup> However, the lengthy and brutal war likely diminished what sympathies Kentuckians felt toward their renowned son immediately after the war. The state's ties to Lincoln had weakened over a period of more than forty years. For Kentuckians, events occurring during Lincoln's adult life both strengthened pro-southern loyalties and forged political and emotional alliances with the Union leader. With this mixed political climate, public and private commemorative efforts for Lincoln failed to emerge until the twentieth century. Unlike most of the South, Kentucky eventually raised several statues and a monumental building and fostered Lincolnian tourism recognizing, beyond sectionalism, the man's national importance.

Following the assassination, local residents directed Lincoln admirers to the Sinking Spring Farm and indicated the knoll where the Lincoln cabin had stood. However, because time had lapsed, and interest had waned between 1811 and 1865, few LaRue County residents personally remembered the Lincolns or their homestead. One sojourner, John B. Rowbotham, an illustrator for a Cincinnati publisher, visited the Sinking Spring Farm in 1865 and wrote about his experience to William H. Herndon. Rowbotham traveled by rail to Elizabethtown and then by coach to Hodgenville. From Hodgenville, the old Lincoln farm lay three miles south on a "good, straight road." Rowbotham sketched the chimney rubble on the knoll that county residents claimed marked the site of the former Lincoln birth cabin.<sup>34</sup>

In 1894 and 1895, interest in the Lincoln birthplace rekindled. The first attempt to memorialize the farm occurred in 1894, when a Major S.P. Gross made a bid to purchase the property, sans cabin.<sup>35</sup> Gross wanted to establish a national historic site that would preserve the Lincoln birthplace just as similar efforts at Mount Vernon and the Hermitage preserved sites linked to other national leaders.<sup>36</sup> However, Gross's plan never materialized, and another interested party stepped in. Alfred W. Dennett, a New York restaurateur, bought the Sinking Spring Farm, also known as the Old Creal Place, from Richard Creal.

Dennett purchased the property, November 23, 1894, with some very specific motives. But whether Dennett's ultimate scheme represented nineteenth-century hucksterism, or simply a personal desire to raise funds for urban religious missions, is unclear. Dennett was a religious man, cofounding the Florence Crittenton Missionary, for wayward women, and other urban missions throughout the country. Dennett purchased the former Lincoln farm through his local agent, James W. Bigham, a prominent Methodist preacher and evangelist, known throughout western Kentucky



Figure 13. The Sinking Spring Farm as it appeared in 1895

in the 1890s. Dennett made no excuses for purchasing the property. He intended to build a hotel and park on this historic spot for commercial purposes. As an immediate goal, Dennett hoped to persuade a national Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) encampment, scheduled to meet in Louisville in fall 1895, to visit his property. By charging an admission fee, Dennett sought to regain his original investment. In August 1895, Bigham claimed that Dennett instructed him to find and reconstruct the original Lincoln birth cabin associated with the property. Bigham purchased a cabin located on the farm of John A. Davenport, one mile north of the Sinking Spring Farm. Then, he and his son dismantled the Davenport cabin and used the logs to erect a cabin on the Sinking Spring Farm in November 1895.<sup>37</sup>

The authenticity of the cabin erected by Bigham in 1895, 86 years after Lincoln's birth, has been fiercely debated. Bigham's authentication story, promoted in his "lecture, historic & descriptive," rested on the premise that the birth cabin was removed from its original site prior to the end of the Civil War. Bigham relied on a supposed tradition that a LaRue County physician, Dr. George Rodman, returned from a visit with Lincoln in Washington, circa 1861, filled with admiration for the president. Wanting to honor Lincoln, Rodman purchased the birth cabin from Richard Creal and moved it to his farm. Later investigators have found at least three major problems with this authentication: in all probability, it was Dr. Jesse Rodman, George's brother, who visited Lincoln; Richard Creal did not own the Sinking Spring Farm until 1867; and neither Rodman brother ever owned the property to which the cabin allegedly was moved in 1861.<sup>38</sup>

The Davenport cabin purchased by Bigham was described in some testimony as a two-story log residence. When Bigham re-erected the cabin on the Lincoln farm from the neighboring Davenport farm, he constructed a one-story cabin, approximating the sixteen by eighteen foot dimensions of traditional, one-room, Kentucky log cabins.<sup>39</sup> Bigham also erected a partial stick chimney. The cabin chinking was mud and the gabled roof consisted of log purlins with wood planks. A central door and one unglazed window opening faced east. Bigham situated the cabin on the knoll above the Sinking Spring that some accounts identified as the traditional cabin site.<sup>40</sup> Bigham finished erecting the cabin just in time for the GAR encampment.

Fewer than 100 soldiers from the GAR encampment, which attracted an estimated 5,000 to 15,000 participants, visited the Sinking Spring Farm. The exorbitant admission fee and railroad fare proposed by Bigham and the deliberate commercial exploitation of the Lincoln farm incensed many of the veterans.<sup>41</sup> For the next two years, little happened at the farm. In 1897, Bigham dismantled the alleged Lincoln cabin and exhibited it, with another equally suspicious cabin described as Jefferson Davis's birthplace, for a price on the midway at the Tennessee Centennial Exposition in Nashville.<sup>42</sup> The Nashville venture proved a poor investment for Dennett, but he agreed to contract with Bigham for future exhibitions of the cabins and for the sale of souvenirs. However, by August 1899, after a failed attempt to sell the Sinking Spring Farm to Congress, Dennett stored the Lincoln and Davis cabins' logs in the basement of a New York City Bowery mission he operated.<sup>43</sup>



Figure 14. The "Davenport Cabin" as assembled by James W. Bingham in 1895

In late 1898 and early 1899, financial problems plagued Dennett in both New York and California, and he may have stored the cabins to protect his investment. Without notifying Bigham, Dennett conveyed the Lincoln farm property and the log cabins to David Crear, a friend to whom Dennett was indebted. However, Dennett continued to pay taxes on the farm, attempted to sell the property, and retained Bigham as caretaker.<sup>44</sup> By 1901, Dennett concluded his relationship with Bigham and shortly thereafter contracted with Frederick Thompson and Elmer Dundy, two Nashville midway exhibitors, to rent the Lincoln and Davis cabins for display at the 1901 Pan-American Exposition in Buffalo. Dundy and Thompson also later may have exhibited the cabins at a Coney Island amusement park they operated. Throughout this last period of exhibition, Crear appeared to hold legal possession of the cabins, but made no attempt to claim them.<sup>45</sup> By 1903, the midway showmen stored the logs in College Point, Long Island. However, in transit the cabin logs became mixed, and separating the two buildings proved difficult.<sup>46</sup>

After the logs had been in storage for several years, Thompson and Dundy publicly claimed ownership of the cabins through a series of newspaper articles. Also at this time, Crear filed suit to retain ownership of the farm that Dennett conveyed in 1899. However, the LaRue County Circuit Court decided that the Dennett conveyance to Crear was fraudulent and void. Dennett's attempt to liquidate his properties and clear some debts prior to bankruptcy proceedings proved unfortunate for Crear. The court ordered the Sinking Spring property sold at public auction and the proceeds distributed among Dennett's creditors. Richard Lloyd Jones, an editor for *Collier's Weekly*, bought the farm at auction, August 28, 1905, for \$3,600.<sup>47</sup>

Although New York parties dominated the cabin and farm transactions, Hodgenville recognized itself as the likely Kentucky candidate for a Lincoln birthplace tribute. Located approximately three miles north of the former Lincoln farm, the town recognized the advantages of that geographic link. Prior to the 1880s, Hodgenville competed with several other neighboring communities for commercial trade. The town witnessed greatest growth after a railroad line connected it to Elizabethtown in 1888. Between 1900 and 1905, Hodgenville flourished commercially. The town had two banks, five dry goods stores, four grocery stores, a hotel, two flour mills, three saloons, and a county jail. In 1903, Thomas Kirkpatrick, the Hodgenville postmaster, published a pamphlet, "Souvenir of Lincoln's Birthplace," to promote LaRue County Lincoln historical sites and the Hodgenville commercial district. In 1904, the Lincoln Monument Commission, authorized by the Kentucky legislature, sought subscriptions to finance a Lincoln memorial for the Hodgenville town square.<sup>48</sup>

The commission originally obtained a \$2,500 appropriation to erect a tablet honoring Lincoln in the courthouse square. An appropriation from Congress accompanied by private contributions allowed the commission to augment their memorial with a statue. Adolph Alexander Weinman, a German native and pupil of Augustus Saint-Gaudens, won the commission. He produced a seated bronze Lincoln mounted on a marble base that was displayed in the Hodgenville square. Local women formed the Ladies Lincoln League to care for and promote visitation to Hodgenville's Lincoln statue.<sup>49</sup>

The town's fortunes rose after the statue's May 31, 1909, dedication. Tourism increased, and the town square grew in proportion.<sup>50</sup> Just three miles south of Hodgenville, the Lincoln Farm

Association (LFA) began construction on a memorial building, which quickly overshadowed the Hodgenville effort. However, the pink granite and marble building erected by the LFA briefly catapulted obscure Hodgenville into the national limelight.

The LFA germinated in Richard Lloyd Jones's personal interest in Lincoln. In April 1904, *Unity*, a Chicago religious weekly edited by Jones's father, Jenkin Lloyd Jones, lamented Dennett's shameful neglect of the farm and commercial exploitation of the cabin. Richard Lloyd Jones, then managing editor of *Collier's Weekly*, enlisted the support of his employer, Robert Collier. Thus, financially supported, Jones traveled in 1905 to Hodgenville to investigate the property, fully aware of Dennett's failing fortunes. Jones quickly retained a Hodgenville lawyer to advise him when the property might be available for purchase. In August 1905, Jones placed the winning bid at the public auction of the Sinking Spring Farm. In February 1906, Jones, through *Collier's*, announced the formation of the Lincoln Farm Association and solicited contributions to construct a Lincoln memorial at the farm. The LFA membership subscription cost as little as 25 cents and could not exceed \$25.00. In this way, all Americans could contribute to the memorial fund. In its first drive to raise funds, the LFA, upon purchasing the "original" Lincoln cabin from Crear, commenced a cross-country railroad tour with the dismantled cabin. Unknown to the LFA, the logs they bought for \$1,000 also contained many of the alleged Jefferson Davis cabin logs. Large crowds met the train in Pennsylvania and Indiana and viewed the logs before they were reassembled in Louisville's Central Park for the Kentucky Homecoming Week.<sup>51</sup>



Figure 15. Kentucky militia guard a railroad flatcar loaded with the birthplace cabin logs, 1906

When the LFA attempted to erect the Lincoln cabin in Louisville, it realized something was amiss. Because the Lincoln and Davis cabin logs were mixed by Thompson and Dundy, the Central Park cabin featured a rear entry, two doors, a mantle, and two windows. The logs bought by the LFA appeared to originate from three different sets: one marked by incised roman numerals, the second with black paint marks, and the third without marks. The cabin erected by the LFA at the Lincoln farm for the cornerstone laying ceremonies closely resembled that constructed by Bigham, with one central door and one window opening. The LFA added glass panes and muntins. The disposition of the additional logs is unknown.<sup>52</sup>



Fig 16. Richard Lloyd Jones, Clarence Mackay, and Robert Collier of the Lincoln Farm Association stand in front of their cabin just prior to the construction of the Memorial Building, 1909

The LFA represented a diverse group of intellectuals, politicians, public servants, artists, and business and religious interests. The LFA's motto, "Organized and incorporated to develop the Lincoln Birthplace Farm into a National Park" possessed great possibility. The *Louisville Courier-Journal* rejoiced that men of considerable wealth now possessed the property and would be "willing to spend large sums to beautify and ornament it in the proper way."<sup>53</sup> Despite the small, self-imposed subscription limit, the LFA raised the necessary building funds in four years, largely by accepting several generous contributions. The LFA engaged John Russell Pope, a promising architect trained at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, to design the monument on a grand scale. However, limited subscriptions and an embryonic plan to commemorate Lincoln in Washington, D.C., reduced the grandeur of Pope's original concepts. Running behind schedule, the LFA could not complete



Figure 17. Curious Kentuckians gather at the site of the soon-to-be Memorial Building, 1909

the building in time for the Lincoln Centennial. Instead, President Theodore Roosevelt and other dignitaries attended the cornerstone ceremony on the Lincoln Centennial, February 12, 1909. Two years later, President William Taft presided over the dedication ceremonies on November 9, 1911.<sup>54</sup>

After purchasing the Lincoln cabin, the LFA launched its own authenticity investigation. Of the affidavits collected in LaRue County, those of Zerelda Jane Goff, Lafayette Wilson, and Judge John C. Creal were most relevant. Goff stated that the birth cabin logs had been moved to Dr. George Rodman's property but she could not recollect when. Wilson stated that he had moved the birth cabin logs to the farm later owned by John Davenport in March 1860.<sup>55</sup> Judge Creal stated his belief that the Davenport house purchased by Bigham in 1895 was a "comparatively new house." Although the three statements contained obvious contradictions, the LFA remained confident of the cabin's authenticity.<sup>56</sup>

Once completed, the Memorial Building would house the cabin for display and preservation purposes. The LFA erected the cabin for the cornerstone ceremony and then disassembled and stored it until 1911 when it was reerected within the Memorial Building. Unfortunately, the Memorial

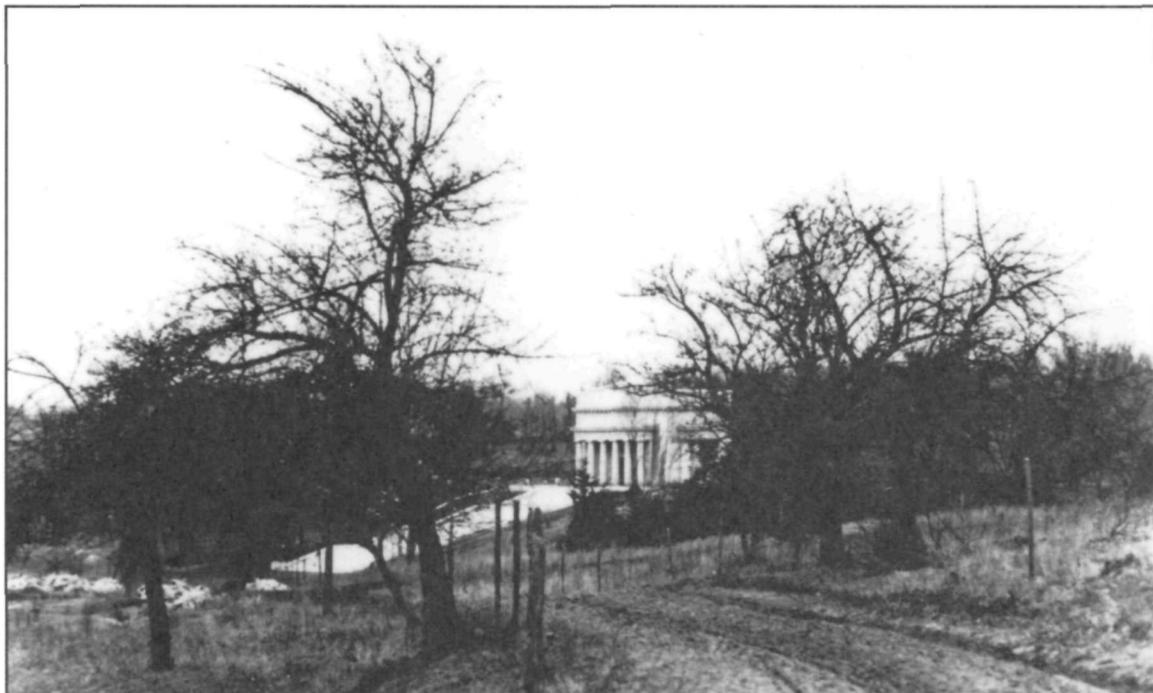


Figure 18. The Memorial Building and steps as they appeared just prior to dedication, 1911

Building's interior proved too small for both the cabin and visitor circulation. Despite lamenting previous abuses of the cabin, the LFA reduced the sixteen by eighteen foot cabin by sawing off the log ends, reducing it to twelve by seventeen feet.<sup>57</sup>

Immediately following the dedication of the Lincoln Birthplace Memorial, the LFA pursued its goal of establishing the farm as a national park. Several attempts in 1912, and subsequent years, failed. Finally, a bill introduced in January 1916 passed through committee without amendment, and President Woodrow Wilson signed H. R. 8351 into law July 17, 1916. Wilson, while president of Princeton University, had supported the LFA's goal of creating a national park. The law established Abraham Lincoln National Park by deed of gift from the Lincoln Farm Association accompanied by a \$50,000 endowment fund for park maintenance.<sup>58</sup> A complete discussion of the LFA and the design and construction of the Lincoln Birthplace Memorial is found in Chapter Three of this study.

#### **NATIONAL PARK DEVELOPMENT, 1916-1935**

The bill placed the memorial building, log cabin, and grounds under the authority of the Secretary of War. The secretary determined that a nonresident commissioner and a resident custodian should be appointed to administer the national park. Richard Lloyd Jones volunteered to serve as commissioner, and the government paid him a nominal annual salary of \$100. John A. Cissell, a grandson of John Creal, continued his previous service as custodian for the LFA, begun in 1910, under the War Department. Cissell later served as the first park superintendent under the National Park Service.<sup>59</sup>

Cissell and his assistant, W. G. Ragsdale, resided on the farm and cultivated part of the farm acreage, approximately ten acres, in bluegrass and tobacco. Jones, as commissioner, did not visit the site often and made few recommendations for repair and upkeep. By 1926, the park showed signs of neglect, and the Secretary of War determined that the Quartermaster General in Jeffersonville, Indiana, should assume more control over park maintenance. Although Jones kept an advisory position, he no longer acted as commissioner.<sup>60</sup>

As a first course of action, the War Department determined that the annual spring flooding of the plaza and spring needed immediate attention. The flooding deposited a layer of mud and debris on the unpaved plaza that also served as a parking area. Visitors often parked around the flagpole in the court to limit their exposure to the soggy ground. This frequent inundation doubly impacted the visitor because the road connecting the highway and the plaza was not paved. Between 1911 and 1916, the LFA performed few, if any, improvements on the property. Under Richard Lloyd Jones's administration, it also is apparent that no investments in the site were made. After years of neglect, the War Department decided to act in 1928.<sup>61</sup>

The War Department inherited a designed landscape, as well as a memorial building. Pope's plans included the Memorial Building on the knoll and a descending granite stair with pea gravel landings. Pope also included a gravel plaza, approximately seventy feet in diameter, with a central flagpole on axis with the stairs and the Memorial Building.<sup>62</sup> At the 1911 dedication, the landscape consisted of stepped grass panels outlined by low hedges with an additional line of hedges that flanked the stairs. A row of Lombardy poplars lay outside each hedged rectangle. At the foot of the stairs lay a grassed plaza that roughly followed the rectangular shape of the basin. A flagpole graced the center of the plaza.<sup>63</sup> The Sinking Spring, located just west of the stairs, remained in its natural state, and the remaining grounds were grassed, wooded, or under cultivation. Visitors entered the court from the south and the east. Four pink granite markers, two incised with "Lincoln Birthplace Memorial," marked the unpaved entrance road.<sup>64</sup>

In the fiscal year 1928-29, the War Department allocated \$5,000 to improve the unpaved approach road, create parking facilities, and provide some measure of flood control. The Engineering Division of the War Department drew plans for widening and paving the existing "old Telford Road." President Herbert Hoover approved on February 14, 1929, more congressional appropriations for repairs and improvement. By June 1929, the War Department had spent approximately \$4,000 to replace the deteriorating split-rail fencing and construct the stone steps and retaining walls that form the spring entrance. The War Department erected rail fencing along the west side of U.S. 31E, along the approach road, and around the plaza.<sup>65</sup>

By the close of 1930, the War Department had changed the site through a rigorous construction campaign. It had completed a well system to pump fresh water, including two stone pump houses. To alleviate the flooding problems, the Engineering Division constructed a stone and concrete dam and drain to catch and carry away the excess water that inundated the basin. The War Department also constructed a log comfort station with a terra cotta pipe leaching field, a picnic pavilion, and over 1,000 feet of limestone walkways to improve sanitation problems and visitor circulation. Two sets of granite steps, located on the northeast and southwest facades of the Memorial Building, provided access to the new comfort station, picnic pavilion, and back down to the plaza area. Flagstone paths east and west of the Memorial Building linked the parking area,

visitor facilities, the plaza, and the Memorial Building. A stone, three-bay garage, located northeast of the Memorial Building between the pump houses, completed the maintenance facility. Finally, miscellaneous shrubbery was planted along the new paths and around the newly formalized plaza area.<sup>66</sup>

The access road, paved with rock asphalt, consisted of an approximately 1280 foot long drive terminating at an elliptical parking loop approximately 230 feet in diameter. The approach road apparently had little natural vegetation and may have been planted. A stair, consisting of two flights of terraced limestone steps, linked the parking ellipse with the east end of the plaza via a flagstone path. Visitors now approached the Memorial Building from the east via a paved road and flagstone paths.

The basin area incurred the greatest change during the War Department administration. Visitors once entered, generally by car, a grassed basin with a central flagpole that served as both court and parking area. By 1913, gravel covered the court surface and a small circle of grass remained around the flagpole. The War Department formalized the court into a rectangular, flagstone-lined plaza enclosed with waist-high hedges and intended for pedestrians. Cars remained on the parking ellipse. The plaza, completed in 1929, measures approximately two hundred by eighty feet and is oriented on a northeast to southwest axis. Flagstone paths transected the plaza on parallel and perpendicular axes to the Memorial Building. A limestone bench and wall occupied the southeast plaza boundary, and a limestone wall, presumably the dam, formed the southwest plaza boundary in front of the Boundary Oak. The flagpole, surrounded by flagstone paths and a grassed court, occupied the center of the plaza. Limestone benches, formerly located in the open

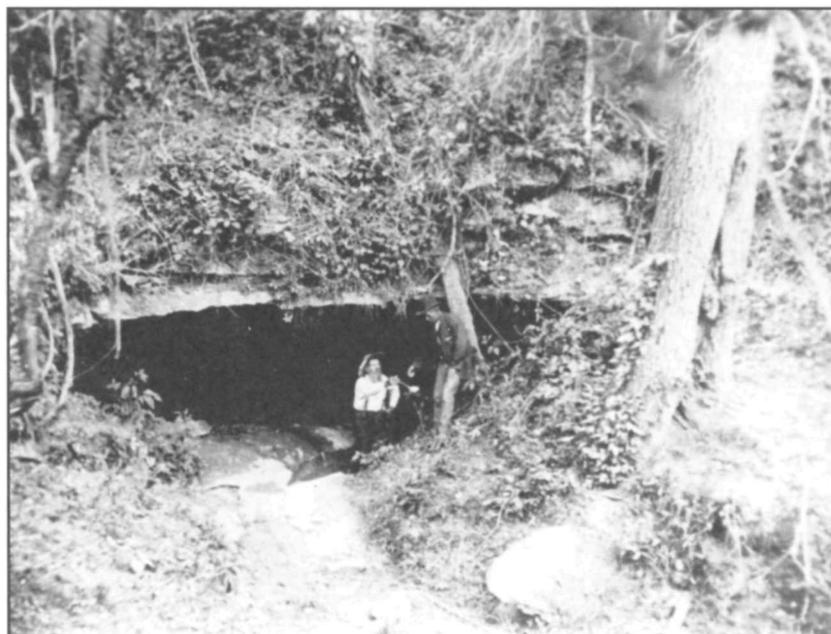


Figure 19. This photograph shows the Sinking Spring as it appeared prior to War Department modification (circa 1890s).

court, were relocated to the landings of the Memorial Building staircase and around the building itself.<sup>67</sup>

The two-story log house, located in a thicket west of U.S. 31E, known as the Old Creal House, remained vacant and in deteriorating condition throughout the War Department tenure.<sup>68</sup>

In 1933, the National Park Service (NPS) assumed responsibility for the Abraham Lincoln National Park from the War Department. Between 1930 and the end of World War II, few improvements or alterations to the Memorial Building and grounds occurred. The NPS inherited a landscape greatly altered from what it perceived as the original design intent of Pope and the LFA. NPS Historian Roy Appleman, upon visiting the site in March 1938, criticized the park's deteriorated condition and overly formal landscaping. The grounds have "too many flagstone and concrete walks, courts, and unnecessary and undesirable buildings."<sup>69</sup>

In 1935, the NPS initiated one of several planting plans. The 1935 landscape work, performed by Public Works Administration laborers between March and June, intended to retain the alterations the War Department had made. The plan called for replacing dying vegetation and elements, such as the poplars, long since removed by the War Department. The NPS also created vegetative screens along the park's southern boundary.<sup>70</sup> Tourist attractions, both on U.S. 31E and within sight of the Memorial Building at the Nancy Lincoln Inn, significantly detracted from the site's solemnity. The NPS attempted to visually shield the Memorial Building and plaza from the inn through vegetation, mostly red cedars.



Figure 20. Memorial Building plaza and steps, 1938

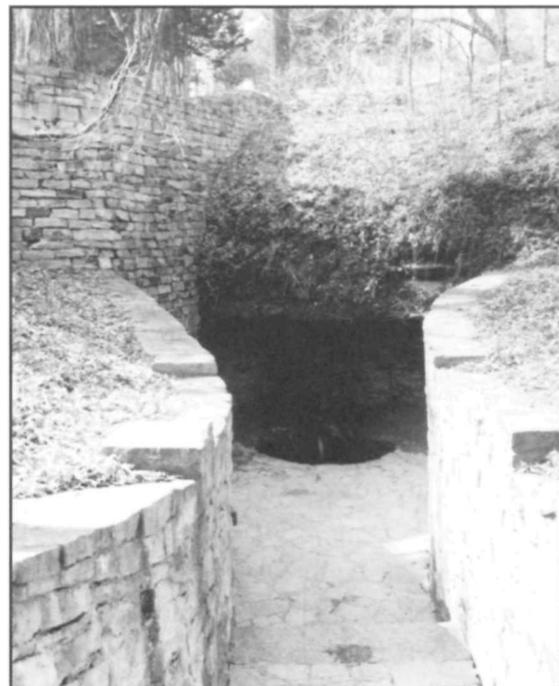


Figure 21. The Sinking Spring, 1938. Note the extensive stonework and paving added by the War Department.

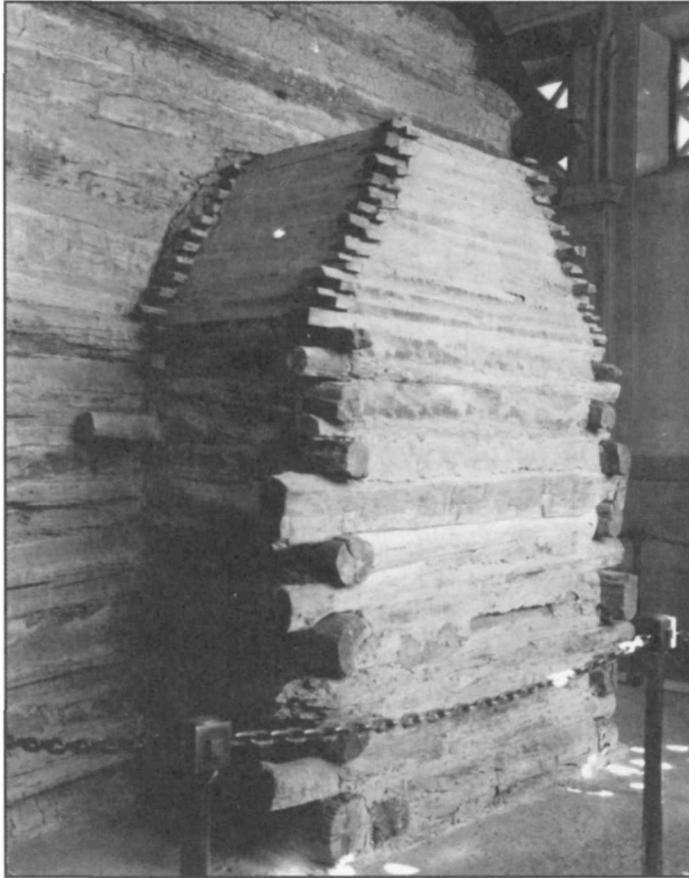


Figure 22. Traditional Birthplace Cabin, 1938

Within the Memorial Building, the reconstructed cabin displayed years of abuse through its unevenly sawn-off log ends, irregular notching, and large gaps in the log walls. A remnant of a flag pole, installed by Dennett and Bigham, remained in the concrete floor of the cabin. The door and window frames were made of sawn lumber and fastened with machine-made nails. Finally, marble plaques addressing the history of the farm and Lincoln's parents contained numerous inaccuracies.<sup>71</sup>

The NPS did not immediately rectify all the problems associated with the Site, particularly those that related to historical accuracy. However, the NPS immediately replaced the concrete cabin floor with a dirt floor and removed the flagpole. The agency also fitted the window and door frames with hand-hewn boards and peg fasteners. The

marble plaques were plastered and painted until further study could amend their texts.<sup>72</sup>

The NPS determined that an accurate boundary survey and historic documentation of the Site should be completed first. Historian Benjamin Davis transferred to the park from Mammoth Cave National Park in January 1947 and proceeded to research the origins of the farm, aided by Melvin Weig of Morristown National Historical Park, and to revise the park's interpretive pamphlet. Davis prepared the "Report on the Original Thomas Lincoln Nolin Creek Farm, Based on Court Records" in July 1948. Davis concluded that the park's 110 acres had been part of the original Thomas Lincoln farm. In October 1948, Roy Hays, an insurance investigator, published an article entitled "Is the Lincoln Birthplace Cabin Authentic?" Davis submitted documentation that addressed Hays', Louis Warren's, the Lincoln Farm Association's, and his own primary research and concluded that the Rodman tradition was without foundation.<sup>73</sup>

Subsequent alterations to park buildings and grounds by the NPS changed some historic fabric associated with the Memorial Building and its grounds, but the feeling and association of the site remained undisturbed. The memorial landscape, consisting of hedges and tall trees flanking the staircase, although replanted, remained intact. In 1941, the NPS razed the log Creal House.

A new sign, reflecting the renamed park, Abraham Lincoln National Historical Park, graced the main entrance some time after 1939. The park also purchased six acres associated with the Boundary Oak, considered a significant Lincoln-era landmark.

In 1959, the park constructed a visitor center on the north side of the parking ellipse, eliminating most of the parking on this portion of the loop. In the same year, the park demolished the picnic pavilion and log comfort station and built two new residences.<sup>74</sup>



Figure 23. The Boundary Oak, 1938

The Lincoln Farm Association, the War Department, and the National Park Service accomplished numerous changes at the Sinking Spring Farm from 1909 to 1959. These agencies transformed a few acres of rolling farm country of central Kentucky into a formal secular shrine complete with a classical temple and a carefully manicured landscape.

## LINCOLN AND TWENTIETH CENTURY

### POPULAR CULTURE: AUTOMOBILE TOURISM

Throughout the 1920s and 1930s, visitation to the birthplace and other Lincoln historical sites escalated in direct proportion to improved roads and better automobiles. The War Department sharply felt the effects of increased park visitation. In 1927, over 20,000 visitors annually entered the park. Each year, over 8,000 cars drove onto the property, often bypassing the inadequate park entrance roads and driving over fields. Visitors routinely parked their autos on the court below the flagpole and picnicking visitors left behind their debris. Improvements to accommodate motoring park visitors were expedited, by the late 1920s, before the landscape deteriorated completely.<sup>75</sup>

War Department and NPS administrators also worried about exterior commercial encroachment, generated by auto tourism, and its effect on the park's historic scene. In particular, the Nancy Lincoln Inn, described as a restaurant, souvenir shop, and dance hall, lay just outside the park boundary, south of the Memorial Building, and posed a threat to the historic site's dignity.<sup>76</sup>

Lincoln historic sites dotted the Kentucky countryside and extended beyond the state borders to other Lincoln homesteads in Indiana and Illinois. At least two Kentucky sites, the Nancy Lincoln Inn and the Knob Creek Farm, catered to automobile tourists during the 1920s and the 1930s.<sup>77</sup> Both of these sites and the Lincoln birthplace benefited from federal aid to states

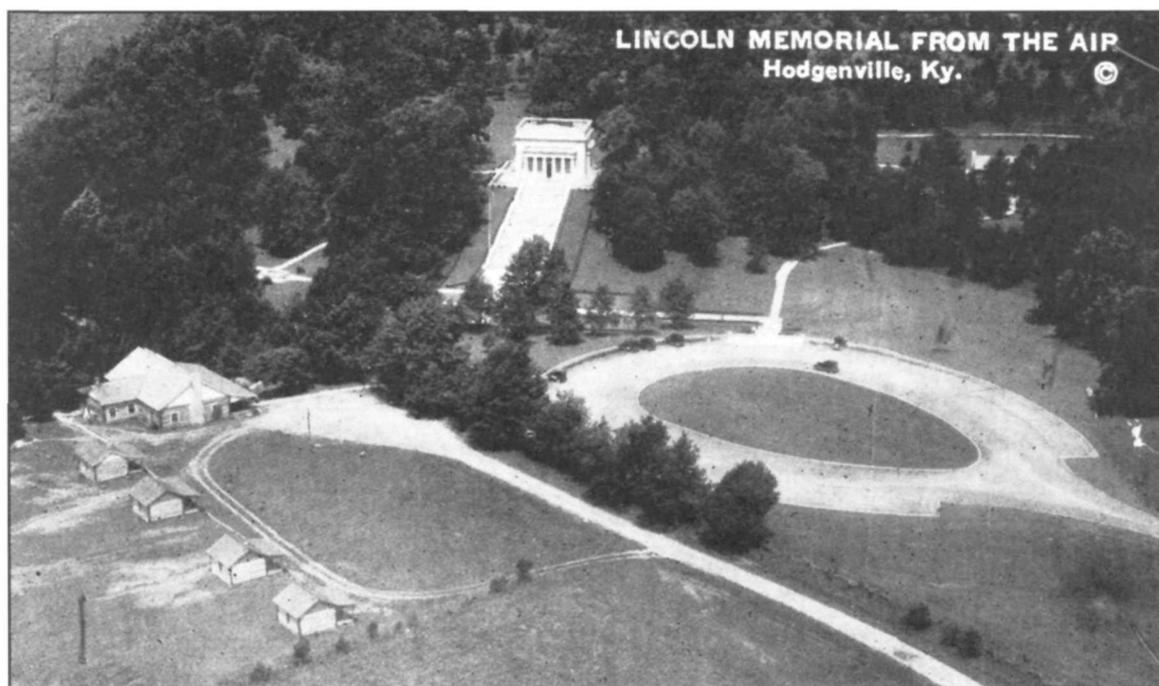


Figure 24. Aerial photograph postcard of the Lincoln Memorial (circa 1936)

for highway construction passed through the Federal Aid Road Act of 1916 and the Federal Highway Act of 1921. During the 1920s, the Kentucky Highway Department constructed U. S. 31E, along older routes, which provided access to all three LaRue County Lincoln historic sites. In addition, the Lincoln Memorial Highway Association began construction of the Lincoln Trail, a memorial highway passing through Kentucky, Indiana, and Illinois. The trail follows the route the Lincolns traveled in these states and was originally marked by road signs and historic structures.<sup>78</sup>

The Nancy Lincoln Inn, constructed in 1928, consists of a large, round-log building that houses a souvenir shop, snack bar, and Lincoln memorabilia. The inn operated four, one-room overnight tourist cabins that are currently unoccupied. Jim Howell constructed and operated this concession, located just south of the Memorial Building and plaza, from 1928 to 1946. Family members continue to operate the inn.

The Knob Creek Farm, Lincoln's home from 1811 to 1817, is another roadside tourist attraction along U.S. 31E. In 1931, Hattie and Chester Howard purchased 308 acres along Knob Creek recognized by Lincoln as his childhood home. The Howards erected a large, round-log building and operated a tavern and restaurant there. In addition, the Howards moved a traditional log cabin, built by the Gollaher family circa 1800, closer to U.S. 31E from another location on the farm and opened it to tourists.<sup>79</sup> Both the Nancy Lincoln Inn and the Lincoln Boyhood Home at Knob Creek Farm still operate as tourist attractions.

Two other parks, the Pioneer Memorial State Park and the Lincoln Homestead State Park, commemorate Lincoln's parents and grandparents. Pioneer Memorial State Park, dedicated by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1934, consisted of an abandoned graveyard and quarry site in 1923. The park is located in Harrodsburg, Kentucky, due east of Bardstown. A Works

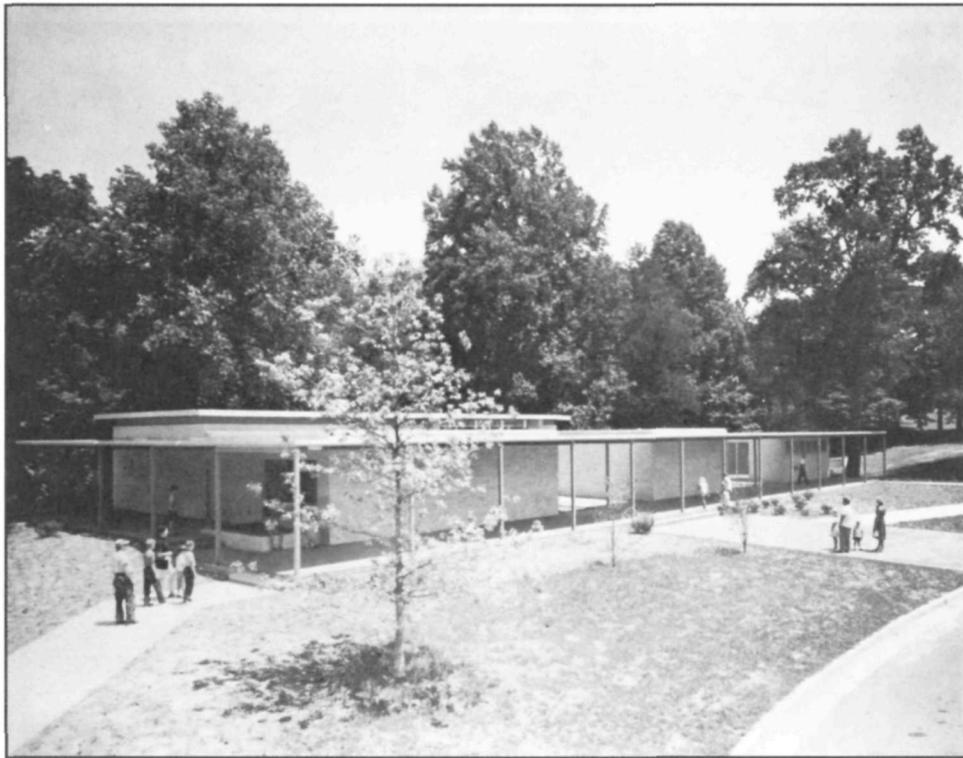


Figure 25. The Mission 66 Visitor Center, 1959

Projects Administration Federal Writers' Project guidebook to Kentucky describes the Lincoln Marriage Temple, one of many attractions at this historic park. The temple is a red brick building, cruciform in plan, with a central pulpit. The Lincoln Marriage Cabin now stands in place of the pulpit. Reportedly, the cabin was moved from its original site in the Beech Fork Settlement where Thomas and Nancy Hanks Lincoln married. It resembles the Lincoln birthplace cabin.<sup>80</sup>

Lincoln Homestead State Park, located in Springfield, Kentucky, southeast of Bardstown, contains the purported childhood home of Nancy Hanks Lincoln, a two-story, hewn-log house. In the same park, the Bathsheba (Bersheba) Lincoln Cabin, a reproduction of Lincoln's grandmother's home, is exhibited. The WPA guide recommended the historical reenactments of the Lincoln marriage ceremony held yearly on June 12.<sup>81</sup>

All of the Lincoln sites in Kentucky clearly profited from the expansion of highways in the state and their often tentative historic connections to Lincoln. Other sites and institutions in the state have liberally adopted the name Lincoln, regardless of any historic link to the Lincoln family, because the name carries specific connotations for Americans. Whether the intent is commemorative or economic, the name and memory of Lincoln is evocative.

#### **INTEGRITY OF HISTORIC RESOURCES**

For this context, historic resources need to retain integrity of design, location, feeling, setting, and association. Some alteration of historic materials is considered acceptable as long as the original design intent remains intact. For example, the plaza walkways retain integrity of location, design,



Figure 26. Aerial photo of the Lincoln Birthplace Memorial complex, 1959.  
Note the buildings of the Nancy Lincoln Inn in the foreground.

feeling, and association although the historic fabric has been removed. The workmanship of the limestone structures is evident although some deteriorated materials may have been replaced with nonhistoric fabric. The setting is largely undisturbed, although numerous changes within the historic period occurred. The historic resources classified as noncontributing lack integrity of setting, design intent, or feeling. For example, the entrance drive and parking area, because of nonhistoric intrusions, have lost some of the original pastoral feeling associated with the long winding road and graceful ellipse. Because feeling and association are largely subjective, the LCS team relied heavily on photographic evidence and several key site plans and planting plans to determine the level of integrity based on these aspects.

#### CONTRIBUTING RESOURCES

*Memorial Building and Steps:* A complete description of the building and staircase can be found in Chapter Three.

*Memorial Landscape:* This includes the landscape elements represented in Pope's design plans; the landscape that accompanied the building's dedication in 1911; the changes effected by the War Department between 1929 and 1930; and the additional landscaping initiated by the NPS in 1935, which restored some of the original landscape configurations altered over time.

The landscape that accompanied the Memorial Building and steps at the 1911 dedication

consisted of three elements: two sets of hedges and a row of Lombardy poplars located behind the hedges. The stairs are flanked by one rectangular hedge and a taller hedge row on the outer edge of the rectangle. Grass covered the exposed ground among the hedges and within the mown basin area at the foot of the stairs. Within two years, gravel replaced the grass in the court and a circle of grass surrounded the centrally located flagpole.

In 1929-1930, the War Department reconfigured the landscape by reconstructing the court and adding numerous stone structures. The War Department enlarged the court to a rectangular plaza, approximately two hundred by eighty feet, oriented on a northeast by southwest axis. Flagstone paths transected the plaza with the longest axis parallel to the Memorial Building. These paths are now laid with a pea gravel aggregate, but preserve their original orientation. A coursed limestone bench, approximately eight feet long and four feet tall, is set in a forty-four foot wall and serves as the southwest plaza boundary. The Sinking Spring lies directly south of the Memorial Building stairway and has coursed limestone walls, progressively taller from the top of the stair to the spring, that create a stair wall and also serve as a retaining wall behind the spring. Three runs of eight flagstone steps descend to a flagstone platform, which encircles the spring pool, approximately six to eight feet below. Two drain pipes are located in this sinkhole and are connected to storm drain pipes under the plaza. Two stone benches are affixed to the south wall at the platform level. The final plaza structure is a limestone and concrete stair that descends from the parking ellipse to the northeast plaza entrance. This thirteen foot wide stair consists of two runs of twelve and thirteen steps and two coursed limestone walls with stone pedestals. The steps, likely originally flagstone, are now concrete and the landings are paved with pea gravel aggregate.

*Boundary Oak Site:* The Boundary Oak was one of the most significant features at both the historic Sinking Spring Farm and the park. Until its death, the great white oak remained the “last living link” to Abraham Lincoln and was of considerable historic interest and value. The tree served as a boundary marker and survey point for determining property lines. The Boundary Oak was first identified as a specific boundary marker in the original 1805 survey of the farm. The tree was located less than 150 yards from the cabin where Abraham Lincoln was born in 1809. Before its death in 1976 and its removal in 1986, the Boundary Oak reached 6 feet in diameter, 90 feet in height, and had a crown spread of 115 feet.

Three separate analyses of a cross section of the tree concluded that the large oak sprouted sometime in 1781. The cross section is now located in the Visitor Center and serves as a template for a chronology of Abraham Lincoln’s life and related events. Although the tree is gone, its stump remains as the primary identifying feature of the original farm boundary.

*Sinking Spring:* The Sinking Spring is a natural landscape feature related to Abraham Lincoln’s formative years. Early NPS interpretation of the spring noted how “the infant child, Abraham, had his earliest drinks from these waters.”<sup>82</sup> This simple but evocative statement is no doubt true; such springs usually dictated the site for a farm residence on the Pennyroyal. In addition, the Lincoln birthplace farm had always taken its name from the spring instead of the property’s owner, being variously known as “The Sinking Spring,” “Rock Spring,” and “Cave Spring” farm.<sup>83</sup> The hydro-

ogy of the spring is typical of that in the Pennyroyal, and the many small ponds that dot the landscape surrounding the park are likely similar sinking springs that have collapsed.<sup>84</sup> Drainage in the Pennyroyal is achieved less by surface rivers and streams than it is by subterranean ones, and the Sinking Spring is a singular example of this larger drainage pattern.

#### NONCONTRIBUTING RESOURCES

*Boundary Oak Storm Drain and Dam:* Although two boxlike structures appear on War Department site plans in 1931 and 1932 and on NPS planting plans for 1935, it is unclear if the existing limestone wall and drain represents either of these structures. No photographic evidence is available that would verify this hypothesis. Thus, these structures are considered noncontributing until further documentation is available.

*Employee Residences:* Two, single-story ranch-style houses for park employees were constructed in 1959 as part of the Mission 66 program. The houses do not contribute to the memorial landscape. Please note the discussion below on these properties' potential eligibility to the National Register.

*Visitor Center:* The Visitor Center was constructed in 1958 and 1959 as part of the Mission 66 program. The building was designed by the NPS's Eastern Office of Design and Construction (EODC) and built by a Lexington, Kentucky, construction firm. The single-story, flat-roof building has been altered over the years; the most observable change was the installation of a glass atrium over the building's originally open entryway.

A recently published study on NPS visitor centers has provided a context that will help in evaluating their significance.<sup>85</sup> Of the Park Service's estimated 114 Mission 66 visitor centers, only five to date have been recognized for their architectural significance. Three of these five properties were declared National Historic Landmarks early in 2001. The remaining visitor centers, however, including the one under discussion here, were based on generic plans and what the author of the aforementioned visitor center study noted as an "assembly-line" mentality. Although the same author also notes the "potential historic value" of all Mission 66 visitor centers, because the Lincoln Birthplace visitor center was based on the standardized designs of the EODC and because alterations to the building have compromised its original design, it is considered noncontributing at this time. At the time of this writing, the entire Mission 66 program and its architecture is being reexamined, and a theme study is being written to guide the determination of the National Register eligibility of individual properties. The Mission 66 structures at the Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historic Site should be reevaluated when the theme study is completed.

#### *Maintenance Garage*

A single-story, four-bay maintenance garage is located northeast of the Memorial Building.

*Storage Building and Pumphouse*

Two War Department-era structures, a storage building (previously used as the Superintendent's office) and a pumphouse, are on either side of the park's maintenance garage. These small stone structures, although well over 50 years old, were not part of the program of commemoration at the Site.

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**NOTES**

1. Among the major centennials were the battles of Lexington and Concord (1875), the Declaration of Independence (1876), the British surrender at Yorktown (1881), and the Constitution (1888).
2. The apotheosis of Lincoln was initially a northern phenomenon. Some southerners lamented the likely effects on the South of Lincoln's death, but few expressed regret at their adversary's passing. Later in the century, a general spirit of reconciliation enhanced Lincoln's reputation in the South but resulted in few memorials. A 1952 compilation of eighty-seven major Lincoln statues did not include a single work in a former Confederate state (Oates, *Abraham Lincoln: The Man Behind the Myths*, 21-23; F. Lauriston Bullard, *Lincoln in Marble and Bronze* [New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1952], 8-9).
3. David Donald, *Lincoln's Herndon* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1948), 167.
4. Roy Basler, *The Lincoln Legend: A Study in Changing Conceptions* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1935), 3-5; Donald, 164-68; Oates, *Abraham Lincoln: The Man Behind the Myths*, 4-5.
5. Oates, *Abraham Lincoln: The Man Behind the Myths*, 9; Victor Searcher, *The Farewell to Lincoln* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1965), 51-93; Neely, 121-22.
6. Walt Whitman, "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd," *Leaves of Grass* (based on the text of the 9th ed., 1892) (New York: Signet, 1955), 265-71.
7. Donald, 168; Basler, 35-37.
8. Quoted in Donald, 370.
9. Neely, 149; Donald, 370.
10. The book's poor sales resulted as much from an inept, nearly bankrupt publisher as from Herndon's refusal to exclude information that didn't conform with Lincoln's saintly image (Donald, 334-42).
11. Neely, 145-48, 177-78; Donald, 170-83, 212-17, 322-34, 370-73; Oates, *Abraham Lincoln: The Man Behind the Myths*, 6-7.
12. John D. Hicks, *The American Nation: A History of the United States from 1865 to the Present* 3d ed. (Cambridge, Mass.: Houghton Mifflin, 1955), Appendix, xviii; John A. Garraty, *The New Commonwealth, 1877-1890* (New York: Harper & Row, 1968), 1-4, 15.
13. Garraty, 78-83; Louis M. Hacker and Benjamin B. Kendrick, *The United States Since 1865* 4th ed. (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1949), 157.
14. Garraty, 139; Hacker and Kendrick, 162-64.
15. Sean Dennis Cashman, *America in the Gilded Age* 2d Ed. (New York: New York University Press, 1988), 15-16; Hicks, 197-99; Garraty, 179, 201-3.
16. Quoted in Hacker and Kendrick, 61.
17. Donald, 168; Hacker and Kendrick, 61-64.
18. Robert H. Wiebe, *The Search for Order, 1877-1920* (New York: Hill & Wang, 1967), 39.
19. James D. Hart, *The Popular Book: A History of America's Literary Taste* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1950), 161, 201-23.

20. Basler, 45-47.
21. C. A. Weslager, *The Log Cabin in America: From Pioneer Days to the Present* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1969), 261-70.
22. Weslager, 288; Oates, *With Malice Toward None*, 180-85; Thomas, 216.
23. Robert G. Ferris, ed., *The Presidents: Historic Places Commemorating the Chief Executives of the United States* (Washington, D.C.: 1976), 577; Charles B. Hosmer, Jr., *Presence of the Past: A History of the Historic Preservation Movement in the United States Before Williamsburg* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1965), 47-51.
24. Hosmer, 59-60, 66, 81-84.
25. Neely, 309-10; F. Lauriston Bullard, *Lincoln In Marble and Bronze* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1952), 58-59.
26. Neely, 114; *The National Parks: Index 1991*, 31.
27. Bullard, 28-29, 40, 46, 67, 79, 144-50.
28. Hosmer, 72-74; *The National Parks: Index 1991*, 31, 39.
29. Merrill D. Peterson, *Lincoln in American Memory* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 55-60.
30. The three Lincoln statues in Washington were standing figures mounted on low pedestals.
30. Bullard, 333-35; Bates Lowry, *Building a National Image: Architectural Drawings for the American Democracy, 1789-1912* (Washington, D.C.: National Building Museum, 1985) 83-85; Norman T. Newton, *Design on the Land: The Development of Landscape Architecture* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1971), 403-7.
31. Neely, 173.
32. Neely, 173-74; McPherson, 295-96.
33. Neely, 173, 284-85.
34. Hays, 128-29. Lincoln himself was vague concerning the location of his birthplace, remembering it was located on Nolin Creek, but not much else.
35. Gross wanted to purchase 110 acres that represented a portion of the original 348.5 acre farm owned by Thomas Lincoln. In 1894, Richard Creal resided on the farm in a two-story log house, erected circa 1860.
36. Both of these efforts, one for George Washington and the other for Andrew Jackson, preserved the residences of these national leaders. Ultimately, the two ladies societies responsible for preserving the properties raised funds to restore the homes by charging admission fees. Because no cabin existed on the Sinking Spring property, it is unclear how Gross intended to follow the example of Mount Vernon or the Hermitage as Picaithley suggests. See Dwight T. Picaithley, "A Splendid Hoax: The Strange Case of Abraham Lincoln's Birthplace Cabin," paper presented at the 1991 Annual Meeting of the Organization of American Historians, 3; Hosmer, 51-61, 69-72; Hays, 129.
37. Hays, 134-36.

38. Roy Hays's 1948 article "Is the Lincoln Birthplace Cabin Authentic?" thoroughly examined the traditional birth cabin's origins. NPS historian Benjamin H. Davis also examined the cabin's authenticity in three reports: "A Report on the Abraham Lincoln Traditional Birthplace Cabin," May 16, 1948; "Report of Research on the Traditional Abraham Lincoln Birthplace Cabin" February 15, 1949; "Comments on Statements Made by Dr. L. A. Warren Concerning the Traditional Lincoln Birthplace Cabin," October 7, 1950.
39. Davis, "Report of Research on the Traditional Abraham Lincoln Birthplace Cabin," 32-33; at the Nashville and Buffalo exhibitions, the cabin measured sixteen by eighteen feet (Weslager, 290).
40. In September 1895, Russell Evans, a local Elizabethtown photographer, took pictures of the Lincoln farm and cabin that revealed the improvements Bigham had made upon the property and the cabin itself. Hays, 132; also, Gloria Peterson, Plates I and II. Various affidavits collected by the LFA also dispute the original location of the cabin upon the knoll or closer to the spring. See Davis, "Report of Research on the Traditional Abraham Lincoln Birthplace Cabin," 7-8, 13, 24, 28, 30-31.
41. Davis, "Report of Research on the Traditional Abraham Lincoln Birthplace Cabin," 2-3.
42. Davis, "Report of Research on the Traditional Abraham Lincoln Birthplace Cabin," 34-5; Hays, 36-7; Weslager, 290.
43. Hays, 137-38.
44. Hays, 138-39.
45. Hays, 140-44.
46. Hays, 148.
47. Hays, 147-51.
48. Thomason, E19-E22, E24-E25.
49. Bullard, 123-24, 126; Thomason, E24-E25.
50. Thomason, E22.
51. Hays, 155-56; Richard Lloyd Jones, "The Lincoln Birthplace Farm," *Collier's Weekly* (February 10, 1906): 12-20.
52. Hays, 157-58; Photographs found in G. Peterson, Plate VI.
53. *Louisville Courier-Journal*, August 29, 1905, as quoted in Peterson, 21. Several notable members and committee chairs included: Samuel Clemens, Augustus Saint-Gaudens, William Taft, Henry Watterson, August Belmont, Cardinal Gibbons, Robert J. Collier, Clarence Mackay, and Ida Tarbell.
54. G. Peterson, 31-33.
55. Because the Republican Party did not nominate Lincoln for the presidency until May 1860, the supposed moving of his birth cabin in March 1860 was probably not motivated by veneration for Lincoln.
56. G. Peterson, 14-15, 31-33; Hays, 159-61; the affidavits are reproduced in Davis, "A Report on the Abraham Lincoln Traditional Birthplace Cabin," 9-13.
57. Davis, "A Report on the Abraham Lincoln Traditional Birthplace Cabin," 30; G. Peterson, 26-28; Weslager, 291.

58. All information pertaining to the War Department administration of the site is documented in G. Peterson, who conducted primary research with War Department records at the National Archives. The actual deed of gift was conveyed to the War Department on June 19, 1916; Peterson, 15-37, 99. The LFA referred to the farm as the Lincoln Birthplace Memorial, and two pink granite markers incised with this title at one time marked the farm entrance. Under the direction of the War Department, the site was called the Abraham Lincoln National Park; the name was changed in 1939 to the Abraham Lincoln National Historical Park by the National Park Service to distinguish this historic park from natural parks; in 1959, the park nomenclature again was changed to the Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historic Site; G. Peterson, 65, 78.

59. G. Peterson, 37-39.

60. G. Peterson, 41-42.

61. G. Peterson, 42-43.

62. John Russell Pope, "Terrace Stairs" and "Block Plan" 1908. Drawings on microfilm, National Park Service, Southeast Regional Office, Atlanta.

63. Two photographs dated July 27, 1913 illustrate the existing conditions prior to the War Department administration. Photographs courtesy of the Filson Club, Louisville, Kentucky.

64. Ida M. Tarbell describes in *In the Footsteps of the Lincolns* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1924) that "You approach the monument by a winding driveway, on each side of which the natural growth of the land has been left. . . . The landscape gardening," she continues, "simply protects the drive, the staircase, the temple itself from the encroachment of the woods, leaving the natural setting undisturbed" (Tarbell, 95-96). Also, photographs in Warren, facing page 97. There is some question regarding the natural state of the Sinking Spring. In 1926, Warren in *Lincoln's Parentage and Childhood* illustrates a coursed wall and stone stair leading down to an overgrown spring, with a natural rock ledge. Early documentation related to the spring has not been uncovered. The four granite markers also have not been accurately documented. Warren illustrates two of the short square blocks in a pre-1926 photograph. However, the function or location of the incised tablets has not been determined (Warren, illustrations opposite pages 97 and 144); Undated photographs, c. 1911 Dedication Ceremony, Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historic Site, Kentucky.

65. G. Peterson, 44, 48, 50.

66. G. Peterson, 44, 52-54. See also Plates XI, XIII, XV, and XVII. For comparison, 1913 photographs in possession of The Filson Club, Louisville, Kentucky, illustrate the site prior to any plaza construction; also, Warren, photographs facing page 97 depict the informal plaza and the declining health of the Lombardy poplars. "Contour Map of the Lincoln Birthplace Memorial" by the Office of Constructing Quartermaster, Hodgenville, Kentucky, June 30, 1931, is a good site plan illustrating the relationship of all the structures to one another.

67. Two War Department site plans illustrate topography, landscaped and natural vegetation, and built structures. "Contour Map," 1931 and "Reservation Map," Lincoln Farm National Monument, compiled by the Construction Division, Office of the Quartermaster General, March 1932. In addition, photographs illustrate the plaza and parking area as they appeared in 1929 and 1934 (Peterson, Plates XI and XV).

68. G. Peterson, 54.

69. G. Peterson, 63; Photographs from 1932 indicate that none of the poplars remained and one row of hedge had been removed, presumably by the War Department (The Filson Club, Louisville, Kentucky).

70. "Planting Plan, Approach Area, Abraham Lincoln National Park," compiled by Eastern Division, Branch of Plans and Design, National Park Service, January 25, 1935; Peterson, 57-58.

71. G. Peterson, 60-63.

72. G. Peterson, 60-1, 66.

73. G. Peterson, 58, 64, 93-94; Davis, "Comments on Statements by Dr. L.A. Warren Concerning the Traditional Lincoln Birthplace Cabin," 1-3.

74. G. Peterson, 76-77.

75. G. Peterson, 44-5.

76. G. Peterson, 50-51.

77. Weslager, 293.

78. Thomason, E26-E27. Many of these Lincoln historic sites and structures associated with the Lincoln Highway are based on conjectural evidence. For example, the Lincoln family resided at the Knob Creek farm, but both the authentic mid-nineteenth century cabin and rusticated tavern/lodge are not originally associated with Lincoln. In addition, much of the original signage is no longer in place due to theft and lack of maintenance.

79. Thomason, E26-E27.

80. Federal Writers' Project, 171-72; Weslager, 294.

81. Weslager, 293; Federal Writers' Project, 379.

82. Taken from interpretive text related in a 1947 letter from Regional Director Elbert Cox to the superintendent of Mamouth Cave.

83. Ibid.

84. Nevin M. Fenneman, *Physiography of the Eastern United States* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1938), 419-421.

85. See Sarah Allaback, *Mission 66 Visitor Centers: The History of a Building Type* (Washington DC: GPO, 2000).

### **CHAPTER THREE: THE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION OF THE LINCOLN BIRTHPLACE MEMORIAL, 1906-1911**

In the months following February 1908, less than a year before the centennial of Lincoln's birth, the directors of the Lincoln Farm Association realized that their limited funds would not provide for the construction of a memorial museum dedicated to Abraham Lincoln. The revised and simplified building program required only that the Memorial Building, as it came to be called, properly honor the memory of Lincoln and that it enshrine the Lincoln birth cabin. The architect, John Russell Pope, already having developed an initial scheme for a large museum building and formal landscape at the site, incorporated much of his original design into the scaled down plan. However, because the Lincoln Memorial Building had to enclose and protect another structure and allow for a constant flow of visitors, Pope created a building without an equal among American museums and memorial buildings. The building can be seen as both a memorial to the birthplace of Lincoln and as a museum displaying one, very significant, artifact. No precedent existed for such a memorial to a cabin, but Pope successfully integrated symbolic and functional architecture to create a very powerful, commemorative experience for the visitor.

Despite Pope's unique architectural vision for the Lincoln Memorial Building, all memorial architecture in America up to that time was part of a long legacy of memorialization using symbolic and architectural forms passed down through the ages. This chapter briefly traces that legacy, and then focuses on the particular events leading up to and through the construction of the Lincoln Memorial Building.

#### **ANCIENT AND CLASSICAL ROOTS OF AMERICAN MEMORIAL ARCHITECTURE**

American memorial architecture, especially the design of large memorial buildings, has long been rooted in the architectural forms of ancient Greece, Rome, and later European architecture. Importantly, the concept of memorialization—the honoring of the memory, deeds, and life of an important person or persons—grew out of universal concepts relating to honoring the dead, worshipping deities, and maintaining the immortal spirit of the deceased. In both Europe and America, ancient architectural forms such as pyramids, tombs, temples, and mausolea, along with smaller sculptural objects such as obelisks and columns, were adapted over time to serve particular memorial purposes.

Funerary architecture is intrinsically related to the concept of the memorial, and by its very nature serves a similar purpose. However, while all funerary monuments are memorials, not all memorials are funerary. As the word implies, memorials often honor only the memory of people or events, and they are not contingent upon the presence of the body or bodies of the deceased. Yet because much of the same emotion and symbolism is intrinsic to both funerary and non-funerary memorials, many of the same architectural and symbolic forms are used. In both ancient and modern times, all memorials used freestanding, sculptural objects such as the obelisk, column, and statue, and enclosing structures such as the tomb, sarcophagus, and mausoleum. Very often, a combination of one or more of these forms would be used in conjunction with a larger building.

One form of ancient funerary architecture, the mausoleum, became a form commonly used in later European memorials. The term mausoleum is derived from the burial tomb of the ancient Carian king Mausolus (c. 377-353 B.C.). The tomb of Mausolus, one of the “Seven Ancient Wonders of the World,” was one example of a type of above-ground, circular funerary building that became popular in Greece during the Hellenistic period. Similar circular tombs were built at Delphi and Epidaurus, and all had antecedents in the domed, subterranean Tholoi of ancient Mycenae. Importantly, however, these new mausolea were intended to be highly visible structures, serving to bring the burial place of notable individuals out of the earth for all to see and honor. Although mausolea were common in Hellenistic Greece, it was in Rome that the mausoleum as a building type flourished. Cylindrical tombs, developed from the Etruscan tumulus, and rectangular tombs, in the form of temples, were typical. Square, octagonal, and tower forms were also common.

During the Ages, the use of the mausoleum declined as burials were incorporated into churches or replaced by sculptural monuments.<sup>1</sup> A revival of the mausoleum occurred in England in the early eighteenth century with the development of the informal garden. By the end of that century, tombs and mausolea were common features of European estates. The mausoleum inspired related building types during this period. Cenotaphs, usually of imposing scale, honor the memory of persons buried elsewhere. Temple forms and architectural follies were built with no purpose other than the addition of an architectural element to the garden to evoke images of ancient idyllic landscapes.<sup>2</sup>

The mausolea constructed throughout the eighteenth century in England, and later in France, were mostly based on forms found in antiquity: the pyramid, square, circle, octagon, and obelisk. These were built with great variation and some forms, such as the pyramid and obelisk, were more common than others. Permanence, monumentality, and immortality were associated with the pyramid, contributing to its popularity in funerary architecture.<sup>3</sup> The mausoleum at Blickling, Norfolk,

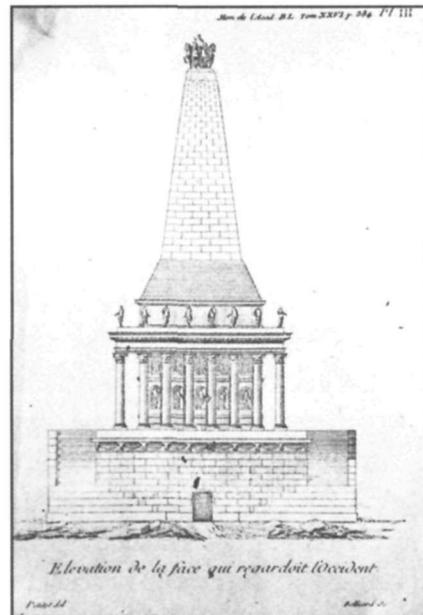


Figure 27. Artist's conception of the Tomb of Mausolus (c. 1700s)

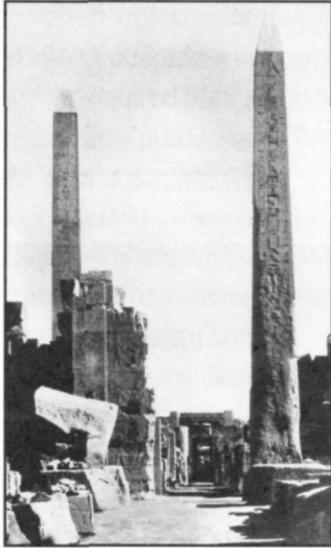


Figure 28. Obelisks at Cairo, Egypt

designed by Joseph Bonomi in 1794, is the first mausoleum of pyramidal form erected in England.<sup>4</sup> Measuring forty-five feet on each side and forty feet tall, the simple form and smooth ashlar walls are interrupted only by the square windows and entrance. The interior is domed and contains arcaded niches.

The obelisk, also derived from ancient Egypt, was commonly incorporated into mausoleum designs. Obelisks brought from Egypt were erected throughout ancient Rome and later reerected by Pope Sixtus V at the close of the sixteenth century. In antiquity, however, obelisks symbolized the sun-god and were rarely used as funerary symbols.<sup>5</sup> John Carr's design for Rockingham Mausoleum at Wentworth Woodhouse, Yorkshire, of 1783-88, is among the first mausolea in England to include an obelisk. As planned, the tomb featured a vaulted burial chamber surmounted by a seventy-five-foot obelisk.

Ancient victory columns, similar to the obelisk form, inspired the introduction of new architectural forms in neo-classical Europe. Trajan's Column, erected in Rome in 107-113, is the quintessential model. It is a 125-foot marble column set on a high podium and topped with a statue of the emperor. The actual shaft is adorned with low relief sculptures in a 600-foot continuous spiral that present a visual narrative of Trajan's triumph over the Dacians. The podium, or base, contained a burial chamber for the emperor's ashes. The Colonne Vendôme in Paris, built 1806-10, and the Nelson Column in Dublin of 1808, for example, were influenced by Trajan's Column, although they never served a funerary function. The popularity of the obelisk and column can, in part, be attributed to revivalism, exoticism, Romantic Classicism, and the influence of the French Academy and its educational arm, the Ecole des Beaux-Arts.<sup>6</sup>

Circular and square temple forms with a rotunda blended with the landscape gardens of neo-classical England and were commonly scaled down and reconfigured to function as funerary monuments. Robert Adam's mausoleum for the Johnson family at Dumfriesshire, Scotland (1790), incorporates an applied tetrastyle temple-front on a square plan temple with a saucer dome. Chambers's more elaborate but unrealized designs for the mausoleum of Frederick, Prince of Wales (1751-52), feature a domed, circular-planned tomb with obelisks at the four corners of the podium.<sup>7</sup>



Figure 29. Trajan's Column in Rome, Italy

### THE PUBLIC MEMORIAL IN EUROPE

The distinction as to whether a memorial was public or private has always been ambiguous. While the ancient mausolea of Greece and Rome were public in the sense that they could be viewed, the circulation of the public through their interior spaces was limited. They stood as symbols of family prestige and power. During the nineteenth century in Europe, this ambiguity was accentuated, because the same architectural forms served as both public and private memorials. Usually, the expense and location of a memorial suggested its place in the public or private domain.<sup>8</sup> Complicating the matter further, the interiors of mausolea often featured private commemorations exclu-



Figure 30. Panthéon in Paris, France

in Paris, designed by Jacques-Germain Soufflot, and erected from 1764 to 1790. Originally designed as a church, the Panthéon was rededicated in 1791 as a secular national memorial temple, and contains the remains of Mirabeau, Voltaire, Rousseau, and Victor Hugo among others. Its plan is a Greek cross with a dome and peristyle drum over the crossing. The large entrance portico is based on that of the Pantheon in Rome.

Buildings were also constructed at this time to honor national heroes without containing their remains, closer to the tradition of the ancients. In the early nineteenth century, Crown Prince Ludwig of Bavaria began collecting busts and statues to include in a temple honoring Germany's



Figure 31. Walhalla

sive of their public exteriors. Public mausolea, of primary concern to this context, will be defined as buildings, usually monumental in scale, that can be entered by the public, with the principal commemoration focused inside the building at the place of burial.

The ancient forms that inspired the designs of small neo-classical tombs in Europe also provided design sources for the public mausoleum. Designs for the monumental tombs, like the smaller, private mausolea, combined Greek and Roman temple forms with the needs of a burial site. Among the most significant public mausolea of the period is the Panthéon

heroes. Walhalla, located near Regensburg, was designed by Leo von Klenze between 1821 and 1827 and was completed in 1842. The marble temple, set on a hill above the Danube River, was modeled on the Parthenon. German historical and allegorical scenes replaced images of Greek gods, and a seated statue of Ludwig I dominates the hall in a manner similar to the colossal cult statue of Athena once contained in the main body (cella) of the Parthenon.

Numerous architectural forms derived from antiquity remained largely free of funerary associations and were purposefully erected in the public sphere. In ancient Rome, memorial arches, or triumphal arches, were erected by persons, often the emperor, honoring themselves or with the purpose of commemorating an event, notably a military victory. The most common types featured a single arch, such as the Arch of Trajan, built in 117, or a large, center arch flanked by two smaller arches, exemplified by the Arch of Septimius Severus, erected in the *Forum Romanum* in 203. These monumental stone arches functioned as large city gates or entrances to *fora*. Rich ornamentation included architectural elements, such as columns and entablature; sculptural elements, both relief and in the round; and incised text, usually in the attic level, explaining the dedication of the monument. Although the finest examples survive in Rome, nearly 150 triumphal arches can be found throughout the Roman Empire.

The triumphal arch was usually limited to commemorating martial events and individuals, but this did not diminish its popularity in neo-classical Europe. The Arc du Carrousel in Paris, designed by Percier and Fontaine in 1806-07, is modeled after the Arch of Septimius Severus. Erected by Napoleon I at the site of the Tuileries, the three-arched monument celebrates Napoleon's military achievements through relief sculpture, life-size figures, and a quadriga that surmounts the center arch. Napoleon began construction of a second monumental arch, far exceeding the scale achieved by the ancient Romans. The Arc de Triomphe, designed by Chalgrin in 1806 and completed in 1835, commemorates Napoleon's military victories, although Napoleon actually dedicated the monument to his soldiers and sailors. The single-arched monument measures 160 feet tall, 150 feet wide, with a depth of 72 feet. Similar arches, although constructed on a smaller scale, were built in England at this time and include John Nash's Marble Arch in London of 1828.

Events in Revolutionary France precipitated a change in memorial architecture, as memorials to events and ideals replaced monuments to individuals. Portrait busts and equestrian monuments dedicated to dynastic rulers gave way to monuments commemorating themes such as liberty and democracy. Although glorification of the individual returned with Napoleon, architecture, much of it derived from funerary forms, replaced sculpture as the primary means of commemorating the achievements of individuals as well as more abstract concepts.<sup>9</sup> Although other ancient forms of architecture, such as the triumphal arch and temple, contributed to the development of the public memorial, the column, and more significantly the obelisk, were most often chosen to honor important events and individuals in the United States.<sup>10</sup>



Figure 32. Arch of Septimius Severus



Figure 33. Baltimore Washington Monument

### THE PUBLIC MEMORIAL IN THE UNITED STATES

The first large-scale public memorials erected in the United States followed the War of 1812. In the twenty-five years following the Revolution and the establishment of the American government, the public's desire for large-scale commemorative monuments intensified. Based on European models, early American monuments featured simple iconographic programs, free of the complex allegories that characterized English and French neo-classical monuments. Although the relative merits of the obelisk and column were debated, both were viewed as the most effective architectural forms for symbolizing a single idea or gesture.<sup>11</sup> Robert Mills, considered the first American-born professional architect, designed many early monuments, including two of the nation's most significant memorials: the Baltimore Washington Monument and the Washington National Monument. The deification of Washington began long before his

death in December 1799, and the dedication of a memorial in his honor seemed certain. In 1811, the first of six lotteries, authorized by the Maryland General Assembly, was held, eventually raising enough funds to construct a Washington monument in Baltimore. Mills's design was chosen in an architectural competition in 1813. The white marble monument rises 175 feet and consists of three main elements: a low, rectangular base containing a museum; a plain, unfluted column; and, atop the column, a standing figure of Washington. By the time of the monument's completion in 1829, financial constraints had forced a series of design compromises. Early designs included rich ornamentation, six iron galleries dividing the hollow shaft into seven sections, and a quadriga surmounting the column. The design of the completed column is very similar to the Colonne Vendôme, which ultimately derived from Trajan's Column.

Columns utilized in a memorial context, however, never achieved the popularity or the widespread use of the obelisk. The Bunker Hill Monument, designed by Solomon Willard in 1825, commemorates the Revolutionary War battle fought there June 17, 1775, and is the first monumental obelisk built in the United States. In choosing an obelisk over a column for the Bunker Hill Monument, Horatio Greenough reasoned that the obelisk was "complete in itself; the column normally stood beneath the weight of a pediment and supported an entablature. It was taken out of a created unity to become a new and inappropriate whole when utilized as a monument."<sup>12</sup> As a practical matter, the column is simply a pedestal to support a sculpture while the "complete" obelisk offers four flat sides for virtually unlimited inscriptions. Mills also recommended constructing an obelisk at Bunker Hill, noting "its lofty character, great strength, and

furnishing a fine surface for inscriptions,” and because it “combined simplicity and economy with grandeur.”<sup>13</sup> Some later analyses have suggested phallic associations with memorial columns and obelisks, pointing to the almost universal fact that they were made by, and honored, men. Whatever the motivation, it was the obelisk that captured the fancy of most memorial designers during the nineteenth century.

The Washington National Monument was designed by Robert Mills from 1845 to 1852 and is among the seminal public memorials erected in nineteenth-century America. Efforts to raise the one million dollars needed to complete a monument concentrated on donations from patriotic Americans which would not exceed one dollar.<sup>14</sup> After five years, only \$31,000 had been collected, and in 1845, the monument committee accepted a proposal by Mills estimated to cost \$200,000. Mills’s design consisted of a 600-foot obelisk rising from a colonnaded pantheon 100 feet tall and 250 feet in diameter. The interior was to contain statues of the signers of the Declaration of Independence and paintings depicting events in American history. The decorated obelisk emphasized Washington’s military career. Design sources for this form can be traced to seventeenth- and eighteenth-century interpretations of the appearance of ancient mausolea, including the aforementioned tomb of Mausolus at Halicarnassos and Hadrian’s Tomb.<sup>15</sup>

Completed by Thomas L. Casey in 1884, the obelisk was reduced in height to 555 feet, and much of the decoration was eliminated. The pantheon surrounding the base was also eliminated, thus creating a monument dedicated solely to Washington. It was constructed of smooth white granite with a plain finish and exceeded the height of all previously erected monuments. The grand scale of the Washing-



Figure 34. Early conception of Washington National Monument by Robert Mills, 1845



Figure 35. Washington Monument

ton Monument served to validate an already popular architectural form. Nine of the first sixteen Presidents are commemorated with obelisks at their places of birth and/or burial sites: Washington, Jefferson, Madison, Jackson, Van Buren, Tyler, Fillmore, Pierce, and Lincoln.

During the nineteenth century, American public memorials, especially memorials with patriotic themes, were thought to improve “national morality” and the “national principles” themselves.<sup>16</sup> Petitions appealing for a Washington monument warned that “inattention to the fame, and insensibility to the merits of those who magnanimously protected and laboriously achieved our liberties, may be justly viewed as the decay of that public virtue which is the only solid and natural foundation for a free government.”<sup>17</sup> Monuments served to “resharpen distinctions which have grown ambiguous and symbolized creeds and principles in danger of being forgotten.”<sup>18</sup> Without a king and imposing ceremony, the United States had few obvious external forms of government. Monuments made the abstract tangible, evoking feelings of patriotism and pride and connected people with the “idea of country.”<sup>19</sup>

The majority of post-Civil War memorials erected in the United States were either statues or what were commonly referred to as shafts. This category included obelisks, columns, and other tower-like forms. Beginning in the mid-1860s, large numbers of shafts were built to honor the war dead. These shafts, also called soldier’s monuments, were frequently topped with an allegorical figure or soldier and included highly decorated bases with inscriptions.<sup>20</sup> Historian David M. Kahn asserts that the popular use of shafts and their close relationship to funerary architecture resulted from the sudden demand for monuments at the end of the war and the lack of an American memorial architecture other than funerary monuments.<sup>21</sup>

Memorial architecture forms derived from antiquity and revived in neo-classical Europe remained popular in the United States through the nineteenth century. In 1800, Benjamin West, President of the British Royal Academy, asked English architect George Dance to produce designs for a monument to George Washington. Dance sketched three proposals based on a pyramid form, similar to European monuments such as the mausoleum at Blickling. Ornamental pyramids constructed of uncoursed rubble mark the birthplaces of Presidents Polk, erected in 1904, and Buchanan, built after 1868. The pyramid form was also deemed appropriate to commemorate Civil War dead; a rusticated granite pyramid erected in 1869 in Richmond, Virginia, honors 18,000 Confederate soldiers killed during the war.<sup>22</sup>

In a design competition for the Baltimore Washington Monument, French architects Maximilian Godefroy and Joseph Ramée each submitted designs for triumphal arches based on neo-classical models. Triumphal arches gained currency at the end of the nineteenth century with the ebb of picturesque eclecticism and the rise of Beaux-Arts classicism. George B. Keller’s Soldiers’ and Sailors’ Memorial Arch in Hartford, Connecticut, built 1884-1886, illustrates the former with its rusticated Gothic arch and conical towers.<sup>23</sup> Contemporaneously, McKim, Mead and White designed two monumental arches in New York, the arch in Prospect Park of 1888-89 and the Washington Memorial Arch in Washington Square of 1889-92. Both single arches incorporate elaborate sculptural programs reminiscent of classical and Napoleonic arches.<sup>24</sup>

Public mausolea, also derived from ancient and neo-classical sources, were first constructed in the United States at the end of the nineteenth century. Private, small-scale mausolea

were erected throughout the century but remained largely in cemeteries. These were designed in the popular styles of their day, including Egyptian revival, Romanesque revival, and High Victorian Gothic. The tomb of James Monroe, built in 1858 when the president was reinterred in Richmond, Virginia's Hollywood Cemetery, is a typical example. Resembling a large reliquary, it is constructed of iron in the Gothic Revival style and includes lancet and trefoil windows, colonettes, and finials.<sup>25</sup>

The Lincoln Mausoleum in Springfield, Illinois (see Fig. 9), established an early American prototype for the monumental public tomb. The tomb was designed by sculptor Larkin G. Mead in 1869 and completed under the supervision of Russell Sturgis in 1874. As rebuilt in 1900-01, the 117-foot tall granite monument is composed of an obelisk set on a base that contains the Lincoln family burials. A statue of Lincoln at the base of the obelisk is surrounded by four bronze military groups. The mausoleum contained Lincoln artifacts, statues of Lincoln, and relief scenes of the President's life. The tomb is closer to sculpture than architecture, and represents only a partial realization of the public mausolea. The interior memorial spaces were secondary to the exterior sculptural expression, and the rotunda and burial chamber were sealed in 1930-31.<sup>26</sup>

The tomb of James A. Garfield, located in Cleveland, Ohio, represents the first American mausoleum to serve as a public memorial, focusing memorial efforts inside the building. Designed by George B. Keller in 1885 and completed in 1889, the tomb expresses both the Romanesque and Gothic idioms in an original composition. The building is comprised of a circular tower, which encloses the memorial chapel and Garfield's crypt, two engaged stair towers, and a three-portal, rectangular entrance block.<sup>27</sup> Funds for the memorial were raised by a popular subscription, with its sponsors referring to it as "the first real Mausoleum ever to be erected to the honor of an American statesman."<sup>28</sup>

The Garfield tomb is among the first complete expressions of the public mausoleum, with interior spaces provided for the contemplation of the late president. Although Keller gave much thought to the exterior appearance of the tomb, its mission remained unfulfilled until the visitor entered the chapel and burial chamber. Constructed shortly after Garfield's tomb, the mausolea of Presidents Grant and McKinley were designed in this new form of American funerary architecture and are discussed below.



Figure 36. Tomb of James A. Garfield, Cleveland, Ohio

### JOHN RUSSELL POPE AND THE LINCOLN BIRTHPLACE MEMORIAL, 1906-1911

In late 1906, the Lincoln Farm Association (LFA) commissioned landscape architects Jules Guérin and Guy Lowell to develop a plan for a memorial building and landscape treatment.<sup>29</sup> The preliminary plan, published in a series of views in *Collier's Weekly*, included a historical museum, a statue of Lincoln, and a formal landscape.<sup>30</sup> A tree-lined avenue linked the Lincoln farm with the town of Hodgenville, three miles to the north. A copy of Augustus Saint-Gaudens's *Standing Lincoln* was to be placed at the intersection of this avenue and a short allée that terminated at the historical museum. A bird's-eye view of the museum depicts a three-part composition with two colossal columns flanking the main entrance. A detail of the proposed museum, however, resembles the south facade of the White House. The surrounding cultivated fields and the proposed meandering paths contrast sharply with the formal landscape.



Figure 37. John Russell Pope

In April 1907, the Board of Directors of the LFA asked board member Thomas Hastings, of the architectural firm Carrère and Hastings, to “select a group of architects to compete for the design of the Memorial Building.”<sup>31</sup> The architect Charles F. McKim was invited to participate in the selection process. Rather than establishing an architectural competition, McKim and Hastings simply awarded the commission to the promising young architect John Russell Pope. McKim and Hastings devoted much of their careers to late-nineteenth-century classicism and their selection of Pope further reveals their views on classicism as the appropriate style for memorial architecture.

Pope was exposed to classicism at the outset of his career. During the 1880s, before reaching the age of seventeen, Pope entered the office of the New York architectural firm McKim, Mead and White, working closely with McKim for several years.<sup>32</sup> In 1891, Pope began his formal study of architecture under William R. Ware at Columbia University. He graduated in 1894, winning McKim's scholarship to the American Academy in Rome and a second award for travel. Pope spent two years in Greece and Italy, producing sketches and measured drawings of such monuments as the Acropolis and the Baths of Caracalla. In 1896, Pope traveled to Paris where he studied at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts from 1897 to 1899. Pope's “grand tour” of Europe and his education at the Ecole contributed to his eventual mastery of, and inclination towards, classical architecture.

The system of architectural education at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts was based on lectures and practical experience gained in *ateliers*, or studios, of established architects. Students advanced in the program through a series of design competitions; Pope won the Jean Le Claire Prize for architectural design in 1898. Central to the Ecole's system was the primacy of the *parti*, or central idea of a design as seen in its logical development. The classical orders and the decorative vocabulary of classical and Renaissance architecture were also emphasized.<sup>33</sup> The clarity of plan

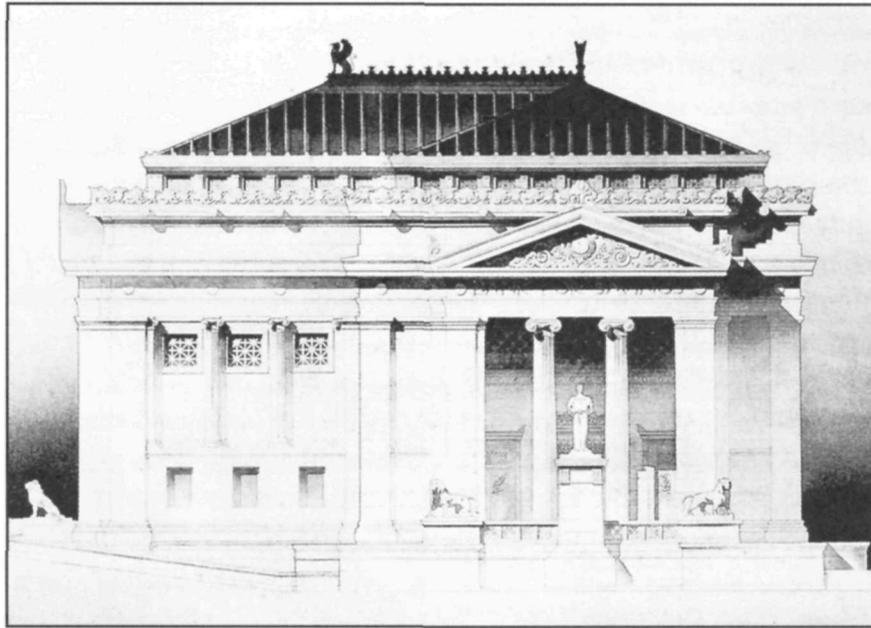


Figure 38. This design for a savings bank won Pope the McKim Travelling Fellowship and the Rome Prize in 1895.

and circulation Pope learned at the Ecole can be seen in his early monumental work such as the Temple of the Scottish Rite in Washington, D.C., of 1910.

Building on his formal training at the Ecole, Pope developed his own classical manner in the United States, and continually refined his own architectural style until his death in 1937. All of his buildings are, arguably, in the classical style, but it became too easy for many critics to dismiss Pope's work as formulaic. According to Richard Chaffee, "Pope was the foremost inheritor of McKim's severe classicism," and Joseph Hudnut labeled him "The Last of the Romans."<sup>34</sup> Although McKim undoubtedly influenced his designs, Pope's own particular interpretation of classical architecture resulted in distinctive compositions. Pope was adept at using building materials to accentuate the mass and volume of his works. Large blank walls devoid of ornamentation or fenestration gave a modernistic quality to many of Pope's buildings, even though they incorporated the reassuring vocabulary of the classical orders. The National Gallery is a prime example of this more restrained Beaux Arts classicism. Along with architects such as Bertram Goodhue and Paul Phillippe Cret, Pope sought to reinterpret the Beaux Arts style to create a distinctively American architectural idiom.<sup>35</sup> Importantly, Pope also understood the modern purposes that his buildings had to serve, and he saw in the logical plans and forms of classical architecture solutions to the practical problems of creating functional public buildings for a modern society. It would not be inaccurate to consider Pope a progressive classicist, one who used classical architecture as a foundation for contemporary architectural expressions. As one more recent critic has argued of Pope's classicizing buildings, they are "neither copies nor revivals."<sup>37</sup>

As Chicago's Prairie School architects such as Frank Lloyd Wright and European modernists such as Le Corbusier abandoned Beaux Arts classicism, Pope continued to design buildings in the classical tradition until his death in 1937. His buildings are known to anyone who has visited our nation's capital. These include the large, public commissions such as Constitution Hall of the Daughters of the American Revolution, 1929; the National Archives Building, 1933-35; the Jefferson Memorial, 1937; and the National Gallery of Art, 1937-41. Because of these highly public and highly cherished works, Pope's classical architecture remains symbolic of the ideals of American democracy.

#### POPE AND HIS DESIGNS FOR THE LINCOLN FARM ASSOCIATION

In 1900, Pope returned to New York from Paris, and worked for various architects, including Bruce Price, before establishing his own office. By June 1907, Pope was at work on plans for the LFA Memorial Building, and in February 1908, *Collier's Weekly* published two renderings of the Lincoln farm design.<sup>38</sup> The plan represents an elaboration of Guérin and Lowell's concept of a formal, linear landscape with a memorial building and sculptural element at each terminus and set within the picturesque landscape of the farm. The progression from the earlier plan is obvious: the museum has become the multi-purpose memorial hall; the Saint-Gaudens statue has been replaced by a memorial column marking Lincoln's birthplace; and the tree-lined allée has been expanded to a memorial plaza.

The Memorial Building, estimated to cost \$250,000, was the principal element of the commemorative landscape. It was a one-story, three-part Beaux-Arts classical building orga-

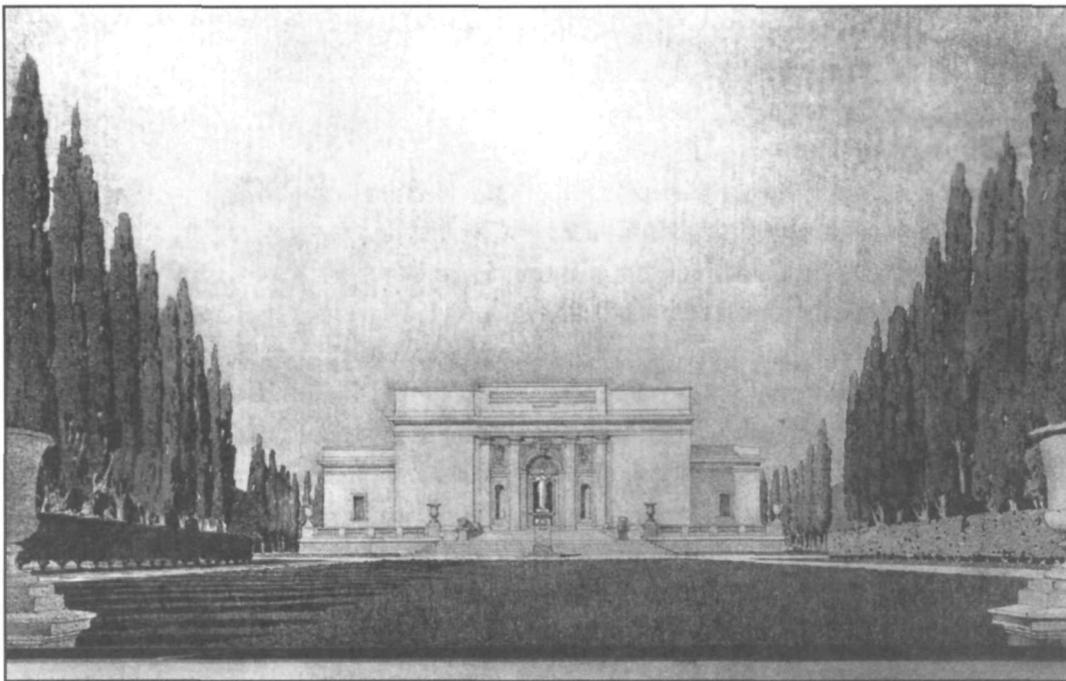


Figure 39. Pope's first plan for a "Lincoln Birthplace Museum," 1907. This initial concept for a large museum was beyond the financial reach of the Lincoln Farm Association.'

nized around an arcaded central court. As designed, the court had a removable roof that sheltered the birth cabin. The surrounding halls featured museum exhibits, and an auditorium was located in the main room. The main entrance was recessed and set within a triumphal arch that included four colossal columns *in antis*.<sup>39</sup>

The unornamented, planar wall surfaces of the proposed memorial building are characteristic of Pope's monumental designs and can be seen in the tomb for William Bateman Leeds, a project Pope was completing while preparing designs for the LFA. The Leeds tomb, constructed in Woodlawn Cemetery, the Bronx, New York, built from 1907 to 1909, features smooth ashlar walls and a bold cornice with much of the ornamentation concentrated around the main entrance, similar to the proposed memorial building. Architectural historian Stephen Bedford believes the main facade in Pope's preliminary memorial building design is based on McKim's 1907 Morgan Library in New York, which has a similar three-part organization and entry articulated as a "wafer-thin triumphal arch."<sup>40</sup> Clearly pleased with this architectural vision for the LFA, Pope resurrected the design in 1928 when he was hired by the American Pharmaceutical Association to design their headquarters in Washington, D.C. The building is today considered one of Pope's best works.<sup>41</sup>

On the knoll where it was believed Lincoln's birth cabin originally stood, opposite the Memorial Building, Pope called for a monumental column. This "simple shaft" may be a reworking of a lost drawing entitled "Design for a Commemorative Monument on the Great Lakes."<sup>42</sup>

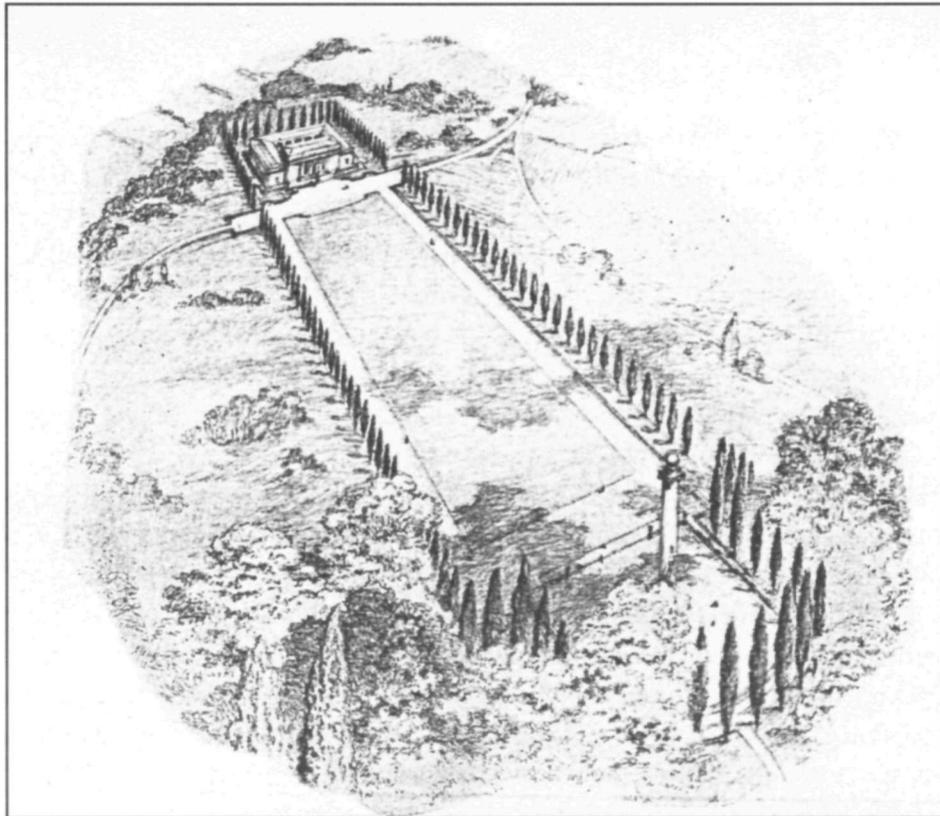


Figure 40. A Bird's -Eye View of Pope's First Plan For a Lincoln Birthplace Memorial as Illustrated in a 1908 Issue of *Collier's Weekly*

Pope may have been influenced by a series of monumental columns designed by Stanford White beginning with the unrealized 220-foot Detroit Bicentennial Column of 1899. White adapted this design for the 143-foot Prison Ship Martyr's Monument in Greene Park, Brooklyn, New York, of 1904-1909. In 1904, White designed the setting for Saint-Gaudens *Seated Lincoln*, located in Chicago's Grant Park. The design, which included two Doric columns, was not completed until the 1920's.<sup>43</sup>

Pope placed the Memorial Building and column at opposite ends of a long, rectangular grass plaza. The entire arrangement was surrounded by closely spaced Lombardy poplars, interrupted only by two meandering pathways. The trees focus attention on the Memorial Building and the column at opposite ends of the plaza, screening out the surrounding landscape. Conversely, views of the plaza and memorial structures could only be afforded from within the plaza. As compared to the Guérin and Lowell plan, Pope's design depicts a memorial that is somewhat isolated from the Lincoln farm and surrounding area.

The axial placement of horizontal and vertical elements and open space in Pope's first design for the Lincoln farm may have been inspired by the 1902 McMillan Commission Plan to re-establish Pierre Charles L'Enfant's original plan of then nation's capital, specifically, the portion of the Mall that included the Washington Monument, the reflecting pool, and the Lincoln Memorial.<sup>44</sup> Tellingly, the gentle grades depicted in Pope's renderings bear little resemblance to the hilly topography of the Lincoln farm and suggest that the drawings were produced before the architect visited the site. Regardless of the effect of the influential McMillan Commission Plan upon Pope's design for the Lincoln farm, a barrier other than topography would eventually confront the architect.

As Pope's plan was introduced in February 1908, the LFA had collected only \$100,000 of the estimated \$250,000 needed to complete the Memorial Building.<sup>45</sup> Funds were sought through Congressional appropriation, but none were forthcoming.<sup>46</sup> Between February and October 1908, less than one year before the centennial of Lincoln's birth and the projected dedication of the memorial, the LFA decided to modify the design in view of its limited financial resources.

In October 1908, Pope produced a set of eleven drawings — elevations, plans, and sections — that depict the Memorial Building largely as it was completed.<sup>47</sup> As suggested by the drawings, the memorial efforts shifted from a memorial museum and landscape to a more modest memorial building to enshrine the birth cabin with a landscaped approach. The Beaux-Arts classical building was constructed by Norcross Brothers Construction Company of Worcester, Massachusetts, the nation's first general contractor and one of the most important construction companies of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

As built, the Memorial Building is situated on the knoll where some believed the Lincoln birth cabin originally stood. The difference between Pope's original and revised plans reflects a fundamental change in the way Pope integrated the natural topography of the site with his architecture. No doubt recognizing the dramatic perspective afforded by the knoll, Pope placed the Memorial Building on this natural pedestal and used its incline for a dramatic stairway approach. Four sets of granite stairs ascend the terraced hill. Nearly thirty-seven feet wide at the base, the stairs narrow to thirty feet at the summit.<sup>48</sup>



Figure 41. Assembled crowd at the 1911 dedication of the Lincoln Birthplace Memorial

Pope's rising, processional approach to the Memorial Building was enhanced by his landscaping plan, an arrangement of ornamental hedges, trees, and open space evocative of his original plaza plan of 1908, albeit placed on an inclined plane. At the 1911 dedication, the landscape consisted of terraced grass panels outlined by low hedges with an additional parallel line of hedges that flanked the stairs. A row of Lombardy poplars was planted just outside and parallel to each of the two outside hedgelines. The October drawings do not include this landscape, but photographs from the 1911 dedication ceremony indicate that these plantings were in place, including the Lombardy poplars.<sup>49</sup> The stairway included pea gravel landings at the top of each set of stairs. Pope also included a large gravel entry plaza with a central flagpole at the foot of the stairway. The court was bordered by low hedges, effectively defining the entire memorial site as separate from the rest of the farm property. This open area at the foot of the stairs provided the visitor a dramatic perspective of the Memorial Building high in the distance, a goal to be reached by gradual ascent. Just as it did in his original plan, Pope's use of Lombardy poplars created a simple but powerful framework for the entire setting.

The Sinking Spring, located just west of the stairs, remained in its natural state and the remaining grounds were grassed, wooded, or under cultivation. Visitors entered the court from the south and the east. Four pink granite markers, two incised with "Lincoln Birthplace Memo-

rial,” marked the unpaved entrance road.

The formal landscape Pope conceived for the Memorial Building was very similar to the McKinley National Memorial. Designed by New York architect Harold Van Buren Magonigle, the McKinley Memorial was dedicated in September 1907, four months after Pope began work on plans for the Lincoln farm. The pink granite mausoleum is circular in plan with a diameter of seventy-five feet and features a dome and triumphal-arch entrance. More significantly, the building is set on a terraced knoll ascended by four sets of broad marble stairs with wide abutments. “Long rows of trees, uniformly planted,”<sup>50</sup> line both sides of the approach, originally a reflecting pool that was drained by 1930. Although the rows of trees are situated below the terraced stairs, the entire arrangement recalls Pope’s landscape treatment for the Lincoln Memorial Building.<sup>51</sup>

### POPE’S LINCOLN MEMORIAL BUILDING

For the design of the Memorial Building itself, Pope fashioned a compromise between his original museum building and a more intimate, memorial structure, rejecting altogether the idea of an adjacent memorial column for the cabin site. Pope created a hybrid structure that operated as both an exhibition space and a memorial to the birthplace of Lincoln, specifically, a memorial to the rude log cabin of his birth. Rather than plan a formal museum, Pope’s revised plan called for one large “Exhibition Room” that left enough space for the cabin and interior pedestrian space to surround it.

The Memorial Building measures fifty by thirty-five feet and encloses a single chamber. Constructed of pink Stony Creek granite and reinforced concrete, the building is set on a low terrace and oriented to the south.<sup>52</sup> The main, or south facade, features a shallow hexastyle Doric portico with responds and wreaths in place of triglyphs in the frieze. Above the portico, a bold, dentil cornice continues around the building. The hip roof is set behind a stepped, gabled parapet, and a band of five windows with neo-classical granite grilles is situated above the double bronze doors of the main entrance. Passages from Lincoln’s speeches are incised in the walls that flank the main entrance and on the entablature of the portico. Five lines articulating the purpose of the memorial are incised in the parapet above the portico (see Appendix A).<sup>53</sup>

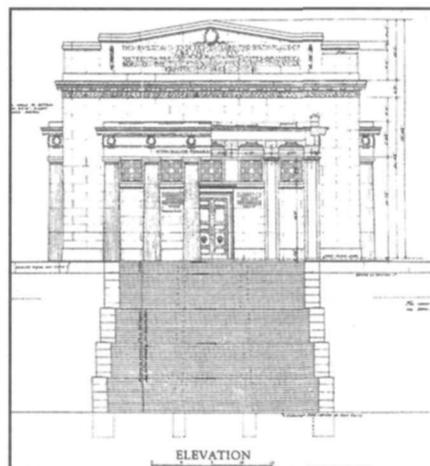


Figure 42. Elevation of Memorial Building, 1908

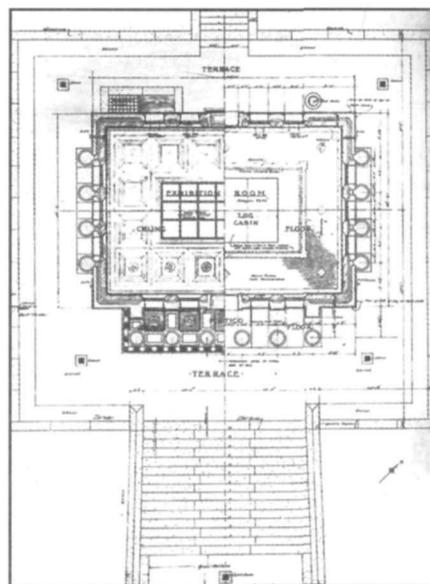


Figure 43. Plan of Memorial Building, 1908

The identical east and west elevations feature engaged, tetrastyle Doric porticos, employing the same wreath motif as the main facade. Three windows set between the columns include granite grilles that are taller than the square windows above the main entrance. The flat parapets give these elevations a rectangular profile.<sup>54</sup> The rear elevation maintains the symmetry of the main facade but without a portico; a band of five square windows is situated above double bronze doors. A recessed, rectangular panel is located above the windows with similar, vertical panels placed beneath each window. Bronze plaques denoting the history of the memorial and board of trustees of the LFA are mounted on the panels that flank the rear entrance.<sup>55</sup>

The birth cabin is located behind bronze stanchions in the center of the Memorial Building. Its rectangular plan is outlined with inlaid pink marble with crosset corners, contrasting with the herringbone brick floor.<sup>56</sup> Above the pink marble dado, plaster crosset surrounds frame each of the sixteen windows. Additionally, light was originally provided by a skylight incorporated into the hip roof. In 1959, electric lighting was installed in the ceiling, and the glass panes that transmitted natural light were replaced with translucent plastic panels that conceal the fluorescent lighting.<sup>57</sup> A ring of sixteen ceiling coffers with plaster rosettes, based on those found in the Pantheon in Rome, surround the translucent panels.<sup>58</sup>

In creating a shrine for the Lincoln birth cabin, Pope was asked to devise a building type—a building to house a building—for which there were few celebrated examples.<sup>59</sup> Nonetheless, structures contemporary to the period and notable buildings from antiquity clearly influenced his final design. For the basic requirement of enshrining the cabin, he turned to the mausoleum, a structure designed to hold a static object and requiring limited building services. In the United States, mausolea did not appear as public memorials until after the Civil War, with the first three significant monuments constructed in the two decades preceding the Lincoln memorial: the Garfield Memorial,



Figure 44. Birthplace Cabin and Skylight, 1987



Figure 45. Grant Monument



Figure 46. The Memorial Building and designed landscape as it appeared several years after the 1911 dedication. Note the replanted poplars and hedges along the stairway.

Cleveland, Ohio, 1885-89; the General Grant Monument, New York City, 1891-1897; and the McKinley National Memorial, Canton, Ohio, 1905-07. Richard Lloyd Jones, secretary of the LFA, wrote of “the stately tombs we have erected to Grant and McKinley,” compared with the “modest tribute” planned for Lincoln. Pope’s design, described as a temple in the popular literature of the period, borrows heavily from the Grant and McKinley tombs.<sup>60</sup>

At the time of its completion, the Grant Monument, popularly known as Grant’s Tomb, was comparable in scale and cost to only two American memorials, the Washington Monument and the Statue of Liberty.<sup>61</sup> Like so many architectural revivals, the monument, designed by John H. Duncan, is loosely based on the fourth-century-B.C. tomb of Mausolus.<sup>62</sup> The Grant Monument contains three parts: a high base or podium that contains the sarcophagi of President and Mrs. Grant and Civil War artifacts; a peristyle drum; and conical dome. It is the podium, however, that may have served as the model for Pope’s Memorial Building. Roughly twice the size of Pope’s building, the podium features a hexastyle Doric portico on the main facade, four engaged Doric columns on the side elevations, and, unlike the Memorial Building, an apse at the rear. The fenestration, cornice, parapet, and many of the decorative elements are equally similar, although Pope’s design does not include sculptural figures on the parapet.<sup>63</sup>

The basic shape and profile of Pope’s Memorial Building also turned to earlier building designs, most fundamentally the famous temples of Greece such as the Temple of Aphaia and the

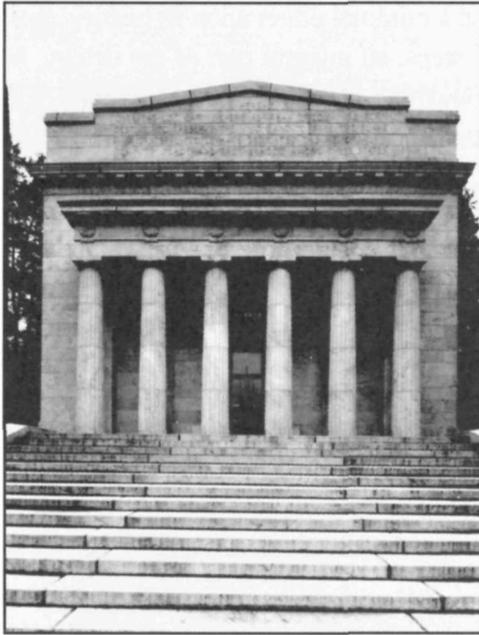


Figure 47. Memorial Building, 1987

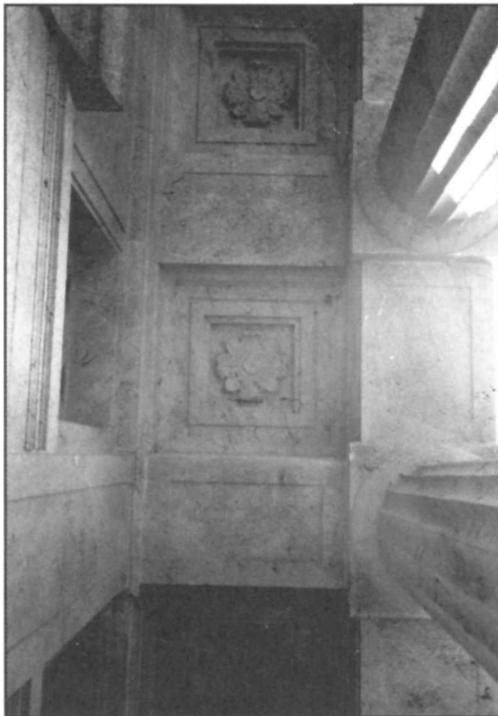


Figure 48. Portico ceiling of Memorial Building, 1987

Parthenon of the Acropolis. The most recent biographer of Pope, Steven McLeod Bedford, notes how the Memorial Building “immediately evokes images of Leo von Klenze’s Walhalla,”<sup>64</sup> furthering the notion of Pope’s debt to both the classical revival of the time and, more important, the architecture of Classical Greece. Such direct association with Greek temples was both expected and appropriate for the memorialization of such an emotionally and historically potent site as the birthplace of Abraham Lincoln. Pope’s use of classical architecture was direct and unabashed, and his use of the site to duplicate ancient rites such as ceremonial procession and deity (cabin) worship is clearly evident in the plan of the Memorial Building and its immediate grounds.

On November 9, 1911, three thousand people gathered at the foot of the Memorial Building for the dedication of the Lincoln Birthplace Memorial.<sup>65</sup> President William Howard Taft, a member of the LFA Board of Trustees, delivered an address. But what was to be the “Nation’s Commons, the meeting-place of North, South, East and West,”<sup>66</sup> was rapidly eclipsed by plans to erect a Lincoln memorial in Washington, D.C. Congress approved funds for the Lincoln Memorial on February 9, 1911, and the nation’s attention quickly turned to this latest addition to the Mall.<sup>67</sup> Articles with the proposed design by Henry Bacon appeared in popular literature and architectural journals, while little mention was made of the completion of the Lincoln Birthplace Memorial.<sup>68</sup>

#### INTEGRITY OF HISTORIC RESOURCES

The properties eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under this context exhibit all aspects of integrity: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Alterations made to the Memorial Build-

ing, including a new roof and HVAC systems, have had a minimal effect upon its historic design, materials, and workmanship. Similarly, the memorial steps, an integral part of the design, have been altered with the introduction of limestone benches and paved landings but retain much of their historic appearance. Although elements of Pope's landscape design remain, the areas surrounding the Memorial Building largely reflect the activity of the War Department from 1916 to 1933. However, the memorial plaza, walkways, Sinking Spring, and other structures developed by the War Department do not diminish the ability of the Memorial Building to convey its historic significance.

### CONTRIBUTING RESOURCES

*Memorial Building and Steps (1909-1911)*

*Birthplace Cabin (1809-1911)*



Figure 49. Interior wall and windows of Memorial Building, 1987



Figure 50. Rear of Memorial Building, 1987



Figure 51. Traditional Birthplace Cabin, 1987

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**NOTES**

1. Damie Stillman, "Death Deified and Honor Upheld: The Mausoleum in Neo-Classical England," *Art Quarterly* 1 (1978): 177-78.
2. Howard Colvin, *Architecture and the After-Life* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991), 330-31.
3. Stillman, 196.
4. Stillman, 196; Colvin, 339.
5. Colvin, 341.
6. Robert L. Alexander, "The Public Memorial and Godefroy's Battle Monument," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 17 (March 1958): 22.
7. Colvin, 344.
8. David M. Kahn, "The Grant Monument," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 41 (October 1982): 215.
9. Alexander, 19-22.
10. Alexander, 19, 22.
11. Neil Harris, *The Artist in American Society: The Formative Years, 1790-1860* (New York: George Braziller, 1966), 190.
12. Quoted in Harris, 192.
13. Quoted in Alexander, 23.
14. The Lincoln Farm Association attempted a similar fund-raising effort in which donations for the construction of the Lincoln Birthplace Memorial could not exceed twenty-five dollars. It also resulted in disappointing returns.
15. Pamela Scott, "Robert Mills and American Monuments," in *Robert Mills, Architect*, John M. Bryan, ed. (Washington, D.C.: American Institute of Architects, 1989), 161-62.
16. Harris, 194.
17. Quoted in Harris, 194.
18. Harris, 193.
19. Harris, 194-95.
20. Kahn, 214.

21. Kahn, 214-15.
22. Stillman, 196; Colvin, 340
23. Kahn, 216.
24. See Leland M. Roth, *McKim, Mead and White, Architects* (New York: Harper and Row, 1983), 136-38.
25. William Judson Hampton, *Presidential Shrines from Washington to Coolidge* (Boston: Christopher Publishing House, 1928), 65-66.
26. John Zukowsky, "Monumental American Obelisks: Centennial Vistas," *Art Bulletin* 58 (December 1978): 576-78; Ferris, 417-20.
27. Hampton, 181-84.
28. Quoted in Kahn, 216.
29. Stephen Bedford, "Early Monumental Work," chapter draft (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1992), 10.
30. "The Lincoln Birthplace Farm," *Collier's Weekly* 38 (February 7, 1907): 16-17.
31. Quoted in Steven McLeod Bedford, *John Russell Pope, Architect of Empire* (New York: Rizzoli, 1998), 10.
32. Herbert Croly, "The Recent Works of John Russell Pope," *The Architectural Record* 29 (June 1911): 442.
33. Arthur Drexler, ed., *The Architecture of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1977), 82, 86-87.
34. Richard Chaffee, "John Russell Pope," *Macmillan Encyclopedia of Architects* Vol. 3 (New York: Free Press, Macmillan Publishing, 1982), 450; Joseph Hudnut, "The Last of the Romans: Comments of the Building of the National Gallery," *Magazine of Art* 34 (1941): 169-73.
35. 151 Fredrick Koeper, *American Architecture: Volume 2 1860-1976*, (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1990), 289-291.
36. Richard Chaffee, "John Russell Pope," *Macmillan Encyclopedia of Architects* Vol. 3 (New York: Free Press, Macmillan Publishing, 1982), 450; Joseph Hudnut, "The Last of the Romans: Comment of the Building of the National Gallery," *Magazine of Art* 34 (1941): 169-73.
37. William L. McDonald, quoted in Bedford, 8.
38. Bedford, 10; Richard Lloyd Jones, "The Lincoln Centenary," *Collier's Weekly* 40 (February 15, 1908): 12-13.
39. Jones, February 15, 1908, 12-13.
40. Bedford, 11.
41. Bedford, 142.
42. Bedford, 8.
43. Roth, 247-50. It should be noted that Pope eventually erected a monumental column, the Meuse-Argonne Monument near Montfaucon, France, 1926-34, which is derivative of White's Ship Martyrs' column in both style and setting. See Elizabeth G. Grossman, "Architecture for a Public Client: The Monuments and Chapels of the American Battle Monuments Commission," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 43 (May 1984): 119-43.

44. The Senate Park Commission was composed of Daniel H. Burnham, Frederick Law Olmstead Jr., Charles F. McKim, and Augustus Saint-Gaudens. Lowry, 82-88; Roth, 254.
45. Jones, February 15, 1908, 12-13.
46. G. Peterson, 30-31.
47. Pope, "Memorial Building Plans."
48. Pope, "Terrace Stairs" and "Block Plan."
49. G. Peterson, Plate VIII.
50. Hampton, 215.
51. See Edward Thornton Heald, *The William McKinley Story* (Stark County Historical Society, 1964), 123-24; Hampton, 213-17; Ferris, 507-9.
52. Pope refers to the main facade as the south elevation although the building is actually oriented to the southeast.
53. Pope, "S. Front Elevation."
54. Pope, "West Elevation."
55. Pope, "North Elevation."
56. Pope, "Main Floor Plan."
57. Center for Architectural Conservation, College of Architecture, Georgia Institute of Technology, comp., *Historic Structures Assessment Report: Lincoln Birthplace Memorial Building* (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, Park Historic Architecture Division, 1991), 4. A second significant alteration to the building includes the installation of terrace steps on the east and west sides by the War Department in 1930 (G. Peterson, 52).
58. Bedford, 12; Pope, "Main Floor Plan." Similar granite rosettes adorn the ceiling of the south portico.
59. In 1896, the Grant birth house was enclosed in an unimposing masonry and steel memorial building on the Ohio State Fairgrounds in Columbus. See Hampton, 160-62.
60. Direct influence from antique sources cannot be discounted because Pope traveled extensively in Greece and Italy. In terms of building type, Pope's design is related to the Roman mausolea, such as the second-century tomb of Annia Regilla on Rome's Appian Way with its single-cell plan, high windows, and vertical proportions. "A National Shrine," *Bulletin of the Pan American Union* 43 (October 1916): 498; Tarbell, 95.
61. Kahn, 212.
62. Pope's Temple of the Scottish Rite is also based on the tomb of Mausolus and more closely reflects the supposed ancient appearance of the tomb.
63. See Kahn, 226-31; Hampton, 163-64; Ferris, 475-79.
64. Bedford, 122.
65. G. Peterson, 33.

66. Jones, 13.

67. In February 1912, Pope was asked to submit designs for the Lincoln Memorial, and he again turned to funerary architecture for design sources. Three of his seven alternate proposals feature fantastic pyramid forms: a smooth-sided pyramid with four temple-front entrances; a Meso-American pyramid; and a ziggurat.

68. For the Lincoln National Memorial see, "What Shall the Lincoln Memorial Be?," *American Review of Reviews* 38 (September 1908): 334-42; Leila Mechlin, "The Proposed Lincoln Memorial," *Century Magazine* 83 (January 1912): 368-76; "The Proposed Lincoln National Memorial," *Harper's Weekly* 56 (January 20, 1912): 21; and "The Lincoln Memorial: The Man and the Monument," *The Craftsman* 26 (April 1914): 16-20. For the Lincoln Birthplace Memorial see "The Lincoln Centennial Celebration," *American Review of Reviews* 39 (February 1909): 172-73; and "A National Shrine," 496-501.

## **CHAPTER FOUR: MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS**

Management recommendations for the Site address record-keeping, research needs, interpretation, and resource management. To facilitate cultural resource management, park files should be kept current to reflect all maintenance and alterations to structures and landscape features. Historic photographs and materials relating to the Lincoln Farm Association should continue to be catalogued and indexed to facilitate retrieval by NPS staff, researchers, and interested visitors and for future use in interpretive exhibits. As mentioned in the park's Resource Management Plan (RMP), digital conversion of the voluminous donor files of the LFA would make them more accessible to visitors and researchers.

The War Department period (1916-1933) is particularly important at this Site, because the current appearance of the plaza, Sinking Spring, pathways and stone walls, main parking lot, and access road was largely created during that period. Peterson's administrative history sheds considerable light on the War Department years, and War Department plans and drawings from the National Archives were used in preparing the HRS. Further research in War Department records, particularly those not transferred to the NPS but remaining in War Department record groups, would provide more complete documentation for this period. Areas for additional research include the sequence and intent of improvements and the sources of labor. The Park should investigate and verify if any records relating to the construction, maintenance, and improvements made at the Site remain at Mammoth Cave National Park. If such records exist, arrangements should be made to obtain copies for the Park's reference files.

The Site is significant not only as Abraham Lincoln's birthplace, but because it reflects early twentieth century attitudes on the commemoration of famous Americans through architecture and landscape design. Commemoration merits more emphasis as an interpretive theme, and the cultural contexts and themes discussed in the Park's RMP should be reconsidered. For example, the RMP notes that "the Civil War" was determined to be the proper cultural context for the Park. Although the Civil War is clearly related to the history of Abraham Lincoln, it is not the best context in which to interpret the Site. An expanded interpretive program focusing on the creation and development of the Site by the Lincoln Farm Association, including the prominent Americans involved and prevalent societal attitudes toward historical figures, would enhance visitors' experience of the Site. This could be accomplished through exhibits at the visitor center and through interpretation of the memorial landscape itself. Materials existing in the park's archival collection already provide a basis for new exhibits. In addition, the topic of the disputed authenticity of the

birthplace cabin could be an engaging one for future interpretation. The cabin's spurious origins have been well known for some time, and are less a source of controversy than they are a valuable backdrop to discuss and interpret how American history is used and disseminated to the public.

The major historic resources at the Site are the symbolic birthplace cabin, the Memorial Building and its landscape setting, the paths and walls leading to the plaza and the Sinking Spring, and the Sinking Spring itself. The site of the Boundary Oak remains an important historic resource, although the loss of the great tree has affected its interpretive potential. The replanting of another tree to symbolize the original should be considered. This action would fit well into "Goal III" as written in the Park's RMP plan outline. Management recommendations relating to the Boundary Oak site are addressed in the Cultural Landscape Report (CLR) for the park. The formal character of the Memorial Building and its four flights of steps are little changed from their 1911 appearance. Past modifications to doors and windows and recommendations regarding their treatment are noted in a recently completed Historic Structure Report (HRS). It is likely, although not certain, that the original circular court at the base of the steps was an expedient dictated by limited funds, rather than a fully worked-out design decision. The formal rectangular plaza constructed by the War Department in the late 1920s is in keeping with the formality and symmetry of Pope's building and stairs and has acquired its own significance. Although some materials have been replaced, the plaza maintains considerable integrity. The War Department-era stone steps descending from the parking area and the walls and steps leading to the Sinking Spring are also important historic features. The plantings flanking the Memorial Building steps, though not employing the original species, accomplish the same effect of screening the view to the left and right and creating a ceremonial approach corridor. The designed landscape and Memorial Building are historically and aesthetically linked and contribute equally to the visitor's experience of the Site. Management recommendations for the designed landscape and an analysis of its current and historic vegetation are addressed in the CLR.

Any proposed changes to the landscape setting of the Memorial Building or historic walls, paths, and steps must be evaluated through the Section 106 process. Historic materials, such as limestone wall slabs and pavers, should be retained, and if feasible, reintroduced where they have been removed. The feeling of the overall design, with its emphasis on axuality, symmetry, and a well-defined ceremonial approach to the Memorial Building, should be preserved and maintained. In addition, the park should develop and implement standard procedures for collecting and maintaining historic architectural elements and/or building materials that result from repair, maintenance, or rehabilitation activities.

The historic granite entrance markers now lying in the woods east of U.S. 31E should be moved to a secure area and preserved. Future research may indicate their original locations and allow their re-erection. Failing that, consideration should be given to using them as exhibits in the park's interpretive program.

Finally, the park's RMP should be amended to reflect the historic and landscape analyses contained in the HRS and the CLR. Future decisions concerning interpretation, planting plans, choice of species, and similar issues, need to be based on this most recent research.

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## APPENDIX A

### INSCRIPTIONS ON MEMORIAL BUILDING\*

*Architrave, Main Portico:* "With Malice Toward None with Charity for All"

*North Side of Main Entrance:* "Stand with Anybody/That Stands Right/Stand with Him while He/Is Right and Apart with Him/When He Goes Wrong/Peoria Ill. Oct. 16, 1854."

*South Side of Main Entrance:* "Let Us Have Faith/That Right Makes Might,/And that Faith Let Us to/the End Dare to Do Our/Duty as We Understand It./Cooper Institute N. Y. Feb. 27, 1860."

*Bronze Tablet, North Side of Rear Entrance:* "This Memorial/Erected/by Popular Subscription/through the/Lincoln Farm Association/Joseph W Folk/President/Robert J Collier/Vice President/and Chairman of the Executive Committee/Clarence A Mackay/Treasurer/Richard Lloyd Jones/Secretary/John Russell Pope/Architect/Cornerstone Laid by President Roosevelt/February 12th 1909/Dedicated by/President Taft/November 9th 1911"

*Bronze Tablet, South Side of Rear Entrance:* "Board of Trustees/of the/Lincoln Farm Association/William H Taft/Joseph W Folk/Horace Porter/Charles E Hughes/Oscar S Straus/John A Johnson/Albert Shaw/Samuel L Clemens/Clarence A Mackay/Norman Hapgood/Lyman J Gage/Samuel Gompers/August Belmont/Robert J Collier/Augustus E Wilson/Henry Waterson/Jenkin Lloyd Jones/Thomas Hastings/Ida M Tarbell/Charles A Towne/Richard Lloyd Jones/Cardinal Gibbons/Joseph H Choate/Edward M Shephard/William J Bryan/Charles E Miner/William T Jerome/Augustus St. Gaudens"

*Pediment Over Main Entrance:* "Here/Over the Log Cabin Where Abraham Lincoln Was Born/Destined to Preserve the Union and Free the Slave/A Grateful People Have Dedicated Memorial/To Unity, Peace and Brotherhood Among These States"

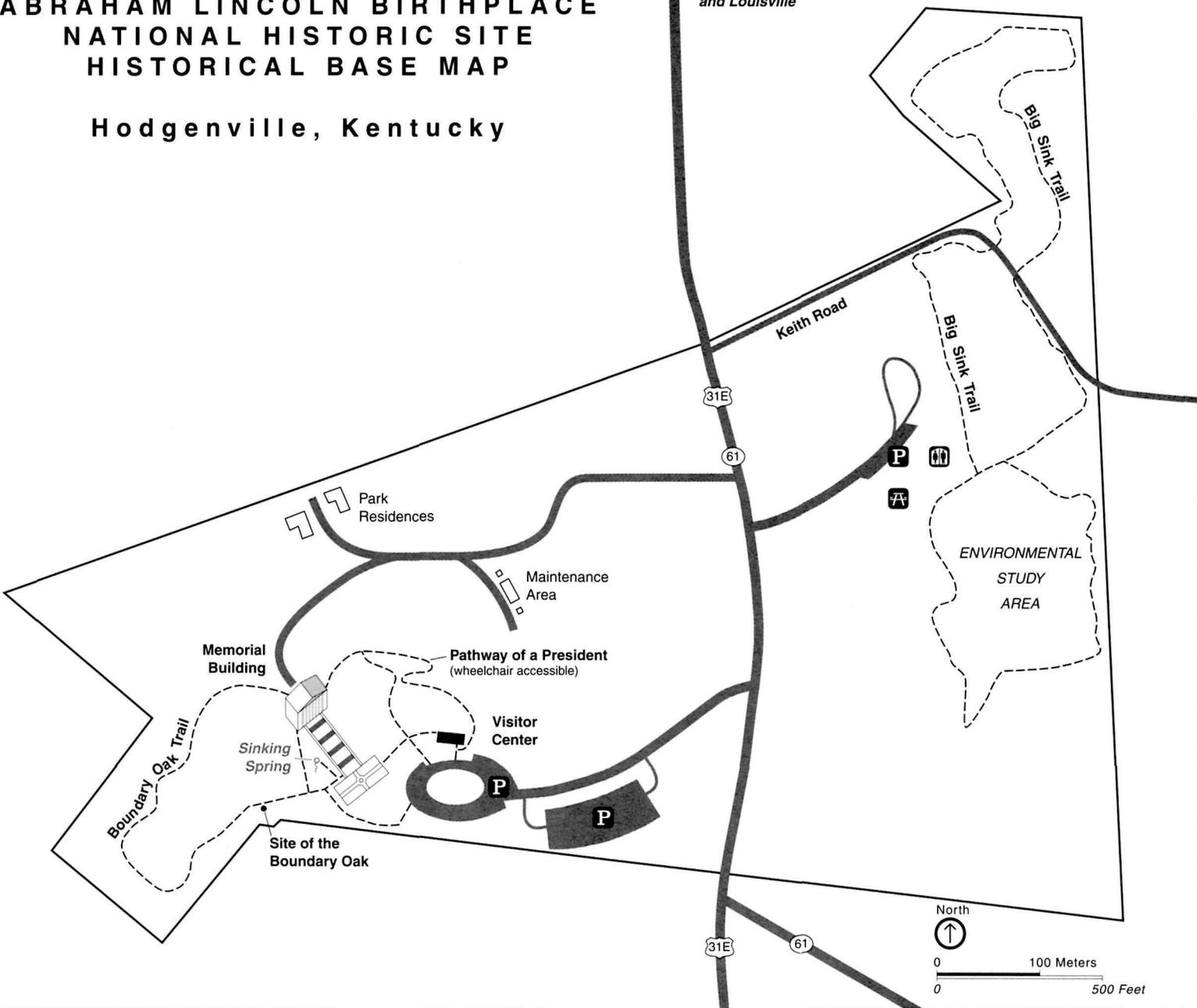
Cornerstone at Northeast Corner: "February/Twelfth/1909"

\*Inscriptions on building are in all capital letters.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN BIRTHPLACE  
NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE  
HISTORICAL BASE MAP

Hodgenville, Kentucky

To Hodgenville  
and Louisville





**WITH MALICE TOWARD NONE, WITH CHARITY FOR ALL**



**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, SOUTHEAST REGION**