AN ARCHEOLOGICAL OVERVIEW AND ASSESSMENT OF LINCOLN BOYHOOD NATIONAL MEMORIAL, SPENCER COUNTY, INDIANA

by

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with a contribution by

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Note: The corporate logo is adapted from a prehistoric design found on a stone tablet recovered from the Gaitskill Mound, Mt. Sterling, Kentucky.
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ABSTRACT

During 1994 and 1995 Cultural Resource Analysts, Inc. undertook an archeological overview and assessment of the Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial in Spencer County, Indiana. This resulting study was designed to provide a regional context and summary description of all known cultural resources within the Memorial. The overview and assessment included a review of past archeological research on Memorial lands and a comprehensive search for pertinent documentary records. The results of this research effort are: 1) a compilation of known resources on the Memorial and appropriate critiques of the historical value of these sources, and 2) an evaluation of the archeological work conducted to date, and a statement on the potential for additional archeological sites within the Memorial grounds.
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Chapter I. Historical Background

Introduction

The report which follows was prepared by Cultural Resource Analysts Inc., under purchase order with the National Park Service, during 1995. This Scope of Services called for an archeological overview and assessment of resources located within the boundaries of the Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial. The Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial is located in Spencer County, in southwestern Indiana, approximately 44 miles east of Evansville and 70 miles west of Louisville, Kentucky.

This study was designed to establish "baseline" information on the archeological resources of the memorial park. The primary goal was to accumulate and categorize relevant materials, data, and opinions pertaining to archeological resources within the park. The Archeological Overview and Assessment entails basically five components. These components include:

1) An overview of prehistoric occupation and historic settlement of the region, to provide an historical context for the study area. Currently the data regarding prehistoric occupation of Southwestern Indiana is quite limited, and the cultural overview draws on literature from the Ohio Valley and the Southeast.

2) Research into documents pertaining to the historic occupation of the memorial.

3) A summary description of all known cultural resources within the park area.

4) A review of past archeological research within the park area, including professional opinions on the adequacy of those investigations, and on the archeological integrity and archeological significance of those remains.

5) An evaluation of the potential for significant archeological sites located within the memorial.

Each of these topics are addressed in the following report.

This study is divided into eight sections and an appendix. Chapter I and II provide an historical background and cultural context for cultural resource evaluation of the Memorial. Chapter I addresses the prehistoric and early history of this portion of the state of Indiana, and Chapter II consists of an overview of historical literature bearing on Abraham Lincoln and the Lincoln farm in Indiana.

Chapters III and IV address the task of compiling and critiquing the existing documents on Lincoln and family during their stay in Indiana. Chapter III represents the results of a comprehensive search for documents and primary sources relating to the historical development of the Memorial property. One of the most comprehensive and important works completed to date on the early Lincoln homestead is the work of Edwin Bearss. Chapter IV reviews and summarizes Bearss' work; a detailed study of the Lincoln farm and its various components. A component of this section is an integration of this historical work with a discussion on the potential and use for additional archeological work around the cabin.

An attempt was made to summarize known cultural resources existing within the park. Chapters V, VI and VII discuss the historic resources included within the park area from 1830 through the 1960's. Chapter V focuses specifically on the development of the Memorial in the years between the Lincoln's departure for Illinois in 1830 and its incorporation into Lincoln City in 1872. Chapter VI discusses the history of the Nancy Hanks Lincoln cemetery and how archeology might help determine the cemetery's true dimensions, as well as the location of Nancy Hanks Lincoln's grave. Chapter VII discusses the history of Lincoln City from 1872 to the 1960s. Archeological sites and features are clearly associated with the parks development.
during the turn of the twentieth century. Some of these archeologically important aspects of the surrounding town are discussed. At the end of the report is an appendix containing transcripts of early deeds to the Lincoln farm.

Chapter VIII addresses the review of the extant archeological literature on the Memorial. To date little archeological research at the Lincoln Boyhood Home, and has been conducted. This research was quite limited in scope, and only addressed the potential impacts of park projects on archeological resources of small areas of park land. Included in this section are professional opinions on the quality of the archeological field work conducted and on the artifacts collected during these projects. Comments regarding specific archeological techniques which may be utilized to more fully understand Lincoln’s home site are included.

This report is not meant to provide a complete summary of historical and archeological data on the National Park land of Lincoln’s Boyhood Home, but to gather and evaluate the existing data. These data can be used to guide future research, either historical or archeological, within the confines of this valuable historic landmark.

Prehistoric Settlement of Southwestern Indiana

Currently, there are 887 prehistoric and historic sites recorded in Spencer County, which have been reported to the Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology (DHPA). These sites represent the full range of prehistoric and historic occupations in the area. Unfortunately, the DHPA is currently entering data into a database file which would enumerate the archeological sites and associated prehistoric cultures represented within the county. The following overview presents current knowledge on the prehistoric cultures known to have existed in Indiana, the Ohio Valley and the Southeast in general.

The first professional archeological investigations in Spencer County essentially began as late as 1956. J. Kellar recorded and investigated over 200 sites in the area. Green and Munson (1978) surveyed along the Ohio River in Spencer County to locate prehistoric Mississippian culture sites. Indiana University (Smith 1990) and Indiana State University have conducted a variety of small scale archeological investigations in Spencer County as well. Archeological investigations in Spencer County have contributed to the documentation of prehistoric cultures in the Ohio River Valley and the Southeast. The prehistoric sequence for Indiana which follows is derived from the work of Stafford et al. (1988), who were responsible for generating a document summarizing the prehistoric resources of southwest Indiana in a long range project which began in 1983.

Southwestern Indiana may be viewed within a temporal-spatial framework of cultural traditions common to eastern North America. Kellar (1983:23-63) summarized Indiana prehistory in the four major traditions of Paleo-Indian, Archaic, Woodland and Mississippian. Each of these represent what appear to be persistent continuities in life styles and technologies, with approximate temporal spans as follows: Paleo-Indian Tradition from earliest known culture to 10,000 B.P.; Archaic Tradition from 10,000 to 2750 B.P.; Woodland Tradition from 2750 to 950 B.P.; and Mississippian Tradition from 950 to 400 B.P.

Within these major traditions archaeologists have been able to isolate and define a number of regional-specific cultures and phases. Winters (1967) provided the first modern synthesis of prehistoric occupations within portions of the central and lower Wabash River valley. Although his data were derived primarily from Illinois sites and materials, the close geographic proximity of his study area to southwestern Indiana has made his study of the Wabash Valley a long standing reference work for the area. Winters (1967) discussed the presence of Paleo-Indian Clovis-like points in the Wabash Valley, and the virtual lack of points of the Dalton-Meserve
Style which are common to the west in southern Illinois and the central Mississippi Valley. Winters also noted the recovery of materials, typically points, diagnostic of Early, Middle and Late Archaic occupations. Furthermore, based on both survey and test excavation data he was able to define a previously unrecognized Late (Terminal) Archaic manifestation which he termed Riverton Culture (Winters 1967:30-36; 1969). While a paucity of Early Woodland material was recovered by Winters, points, prismatic blades and ceramics morphologically and technologically similar to those of the Middle Woodland Havana Tradition of the central Illinois River Valley were recovered from several Wabash Valley sites. Also discussed by Winters (1967) were the Middle Woodland LaMotte culture, Late Woodland Albee and Duffy complexes, and the Mississippian Vincennes Culture.

Other studies of prehistoric manifestations in southwestern Indiana include Black's (1967) analysis of the Mississippian Angel site, Green and Munson's (1978:293-330) discussion of settlement patterns associated with the emergent Mississippian Yankeetown Phase and the Angel and Cabron-Welborn phases of Mississippian culture, and Munson and Cook's (1980) report on survey and excavation of sites in a restricted area of the Crawford Upland. Resulting data was used to define the Late Archaic French Lick Phase. Numerous other surveys and excavations have greatly added to the archaeological data base for the southwest portion of the State, but the history and cultural dynamics of this area remain poorly understood. Present below is an outline of the culture history of southwestern Indiana which includes brief discussion of settlement and subsistence, technology, diagnostics and temporal limits.

**Paleo-Indian Tradition**

Although C-14 dates for a Paleo-Indian occupation are not available for Indiana, it is generally agreed that Paleo-Indians were the first people to inhabit the State, and that this occurred sometime prior to 10,000 B. P. Evidence for the existence of PaleoIndians in southwestern Indiana and adjacent areas is well documented in the literature. Dorwin (1966) undertook a study which examined the distribution of Paleo-Indian fluted points in Indiana. Data were collected from artifact collectors, the Indiana Historical Society, and reports of county archaeological surveys. Results revealed a total of 54 fluted specimens from counties in which Data Centers occur, and 65 specimens if Posey County is included. Dorwin (1966:148, 177) noted that the distribution of fluted points was heavily weighted to counties which bordered the Ohio River, as well as the lower Wabash Valley. However, he was aware that factors such as varying degrees of collecting activity within areas of the State might be responsible for the skewed distribution (Dorwin 1966:147-148).

 Sites which have produced single Paleo-Indian specimens are by far the most common in southwestern Indiana. Although some sites are known to have yielded 2 or more Paleo points, the occurrence of 3 or more points at a single site is rare. In a recent survey of fluted point producing sites in Indiana, Tankersley (1987:9) notes that only 13 (8.1%) of 161 sites he studied are known to have produced 3 or more fluted points.

The evidence for the presence of early and late Paleo-Indian occupations in the southwestern portion of Indiana exists most commonly in the form of fluted and unfluted points. For the most part Paleo-Indian points occur as isolates, leaving few clues to the types or range of activities conducted at sites. The traditional interpretation of Paleo-Indian settlement-subistence is that small bands of mobile hunter-gathers moved across the landscape in pursuit of late Pleistocene megafauna. Although such animals may have contributed to the diet of Paleo-Indians in Indiana, it seems likely that a variety of smaller animals and botanical resources would also have been important to the subsistence economy. Based on incomplete data it appears most Paleo-Indian finds in Indiana occur on river terraces and upland bluffs. However, the
presence of Paleo-Indian materials in valley settings has been noted by Higginbotham (1983:141) and Tankersley (1987:9-10). The rarity of Paleo-Indian points is reflected in the data center survey where only one point was collected.

**Archaic Tradition**

During the Archaic Tradition a number of significant shifts in human adaptation took place in response to rapidly changing environmental conditions brought about by the end of the Wisconsin glaciation. Specialized hunter-gather economies developed and adapted to local conditions, with deer, turkey and other small mammals providing the staple meat source, and with hickory nut being an important botanical resource. During the late Middle and Late Archaic periods river mussels became important to the subsistence base of some groups, while native cultigens also are used. Settlement and subsistence strategies operated in response to seasonal fluctuations in the availability and distribution of floral and faunal resources, with group mobility being scheduled to maximize the availability of those resources. During the Archaic the trend was for site size and complexity to increase, with substantial multi-seasonal and possibly year-round residences occurring by the Middle Archaic in areas with high carrying capacities. As population increased and peoples adapted to regional conditions there was an increase in the number of regional projectile point styles, suggesting an increase in the number of discrete cultures or manifestations. Based on differences in settlement and subsistence, technology and complexity of social organization, the Archaic is typically discussed in terms of Early, Middle and Late periods of development. Each is briefly discussed below.

**Early Archaic**

Early Archaic sites in southwestern Indiana are believed to date to approximately 10000-7950 B.P. Sites of this period share a number of similarities with those of the earlier Paleo-Indian period in that they are typically small and contain low densities of cultural debris. The traditional view of Early Archaic populations is that they were more geographically restricted than Paleo-Indian groups, although they remained highly mobile. For this reason occupations were of rather short duration, with the development of structures such as pits and hearths being rare. Projectile points remain the most diagnostic items, with types still sharing a high degree of technological and morphological similarity over large areas. However, regional differentiation does occur. Early Archaic point types common to southwest Indiana include Thebes, Kirk-Palmer, Lost Lake, Charleston, and MacCorkle and LeCroy bifurcates. Early Archaic artifacts are common in southwest Indiana, with points of the aforementioned types being present in most private collections. A large scale survey conducted along the lower Wabash Valley in Knox, Gibson and Posey counties identified 21 sites which produced 2 or more Early Archaic points, with most sites occurring on floodplain sand ridges and bluff tops (Higginbotham 1983:163-170). Across the Wabash River in Illinois Winters (1967:18-21) likewise identified a number of Early Archaic sites.

Two Early Archaic sites of particular interest located in southern Indiana are Jerger and Swan's Landing. Jerger is a surface site located in Daviess County which was examined by Tomak in 1977. Based on the recovery of bifurcate base MacCorkle-like points, bone and shell artifacts and other materials from 3 large features which also contained calcined human bone, Tomak (1979:6269) interpreted Jerger as an Early Archaic mortuary site. This remains the only Early Archaic site of this nature identified in Indiana, and one of the few Early Archaic burial sites in North America. The second site of interest, Swan's Landing, is a deeply buried site located along the Ohio River in Harrison County. The site was reported by Tomak (1982:76-77), and subsequently tested by Indiana University (Smith 1986). Data generated during the excavation along with that obtained through examination of private collections indicated the site was occupied by
Early Archaic peoples for the specialized purpose of manufacturing Kirk points (Smith 1986:53).

Diagnostic artifacts which can be attributed to the Early Archaic are few, and it is generally believed that the total cultural inventory was sparse (Kellar 1983:27). Nevertheless, Early Archaic diagnostics occur in large numbers throughout southwestern Indiana. Although formal settlement pattern studies are lacking for the area, points attributable to this period occur in a wide variety of upland and terrace settings, but may be less frequently represented in major floodplains. Early Archaic points were the most common type recovered in the data center survey.

**Middle Archaic**

As viewed here the Middle Archaic represents a period between approximately 7950-4950 B.P. when regional populations developed increasingly specialized systems of adaptation marked by the appearance of relatively large and intensively occupied sites, many of which may represent multiseasonal or year-round habitations. The diversity of artifact assemblages increases during this period, with specialized tool forms, many manufactured from ground stone, first appearing. Points typical of this period are side notched with ground bases, and include named types such as Godar, Big Sandy II, Matanzas and Faulkner. Other artifacts typical of Middle Archaic cultures include axes, atlatl weights, plummet, pitted stones and geometrically incised bone pins.

Although Middle Archaic sites and materials are well known throughout southwestern Indiana, there are currently no defined phases or cultures for the period. As a result, Indiana archaeologists have relied heavily upon information from the Middle Archaic levels at the Koster and Black Earth sites in Illinois when describing Middle Archaic assemblages and adaptation in Indiana.

Middle Archaic sites are known to occur in valley, terrace and upland settings throughout the study area. Larger, more intensively occupied habitation sites occur more frequently in valley and terrace settings, with smaller, limited activity sites being more common in upland areas. Large habitations are well represented along major streams and former late Pleistocene impoundments, although shell middens are believed to be restricted to major valley settings. Middle Archaic points are well represented in the data center sample.

**Late Archaic**

The temporal limits for the Late Archaic range from approximately 4950-2750 B.P. in southwestern Indiana. During this period the trend of regional specialization and adaptation continues, and evidence for plant domestication and the extensive utilization of wild plants is well documented (Yarnell 1976:269). Large habitation sites, including shell middens, occur along major waterways, although relatively large middens also occur in upland settings adjacent to former wetland tracts.

In southwestern Indiana Munson and Cook (1980) defined the Late Archaic French Lick Phase, and assigned temporal limits of 4950-3450 B.P. Diagnostic artifacts associated with this phase include side notched Big Sandy II-like examples and stemmed point types such as Karnak, Matanzas and "Late Archaic Stemmed", all of which are common at Late Archaic sites in southern Indiana, as well as in adjacent areas of Illinois and Kentucky. Incised bone pins have also been recovered from French Lick-Phase sites. Some artifacts associated with the French Lick Phase are similar to those reported from Middle Archaic sites in Illinois. Riverton Culture (Winters 1967:30-36, 1969; Anslinger 1986) occurred during the latter portion of the Late Archaic in portions of Illinois and Indiana. Available C-14 dates indicate a span of occupation from 3550-2750 B.P. (Anslinger 1986:16-17). The distribution of Riverton sites indicates an increased adaptation toward riverine resources, with Riverton sites and materials being infrequent outside major valleys and the lower reaches of tributary streams. Diagnostic of
Riverton Culture are the small and often poorly manufactured Trimble and Merom point types which are typically fashioned from gravel cherts.

Like Early and Middle Archaic sites, those of the Late Archaic are located in a wide variety of physiographic settings ranging from large, broad valleys to uplands. Through the Archaic there does appear to have been a trend toward greater exploitation of riverine resources, reflected in part by the presence of numerous large, deep middens along the Ohio, Wabash and White rivers. Settings outside the river valleys continue to be exploited for subsistence and lithic resources, but there is little evidence for the extensive use of these resources by peoples of the Terminal Archaic Riverton Culture. Late Archaic points are prevalent in the data center sample, although terminal Archaic diagnostics were recovered in smaller numbers.

Woodland Tradition

In eastern North America the Woodland Tradition is typically divided into Early, Middle and Late periods, which when combined span from approximately 2950-950 B.P. Several trends which occur during this period are an increase in the importance of native and tropical cultigens, the introduction and spread of ceramic technology, larger group size, extensive intra- and interregional trade systems, and more complex socio-political systems.

Early Woodland

In southwestern Indiana the Early Woodland period, which dates from about 2950 to 2150 B.P., is poorly understood. North of the White River some thick, grit tempered ceramics with flattened bases, similar to Marion Thick, have been recovered. However, Early Woodland ceramics are rare, with most sites producing no more than a few specimens. In the same area stemmed Kramer and Adena points and leaf-shape cache blades, sometimes associated with red ocher occur. The Curley Mounds site located near Terre Haute in Vigo County produced Turkey Tail points of Wyandotte Chert, lanceolate cache blades of Burlington Chert, a Kramer-like point of Wyandotte Chert and a bar amulet (ISU Files; Pace 1987, personal communication). This is the only reported Red ocher mound site, to our knowledge, in southwestern Indiana.

South of the White River Crab Orchard/Baumer ceramics appear to be earliest, a pattern which also occurs in southern Illinois (cf. Jefferies and Butler 1982:21). Although Crab Orchard is usually considered a Middle Woodland expression, it may occur throughout much of the Early and Middle Woodland periods (Jefferies and Butler 1982:21; Butler and Jefferies 1986:523-534).

Throughout the southwestern portion of Indiana Adena style points occur, indicating the presence of Early Woodland, and possibly Middle Woodland peoples.

Early Woodland sites in southwestern Indiana are typically identified on the basis of stemmed points morphologically similar to Adena and Dickson Broad Bladed types, and not on the presence of ceramics. However, the temporal limits of these point types are not well established in the area, as they are also recovered from sites producing quantities of Middle Woodland Havana ceramics. In conclusion, the Early Woodland remains one of the most poorly understood periods in southwestern Indiana.

Middle Woodland

The Middle Woodland period dates from 2150 to 1550 B.P. and has historically been distinguished on the basis of a variety of social, economic and technological developments. Many Middle Woodland societies in the East participated in an extensive exchange network and redistribution system which Struver (1964) termed the Hopewellian Interaction Sphere. While Middle Woodland societies in the central Ohio Valley and the lower Illinois Valley were highly involved in this network, there is little evidence to suggest that Middle Woodland groups in southwestern Indiana were active participants. The only exception appears
to be Mann (12Po2) and related sites near the confluence of the Ohio and Wabash rivers (Kellar 1979:100-107).

Winters (1967:44-60) discussed the presence of Middle Woodland cultures along the central Wabash Valley in Illinois and Indiana. Havana series ceramics and associated lithic tools were recovered from a number of sites by Winters, and additional survey of the central Wabash Valley by Indiana State University has identified Havana-like sites including a village with associated mounds. Black (1933) and Tomak (1970) likewise noted the occurrence of middle Woodland Havana-like habitation and mound sites along the West Fork of White River in Greene County, near the town of Worthington.

South of the confluence of the White and Wabash rivers many middle Woodland sites produce quantities of grog tempered Crab Orchard ceramics. Higginbotham (1983:227-260) and Winters (1967:49-52) discuss Crab Orchard sites along the Wabash River in Indiana and Illinois respectively. At the Mann site a complex and highly variable assemblage of Middle Woodland ceramics occurs (Kellar 1979:102-106). Of interest are ceramics with "Hopewellian" elements and a variety of exotic goods associated with the Hopewellian Interaction Sphere (cf. Seeman 1979). Outside the general area of Mann in southwestern Indiana, Middle Woodland Hopewellian phase items are rare or absent.

The basic lack of a Hopewell presence in the central Wabash Valley may be related to the Allsion-LaMotte occupation of the area (cf. Pace and Apfelstadt 1980). Allison-LaMotte peoples dominated the central Wabash Valley between 1850-1300 B.P. (A.D. 100-650), and the evidence indicates they did not participate or interact to a significant degree with neighboring Havana or Crab Orchard Hopewell populations. Typical of Allison-LaMotte sites are thin, sand tempered cordmarked, simple stamped and check stamped ceramics, and Lowe Flared Base points (cf. Pace and Apfelstadt 1980; Winters 1967:47-48, 52-60).

Middle Woodland village and mound sites occur predominately in valley settings in southwestern Indiana, with many occurring on elevated terraces. Smaller sites, which often lack ceramics occur in a variety of valley, terrace and upland settings. No formal analysis of Middle Woodland settlement patterns in southwestern Indiana has been conducted. The number of Early and Middle woodland sites in the data center sample is relatively small, based almost exclusively on point types rather than ceramics.

**Late Woodland**

The Late Woodland dates from about 1550 to 950 B.P. During this period interregional trade decreased relative to the preceding Middle Woodland period, and the elaborate decorative elements on Middle Woodland vessels are, for the most part, absent. In general, there appears to have been a decrease in the amount or nature of regional interaction during this period. Subsistence economies remain heavily dependent on hunting and gathering, although some tropical cultigens are also important.

The Albee Complex is the only defined Late Woodland manifestation in the central Wabash Valley and along tributaries in Indiana and Illinois (Winters 1967:60-69). Distinctive of Albee are grit tempered vessels (jars) with cambered rims and cordmarked exterior surfaces (Winters 1967:68). Points include side-notched pentagonal and trianguloid forms. Albee sites also occur in relatively large numbers along the West Fork of White River. Indiana State University identified an Albee component, including human interments, at the Lattas Creek site (12Gr24) in Greene County. MacLean (1931) reported on the excavation of the Albee Mound in Sullivan County.

Winters (1967:69-70) also discussed 2 Late Woodland manifestations which occurred south of the Albee core area. The Duffy Complex was believed to occur primarily in southeastern Illinois, while the Yankeetown Culture was viewed as its southwestern Indiana counterpart. Lithic assemblages of the 2 manifestations were similar, but Winters (1967:70) believed there
was a significant difference in the use of decorative treatments on ceramics which distinguished them from one another. However, a re-analysis of Duffy and Yankeetown ceramics indicates they represent a single cultural-historical unit (Redmond 1988:299-317).

**Mississippian Tradition**

The Mississippian Tradition in southwestern Indiana persisted for approximately 600 years, from 950-350 B.P. During this period there was increased attention and dependence on cultivated foods such as squash, corn and beans. However, wild plant foods and a variety of animals remained important to the subsistence base. Large, complex sites emerged, with fortification walls and ceremonial mounds. Also, large sites were organized around central plazas. Diagnostic artifacts include shell tempered ceramics and trianguloid (Madison) points.

The best example of Mississippian culture in southwestern Indiana occurs along the Ohio valley in Warrick, Vanderburg and Posey counties. Black (1933) reported on extensive excavations at the Angel site, and more recently Indiana University has conducted excavations and survey at Mississippian sites of the Caborn-Welborn Phase in Posey County. To the north, along the central Wabash Valley in the area of Vincennes, there is evidence of a distinct Mississippian manifestation which Winters (1967:7183) termed Vincennes Culture. Both large habitation sites and mound groups occur. Vincennes Culture sites also occur along the White River.

Farther north in the area of Vigo, Vermillion and Parke counties Mississippian culture is not well represented or developed. Shell tempered ceramics occur in association with Madison points, but many of these same sites also produce quantities of grit tempered Late Woodland ceramics. It may be that the Late Woodland persisted in this area, with local groups acquiring or copying Mississippian ceramics.

Several Native American tribes are known historically to have frequented the area. These Indian groups include the Delaware, Potawatami, Miami, the Wyandotte and the Shawnee. Kellar (1983) notes that historically documented Indian groups may have entered this area of Indiana late in prehistory or early in the historic period. The migrations and movements of Native Americans after the appearance of Euro-Americans on the continent obscures the identification of distinct Indian groups in the area.

The land of the Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial does not currently have any prehistoric sites recorded. The park land, however, clearly has the potential to contain prehistoric cultural resources given the rich prehistoric past of southwestern Indiana.

**The Historic Settlement of Frontier Indiana**

Euro-American presence in this part of the United States dates back to the early eighteenth century. In 1732 the French expanded their Mississippi Valley fur-trading empire into the lower Ohio and Wabash valleys and built a fort and trading post at Vincennes—only about 50 miles northeast of the park. France claimed the region until 1763 when, as a consequence of its loss in the Seven Years War (1756-1763), it ceded its vast North American holdings to Great Britain. The British maintained a nominal presence in the Ohio Valley until King George III recognized American independence in 1783. In just over twenty years the lands comprising Spencer County had passed from French, to British, to American sovereignty (Madison 1986: 10-27).

American claims, however, were rather tenuous. The Indian tribes of the Wabash Valley proved an effective barrier against white settlement north of the Ohio until after General Anthony Wayne defeated the tribes at the Battle of Fallen Timbers in 1794. Despite the reduction of the Indian threat, most of southern Indiana technically remained Indian territory.
Nevertheless, by 1800 a few squatters surely trickled into modern Spencer County, particularly along the river. Then in 1809, the Indiana territorial governor, William Henry Harrison, negotiated a treaty with certain leaders of the Delaware and Piankashaw tribes opening most of far southwestern Indiana to white settlement (Figure 1) (Barnhart and Riker 1971: 370-77).

Nevertheless, none of the land could be sold until the federal government surveyed it. Anyone who arrived before that time was a squatter. Furthermore, the Indian threat had not evaporated totally. The Shawnee Tecumseh organized a loose confederation of tribes to resist Harrison's land deals. In 1811 Harrison marched an army up the Wabash and, taking advantage of the temporary absence of Tecumseh, defeated the insurgents at the Battle of Tippecanoe near modern Lafayette. A brief Indian resurgence took place during the War of 1812 and raids began anew, ranging as far south as Pigeon Roost in modern Scott County. The tide of war soon shifted. Tecumseh's death at the Battle of the Thames (1813) and the British abandonment of the tribes in the peace treaty of 1815 marked the end of Indian power in the Wabash watershed. It also spelled a permanent end to raiding in southern Indiana (Barnhart and Riker 1971: 378-90). Finally in 1816 federal land sales began in Perry County (and modern Spencer County) (Figure 2).

The Lincoln Family in Indiana: An Overview

The Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial in Spencer County, Indiana was the site of the farm of Thomas Lincoln and his family from 1816 to 1830. The family included Abraham Lincoln, the sixteenth president of the United States. Abraham Lincoln was seven years old when his family arrived in the Hoosier wilderness and twenty-one when they departed for a new home on the Illinois prairie. The Lincoln family first came west in the early 1780s. Abraham Lincoln, grandfather of the future president, sold his farm in Virginia and bought land along Long Run in what is now southern Jefferson County, Kentucky. In 1786 the elder Abraham Lincoln was killed by Indian raiders (Warren 1959: 4). During his lifetime Abraham had acquired over 5,500 acres of Kentucky land and, by the standards of the frontier, was affluent. Kentucky was then part of Virginia, and the commonwealth, followed the tradition of primogeniture, in which the eldest son, Mordecai, inherited the entire estate and eventually became a prosperous citizen of Washington County, Kentucky. His younger brothers Josiah and Thomas were left to fend for themselves (Donald 1995: 21).

Thomas Lincoln eventually scraped together enough money to buy a 238-acre tract on Mill Creek in Hardin County. In 1806 he married Nancy Hanks and within the year their first child, Sarah, was born. In 1809 he sold the Mill Creek farm and bought three hundred acres near Nolin Creek near Hodgensville, called the Sinking Spring Farm. Abraham Lincoln was born there on February 12, 1809. The land is now the Abraham Lincoln National Historical Site (Donald 1995: 22).

Two years later, having found the soil on the Sinking Spring farm to be infertile, Thomas Lincoln sold out and moved to a smaller, but more productive farm on Knob Creek ten miles northeast. Kentucky's lands had never been systematically surveyed and, as a consequence, property disputes were very common. Thomas was thus unable to establish a clear title to the Knob Creek farm, a problem that he had faced on his two previous properties. He did not have the money to pay a lawyer to sort out his claim; therefore, it made more sense to sell out and move to the Indiana frontier. The federal government owned the land of the Indiana frontier, and it was surveyed and sold in rectangular sections. Furthermore he worried about the competition of the slave labor system. In 1811 Hardin County had 1,627 adult white males and 1,007 slaves. Thomas Lincoln was not, however, leaving because he was destitute. In 1814 he ranked fifteenth out of ninety-eight property owners in the county tax records (Donald 1995: 22-24).
I. June 7, 1803, at Fort Wayne, with the Delawares, Shawnee, Potawatomi, Miami, Eel Rivers, Wea, Kickapoo, Piankashaw, and Kaskaskia.
II. August 13, 1803, at Vincennes, with the Kaskaskia.
III. August 18 and 27, 1804, at Vincennes, with the Delawares and Piankashaw.
IV. November 3, 1804, at St. Louis, with the Sauk and Foxes.
V. August 21, 1805, at Grouseland, with the Delawares, Potawatomi, Miami, Eel Rivers, and Wea.
VI. December 30, 1805, at Vincennes, with the Piankashaw.
VII. September 30, 1809, at Fort Wayne, with the Delawares, Potawatomi, Miami, Eel Rivers, and Wea.
VIII. December 9, 1809, at Vincennes, with the Kickapoo.

Figure 1. William Henry Harrison’s Indian treaties (from Barnhart and Riker 1971: 377)
Figure 2. Indiana Counties in 1816. The Lincoln farm was originally in Perry County (from Barnhart and Riker 1971: 431)
Thomas Lincoln traveled in the fall of 1816 to the undeveloped wilderness along Pigeon Creek in what was then Perry County, Indiana. When he reached the present site of Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial, he built a half-face camp and began setting out his claim. He then brought his family from Kentucky. For the next decade and a half this land was home to Thomas Lincoln’s family (Donald 1995: 24-25). Upon arriving on their claim, the Lincoln family spent a short time in the half-faced camp until Thomas and some of his new pioneer neighbors could put up a cabin. The family survived the first winter on deer and bear meat and whatever forest products they could scrape up. By spring they had cleared enough land to start a crop of corn (Donald 1995: 25).

On October 15, 1817 Thomas bought his farm at the United States Land Office in Vincennes. He purchased two tracts of eighty acres each, comprising the southwest quarter of Section 32, T 4 S, R 5 W. and paid $16 to secure his right. Two months later he paid an additional $64, for a total of $80, or one quarter of the total price of $320 (Bearss 1967: 32). The land was located on a pioneer road which separated townships four and five (Warren 1959: 41-42). A full and detailed account of Thomas Lincoln’s Indiana land transactions is William E. Bartelt, “The Land Dealings of Spencer County, Indiana, Pioneer Thomas Lincoln,” *Indiana Magazine of History*, Volume 87, Number 3, September, 1991 (Figure 3, 4 and 5).

In 1818 the state legislature created the new county of Spencer, named for pioneer militia leader Spier Spencer who was killed at the Battle of Tippecanoe, and established the seat at Rockport on the Ohio. The Lincoln farm was then located in Carter Township of Spencer County. Though a number of settlers moved into the neighborhood in 1816 and 1817, the farm was still isolated. It was over two miles to Noah Gordon’s horse mill to have grain processed. Troy on the Ohio River was the nearest trading center of any kind (Warren 1959: 43).

In the fall of 1817 Nancy Hanks Lincoln’s aunt and uncle, Elizabeth and Thomas Sparrow, and their ward Dennis Hanks, moved to Indiana from Kentucky and came to live on the Lincoln farm. They had lost their Kentucky land in an ejectment suit. Tradition says they lived for a while in the “half-faced camp”—actually a three-sided shelter—but they probably put up a cabin sometime in their first year on the farm (Warren 1959: 51; Donald 1995: 26).

The following fall tragedy struck. What was then a mysterious disease known as “milk sickness”—actually *brucellosis*—killed the Sparrows and Nancy Lincoln. After her death on October 5, 1818 Nancy was buried close to her aunt and uncle on a knoll fifteen hundred feet south of the cabin (Warren 1959: 53-55). Abraham Lincoln was orphaned at age nine.

A year later Thomas went back to Hardin County, Kentucky and married widow Sally Bush Johnston. Sally, age 32, moved to the Lincoln farm with her three children, Elizabeth 13, John 10, and Matilda 9—where they joined Thomas Lincoln 42, and his children Sarah 13 and Abraham 11, and Dennis Hanks 21. For two years eight people lived in the one-room cabin (Warren 1959: 58-62). In 1821 the crowding was somewhat alleviated when Dennis Hanks married Elizabeth Johnston and they moved into their own cabin a mile to the east (Warren 1959: 84).
Figure 3. The only known portrait of Thomas Lincoln (Source: Kunhardt, Kunhardt, and Kunhardt 1993: 35)
Figure 4. Spencer County and Thomas Lincoln's lands (Source: Bartelt 1991: 216)
Spencer County Land Holdings of Thomas Lincoln and Dennis Hanks

LAND MAP LEGEND

A 160 acres claimed by Thomas Lincoln on October 15, 1817.
B 80 acres for which Thomas Lincoln received a patent on June 6, 1827.
C 80 acres Thomas Lincoln relinquished on April 30, 1827.
D 20-acre David Casebier tract associated with Thomas Lincoln.
E 160 acres claimed by Thomas Barritt in 1817. It was assigned to Dennis Hanks in 1820 and assigned to James Gentry in 1826.
F 80 acres on which Hanks lived and which was relinquished by Gentry in 1827. It was eventually owned by James Gentry, Jr., in 1838.
G 80 acres which was retained by Gentry and for which he received a patent on June 6, 1827.
H 80 acres claimed by John Carter in 1818 and assigned to John Hanks in 1823. John Hanks assigned the land to Dennis Hanks in 1825. Dennis Hanks assigned the land to James Gentry, who paid off the land in 1827.

Figure 5. Land holdings of Thomas Lincoln and Dennis Hanks in Spencer County, Indiana (Source: Bartelt 1991: 217)
Chapter II. Secondary Sources On The Lincolns In Indiana

The following is a discussion of the major literature bearing on the life of Abraham Lincoln with particular focus on the years he and his family lived in Indiana. It also includes a short discussion of historical works on the evolution of the American log cabin and pioneer material culture to provide a context for better understanding the Lincoln homestead in Indiana.

William Herndon: Lincoln’s Law Partner and Early Biographer

In 1844 Abraham Lincoln formed a law partnership with William Herndon in Springfield and the firm was not officially dissolved until Lincoln’s assassination in 1865. After Lincoln’s death Herndon began collecting material for a biography. Over the next few years he wrote hundreds of letters to Lincoln’s acquaintances asking for impressions of the man. Herndon also traveled to the former Lincoln home in Indiana and has left detailed impressions of both the sites and former neighbors. With his co-author Jesse W. Weik of Greencastle, Indiana, he published Herndon’s Life of Lincoln in 1889. Selections from Herndon’s interviews have been published in Emanuel Hertz ed., The Hidden Lincoln: From the Letters and Papers of William H. Herndon (1938). Those wishing to research all the interview transcripts can consult the Herndon-Weik Manuscripts at the Library of Congress. Microfilm copies at the Filson Club in Louisville were used for this report. All the subsequent studies have inevitably incorporated much of this material. The problem was that Herndon relied heavily on the testimony of Lincoln’s cousin Dennis Hanks, who, it has been shown, was an unreliable witness and gave contradictory accounts to different individuals. Yet much of what we know about the nature of the Lincoln Indiana farm comes from Hanks’ memory.

Herndon painted the Indiana years as the “dark age” of Lincoln’s life. Perhaps Herndon was influenced by Lincoln himself, who had undoubtedly passed hundreds of hours in conversation with his law partner, and never had much positive to say about his childhood. This view of the Indiana experience paints the family as impoverished and Thomas Lincoln as a man of little ambition. In the 1920s a group of amateur historians associated with the Southwestern Indiana Historical Society vigorously attacked this “dung hill” thesis in a series of papers meant to create a more positive picture of the life of the Lincolns on the Indiana frontier (Peterson 1994: 267).

Louis G. Warren: The principal historian of Lincoln’s youth.

Historian Louis G. Warren was the most prolific writer on Lincoln’s youth and background. A native of Massachusetts, Warren enrolled at Transylvania University in Lexington, Kentucky in 1909. He was ordained a minister of the Disciples of Christ in 1916. His first pastorate was in Lincoln’s birthplace, Hodgenville, Kentucky. During these years he started intense research on Lincoln’s youth and ancestry. He later moved to Indianapolis and while living there published Lincoln’s Parentage and Childhood in 1926. This remains the best study of the family’s background and Kentucky years (Peterson 1994: 221, 239-41).

In 1928 he left the pulpit to assume directorship of the Lincoln Historical Research Foundation in Fort Wayne, Indiana, the “Lincoln ministry” as he called it. This was a research facility funded and maintained by the Lincoln Life Insurance Company to memorialize the man after which it was named. Over the next thirty years Warren built one of the great collections of Lincolnia and became an authority on Lincoln family’s years in Kentucky and Indiana. After many years of research he published Lincoln’s Youth: The
Indiana Years, 1816 to 1830 in 1959 (Peterson 1994: 221, 267)

Warren made a great contribution to our understanding of Lincoln's youth and the life of the Lincoln family on the Indiana frontier. He did much to discredit Herndon's "dung hill" thesis, but as often the case with revisionists, he tended to go too far. For example, before Sally Bush Johnston arrived, the Lincoln homestead does appear to have been a rather spartan place. The cabin had a dirt floor and apparently even lacked a door (Donald 1995: 28).

The image of Thomas Lincoln as uninterested in his son's advancement may hold a grain of truth. Almost as soon as the family arrived in Illinois, Abraham left his father's home and the two saw little of each other in coming years. Abraham Lincoln did not attend Thomas Lincoln's funeral and, despite expressing his intention to do so, never erected a suitable marker on the grave. Warren largely ignores this strained relationship and its origins on the Indiana farm (Donald 1995: 38-40, 152-153).

As director of the Lincoln Museum in Fort Wayne, Warren edited Lincoln Lore, a newsletter treating various aspects of Lincoln history. The most useful issues for evaluating cultural resources at Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial are "Thomas Lincoln's Cabin Homes," #23, September 23, 1929; "Thomas Lincoln Chronology," #44 and #45, February 10 and 17, 1930; "Grandfather Lincoln Chronology," #171, July 18, 1932; "Lincoln Log Cabins," #216, May 29, 1933; "Marking of the Grave of Lincoln's Mother," # 218, June 12, 1933; "The Sister of Abraham Lincoln," #219, June 19, 1933. Most important is "The Indiana Farm—Home of Lincoln's Youth," Lincoln Lore #413, March 8, 1937, in which Warren offers a property history of the Lincoln farm. It is worth consulting, but has been superseded by William Bartelt's 1991 article in the Indiana Magazine of History, which demonstrates, contrary to Warren's opinion, that the land Lincoln purchased from David Casebier on the west border of his farm was a long thin strip rather than a rectangular section Warren envisioned (Bartelt 1991: 217).

Other Accounts

Two older works still provide insights into Lincoln's Indiana years. Ida M. Tarbell, The Early Life of Abraham Lincoln (1896) was the first work to attack Herndon's "dung hill" thesis. Also useful is Bess V. Ehram, The Missing Chapter in the Life of Abraham Lincoln (1938), which treats the Indiana years.

Cabin Architecture: Historical and Archeological Studies

An excellent overview on the origins of log homes and cabins in North America is Harold R. Shurtleff, The Log Cabin Myth (1939). He demonstrates that Swedish settlers brought the log cabin from Scandinavia to the Delaware Valley in the 1630s. Anglo-Americans later adopted it as a practical form on housing on the American frontier. A recent discussion of the log home can be found in David Hackett Fischer, Albions Seed: Four British Folkways in America (1989). He argues that a form of cabin architecture was found in Scotland and northern Ireland in the sixteenth-century, but that because of the lack of timber, the "borderlanders" used stone to build their one-story homes. The word "cabin" originally referred to any "rude enclosure, commonly built of the cheapest material that came to hand." In Ireland that was turf and mud, in Scotland stone, and in America logs. The interior of the cabin was the same on both sides of the Atlantic, "a single room in which the entire family lived together." These structures had a standard size of about sixteen or seventeen feet in length. The log cabin that developed in American was not, as Shurtleff argues, simply a Scandinavian invention, but an amalgamation of building ways brought to America by Swedes, Germans, and, most important, North British borderlanders (Fischer 1989: 655-662). Fischer's work also contains an excellent bibliography of sources on cabin architecture. Another excellent source on cabin construction

**Pioneer Material Culture of the Lincoln Farm**

Two studies provide an excellent introduction to the material culture of Hoosier pioneer farms. Logan Esarey, *The Indiana Home* (1953) is generally considered a classic. Esarey was born and raised in a log cabin in the hills of Perry County, not far from Lincoln’s boyhood home. He eventually became a professor at Indiana University and a leading historian of Indiana and the Midwest. *The Indiana Home* was published after his death. Esarey’s student, R. Carlyle Buley won the Pulitzer Prize for his classic *The Old Northwest* (1951). It has an excellent chapter on material culture and everyday life on early Indiana farms.

**Chapter III. Archival Search For Primary Sources On The Lincolns In Indiana**

As part of the contract requirement to conduct a diligent search for documentary sources bearing on the historic occupation and use of the Memorial’s land, Dr. Jeffrey G. Mauck, project historian, visited archives in Indiana, Kentucky and Washington, D.C. The following is a list of the depositories he visited and the search results for each.

**The Lincoln Museum, Lincoln National Life Insurance Company, Fort Wayne, Indiana**

A review of materials housed at the Lincoln Museum in Fort Wayne was conducted in January 1996. Archivist Jim Eber was prepared for the visit and had all the materials ready for perusal. Among the materials collected by Louis Warren, who directed the museum for many years, is a series of photographs that may be useful if and when archeological survey is to take place. The cost of obtaining copies was prohibitive for use in this study ($15.00 each). The following is a list of available photographs and their citation numbers:

- #637 Site of the Lincoln Home taken in 1933
- #638 Bronze cabin foundation and hearth, taken in 1936
- #639 Lincoln Spring (included in report as figure)
- #641 View Southeast of cabin site taken in 1933
- #642 View Northeast of cabin site (probably 1933)
- #643 Rear of the Lincoln Farm (probably 1933)
- #644 Rear Acres of Farm (probably 1933)
- #645 Old Elm on Farm (probably 1933)
- #646 Close up of Old Elm (probably 1933)
- #647 Old Elm on Farm, another view (probably 1933)
- #648 Farm Corner Oak (probably 1933)
- #649 Trunk of Farm Corner Oak (probably 1933)
- #651 Well Near Lincoln Farm (probably 1933)
- #658 Old Approach to Cemetery (gates to Nancy Hanks Lincoln Park)
- #659 Nancy Hanks Lincoln Grave Site, view from cabin site (probably 1933)
- #660 Another view of Nancy Hanks Lincoln grave site from cabin site (probably 1933)

One might also find “Aerial View of Nancy Hanks Lincoln Memorial, April 9, 1934 by Sheldon Hine of Lincoln Life Insurance Company” useful. This photograph did not have a citation number.
The Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

A materials search was conducted at both the Jefferson Building (secondary sources) and Madison Building (manuscripts). As expected, because so much work has been done on Lincoln, no new sources were located. Dr. Charles Sellers, the specialist on ante-bellum America at the manuscript archives, said he knew of no recent discoveries of sources on Lincoln’s youth. He had recently checked for Dr. David Donald of Harvard University, who has recently completed a Lincoln biography.

The National Archives, Washington, D.C.

Aerial photographs of the park area dating to the 1930s and 1940s were located at the National Archives map room. They were taken to regulate crop production as part of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration under the New Deal. They are from such a high altitude, however, that they are unlikely to provide much information for the archeologist. They can be obtained from the map room at National Archives II in College Park, Maryland.

The Indiana State Library, Indianapolis

The Indiana State Library has a number of manuscript collections that shed light on the creation of the Nancy Hanks Lincoln State Park and its expansion to include the cabin site after 1929. These include the papers of Charles T. Baker (1871-?), a newspaper publisher from Grandview, Indiana, relating to the history of Spencer County, Indiana and the life of Lincoln; Orian V. Brown (1889-1966) a businessman of Dale, Indiana and amateur Lincoln historian; William Fortune (1863-1942), an Indianapolis journalist, active in the development of the Nancy Hanks Lincoln State Memorial; and Margaret Scott (1873-1964), an Indianapolis journalist and member of the Indiana Lincoln Memorial Association. All these collections were examined, but little was found of immediate value to cultural resources management. The library also owns the papers of Senator Albert J. Beveridge, a Lincoln biographer.

The Indiana Historical Society

This is a private archive located in the same building with the Indiana State Library. They have an extensive collection of manuscripts relating to early Indiana and its pioneer history.

The Lilly Library at Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana

The Lilly Library houses a large Abraham Lincoln Collection. Unfortunately almost all of the material relates to the sectional crisis and Civil War.

The Filson Club, Louisville, Kentucky

The Filson Club has a complete collection of Lincoln Lore, and transcripts of the William Herndon/ Jesse Weik Papers in the Library of Congress.

Spencer County Court House, Rockport, Indiana

Here one may locate deed books and various other county records. Some of the records dealing with the Lincoln period, including tax records, have been lost to fire. The surveyors office has recent aerial photographs of that part of the park lying in Carter Township.

The Indiana Room, New Albany-Floyd County Public Library, New Albany, Indiana

This excellent regional genealogy center has all censuses for Indiana, a nice map collection, vertical files containing numerous newspaper clippings on the Lincolns in
Kentucky and Indiana, a complete set of the Indiana Magazine of History, Indiana Historical Collections, and Indiana History Bulletin.

The Kentucky Collection, The Louisville Free Public Library

This excellent collection has numerous secondary sources relating to the Lincolns in Kentucky and Ohio Valley history.

Archival materials at Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial, Lincoln City, Indiana

The files at the park contain a variety of maps and reports. This is the starting point for any work on the park.

Lincoln Inquiry Papers at the Evansville Public Library and Willard Library

During the 1920s the Southwestern Indiana Historical Society sponsored a series of papers on the Lincoln family in Indiana. Most, however, were compiled by amateur historians and are of questionable quality. They are at the Evansville Public Library and the Willard Library in Evansville.

The Spencer County Public Library in Rockport

This small county library holds material relevant to the history of Spencer County and the Lincoln family. It is not, however, a major depository.

IV. The Bearss Study Of The Lincoln Farm: A Critique

The best general study of the Lincoln family during their Indiana years is Louis A. Warren’s Lincoln’s Youth: Indiana Years, 1816-1830. From the standpoint of cultural resource evaluation, however, Warren’s work should be complemented by Edwin C. Bearss, Lincoln Boyhood: As A Living Historical Farm (1967). Bearss study is the best assessment of what the farm looked like and operated in the years 1816 to 1830 (Figure 6). Though it is almost three decades old, no significant new sources have appeared on Lincoln’s Indiana years and there is no reason to revise the work. During a close critique of the study only one error was found. In his discussion of tenant farmer David Atlas Jones, Bearss cites a source that apparently does not exist. This, however, is a small matter; therefore, a review of the major components of the Lincoln farm which Bearss identified and offer a few comments are presented.

The Half-Faced Camp

When Thomas Lincoln first arrived in the wilderness along Pigeon Creek he built a three-sided structure, a so-called “half-faced camp” in which to live. The Sparrows lived in it for some time after they first arrived on the Lincoln farm. The best evidence is that it was located on the cabin knoll or near the Lincoln spring. It probably fell into disuse after that time. Bearss provides an excellent discussion of this structure (Bearss 1967: 141-143).

The Round Log Cabin

Some time after the Lincolns arrived in Indiana—perhaps a few days or few weeks—Thomas joined with his neighbors in erecting a log cabin for the family home. Historians have generally referred to the building as the “round log” cabin to distinguish it from a “hewn log cabin” Thomas and Abraham had partially completed before moving to Illinois. It
apparently was eighteen feet wide and twenty feet long and originally had a dirt floor; but after Sally Lincoln arrived with her family Thomas constructed a puncheon floor and built a loft for Abraham, John Johnston, and Dennis Hanks to sleep in. Some years later Sarah had the interior of the home whitewashed. Bearss describes the structure in some detail in his report. The cabin stood on top of the knoll which now is home to the pioneer farm recreation. Its exact location has never been determined, but the best guess from all the evidence suggests it stood close to where the cabin now sits on the knoll (Bearss 1967: 144-148).

We know the cabin had disappeared by the time Lincoln became president. When Joseph Wiebe was custodian of the Nancy Hanks Lincoln Park in the 1930s, an elderly resident told him that the original Lincoln cabin burned down when "Mr. Hevron," apparently a tenant, was living in it. When William Herndon visited the farm in 1865 he noted that James Gentry's tenant, John Hevron lived in their cabin (Bearss 1967:148). It seems strange, however, that Hevron or any other tenant would have neglected the nearly finished hewn log cabin to live in the old Lincoln cabin. Bearss does not address this issue.

The Hewn Log Cabin

This structure was apparently built by Thomas and Abraham Lincoln just before they departed to Illinois in 1830 (Figure 7). It became somewhat of a tourist attraction after Lincoln's assassination and luckily we have at least two grainy pictures of it. It apparently served as a tenant's home after the original Lincoln cabin was destroyed, perhaps by fire. The photographs show several outbuildings around it. William Herndon described it in 1865:

The house is a one-story hewed log one, porch in front;....fronts south, chimney at east end, has two rooms, an east one and west one, stands on a knoll or knob about 50 feet above the road and 150 yards north of the land; it has an orchard on it, part of which Abraham planted with his own hands.

The dilapidated cabin stood until 1874 when it was sold. Several good pictures of the hewn log cabin are found in the Bearss study (Bearss 1967: 148-154).

Outbuildings and Associated Structures

Bearss also presents an excellent discussion of outbuildings and structures which were likely associated with the farm. These would have included a stable, corn cribs, chicken house, smoke house, pig pens, sheep pens, and a privy. He also constructed a map of what the home site may have looked like. This became the basis for the construction of the pioneer farm recreation which now sits on the cabin knoll. The exact positions of the cabin and outbuildings have not been verified archeologically and the reconstruction may actually have damaged any remaining evidence of the cabin and outbuildings of the Lincolns. This possibility is discussed in more detail later in this report. In addition, there are unanswered questions about several other sites or potential sites on the Lincoln Farm.

Sparrow Cabin

Most accounts suggest that the Sparrows lived in the half-faced camp after they arrived at the Lincoln farm. Given the fact that it was nearly a year before their deaths, there is a good chance they built a cabin on the farm. What arrangement they had with Thomas Lincoln is not clear. If such a cabin could be located, it would provide interesting clues into the construction of the Lincoln family cabin. Although the Sparrows only lived on the farm for a short time, one wonders what Thomas Lincoln would have done with such a structure after their deaths. Unfortunately the historical record is silent on this matter. One possible location for it would be along the road on the south end of the farm or perhaps they simply renovated the half-faced camp that stood a short distance from the Lincoln Cabin?
Figure 6. Edwin Bearss' conception of the Lincoln farm (Source: Bearss 1967).
Trash Dump

Bearss wrote his report to aid in the development of the pioneer farm constructed on the cabin knoll. He did not believe it necessary to discuss a number of questions that might be of use to archeologists. For example, where did the Lincolns dump their trash? "One suspects it would have been somewhere behind the cabin, and a good guess is just to the northeast where the land drops off and the "Trail of 12 Stones" now begins.

South’s study on historic artifact patterning about yard areas states the disposal of trash refuse often took place behind the house on historic sites he studied (1977:47-80). Moir and Jurney’s study of nineteenth and twentieth century sites also revealed front yard areas may be swept clean of trash for appearance, while rear yard areas are locations for refuse disposal (Moir and Jurney 1987:229-245). Another possibility for the location of trash disposal from the Lincoln family is near the pig pen, which Bearss placed directly north of the cabin. More extensive archeological research could provide information on the distribution of artifacts, suggesting activity, work and refuse disposal areas around the Lincoln cabin.

Artifacts such as ceramics and container glass may be able to date a trash deposit to the period of the Lincoln family occupancy. For example ceramics classified as pearlware, which dates from about 1790-1830 (South 1977, Price 1979) would be expected in and diagnostic of an artifact assemblage associated with the Lincoln family. The artifacts associated with a refuse dump are informative of the lives of the Lincolns, telling us what they ate, what their material conditions were and how isolated they were on the early nineteenth century frontier.

Privies

Bearss’ model of the cabin site places a privy near the cabin. The question that arises is, of course, where was the privy located, and did the Lincoln’s use the same privy shaft for their entire fourteen years at the site or dig a new shaft when one became necessary? Furthermore, did later tenants use the same privy or dig a new one? We know there were early twentieth-century privies associated with a school and homesites on the cabin knoll. Artifact analysis of the remains in the privies could distinguish artifacts old enough to have been associated with the Lincoln family and inform us of their frontier lifestyle. Privies which are more recent in age could be informative of the changes in Lincoln City, from the frontier environment of the Lincolns to the small town of Lincoln City.

Chapter V. The Farm
After The Lincolns
(1830-1875)

The Lincolns moved to Illinois in 1830. Over the next three decades the farm changed hands many times and was probably leased to tenant farmers. During these years the residence and main activity area remained centered on the cabin knoll. After Lincoln was elected president, the spot became somewhat of a tourist site and the hewn log cabin that Abraham and Thomas Lincoln had built in 1830 still stood, though in some degree of disrepair.

The property history runs as follows: in 1830 Thomas Lincoln sold the farm to Charles Grigsby for $125. We do not know if Grigsby lived on the farm or leased it to a tenant. In December 1835 Grigsby sold the property to Edley Brown for $200. Brown was probably only speculating, for in 1837 he sold it to James Sally for $250. The next year Sally passed the property to Joseph Gentry for $240--taking a $10 loss on his initial investment. Gentry divided the property. He sold the north half of the farm to Elijah Winkler for $100 in 1850. In 1853 he sold the southern half of the farm containing the cabin and other lands to William Oskins for $500. Then Oskins sold the property to James Gentry (father of Joseph) in 1859 (Larrabee 1968: 22-25). For the text of these deeds see Appendix A.
John Hevron, Tenant Farmer

Neither Bearss nor Warren attempted to obtain any detailed information about John Hevron, who was James Gentry’s tenant on the Lincoln farm. When might have Hevron moved onto the property? Did he only rent from James Gentry or was he on the farm longer? If the story about the original Lincoln cabin burning while he occupied it, Hevron may have resided on the land for some time and conceivably rented from both the Gentry and Oskins family. The census gives us a few details about the man and his family. Hevron does not appear as a resident of Carter Township of Spencer County in the 1850, 1860 or 1870 censuses nor does William Oskins seem to have resided on the land. In 1850 census he does appear as a resident of Jackson Township of Spencer County (United States Census, Spencer County, Indiana, 1850, 1860, 1870).

Possible Activity Areas and Resources related 1830 to 1875 Period

Privies

Residents of the land would have continued to dig privies. There are probably a number in and about the cabin knoll ranging in age from the period of the Lincoln occupation to the 1920s when the small hill was home to two families, a doctors office and school. These features may be deep enough to have escaped the destructive impact of the landscaping in the 1920s and would hold artifacts which could be used to address a variety of research questions on the lifeways of the Lincoln family and later tenants.
Chapter VI. The Nancy Hanks Lincoln Cemetery: Historical Background And Possibilities For Archeology

An important component of the Memorial is the Nancy Hanks Lincoln cemetery, where Abraham Lincoln’s mother was buried in 1818. Unfortunately the exact location of her grave, the dimensions of the cemetery and the exact number of burials in it are unknown. The following discussion presents an historical overview of the death and burial of Nancy Hanks Lincoln, efforts in later years to mark her grave, and the eventual incorporation of the cemetery into a state and then national park. Furthermore, it discusses the potential for archeology to help better understand the nature of the cemetery and possibly locate the grave of Mrs. Lincoln.

During the early nineteenth century frontier communities were often ravaged by a little understood epidemic known as “milk sickness,” which today we know to be brucellosis. It was caused by cattle eating poison snakeroot, which contains the toxin tremetol, which can be passed to humans through tainted milk. The sign of an outbreak was cattle having the “trembles.” In the fall of 1818 some of Thomas Lincoln’s cows developed the “trembles” and died. Soon Thomas Sparrow developed symptoms—intense nausea and thirst, vomiting, and stomach pain. On September 21 he made out his will and died a week later. His wife followed him to the grave a few days later. A neighbor, Mrs. Peter Brooner also developed the disease. By the time she died, Nancy Hanks Lincoln showed symptoms. Nancy Hanks Lincoln died on October 5, 1818, about a week after Thomas Sparrow had expired. According to Louis Warren, Nancy Lincoln was buried in a simple wooden coffin with wooden pegs that Thomas and his son Abraham built. The coffin was placed on a primitive sled and drawn up the long slope to the cemetery on land owned by John Carter about a quarter mile south of the Lincoln Cabin. Nancy was buried next to the Sparrows, and Mrs. Brooner’s grave was close by. Warren asserts that Thomas Lincoln placed field stones at the head and foot of the grave and carved “NHL” on the headstone. Whatever the case, by the time of the Civil War no evidence of any headstone was present. Warren suggests that it was carried away by souvenir hunters (Warren 1959: 54-55, 229).

In 1844 Abraham Lincoln had become one of the leaders of the Whig Party in Illinois and accepted an invitation to return to Spencer County to speak for the Whig presidential nominee Henry Clay. After speaking in Rockport he visited his old neighborhood and farm on Pigeon Creek. He undoubtedly visited his mother’s grave, but made no effort in the coming years to mark it. This raises the question if he remembered exactly where she was buried? Surely he knew the general area, but he had been gone for fourteen years and from most nineteenth-century accounts we have, it appears the cemetery was allowed to become overgrown (Donald 1995: 116).

The grave was apparently neglected until after Abraham Lincoln’s assassination. In 1865 William Herndon visited the grave site and offered the most useful description we have:

... started to find Mrs. Lincoln's grave; it is on a knob, hill, or knoll about a half-mile southeast of the Lincoln house; passed out of the lane going east, landed at the grave, tied my horse; the grave was, is, on the very top or crown of the hill. The knob or knoll is a heavy timbered one. A space is cut out of the forest by piling the trees somewhat as crossbars. In the center of this small cleared place, about fifteen feet from a large white oak tree, rather somewhat between two of these, lies buried Mrs.
About this time local residents, led by Joseph Armstrong, started a movement to place a marker on the grave, but the effort apparently failed for lack of funds. Finally, the stone that today marks the grave site was placed there in 1879 through the anonymous effort of South Ben carriage and wagon manufacturer P.E. Studebaker. He also paid for a wrought iron fence. Truman S. Gilkey of Rockport acted as Studebaker’s agent to have the monument. Stone was purchased from the W.H. Jarvis Company of Cincinnati and local stonemason Alfred H. Yates carved the inscription:

NANCY HANKS LINCOLN  
Mother of  
PRESIDENT LINCOLN  
Died October 5, A.D. 1818, aged 35 years. Erected by a friend of Her  
Martyred Son, 1879

The problem was where to place the stone? A group of local citizens, two of whom had been at Nancy Hanks Lincoln’s burial, were brought to the site to properly identify the grave. Apparently only Allen Brooner, who had been born in 1813 and was five years old at the time of the funeral, could point to the spot. Brooner’s mother, who died of milk sickness a few days before Nancy Hanks Lincoln, had been buried on the knoll and the Brooners came to pay their respects when Mrs. Lincoln was laid to rest. Brooner told the committee that he remembered the spot and even offered the
extraordinary revelation that Abraham Lincoln had stood on the east side of the grave when his mother was lowered into it. Could Brooner have recalled such detail after half a century (Shedd 1959:9)? In 1937 Mr. O. I. Brooner wrote to local historian C. D. Ehrman adding:

My grandfather knew the location of Mrs. Lincoln's grave because his mother was laid to rest within one week of the death of Mrs. Lincoln and knew that they were laid side by side. He did not remember, however, who was buried on the north side, and when old Mr. Studebaker came here to locate the grave for erecting the monument my grandfather suggested that the iron fence be placed around both graves and a mound made between the two which was done...My grandfather, Allen Brooner, was born Oct. 22, 1813, and died April 2, 1902 (Ehrmann1938:124).

After the placement of the Studebaker Stone the cemetery once again began to deteriorate. A visitor in 1888 described it:

In a neglected piece of woodland on the outskirts of Lincoln City, two miles from this place, in Spencer County, is the grave of President Lincoln's mother. A marble slab four feet in height and almost buried in a dense growth of weeds and dog wood...Surrounding this grave are the graves of seven other persons, but there are no stones or monuments to indentify the occupants of any of them, and all are sadly neglected. The deserted spot is but a short distance from the highway, but it is so situated that it can be reached only by crossing cultivated fields. With the proper efforts the place might be made attractive, however, and there is some talk among the people here of beautifying it and erecting a more costly stone...The place is seldom visited by strangers and rarely by the people living hereabouts (newspaper clipping, Nancy Hanks Lincoln file, Lincoln Museum).

In 1897 Benjamin B. Dale of Cincinnati visited the grave and was so angered over its condition that he wrote to the governor. In response Governor Mount helped to organize the Nancy Hanks Lincoln Memorial Association, to raise funds to maintain the site. After three years the organization had raised only $56. It was not until Robert Todd Lincoln, grandson of Nancy Hanks Lincoln, gave them a gift of $1000, that any movement was made on improving the cemetery. Learning that something was to be done, the Spencer County Commissioners responded by granting the cemetery association sixteen acres of land to preserve in Mrs. Lincoln's honor.

Ten thousand people attended the 1902 dedication of the cemetery. Governor W.T. Durbin addressed the throng, which included 91-year-old Hannah Romine, who was said to have attended Nancy Hanks Lincoln's funeral in 1818 (Evansville Journal News, no date, clipping in Nancy Hanks Lincoln file at Lincoln Museum). Nevertheless, by 1906 the cemetery was again in a state of disrepair. Learning of the problem, Governor J. Frank Hanley appointed a commission to take over operation of the Nancy Hanks Lincoln Memorial Association, and the legislature appropriated $5000 for placing a fence around the cemetery and beautifying the area. The state's action apparently spurred local attention to the Lincoln family site. In 1917 a stone monument was erected on the knoll where the cabin had stood. Finally in 1925 the Indiana State Department of Conservation took over management of the cemetery (Warren 1933b).
Historical Summary

The historical evidence suggests Nancy Hanks Lincoln is indeed buried in the vicinity where her stone now stands, but it appears unlikely that we can ever positively identify the location of her grave. As early as Herndon's 1865 visit, there was great confusion among the local residents as to the location of the grave. Furthermore, Allen Brooner's account from 1879 does not sound convincing. It seems unlikely that Brooner, then a five year old boy traumatized by his own mother's death, would remember Nancy Hanks Lincoln's funeral. It is improbable he would recall in detail the burial of a woman whose son would be elected president several decades later.

Archeological Options

Historical Archeologist Dr. Henry McKelway of Cultural Resource Analysts suggests following the options described by National Park Service archeologist, Dr. Douglas Scott (Scott 1990) and Jeffrey Richner (Richner 1992) who describe several archeological options to locate graves if so desired. He adds, however, that neither Scott nor Richner address how difficult a problem would exist in identifying any individual found within an early nineteenth century grave, for example, Nancy Hanks Lincoln. We have little dependable historical data about her appearance, height, weight and specifics of her burial—most of which has been provided by the unreliable Dennis Hanks or neighbors who recounted events decades later. This information would be essential in correlating human remains with a known individual. In most cases, burials of this age are severely decayed. It is unlikely that even a full excavation could conclusively answer the question of where Nancy Hanks Lincoln is buried.

Chapter VII. The History Of Lincoln City And Major Activity Areas

An effort was made to create a map of Lincoln City through the use of primary sources, principally deeds and maps. The project was nearly completed when a contact suggested talking to a former park historian William Bartelt of Evansville. Mr. Bartelt is an historian who teaches full-time at Evansville Harrison High School and as an adjunct instructor at the University of Southern Indiana. He pointed out several new sources. He suggested that my work on Lincoln City was not as complete as that found in John Santosuosso's 1970 report “Survey of Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial and Lincoln City” which should contain all the information about the town which would be necessary for any archeological survey. It also contains interviews of many people who have since passed away, as well as pictures of the principal businesses and homes that were removed to make way for the park.

Bartelt also recommended that in case of any future work at the park, the scrapbooks of the late Hilda Taylor of Lincoln City, which the park has copies, should also be consulted. Last, it was his opinion that the NPS should have information files for each of the properties acquired. These should also be at the park office. Given the rich resource base which is already in existence, I will treat the history of Lincoln City and the development of the park in summary fashion.

Brief Overview Of The Development Of The Town And Park

Lincoln City owed its existence to the spirit of land speculation. In 1871 a group of Cincinnati land speculators purchased several pieces of property, including the Lincoln cabin site, from local residents and platted Kerchival, though the name was later changed to Lincoln
City (Figure 8). The town slowly grew up around a regional railroad depot. It was not long after settlement, however, that the idea of creating a park at the Nancy Hanks Lincoln grave or Lincoln cabin site became a matter of discussion. Eventually the creation of the Nancy Hanks Lincoln State Park in 1929 and the Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial in 1962 led to parts of Lincoln City being bought by the state and federal government, and many homes and businesses destroyed. By the mid-1960s the park had swallowed up much of the old town.

In 1900 Spencer County commissioners used a state appropriation to purchase sixteen acres around the Nancy Hanks Lincoln grave from Robert and Carrie Ferguson. Shortly thereafter the commissioners transferred the land to the Indiana Lincoln Memorial Association which was to maintain the site. The non-profit group failed to properly maintain the site and in 1907 the state legislature established a new board of commissioners to maintain the site. Then in 1925 Spencer County deeded the land surrounding the Nancy Hanks Lincoln grave to the state, which established a 60-acre Nancy Hanks Lincoln State Park.

In 1925 Governor Ed Jackson appointed a nine-member committee to investigate the possibility of establishing a memorial to the Lincoln family in Spencer County. At about the same time, a private group, the Indiana Lincoln Memorial Association, was formed to raise funds. The state also transferred responsibility for care of the grave site to the Indiana Department of Conservation. In 1926 Conservation Director Richard Lieber established the Indiana Lincoln Union (I.L.U.) to coordinate establishment of a state memorial which would include both the grave and cabin sites. Then in 1929 Frank C. Ball of Muncie, purchased twenty-nine acres of the historic Thomas Lincoln farm—including the cabin site—for $32,000 and donated it to the state. A number of homes and other buildings had to be destroyed to make way for the park, including the Lincoln City School and the United Brethren Church.

In 1927 the state hired the firm of the nationally recognized landscape architect Frederick Law Olmstead Jr. to prepare plans for the memorial. Following Olmstead's recommendations the state began a long-term project that included removal of buildings from the Thomas Lincoln farm, reforestation, relocation of state Highway 162, earth grading, and development of the plaza and alley. A second phase of construction from 1938 to 1944 involved construction of the memorial building, and additional landscaping. This process was particularly damaging to the cabin site where earth was removed from the surface to prepare the way for erection of the memorial.

Moves to make the state park a national park unit began in the 1950s. In 1959 Indiana Senator Vance Hartke sponsored bill S-1024 which called for a study to see if the Nancy Hanks Lincoln Memorial was nationally significant and eligible for inclusion into the National Park System. The question was the subject of a report by Park Service historian Charles Shedd, Jr., which recommended neither inclusion or exclusion. In 1960 Indiana Eighth District Congressman Winfield K. Denton introduced a bill, H.R. 2470, proposing to transfer the Nancy Hanks Lincoln Memorial to the National Park Service and establish the Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial. The bill passed on August 22, 1961 and President Kennedy signed it into law (York-O’Bright 1987:104-111).

Passage of the bill necessitated a study to determine just what the new park boundaries would be. The Park Service eventually obtained several tracts of land, including a a number of homes and businesses on the west side of the original state park. This process is covered in detail in Jill York O’Bright’s There I Grew Up: A History of the Administration of Abraham Lincoln’s Boyhood Home (1987).
Twentieth Century Lincoln City

Using several manuscript maps and an oral history video, the major early twentieth-century activity areas in Lincoln City, which are now part of the park grounds, were located. Approximate locations of key activity centers within Lincoln City were determined. The associated blocks and lots are depicted in a Lincoln Boyhood Home National Memorial map, (1962, Department of the Interior), included within the sleeve of this document. For precise information, the reader should refer to property documents on file at the Lincoln Boyhood memorial.

Dr. Crafton’s Office

Dr. O. T. Crafton bought two lots for his home and doctor office just north of the cabin site in 1902 in city block 40. The buildings stood until 1929, when the state bought the property. The house was moved to a new location in town on the west side of the railroad. This site, which contained both his home and doctor office, might contain material culture which could provide valuable insights into the practice of medicine in rural American in the early twentieth century (Spurlock 1990).

European Hotel and Taverns

The European Hotel and two adjoining taverns, were located within city block 33, lots 14-17, and were built before the turn of the
century to provide accommodations for railroad travelers (Figure 9). The complex, which was something of an embryo of a downtown for Lincoln City, burned on Easter Sunday, 1911. After that time Lincoln City lacked a centralized business district, as stores, restaurants, and a hotel were dispersed throughout the small village. National Park Service Ranger John Fleener grew up in Lincoln City and during a tour of the park pointed out two large cisterns behind the hotel site. They were probably filled when the neighborhood was torn down in the 1960s. He also recounted that there was once a small earthen bluff behind the hotel site which has since been bulldozed, probably since the park service acquired the land in the 1960s (Spurlock 1990; John Fleener, personal communication)

**Lincoln City Hotel**

After the European hotel burned, the Meier family built a new hotel within city block 50, lot 8, to provide visitors accommodations just across from the old Nancy Hanks Lincoln Park gates (Figure 10). Unfortunately, only two years after it opened, the state bought the land and tore down the building (Spurlock 1990)

**Ben Meier Tavern**

After the state bought the old Lincoln City Hotel, Ben Meier built a new tavern and restaurant which operated until the 1960s, as well as a number of homes and businesses on the west side of the original state park (Figure 11) (Spurlock 1990). This process is covered in detail in Jill York O’Bright’s *There I Grew Up: A History of the Administration of Abraham Lincoln’s Boyhood Home* (1987).

**United Brethren Church (ca. 1902-1929).**

The United Brethren Church was located on lot 6 of block 39, just south of the school (Figure 12). This frame building was built about 1902 and was sold to the state of Indiana in 1929. Some time thereafter it was torn down. It is likely that two privies would have been located behind the structure. Directly across the street stood the home of Butch and Ethel Rhodes (Spurlock 1990).

**New United Brethren Church building (ca.1929 until 1960?)**

A new church in lot 25 replaced the church torn down in 1929 to make room for park expansion (Figure 13). It was in turn torn down in the 1960s to make way for further expansion (Spurlock 1990).

**School**

The Lincoln City School stood on the cabin knoll, in block 40, until it was torn down to make room for park expansion (Figure 14). A good analysis of the grounds are offered in Larrabee (1967, 1968). There were privies behind the school as well as a storage shed or barn (Spurlock 1990).

**The Lipsey Store**

This store and later a gas station stood across the street from the old school site on the corner in lot 8 of block 33. At other times it was operated by Jack Huff, and Butch Rhodes. Its location, a block east of the main railroad tracks, shows how the community’s business district began to disperse after the destruction of the European hotel by fire in 1911 (Spurlock 1990).

**Van Winkle barber shop and post office**

During the 1920s and 1930s William Van Winkle and his family owned a store on lots 3&4 of block 41. His son Dennis Van Winkle later operated a barber shop and post office in the same building. It stood across the street from the popular restaurant of Charlie Simpson (Spurlock 1990).
Figure 9. The European Hotel (Source: Spurlock 1990)

Figure 10. Lincoln City Hotel (Source: Spurlock 1990)
Figure 11. Ben Meier Tavern (Source: Spurlock 1990)

Figure 12. The first United Brethren Church (Source: Spurlock 1990)
Figure 13. The second United Brethren Church building (Source: Spurlock 1990)

Figure 14. The Lincoln City School which was torn down in 1929 (Source: Spurlock 1990)
**Statten Store**

This grocery stood directly behind the Lincoln Spring (Figure 15) (Spurlock 1990).

**Hobo Jungle**

The 1990 Spurlock map identifies an area just northeast of the train depot called “Hobo Jungle.” This was probably a shanty town of itinerants who traveled the railroads or made a living as best they could (Spurlock n.d.).

Drawing upon maps prepared by local residents Eugene Varner (n.d.) and Clell Spurlock (n.d.). More than thirty home sites on the park grounds were counted. These are documented in the Santosuosso report (1970). Photographs in the Spurlock video tape show that most of the homes were frame and wood siding, ranging between large two-story structures and small one-story homes. According to National Park Service Ranger John Fleener, most homes still had privies in the 1950s. Many of these, however, had shallow pits rather than deep shafts, necessitating that they be cleaned on a regular basis (John Fleener, personal communication). As far as the spatial relationship between homes is concerned, they rarely stood immediately adjacent to each other. Most homes had room for gardens, outbuildings, and in the area east and north of the cabin sites even fields for crops. A copy of the Spurlock map is presented in Figure 16; although, it is not drawn to scale, it contains much useful information.

**Chapter VIII. Archeology At Lincoln Boyhood Memorial: An Overview And Assessment**

In 1871 four Cincinnati businessmen purchased the former Thomas Lincoln farm and much of the surrounding land. The next year they recorded a plat for the town of Lincoln City with the Spencer County recorder. The town grew slowly, but by the early twentieth century was a small community with a hotel and two taverns. During these years much of the land that now makes up the Memorial was developed as sites for homes and businesses. Beginning in the late 1920s the state obtained a large section of the east side of the town and tore down the homes and other buildings there to make way for a state park honoring the Lincolns. After the Memorial became a national park in 1962 further expansion took place. More homes and businesses were removed in an effort to return the land to the appearance it had had when the Lincolns occupied it. The sites of these former Lincoln City homes and businesses are, however, important cultural resources and if investigated archeologically might provide important information about small town life in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

In February 1995 Cultural Resource Analysts archeologist, Dr. Henry McKelway reviewed the Larrabee report and then visited the Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial and filed the following report concerning the potential for archeology at the cabin site and other areas of the park:

It is easier to understand how the evaluation of cultural resources at the Lincoln boyhood home might be conducted if we divide archeological resources into three basic categories: 1) those resources associated with Lincoln family, and 2) those postdating Lincoln, yet old enough to be considered historically significant—primarily the early
Figure 15. The Statten Store and Lincoln spring, photographed in 1933. Photo courtesy of the Lincoln Museum, Fort Wayne, Indiana (Photograph 639).
Figure 16. Map of Lincoln City in 1930, by C. Spurlock.
Lincoln City community and 3) any prehistoric sites. The following comments will pertain to the requirement of the technical report, which states that the documentary overview will comment on the strengths and weaknesses of prior archeological research and make suggestions for future work. The archeological investigations within the memorial include Larrabee's work (1967, 1968), and three trips made to Lincoln Boyhood Memorial by Park Service archeologists to monitor ground disturbing activities (Scott 1990, Richner 1992, Pennington 1993). The monitoring activities of the archeologists during these trips was useful in identifying disturbed areas and historic features. There were no prehistoric cultural resources identified in any of these trip reports.

The primary archeological research is that of Larrabee where there were two series of excavations. The first was in 1967 and centered on the trench across the memorial (trench A) and outside to the south of the memorial (trench B). His findings were that the preparation for the memorial thoroughly disturbed whatever valuable archeological remains there may have been in the immediate vicinity of the memorial. There have been two test pits placed to the northeast (NE Test) and northwest (NW Test) of the memorial. In contrast to the findings for the two archeological trenches, these test pits did have intact deposits. There were artifacts retrieved from these units; one green glass hand blown bottle is probably pre-Civil War era. There are maps that locate all units described in the first series of excavations.

The second episode of excavations occurred in 1968. Three trenches, 25 to 47 ft. long and three five foot square units were excavated. There are maps of the location of these units in the documents. General locations are given in the text, and most of the excavations centered on the garden area west of the reconstructed cabin. Trenches F and G, and pits E and F were placed in the garden area. Trench C was placed southwest of the memorial, and pit D was placed well west of the memorial. There was probably a latrine located in Trench C. Larrabee believed the privy to be modern because of the quantity of lime found in association with the feature. The investigations in the garden retrieved artifacts dating primarily to the turn of the twentieth century. Pit E, however, placed at the eastern end of the garden, had a higher artifact content and Larrabee suggested that this pit was nearer an "occupation."

These excavations have three important findings in relation to archeological deposits associated with Lincoln. The first is that there are no useful archeological deposits near the memorial. The second is that there are intact natural soil profiles, and presumably archeological deposits, in the vicinity of the reconstructed cabins. Lastly, subsurface deposits are present.

The construction of the schoolhouse would have obliterated the archeological deposits. The outbuilding facilities are not very substantial and may not have disturbed the earlier deposits significantly. The Park Service reconstruction of the cabins and outbuildings may have disturbed the earlier deposits, but this is dependent on the construction. If they filled the areas and built on top, the deposits may not have been disturbed. There is only one way to assess the degree of disturbance and that is to conduct additional archeological testing to look at soil profiles around the cabin. Even if there are no surface deposits left intact, there are undoubtedly privies, and probably root cellars, associated with the old cabin.

My characterization of the previous work relating to the archeology associated with Lincoln is as follows:

The strategy employed to determine remaining deposits around the memorial and in the area of the garden seems adequate. The amount of excavation to determine intact deposits in those small areas and the strategy of focusing on questions regarding intact deposits at this stage of the investigation was appropriate. There are several critical comments that can be made about these early investigations.
1) The excavations in 1967 and 1968 were conducted under apparently difficult weather conditions because there were several comments about the difficulty of reading soil profiles because of the "muddy" conditions. Subsurface features and subtle soil changes may have been missed due to excavation in these conditions.

2) The description of artifacts would be considered, by today's standards, weak. There has been a vast amount of literature devoted to historic artifacts in the last twenty years, and a reexamination of those artifacts might provide additional insights. My perusal of the collection corroborates Larrabee's assessment that the majority of artifacts date to the 1880s and older. There are ceramics that date to Lincoln's time period, pearlware and redware, in the collection, but are not discussed as such. Since the dating of the artifacts is crucial in determining intact deposits associated with Lincoln, a review of artifacts might be useful.

3) It is puzzling that substantial archeological work was not conducted prior to the reconstruction of the cabin and outbuildings. Apparently there was a miscommunication between Larrabee and the Park Service on where the garden was to be placed initially. This is unfortunate considering that there were apparently deposits in the area. Given the information that Larrabee's testing and the historical information is correct, this is where deposits relating to Lincoln may be found.

Recommendations

Historic Resources

1) It is suggested that close interval shovel probes be placed around the reconstructed cabin and outbuildings. This would identify disturbed areas. If there are undisturbed deposits, a computer generated map of artifacts dating to the early nineteenth century might point to activity areas, disposal areas, and even the cabin location.

2) Subsurface reconnaissance of some kind might be employed. This can be accomplished by backhoe stripping of areas to look for features. Less destructive methods would be resistivity or magnetometer survey to locate the "feature" areas. This technology is advancing rapidly and might be very useful here.

3) Excavation of some features: It should be noted that Larrabee (1967, 1968) recommended no more excavations in the vicinity of the Lincoln cabin memorial and reconstructed cabin, stating that subsurface features like a privy, even if it could be placed to Lincoln's time period, would serve little purpose for historical interpretation. I disagree with this recommendation strongly. The first reason is that 1) the archeology will correct erroneous assumptions on the locations of cabins, outbuildings, etc. The reconstruction is based on "typical" farmsteads of the time period. If the Park Service wants to reconstruct the farmstead accurately, then more archeology ought to be done. 2) Interpretive displays have changed from the perspective of "memorializing" with spatially bounded monuments to show what "life was really like." For example, did the Lincoln's have poor access to the material culture of the time? If there really are few artifacts dating to Lincoln's time period, then this may suggest a real degree of isolation, or possibly poor economic conditions among other variables. This is important information on the early
history of Lincoln. Even though a privy may not be something everyone wants to associate with the historic grandeur of a man such as Lincoln, the artifacts in the privy inform us about everyday life in this part of Indiana during the early nineteenth century. Features such as root cellars and privies provide artifacts for museum display as well. 3) Artifact analysis by today’s standards might be able to separate a Lincoln privy from another one. Then again any “old” privy would probably give you insight as to how the Lincolns lived and could contribute substantially.

Concerning the “Non-Lincoln historical deposits.” 1) There is going to be a wealth of archeological information about the Lincoln community. Documentation in the Santosuosso report (1970) provides basic documentation on the different structures within the park area. Each of these structures, including the school house would have foundations, privies, wells, and cisterns as did the homes.

The town of Lincoln had no impact on Abraham Lincoln’s life, however, the remains of the community should be considered a potentially significant archeological resource. The town area should be considered an urban environment with a myriad of features informing us of the growth and changes to the town and its residents throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The maps and documents pertaining to the farmsteads, schools, homes, and businesses now incorporated into the park represent a wealth of historical information that can be supplemented and improved by the documentary record.

Archeological features which may remain in an urban environment include cisterns, wells, cellars, foundations, privies, postmolds and walkways. These archeological features and surrounding intact deposits can yield artifacts to address pertinent research questions on the lifeways of the town’s residents.

The most prominent historic archeological feature type is the structural foundation, which usually consists of walls of brick, sandstone or limestone. A builder’s trench may be encountered where a ditch was dug before the stones were placed to form the walls. Builder’s trenches may be useful features to date the structure, as the building must postdate the oldest artifact in the trench. If the structure does not rest on foundation walls, then pier stones which the wooden floor sills rested on may be encountered. Associated with the interior of structures are cellars, which were used as storage facilities. Early cellars are usually termed root cellars, and consisted of a dugout area with access through a trap door in the floor of the structure which functioned to store foods. These facilities may be lined with stone, brick, wood. Later cellars obviously had concrete floors poured and served functions other than just food storage. In addition to the main structure, the rear yard may have enclosed a variety of outbuildings, including smokehouses, stables, carriage houses, storage sheds and even animal pens.

Another prominent feature type is the privy shaft. These features are usually placed in the rear yard areas of the houselot. Often, a series of privies may be encountered that have chronological order. As one privy is filled, another may be dug behind the first, creating a series of privies, whose artifacts represent a chronological sequence of occupation at that specific lot. The size and depth of privies can be highly variable depending on the subsoil. Privies were lined with wood, brick and stone. According to Genheimer (1995), privy depths usually range from 2 to 3 meters. An important aspect of privy features is that they are sealed, protecting the contents from disturbance, and that they may be stratified; the successive layers of privy fill are usually in chronological sequence, allowing for the comparison of artifacts through time. Rather than dig a new privy, the occupants may have chosen to clean or “dip” the privy, in which case the privy artifacts will not reflect the full use cycle of the facility.

Cisterns represent another large category of feature types which may be present in the urban
yard area. Cisterns are used as a water storage facility and are lined with plaster or cement to prevent the loss of the collected water. Cisterns are usually located near the residence, where water can be funneled into the water receptacle from rain spouts. The filling processes for cisterns are quite different from privies. Rather than successive filling episodes, cisterns tend to be filled quite rapidly, usually as a result of new access to city water and the desire of the residents to fill the potentially dangerous hole in the ground. The fill in cisterns is often accumulated away from the site, so that the artifacts may not be associated with the occupants of that particular lot. Genheimer (1995) notes that cisterns may be filled as late as the early nineteenth century.

Trash pits are often encountered in historic sites before the neighborhood had access to trash disposal. Trash pits usually consist of round unlined pits, dug and used as receptacles for household debris. Low areas in the yard may be filled with debris or soil and this is a common occurrence on historic sites. “Fill” dirt can serve to seal deposits and prevent later disturbance to the archeological deposit.

The last prominent type of historic feature is the fence post mold. Fences in an urban environment are used to segregate space. The most obvious use of fences is to separate the boundary of one domestic lot from another. Fences are also used to bound an area for specific tasks and activities. Fences and the remains, postmolds, are important in perceiving changes in lot boundaries and associated activity areas.

All of these historic feature types are likely to be preserved in the town of Lincoln. Major activity areas within the town have been located and described and there are probably archeological deposits associated with each. There is probably a wealth of archeological deposits within the park confines which can substantially contribute to the history of the Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial.

Prehistoric Resources

The archeological resources pertaining to the historic period have been discussed. Little attention has been paid in the past to document the possibility of Native American archeological deposits within the park boundaries. The attention to historic resources is understandable, given that the park was created as a memorial to one of the most important and prominent figures in American history. Nevertheless, the park has a responsibility to preserve both prehistoric and historic resources. Currently there are no prehistoric resources recorded within the park boundaries. The cultural overview of southwestern Indiana, presented in Chapter I, has demonstrated the richness of the prehistoric archeological record in the region. It is highly likely that the park area was used by prehistoric peoples. Prehistoric occupation could range from Paleo-Indian through historic period Indian groups.

Larrabee (1967, 1968) recovered prehistoric material but not in enough quantity to state there was a prehistoric site. The presence of the spring strongly suggests the possibility of a prehistoric site. These springs were magnets to prehistoric cultures, and prehistoric sites would be expected in that specific locality.

A phase I archeological survey across the park grounds to determine the presence and integrity of prehistoric sites is strongly recommended. Methodologically, this could consist of shovel tests at 20 m intervals across park boundaries. If areas of the park are known to have been disturbed by plowing the fields may be plowed again, and inspected for prehistoric artifacts. Any artifacts should be collected in a controlled fashion.

In flood plain settings, backhoe trenches may be excavated and the soil profiles examined for buried land surfaces which may contain the remains of past prehistoric occupations. Soil augers and cores may also be used to sample deep soil deposits for the presence of prehistoric artifacts. Prehistoric
sites within the park boundaries may be identified in this fashion, and considering the lack of attention regarding the prehistory of the park, these measures may be considered an appropriate first step.

The Lincoln Boyhood Memorial has suffered from disturbances which have affected the archeological record. However, judging from the voluminous documentary record and the small amount of archeology which has been conducted, the park has a wealth of potentially significant archeological resources.
APPENDIX A: Principal Deeds relating to the Lincoln Farm

The following transcriptions of key deeds to the Lincoln property are taken from the Spencer County Deed Books in the Spencer County Court House in Rockport, Indiana. The key portions of each document are highlighted in bold lettering.

Lincoln to Grigsby, 1830 (Spencer County Deed Book 2:51)

This Indenture made this 20th day of Feby. 1830 between Thomas Lincoln and Sarah his wife of the county of Spencer and State of Indiana, of the one part and Charles Grigsby of the county & State aforesaid of the other part, Witnesseth: That the said Thomas Lincoln, and Sarah, his wife, for and in consideration of the sum of One Hundred and twenty five dollars to him in hand paid, before the signing, sealing, and delivering of these presents, the receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged, have this day, given, granted, bargained, and sold, and by these presents, do give, grant, bargain, and sell, to said Charles Grigsby, his heirs, and assigns, all their right title, interest and estate, in, and to, the West half of the South West quarter of section thirty two, in township four, South of Range five west, containing eighty acres of the lands, described to be sold at Vincennes, Indiana, it being the same tract or parcel of land for which the said Charles Grigsby holds a bond on the said Thomas Lincoln, dated November the 26th 1829. To have and to hold the said tract or parcel of land together with all and singular and appurtenances thereunto belonging or in any wise appertaining thereto to the said Charles Grigsby his heirs and assigns forever and the said Thomas Lincoln, and Sarah, his wife, do further covenant and agree to and with the said Charles Grigsby, that they will forever warrant and defend the aforesaid tract or parcel of land with its appurtenances from the claim of themselves, their heirs and every other person or persons whomsoever. In testimony whereof the said Thomas Lincoln and Sarah his wife have hereunto set their hands and seals the day and year above written.

Thomas Lincoln
Sarah (her X mark) Lincoln

Grigsby to Brown, 1835 (portion) (Spencer County Deed Book 3:86-87)

This Indenture made and entered into this 8th day of December in the year of our Lord Eighteen Hundred and Thirty Five between Charles Grigsby and Matilda his wife of the County of Spencer and State of Indiana of the one part and Edley Brown of the State and County aforesaid of the other part. Witnesseth that the said Charles Grigsby and Matilda his wife for and in consideration of the sum of Two Hundred Dollars to them in hand paid the receipt and payment whereof is hereby acknowledged by the said Grigsby and wife have this day granted, bargained and sold and by these presents do grant, bargain, sell, and convey unto the said Edley Brown his heirs and assigns forever a certain tract or parcel of land lying and being in Spencer County and State of Indiana described as follows to wit: The West half of the South West quarter of section thirty two, in township four, South of Range five west, containing eighty acres of the lands, described to be sold at Vincennes, Indiana, it being the same tract or parcel of land for which the said Charles Grigsby holds a bond on the said Thomas Lincoln, dated November the 26th 1829. To have and to hold the above described land with all and singular the appurtenances thereunto belonging or in any wise appertaining to the proper use and benefit and behoove of him the said Edley Brown....

Edley Brown to James Sally, 1837 (Spencer County Deed Book 3:482)

This Indenture made and agreed to this fourth day of February One thousand Eight Hundred and Thirty Seven between Edley
Brown and Martha Brown his wife of the first part and James Salley of the second part all of the State of Indiana and Spencer County. Witnesseth that the parties of the first for and in consideration of the sum of Two Hundred and Forty Dollars to them in hand paid by the said James Sally the receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged and the parties of the first part doth by these presents bargain, sell, convey, and confirm unto the said James Sally, his heirs or assigns forever all that tract or parcel of land lying and being in the County of Spencer aforesaid and bounded as follows to wit: The West half of the South West quarter of section thirty two in Township no. 4 South Range no. 5 West containing Eighty acres and also twenty acres bought of James Gentry off of section thirty one in Township no. 4, south of Range 5, west; together with all the appurtenances...

James Sally to Joseph Gentry, 1838
(Spencer County Deed Book 4:31)

This Indenture made this 11th day of January in the year of our Lord One thousand eight hundred and thirty eight between James Sally and Mary his wife of the county of Spencer and State of Indiana of the first part and Joseph Gentry of the same place of the second part. Witnesseth that the said James Sally and Mary his wife for and in consideration of the sum of two hundred and forty dollars lawful money of the United States to them in hand well and truly paid by the said Joseph Gentry the receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged have granted bargained sold...released conveyed and confirmed and by these presents do grant bargain sell...unto Joseph Gentry his heirs and assigns forever, Laying and being in the County of Spencer and known and designated as the west half of the South west quarter of section thirty two in Township No. 4 south of Range 5, west containing eighty acres and also twenty acres to be taken from the east part of the east half of the south east quarter of section Thirty one Township and range aforesaid and being twenty acres conveyed by James Gentry to Edley Brown and by Edley Brown to Sally...hereby bargained and sold...with all appurtenances...

Joseph Gentry to Elijah Winkler, 1850 (Spencer County Deed Book 14:622)

This Indenture Witnesseth that Joseph Gentry and Mary Ann Gentry his wife of the County of Spencer and State of Indiana in consideration of One Hundred dollars good and lawful money of the United States to them paid, by Elijah Winkler of the County and State above written the receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged do hereby bargain sell and convey to the said Elijah Winkler his heirs and assigns forever the following real estate in Spencer County and State of Indiana and described as follows to wit: The North half of the West half of the South west quarter of Section thirty two in Township No. four (4) south of range No. five (5) west containing forty acres be the same more of less together with all privileges and appurtenances...this twenty third day of December, 1850.

Joseph Gentry to William Oskins, 1853 (Spencer County Deed Book 15:224)

Mr. Joseph Gentry and Mary Ann Gentry convey and warrant to William Oskins the following described land it being in the county of Spencer and State of Indiana. The West half of the North west quarter section no. five, township five, range five west, containing sixty six acres and thirty three hundredths of one acre also the southwest quarter of the South west quarter section thirty two township four south or range? five west containing forty acres more or less in consideration of the sum of five hundred dollars...this third day of June, 1853.
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