The Evolution of a Sanctified Landscape:

A Historic Resource Study of the

LINCOLN BOYHOOD NATIONAL MEMORIAL

SPENCER COUNTY, INDIANA

Prepared by:
HRA Gray & Pape, LLC

Prepared for:
National Park Service
Site Plan of the Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial
ABSTRACT

In November 2000, HRA Gray & Pape, LLC, contracted with the National Park Service, Midwest Regional Office, to prepare a Historic Resources Study of the Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial in Spencer County, Indiana (Contract No. P6300000125). In 1962, the National Park Service designated the Lincoln Boyhood site a National Memorial to preserve the family and boyhood home setting of Abraham Lincoln and the grave site of his mother, Nancy Hanks Lincoln. The Lincoln family lived on the Thomas Lincoln farm from 1816 until February 1830, when they moved to Illinois. The memorial site includes a visitor center, park housing complex, memorial and designed historic landscape, walking trails, living history farm, a burial area, and wayside exhibits. Park administrative offices are housed in the visitor center. The site was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1966 and was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1973.

This report is derived from research in primary and secondary records related to environmental history, Native American use and occupation, exploration, land use, settlement patterns, and commemoration of the lives of Abraham Lincoln and Nancy Hanks Lincoln. It utilizes both documentary research and field observations to determine and describe the integrity, authenticity, associative values, and significance of resources within the memorial site, as well as to highlight areas for future interpretive development. The study will serve as the foundation for future cultural resource assessments and management plans. The historic context defines themes of area history; establishes a relationship between events and the built environment; identifies time frames and periods of significance for historic contexts; and identifies links between national, regional, and local events.

The Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial is historically significant for its association with the early life of Abraham Lincoln and as the final resting place of Nancy Hanks Lincoln. Furthermore, the property retains a high level of integrity with regard to its historic landscape design, and the Memorial Building is an important contributing element to the property’s architectural significance. Finally, the property is significant for its association with the development of historic preservation theory over the course of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It began as a shrine to Nancy Hanks Lincoln and, by extension, the cult of motherhood that characterized the Victorian era. During the 1930s, the memorial was transformed to commemorate Lincoln and his lifetime of accomplishments. Thirty years later, the site’s programs were expanded to include a parallel interpretive theme with the construction of the Living History Farm. The influences of each interpretive theme are clearly visible upon the extant cultural landscape and contribute to our understanding of the constantly evolving cultural and social phenomena of memorializing important personages in American history.
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In November 2000, HRA Gray & Pape, LLC, (HRAG&P) contracted with the National Park Service (NPS), Midwest Regional Office, to prepare a Historic Resource Study (HRS) of the Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial in Spencer County, Indiana (Contract No. P6300000125). In 1962, Congress designated the Lincoln Boyhood site a National Memorial to preserve the family and boyhood home setting of Abraham Lincoln and the grave site of his mother, Nancy Hanks Lincoln (Figure 1/inside cover). The Lincoln family lived on the Thomas Lincoln farm from 1816 until February 1830, when they moved to Illinois. The memorial site includes a visitor center, park housing complex, memorial and designed historic landscape, walking trails, living history farm, a burial area, and wayside exhibits. Park administrative offices are housed in the visitor center. The site was listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) in 1973.

As a management tool, the HRS synthesizes cultural resource information from all cultural resource disciplines in a narrative designed to serve managers, planners, interpreters, cultural resource specialists, and the interested public as a reference for the history of the region and the resources within the park. This HRS is derived from research in primary and secondary records related to environmental history, Native American use and occupation, exploration, land use, settlement patterns, and commemoration of the lives of Abraham Lincoln and Nancy Hanks Lincoln. This study utilizes both documentary research and field observations to determine and describe the integrity, authenticity, associative values, and significance of resources within the memorial site, as well as to highlight areas for future interpretive development. The HRS will serve as the foundation for future cultural resource assessments and management plans. It defines themes of area history; establishes a relationship between events and the built environment; identifies time frames and periods of significance for historic contexts; and identifies links between national, regional, and local events.

This HRS also is designed to address deficiencies in previously completed Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial cultural resource studies. These deficiencies are the result of changing cultural resource management theories and changing management needs arising from increased use of the site and the targeting of a broader audience. Furthermore, in recent years cultural resource managers have placed increased emphasis upon cultural landscapes encompassing the totality of resources that form a system of land use or that now form a multiple-layer depiction of use over time. Natural features (as they influence cultural development), vegetation, land use patterns, and circulation systems are a few of the important elements of cultural landscapes. The Memorial is located in an area rich with Indian, European, early United States military and settlement history, the interwoven effects of which are visible in the present landscape. To interpret and manage the primary cultural resources for which the monument was established, it is critical to understand the evolution of this cultural landscape.
METHODOLOGY

HISTORICAL RESEARCH

HRAG&P undertook a comprehensive literature search for this project in early 2001. This effort resulted in preparation of a chapter outline for the HRS and an annotated bibliography of major primary and secondary sources to be used in the preparation of the document. The research effort began with initial consultation with park and regional NPS office staff and other local informants. It continued with a review of secondary resources and gray literature, followed by primary-source materials at various Indiana repositories. HRAG&P’s research focused on four efforts: (1) compilation and mastery of the published literature; (2) familiarity with the primary sources on which the published literature stands; (3) original research in primary sources on issues that pertained specifically to cultural resources within the property; and (4) review of existing cultural resource documentation. Repositories consulted during the course of these investigations included the Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial, the adjacent Lincoln State Park, historical societies in Perry and Spencer Counties, the Indiana State Historic Preservation Office, and the Indiana State Historical Society.

FIELD SURVEY

Information derived from a review of the 1973 National Register nomination for the Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial and from previously completed cultural resource studies, inventories, and surveys of resources guided HRAG&P’s field survey, completed in 2001. During the course of fieldwork, the location, integrity, and condition of all previously identified cultural resources were confirmed. The field investigations were informed by the findings of the documentary research, with particular care taken to identify and evaluate cultural landscapes and areas of high archaeological site potential. No subsurface archaeological investigations were conducted as part of this effort. Fieldwork took place in early 2001, with follow-up visits to photograph significant cultural resources taking place in August and November 2001.

PROJECT PERSONNEL

HRAG&P’s Senior Historian, Patrick O’Bannon, served as the Principal Investigator for the project. He acted as the primary point of contact with the National Park Service, directed the field survey, undertook preliminary historical research, prepared the management summary and annotated bibliography, and edited the final report. Project Historians Lena Sweeten and Harrison Stamm Gowdy conducted some of the historical research, prepared the historic context, identified areas in need of further research, and developed recommendations for additional interpretive programs. Graphic Artist Casey Fagin created the graphic layout and design of the final report.
Chapter II Environmental Overview

The historical record is as much a product of natural forces as of human endeavors. In much the same way, the extant landscape displays the interwoven influences of cultural and natural components in an ever-evolving relationship. In order to understand patterns of prehistoric human occupation in Spencer County, the natural environment of southern Indiana must be considered. Human societies at all levels of complexity are linked to the natural environment in a systemic or ecological relationship. This relationship can best be understood as the differential use of available resources, coupled with the strategies employed for exploitation of those resources. Environmental constraints work to define the set of settlement and subsistence options available to a particular social group. These include proximity to water, climatic patterns, access to lithic resources, and the presence of game and edible plants. Parameters such as these further affect site selection for settlements and influence the likelihood of the site's subsequent preservation. Only sites preserved through a combination of environmental, locational, and geographic factors remain sufficiently intact to yield information concerning prehistoric peoples. Consequently, the information available about patterns of human occupation in a given area is shaped both by the types of societies occupied the area and the contemporary and subsequent environmental conditions present at the site.

PHYSIOGRAPHY-GEOMORPHOLOGY

Spencer County is located in southwestern Indiana, approximately 150 miles south of Indianapolis and 40 miles east of Evansville. It is bounded on the west by Warrick County, on the north by Dubois County, and on the east by Perry County. The 37-mile southern boundary is formed by the Ohio River. Spencer County is approximately 400 square miles in area.

This county lies within the Wabash Lowlands physiographic unit, the largest and westernmost unit in southern Indiana (Figure 2). It is situated south of the Illinoian and Wisconsin glacial boundaries. During the Wisconsin Age (Late Pleistocene), the tremendous volume of water carried by the Wabash River created a lake that covered much of southwestern Indiana. Depositions dating from this era are responsible for the present topography of broad aggraded valleys separated by low, rolling hills. As a result, with the exception of the northeastern section, topographic relief in Spencer County is not great, with elevations generally ranging between 338 and 660 feet above sea level. In these unglaciated areas, the soil is thin and easily worn away, particularly in comparison to the soil stratigraphy in the northern half of Indiana.  

FIGURE 2

Map of Indiana Showing Physiographic Units and Glacial Boundaries (Schneider, 1966: 41)
In southern Indiana, the Ohio River is bordered by bottom lands and floodplains as much as three-and-a-half miles in width. During prehistoric times, extensive swamps and marshes paralleled the river. Fully one-quarter of Spencer County’s area historically was dominated by marshy bottomlands and floodplains. A few shallow lakes were present as well, with the largest being Willow Pond, located in east-central Luce Township. Sand and silt ridges were interspersed among the swamps, and likely were dry except during periods of flooding. Kellar’s archaeological survey of Spencer County suggests that many of these ridges were locales for aboriginal occupation.3

Presently, with the exception of the Ohio River, Spencer County does not have any major waterways. Little Pigeon Creek and Anderson River form the western and eastern boundaries, respectively, of the county and both are comparatively modest streams. A number of small brooks exist, such as Big Sandy, Little Sandy, and Crooked creeks, but these often are dry during summer months. Dredging and draining are believed to have altered a number of stream courses. Deforestation of the area during the nineteenth century and subsequent agricultural practices also are likely to have contributed to changes in drainage patterns.4

BEDROCK GEOLOGY

Spencer County is underlain by rocks of Pennsylvanian age (late Paleozoic Era), the youngest bedrock formations found in Indiana (Figure 3). The dip in the rock beds is generally to the west from the Cincinnati Arch. The stratigraphy is dominated by siltstones and shales, interbedded with limestone formations and coal beds.5 Bedrock geology determined the various lithic resources available for utilization by Paleoindian cultures, the types of soils in the area (which were significant to agricultural activity), and topography. In more recent times, the proximity of the coal beds to the surface has resulted in the strip mining of much of the county.

LITHIC RESOURCES

Several limestones crop out within and near Spencer County that contain chert. These cherts include Holland and Lead Creek. Holland chert is a high quality blue-gray chert that crops out in southcentral Dubois and northern Spencer Counties. It was utilized by prehistoric peoples during all cultural periods for use as tools, blades, and spear points. Lead Creek has also been known as Lieber and “the black chert beneath the Mariah Hill coal seam.” It is a poor to medium quality fossiliferous chert found in residual contexts in much of Spencer County.

3 Kellar, Archaeological Survey of Spencer County, 12-13.
4 Kellar, Archaeological Survey of Spencer County, 11, 13.
FIGURE 3

Map of Indiana Showing Bedrock Physiographic Units (Gutschick, 1966:54)
County. Other chert resources in the vicinity include Ditney chert in Warrick County, Haney chert in Perry, Crawford, and Orange Counties, and Derby chert in Perry County. All of these are of medium quality. The high quality Wyandotte chert crops out some 35 miles to the east, along the Crawford and Harrison County border.6

SOILS

In the northern two-thirds of Indiana, soils are generally deep, silty, light-brown loams that are the result of glaciation. The unglaciated southern portion of Indiana has thinner, less fertile soil that consists of heavy clays, brown silt loams, or yellowish silt to sandy deposits. Their fertility was greatly depleted by pioneer farming practices that relied on a succession of corn crops without any crop rotation. Over the course of the nineteenth century, deforestation further contributed to problems with erosion and also led to increased instances of flooding and drought. During the 1930s, 100,000 acres in southern Indiana were assessed to be in serious stages of erosion (Figure 4).7


Soils in Spencer County are formed in the Ohio River floodplain and terraces, from sands derived from Pleistocene glacial outwash and related lacustrine deposits, from fine-grained windblown (loess) deposits, and from weathered sandstone and shale bedrock. The Silvan-Alford-Hosmer Association consists of silts and loess derived from windblown deposits on the eastern edge of the Wabash River Valley. These soils are found on gently rolling hills and ridges, and are generally well-drained. The Zanesville- Gilpin-Montevallo Association soils form in dissected sandstone and shale uplands in the northern half of Spencer County. These soils are moderately to poorly drained. The rugged character of this area of the county historically has not lent itself to profitable agricultural pursuits.  

The alluvial terrace soils along the Ohio River, primarily of the Wheeling series, are developed in silty and sandy alluvium. The well-drained Wheeling soils provide a rich basis for agricultural endeavors, an asset important to Paleoindian cultures, successive Indian tribes, and Euroamerican settlers. In comparison, related alluvial terrace soils such as Sciotoville soils are moderately well drained, Weinbach soils are somewhat poorly drained, and the Giant soils are poorly drained. The Bloomfield- Princeton Association formed in the sand dune belt along the eastern edge of the Wabash Valley. The Bloomfield and Chelsea soils are well drained fine sandy loams that also were conducive to crop cultivation, while the Ayrshire and Lyles soils are somewhat poorly drained loamy fine sands.

CLIMATE

Pollen studies conducted in areas adjacent to southern Indiana indicate several climatic shifts occurred in Indiana during the Holocene Period. As the glacial ice sheets retreated across North America, spruce-dominated boreal forests occupied areas adjacent to the ice margins, including northern Indiana. Open subarctic grasslands were also present, probably in a complex mosaic on the landscape defined by local conditions. Gradual warming occurred after 10,000 B.C. and spruce forests were replaced by northern oak and pines. A dryer, warmer climatic interval occurred from 5000 to 2000 BC. This resulted in a significant retreat of grasslands from northern Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, and Minnesota. The effects of this warming are unknown for the oak and pine forests of southcentral Indiana but, presumably, there was some shift of localized prairie areas. Subsequent to 2000 BC, a climate much like the present prevailed, with occasional cooler and wetter episodes, and a modern deciduous forest.

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9 Ulrich, “Soils,” 68, 73.
11 Bernabo and Webb, “Changing Patterns in the Holocene Pollen Record,” 89.
12 Bernabo and Webb, “Changing Patterns in the Holocene Pollen Record,” 89.
As the southernmost portion of Indiana, Spencer County presently has a continental climate with cold winters and warm, humid summers. The average temperature is 37 degrees F. in winter, and 78 degrees F. in summer. During the summer, however, temperatures above 90 degrees F. are not unusual. The total annual precipitation is around 45 inches, of which 23 inches fall from April through September. Average seasonal snowfall is 10 inches. Brief droughts are not uncommon during summer, and can negatively affect agricultural yields. The prevailing wind is from the south/southwest. Tornadoes and severe thunderstorms occur occasionally in spring and summer. As such, severe climactic conditions presently are an exception, rather than the norm for Spencer County. The relatively warm temperatures, combined with the extensive bottomlands and adequate rainfall, contributed to the establishment of varied and extensive flora and fauna in the county.13

FLORA AND FAUNA

The Federal government’s General Land Office initially surveyed Indiana between about 1799 and 1834, providing some documentation of the climax forests.14 Bearing trees were recorded during the survey, providing information on the vegetation as it existed prior to Euroamerican settlement. Upwards of seven-eighths of the state’s land area was forested during this period, with walnut, ash, poplar, elm, hickory, maple, and oak constituting the predominant species.

A wide variety of animal resources were available to the aboriginal and early Euroamerican inhabitants of Spencer County. In the Indiana of 1816, it is estimated that as many as 66 species of mammals existed, including bison, elk, black bear, mountain lion, gray and red wolf, porcupine, eastern spotted skunk, wolverine, river otter, and lynx, as well as current inhabitants, such as white-tail deer, red and gray fox, eastern cottontail rabbit, striped skunk, opossum, beaver, raccoon, and groundhog.15

Federal surveys also recorded over 300 edible plants in Indiana, including nuts, fruits, berries, roots, and tubers, that would have provided a significant source of food for prehistoric inhabitants. In southern Indiana, the marshes and swamps created by the Ohio River and its tributaries provided a habitat for aquatic birds, while the waterways themselves were sources of turtles, freshwater fish, and mussels.16 Archaeological investigations undertaken in Spencer County in the early to mid-twentieth century discovered several Archaic-period shell middens that attested to the reliance of some prehistoric peoples on rivers as a source of food.17

13 Kellar, Archaeological Survey of Spencer County, 14.
14 R. O. Petty and M. T. Jackson, “Plant Communities,” In Natural Features of Indiana, ed. Alton A. Lindsey (Indianapolis, Ind.: Indiana Academy of Science, 1966), 279.
16 Kellar, Archaeological Survey of Spencer County, 14.
17 Kellar, Archaeological Survey of Spencer County, 15, 65.
The ready availability of a variety of food sources and the relatively temperate climate combined to make southwestern Indiana an area of intensive occupation during the prehistoric period. As previously noted, deforestation throughout Indiana, and particularly in southern Indiana, had a profound effect on the natural environment by promoting soil erosion and altering drainage patterns. With approximately 100,000 acres of land in southern Indiana experiencing severe erosion by the 1930s, remedial reforestation programs were initiated to counter this environmental degradation.\textsuperscript{18}
The following chapter is a synthesis of information from various sources regarding the known prehistory of southern Indiana. A review of this literature reveals land use patterns and cultural interactions present prior to Euroamerican settlement and which may have influenced events that occurred during the contact period. Archaeological investigations undertaken in Spencer County have uncovered no evidence of prehistoric habitation in Carter Township in the vicinity of the Lincoln site. Rather, it appears that the area was used for short-term camping and hunting. Admittedly, the county archaeological survey, completed during the 1950s, concentrated its efforts along the Ohio River and future investigations in the immediate area of the Lincoln site could reveal previously unrecorded prehistoric sites.

CULTURAL SEQUENCE

PALEOINDIAN OCCUPATION (7 to 8000 B.C.)

Most of what is known about this earliest identified cultural presence in North America must be inferred from sparse surface recoveries of artifacts, particularly diagnostic fluted projectile points. This information can be analyzed in conjunction with geochronological and paleoecological data to make generalized assumptions about the earliest post-Pleistocene inhabitants. Post-Pleistocene adaptive strategies were geared for coping with a harsh, but rapidly changing, environment. It has been suggested that the radical changes between about 12,000 and 10,000 years before present (B.P.) critically stressed Paleoindian cultures, forcing adaptations to new seasonal extremes of temperature and moisture. As a result, seasonal planning, including the development of more sophisticated means for seasonal storage and shelter, would have been encouraged. Greater resource specialization would have been facilitated by a relatively greater seasonal abundance of some resources (such as bison herds), along with a general decrease in resource diversity.


It has been argued that the earliest subsistence strategies in the eastern United States were not typified by dependency on big game such as mammoth and mastodon, but rather were characterized by a balanced hunting economy based on the exploitation of migratory game, especially caribou, supplemented by foraged food. Martin et al. suggest that patterns of hunting and gathering were influenced by differences in habitat and were specialized by regions characterized by distinct faunas and florae.

Paleoindian sites generally represent areas where small groups of people performed specific tasks of short duration. This type of site maintains a very low archaeological profile on the landscape. Research by Tankersley et al. documented 583 fluted projectile points from 72 counties in Indiana and found that the highest frequency of these points occurs in riparian settings or areas that overlook such settings. Terraces along major streams (like the Ohio River) were the settings with the largest concentrations of fluted points. Of all the documented fluted points, greater than 50 percent were found in the unglaciated portion of the state along the Ohio River and in bedrock source areas of high-quality lithic material. Spencer County had the second highest frequency of fluted points (n=44) for counties in Indiana, due in part to the Raaf Site and the Rockport site cluster. Most of the points were found to have been manufactured from high-quality lithic materials that crop out within a 155-mile radius of the artifact location.

22 Martin et al., "Effect of the End of the Pleistocene," 27.
ARCHAIC OCCUPATION (8000 to 700 B.C.)

The division between the late fluted-point hunters and their descendants in the Early Archaic (8000 to 6000 B.C.) is purely arbitrary. The continuous occupation of the eastern United States is evident from such regionally diverse stratified sites as the St. Albans site in West Virginia, Modoc Rockshelter in Illinois, and Sheep Rockshelter in Pennsylvania.

The transition from Paleoindian to Early Archaic lithic technologies is represented by the Dalton Complex, which dates from approximately 8500 to 7900 B.C. in the southeastern United States. The lanceolate morphology characteristic of Paleoindian points is combined in Dalton points with resharpening strategies characteristic of the Early Archaic.

Early Archaic tool assemblages reflect the influence of moderating climatic conditions and the resultant increased variation in local resource availability. Lanceolate projectiles ultimately were replaced by smaller notched and stemmed points used in the pursuit of smaller game such as deer and elk. However, the presence of Kirk, LeCroy, and Thebes type points, which are ubiquitous to the eastern part of the United States, indicate the continued exploitation of large territories by small hunting bands in the Early Archaic. The addition of sandstone abraders and mortars to the Early Archaic people’s tool kit suggests that vegetable foods were becoming a more substantial part of their diet.

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It has been suggested that Early Archaic settlement patterns in the region surrounding the project area generally reflect broad-spectrum hunting and gathering subsistence strategies. Deeply stratified Early Archaic sites have been documented on point bars on the Ohio River floodplain. At Patoka Lake in the Hoosier National Forest in southern Indiana, Early Archaic occupation of floodplains was noted, although upland settings seemed to have been preferred.

The Middle Archaic period coincides approximately with the Altithermal, between 5750 and 3850 B.C. During this time an eastward expansion of the prairie resulted from a regional warming and drying trend. The material remnants of Middle Archaic culture reflect an increasingly sophisticated technology adapted to the intensive exploitation of forest and riverine biomes. Bifurcate or basally notched points present during the early stages of this period were supplanted by somewhat cruder side-notched and heavy stemmed varieties. There is an increase in ground and polished stone tools, full-grooved axes, pendants, and winged and cylindrical bannerstones used as atlatl weights.

The Late Archaic (4000 to 1500 B.C.) witnessed the blossoming of a great diversity of cultural traditions throughout eastern North America. This cultural differentiation was based primarily on adaptations to stabilized regional and local environments, "that made maximum use of all resources within restricted areas." Projectile points dating from this period tend to be large, crudely made, and of the notched and stemmed varieties.

Late Archaic sites are often large, and represent occupations over long periods of time. Occupation debris is often dense and subsurface contexts exist at many of these sites. Locational changes are reflected in the settlement system in response to resource seasonality. During the spring and summer, the exploitation of aquatic resources produced concentrations of sites along large water courses. Through the fall and winter, the harvest of nuts and the pursuit of game led to the establishment of camps situated above the valleys, in open situations and in rockshelters.

In southwestern and southcentral Indiana, a Late Archaic manifestation has been referred to as the French Lick phase. This phase is best represented by Matanzas, Big Sandy II, Karnak, and stemmed projectile points, although engraved bone pins have been recovered from a number of French Lick phase sites as well. In Spencer County, this manifestation is represented by the Crib Mound Site.
WOODLAND OCCUPATION (700 B.C. to A.D. 1000)

The Early Woodland period (700 to 100 B.C.) appears to represent a cultural expansion of the Late Archaic. It is characterized by a greater tendency toward territorial permanence and an increasing elaboration of ceremonial exchange and mortuary rituals. Some of these traits, once believed to be indicative of Early Woodland, are now known to have had their origins in the Archaic. 36

Although the first manufacture of pottery is generally considered to mark the beginning of the Early Woodland period, it has been suggested that pottery may be simply a convenient marker for archaeologists to distinguish between cultural periods, rather than an indicator of culturally significant new subsistence and settlement patterns. 37 Alternatively, Munson argues that the first pottery represented an important technological innovation in food processing. 38 Early Woodland ceramics are thick, plain-surfaced, usually grit-tempered, with conical and flat-based vessel forms. Local variations in ceramics during early developments included Adena, Early Crab Orchard, and Marion/Fayette Thick. Diagnostic Early Woodland projectile points include large, well-made contracting stem points such as the Adena type. 39

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35 For example, see Howard D. Winters, “The Riverton Culture,” in Reports of Investigations No. 13 (Springfield, Ill.: Illinois State Museum, 1969) and Christopher J. Baltz, “Archaeological Site Database Enhancement, Southwestern Indiana: Greene, Daviess, Dubois, Pike, Spencer, and Warrick Counties, also Gibson, Knox, Martin, Perry, and Vanderburgh Counties,” Prepared for Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology, in 87-46 (Bloomington, Ind.: Glenn A. Black Laboratory of Archaeology, Indiana University, 1987).
38 Patrick J. Munson, Monroe Lake, Indiana, Archaeological Study: Assessment of the Impact of Monroe Reservoir on Prehistoric Cultural Resources (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University, Glenn A. Black Laboratory of Archaeology, 1976), passim.
Horticultural technologies first seen during the Archaic characterized subsistence patterns during the Early Woodland period. Plants that occurred naturally in the environment, such as chenopodium, marsh elder, canary grass, and sunflower were cultivated for food and fiber. Cultigens imported into the region, such as squash, pumpkins, and gourds, also appeared. Hunting and gathering continued as both a subsistence strategy and a seasonal lifeway.

As the Woodland horticultural base improved, settlements became increasingly sedentary, supporting larger populations and more complex societies. At Patoka Lake, terrace locations were preferred during this period, although upland and bottomland locations were equally occupied farther north at Lafayette Lake. An emphasis on Adena cultural elements in the south, derived from the east and the Upper Ohio Valley, may account for the increased differentiation between northern and southern settlement patterns in Indiana.

The Middle Woodland period (100 B.C. to A.D. 500) represents a time of complex sociocultural integration across regional boundaries via networks of trade. During this period, regional cultures remain distinct but are related through their common mortuary and trade complex. The period is characterized by elaborate geometric earthworks, enclosures, and mounds that are often associated with multiple burials and by a wide array of exotic ceremonial goods.

Materials used in the manufacture of ceremonial items were acquired from various regions of North America: copper and silver from the Upper Great Lakes; quartz crystals and mica from the Lower Allegheny region; obsidian and grizzly bear teeth from as far west as Wyoming; and shark teeth, pearls, and marine shells from the Gulf Coast area. Diagnostic lithic artifacts include Snyders points, leaf-shaped blades, prismatic blades and associated polyhedral cores. Ceramics were manufactured with grit, grog, sand, and/or limestone tempering, and have plain, cord marked, and/or stamped designed surfaces.

The trade and cultural interactions that peaked during this period have been termed “The Hopewell Interaction Sphere.”\textsuperscript{44} The extent to which these interactions influenced regional cultures varied depending on the extent of the culture’s participation in the trade networks. The Havana tradition of the Illinois River Valley and the Scioto tradition of the Scioto River Valley in southern Ohio were two major centers of influence. The Indiana region was peripheral to each of these areas, yet because of its centrally located position between the two spheres, it was influenced by both. The Crab Orchard tradition extends into the southwestern portion of Indiana, as does some Havana influence; however, the largest Middle Woodland site in southern Indiana is the Mann Site, located in Posey County, which exhibits influences from as far away as the gulf coast.\textsuperscript{45}

A Terminal Middle Woodland period (ca. A.D. 200 to 600) occupation defined for portions of southwestern Indiana and adjacent portions of Illinois is referred to as Allison-LaMotte.\textsuperscript{46} The Allison-LaMotte culture was first described as two distinctly separate cultural manifestations by Winters.\textsuperscript{47} However, these were later redefined as a single cultural continuum. Diagnostic projectile points for this period include Lowe Flared Base and Snyders types.\textsuperscript{48} Lamellar blades are also part of the Allison-LaMotte toolkit. Ceramics tend to be sand or grit tempered with cordmarked and simple stamped exteriors.

During the Late Woodland period (A.D. 600 to 900), there was an apparent breakdown or abandonment of mortuary ritualism and extensive trade networks, giving way to relatively isolated regional settlements. Late Woodland occupations are often small villages consisting of a number of house structures spaced around a circular plaza. Burials lack the elaborate ritualism associated with earlier cultures, seldom containing grave goods or reflecting status. Bodies were often interred in natural knolls, or placed as “intrusive” burials into existing mounds.

The bow and arrow represents the major technological innovation of the period, evidenced by small, well-made triangular and side-notched points. Ceramics from the period were generally utilitarian; well-made undecorated grit-tempered, cordmarked pottery dominates most Late Woodland ceramic assemblages.


\textsuperscript{48} Noel D. Justice, Stone Age Spear and Arrow Points of the Midcontinental and Eastern United States (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1987), 211-214.
Subsistence patterns continued to include hunting and gathering, which served an increasingly supplemental role to the dominant diet of maize and other plants. The utilization of upland and bottomland sites during the Late Woodland is suggestive of the dichotomous settlement system documented for early historical groups in the Plains and northeastern United States.49 This system is composed of two distinct types of sites occupied on a seasonal basis. During the summer, a base camp or village (located along the terraces of toe slopes of major stream valleys) was established with habitation structures and cultivated fields reoccupied from year to year. After the harvest, these sites would be abandoned for temporary hunting camps in the nearby forests.

Within the west-central portion of Indiana, the Late Woodland is represented by the Albee Complex, named for the Albee Mound in Sullivan County.50 This time period is represented by Jack’s Reef and triangular projectile points and thin, cordmarked ceramics.51

LATE PREHISTORIC OCCUPATION (A.D. 1000 to 1650)

Although Late Woodland cultures continued until historic contact in some areas of the Ohio Valley, they were supplanted by the Fort Ancient culture in southeastern Indiana, by the Angel phase and Caborn-Welborn phase Mississippian in southwestern Indiana, and by the Oliver Phase in southcentral Indiana.52 In the lower White River valley extending to the Wabash valley, there is a poorly understood Mississippian period occupation known as Vincennes Culture.53 The development of large platform mounds, shell-tempered ceramics, stockaded villages, large populations, and intensive maize agriculture are characteristic of this period. For unclear reasons, villages appear to have been abandoned around A.D. 1600, and apparent drops in population are reflected in sites over much of the state.

50 For example, see J. Arthur MacLean, “Excavations of Albee Mound 1926-27,” Indiana History Bulletin B:4 (Indianapolis, Ind.: Indiana Historical Bureau, 1931).
52 James B. Griffin, The Fort Ancient Aspect: Its Cultural and Chronological Position in Mississippi Valley Archaeology (Ann Arbor, Mich.: University of Michigan Press, 1943), passim; Glenn A. Black, Angel Site: An Archaeological, Historical, and Ethnological Study, 1 and 2 (Indianapolis, Ind.: Indiana Historical Society, 1967), 113-115; Brian G. Redmond, ed., The Archaeology of the Clampitt Site (12Lr329), an Oliver Phase Village in Lawrence County, Indiana, Research Reports No. 16 (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University, Glenn A. Black Laboratory of Archaeology, 1994), 1-2.
Chapter IV Euro-American/American Indian Relations

LINCOLN

The tenor of relations between American Indians and Euro-Americans in the Northwest Territory was shaped by a variety of factors, including the formation of trade networks, the development of a patriarchal relationship between the French (and later the British) and the various Indiana tribes, and struggles for military and political control of the region. Epidemics and displacement of eastern tribes greatly affected the Indians' ability to respond to the changes in their traditional lifeways that intercourse with Europeans demanded. The succession of French and British traders by American settlers proved even more disruptive to traditional ways. Ultimately, American hegemony forced the Shawnee, Delaware, Miami, and other tribes to surrender all of their claims north of the Ohio and east of the Mississippi rivers.

PROTOHISTORIC AND CONTACT PERIOD ABORIGINAL OCCUPATION
(ca. 1600 to 1750)

The identities of the tribes occupying Indiana in the early 1600s have not been established with certainty. Considerable displacement and migration was taking place among Indian tribes at this time, largely as a result of European colonization of the eastern seaboard. Furthermore, during the early-seventeenth century, the Five Nations of the Iroquois Confederacy (Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, and Seneca) in northern New York carried on a lucrative trade with the Dutch and the English, exchanging beaver pelts for manufactured goods. By the 1640s, overtrapping had severely depleted the beaver population in Iroquois territory. Beginning in 1641, the Iroquois mounted a series of expeditions to the Western Great Lakes region seeking to gain control of the fur trade that the Huron and other western tribes conducted with the French. The Iroquois were equipped with firearms procured from traders in New York, which gave them a tactical advantage over their rivals and enabled them to drive the Huron from their traditional territory. Tribal warfare continued throughout the late-seventeenth century, with the Iroquois sporadically dispatching military expeditions into New England, south to Chesapeake Bay and the southern Appalachians, north beyond the headwaters of the Ottawa, and westward into Illinois. As a result, a number of western indigenous groups were displaced further to the east, west, and south.54

Around 1680, western tribes armed and supported by their French allies began a counter-offensive that ultimately succeeded in arresting the Iroquois ascendancy. In 1701, the representatives of the Iroquois League, the French, the British, and more than twenty western, eastern, and northern indigenous groups met in councils at Onondaga, Albany, and Montreal. A final council the same year in Montreal resulted in a comprehensive peace, ending the Iroquois Wars.55

Large scale population shifts among Indian tribes were ongoing during this period and continued for more than a century. The Miami, Wea, and Piankeshaw are known to have arrived in northern and central Indiana after 1680. The Miami occupation may have preceded this date, as historical links between this tribe and

Upper Mississippian cultures in Indiana and Illinois have been speculated, but not yet proven. The Kickapoo established villages in the Wabash Valley during the 1740s. By the 1780s, Delaware tribes migrated to Indiana from Ohio, and some groups of Shawnee, Potawatomi, and Wyandotte came shortly thereafter; the Shawnee also have been linked to the Fort Ancient culture of the 1600s in Ohio. These groups were the first tribes encountered by European explorers during the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (Figure 5).

EURO-AMERICAN OCCUPATION (1675 TO 1785)

The first forays by European explorers into Indiana occurred on a sporadic basis from the late-seventeenth through the mid-eighteenth centuries. Father Jacques Marquette may have crossed the dune country of northern Indiana in 1675. His successor, Father Allouez, probably crossed the St. Joseph Valley. Robert Cavelier, Sieur de la Salle ascended the St. Joseph River in 1679, to the site of modern South Bend, Indiana. In 1681, and for several years thereafter, La Salle conducted extensive explorations throughout the region that became Indiana. By 1720, dozens of fur trading French voyageurs or coureurs de bois were engaged in trade with the Miami villages clustered along the Wabash River and its tributaries. In order to maintain open communication between Lake Erie and the Mississippi River, the French constructed forts along the Wabash-Maumee line across Indiana, at Miami, Ouiatenon, and Vincennes. These were the first permanent European settlements in Indiana and were constructed between 1715 and 1731.

Locating forts and trading posts in close proximity to rivers represented a sensible and opportunistic choice on the part of the French. Rivers were central to eighteenth century life in Indiana. In addition to serving as the principal means of transportation, they were sources for water and fish, and the rich bottomlands proved to be fertile farmland. But while the French preferred to travel to their various posts by water, the Miami predilection was to travel overland. Numerous trails crisscrossed the region, serving as arteries for trade, hunting, and war parties.

The landscape through which these trails passed was vastly different from that of the late-twentieth century. Hardwood forests covered much of the region, with only 13 percent of the future state’s area given over to prairie. Fowl and game were plentiful, and agriculture provided a principal means of sustenance as well, most notably cultivation of maize, beans, squash, and melons. The fur trade, however, caused overtrapping, initiating a process of ecological imbalance that would have far reaching implications for the Native American tribes. Forced to travel ever greater distances to acquire the pelts they needed to trade for European goods, tribes such as the Miami became involved in trade networks that skewed their traditional lifeways and subsistence patterns. The transformation of Indian cultural practices brought on by the fur trade reached even more deeply than a desire for technologically superior manufactured goods. The symbolic value of European goods was held in equally high regard. European glass beads could be likened to native crystals for their ceremonial use, and mirrors, like water, were useful for divination rituals. Consequently, a process began in which European items gradually began to supplant traditional native materials for many rituals. Perhaps the most vivid was the widespread use of iron tools, knives, kettles, and necklaces of beads in burial ceremonies, often in dramatically greater amounts than grave goods had been provided in the precontact period. Such instances illustrate that, within Indian culture, the symbolic value of these materials in the social and political realms often outstripped their utilitarian value.

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57 WPA, Indiana, 42-46.
The rich symbolism with which Indian tribes endowed European goods influenced their approach to maintaining trade networks as well. In many instances, the French developed close, even paternalistic, relationships with the Indian tribes with whom they traded. The devastation wrought by epidemics and displacement from their traditional eastern territory led tribes such as the Miami to welcome such relationships, as they buttressed the primacy of social relationships in their traditional systems of exchange while also bringing them into the sphere of a much larger world economy. Ironically, the paternalistic role did not translate into greater cultural hegemony for the French, but instead obligated them to mediate conflicts amongst the tribes and provide material goods to those in need.60

Expansionist pressure from the English colonies on the Atlantic coast and British efforts to control the fur trade disrupted the status quo by the mid-eighteenth century. Escalating episodes of conflict culminated in the French and Indian War, which began in 1754 and ended early in 1763. Defeated, the French surrendered their claims to the Northwest Territory in the Treaty of Paris. However, renewed Indian resistance to European influence left British control of the territory often tenuous. The problem was exacerbated by the fact that, in their relations with the resident Indian tribes, the British enjoyed a lesser degree of success than had the French at establishing productive trade networks. In a misguided attempt at economy, Sir Jeffrey Amherst, British commander-in-chief, ordered his western commanders to limit the provision of gifts, ammunition, and liquor to Indians. Such measures made the British appear ungenerous and inhospitable in the eyes of Native Americans, and had the disastrous consequence of disrupting commerce throughout the Great Lakes region. Frustrated tribes turned to armed reprisals, under the leadership of the Ottawa war chief Pontiac.61

Pontiac’s War soon devolved into a conflict of attrition, with various tribes laying siege to Detroit and military outposts along the Wabash and Maumee rivers. Belated word of the Treaty of Paris, in which the French abrogated their claims to the Northwest Territory, proved demoralizing to the Indians. A stalemate occurred, with the Native American tribes ultimately conceding that the British might prove as adept as the French had been in maintaining beneficial relations. The replacement of General Amherst with Sir William Johnson, who saw to it that trade goods and gifts flooded into the Great Lakes region, helped ease the sting of military defeat. Furthermore, in an attempt to maintain peaceable relations with the Native Americans, a royal decree issued in 1763 forbade white settlement west of the Appalachian Mountains. The Quebec Act of 1774, which incorporated the territory north of the Ohio River into the Province of Quebec and forbade immigration from the eastern seaboard colonies, was another attempt to limit settlement in the region.62 Enforcement of the proclamations proved almost impossible; however, and the incursions of land speculators and squatters not only continued, but increased west of the mountains.

60 Cayton, Frontier Indiana, 3; White, Middle Ground, 104-105, 143.
61 Cayton, Frontier Indiana, 27-28, 33.
The undoing of British aspirations in the Indiana territory, however, lay in the monarchy’s growing rift with its American colonists. The British failed to maintain control over land speculation and the revenue generated by trade networks, and overextended themselves by dint of the enormous territory they sought to control from a distance. Consequently, they proved unable to maintain either a strong military presence or a coherent bureaucratic process for trade, governance, and land transactions.\textsuperscript{63} These difficulties left the British poorly equipped to follow up the military victories of the French and Indian Wars. At the outbreak of the American Revolution, in 1775, there was no British garrison in all of Indiana.

In 1777, British commanders belatedly sent temporary garrisons to the region with explicit orders to incite Indian attacks on American frontiersmen. Such a charge was not difficult, as many Indian tribes had grown increasingly alarmed by the rapid influx of white settlers and the increasing stridency of land speculators determined to acquire huge tracts of land. The year 1777 became known as the “bloody year,” as a result of the ensuing Indian attacks. Atrocities were committed by combatants on all sides producing an enduring legacy of hatred and fear between Native Americans and American settlers.\textsuperscript{64}

Under the leadership of George Rogers Clark, an American expeditionary force won a decisive American victory over the British at Vincennes on February 25, 1779. Thereafter, the two sides stood at a military stalemate in the Northwest Territory until the American victory at Yorktown, Virginia, in 1781.\textsuperscript{65} During the ensuing peace treaty negotiations, one of the most important issues was the location of the boundaries of the United States. Eventually, the British conceded designation of the Mississippi River as the western boundary, a major victory for the newly recognized nation.

Other parties, however, were not prepared to accept the terms of the 1783 Treaty of Paris. The Miami, Shawnee, and other tribes that occupied the Northwest Territory were not parties to the negotiation and saw no reason to recognize its legitimacy. French inhabitants, many of whom were descendants of the region’s earliest French explorers, were also wary of American intentions. Additionally, the British proved reluctant to surrender their forts and outposts to the upstart nation.\textsuperscript{66} Americans, on the other hand, quickly came to regard the Northwest Territory as theirs to exploit in whatever manner they deemed appropriate.

\textsuperscript{63} Cayton, Frontier Indiana, 38-40.
\textsuperscript{64} Madison, Indiana Way, 21-22.
\textsuperscript{65} WPA, Indiana, 42-46.
\textsuperscript{66} Madison, Indiana Way, 26-27.
EXPANSIONISM BY THE UNITED STATES (1785-1815)

Three major problems confronted the United States with regard to the disposition of the Northwest Territory: Indian resistance; a lack of an orderly and democratic system to transfer land ownership from government to private hands; and a system of government for the territory. The most immediate and critical of these issues was that of Indians’ insistence that the land in question remained under their hegemony rather than that of the United States.

Following a series of poorly managed diplomatic missions and military adventures, the Indian tribes of Ohio and Indiana allied into the Miami Confederacy (led by Chief Little Turtle), in an effort to slow the influx of American settlers and defend against further military incursions. With British encouragement, fierce raids on American frontier settlements succeeded for a time in drastically reducing the influx of new settlers along the Ohio River. The defeat of an American force under the command of General Josiah Harmar by Shawnee and Miami warriors at the Maumee and St. Joseph rivers in 1790 bolstered the native confederacy’s resolve. This was further enhanced by the route of American military forces led by General Arthur St. Clair near present-day Portland, Ohio, in 1791.67

Indian resistance to American incursions stemmed from a number of important cultural differences. First and foremost, the Americans appeared cheap compared to their predecessors, the British and French. Federal agents did not distribute gifts or engage in ceremonies that signaled recognition of Indians as equals. This was partially due to the fact that the newly formed government had little money, but more importantly, it reflected an American ideology with regard to the Northwest Territory. Americans had little interest in establishing relations or trade networks with resident tribes as the French and British had. Instead they sought to transform utterly land uses in the region. In American eyes, the territory was destined to be rearranged into an agrarian landscape peopled by independent farmers. If they wished to stay, Indians would have to surrender their traditional lifeways and mirror the customs and social organization of Americans.68

Americans also proved unable to bridge an ideological divide between themselves and Native Americans. They had little interest in assuming the paternalistic role undertaken by the French and, to a lesser degree, the British. The republican ideology born of the American Revolution rejected such ties of dependency. “Liberty” meant the ability to behave autonomously, independently and freely, without fealty owed to kings, priests, aristocrats, or any other ruling class. The inherent contradictions in the republican ideology, particularly with regard to the institution of slavery, were conveniently ignored, at least when it came to the Federal government’s dealings with Indians. Ultimately, it was the unpredictability of the Americans that proved most unsettling to their Indian counterparts. Having no sense of the ritual of mutual obligation and personal reciprocity, which

68 Cayton, Frontier Indiana, 138-139.
had defined Indian relations with European powers, the Americans posed a far greater threat to Indian sovereignty and society. Their rhetoric and behavior demonstrated that the future they planned for the Northwest Territory held little room for Indians in any role. The various Indian tribes, particularly the Miami, Wea, Shawnee, Piankashaw, and Delaware, responded to this threat with military reprisals.

The momentum of Indian victories proved to be short lived. In the summer of 1794 an American force under the command of Anthony Wayne defeated the Indian confederacy at the Battle of Fallen Timbers on the Maumee River. The American triumph led to negotiation of the Treaty of Greenville in 1795. The defeated tribes ceded control of the southern two-thirds of present-day Ohio and a narrow strip of southeastern Indiana. Although the treaty clearly established the boundaries for legal settlement in Indiana, American squatters penetrated further west in increasing numbers, representing the first wave of a rising tide of immigration.

In 1800, the U.S. Congress approved the division of the Northwest Territory into the territories of Ohio and Indiana. Indiana Territory encompassed an area bounded on the east by the Northwest (later Ohio) Territory, on the south by the Ohio River, on the west by the Mississippi River, and on the north by the Canadian border (Figure 6). Vincennes was designated the territorial capital. This demarcation of boundaries was made in accordance with the terms of the 1783 Treaty of Paris despite the continuing refusal by Indian tribes to recognize the legitimacy of the treaty’s terms.

**LAND CESSIONS BY INDIAN TRIBES**

Subsequent to the Louisiana Purchase in 1803, President Thomas Jefferson conceived the idea of removing all Native American tribes to a “sanctuary” west of the Mississippi River. This notion had the added advantage of addressing the persistent problem of the tribes’ rejection of the Treaty of Paris. William Henry Harrison, governor of the Indiana Territory, acted as the principal agent in negotiating a series of treaties with the Delaware, Shawnee, Potawatomi, and Miami tribes whose goal was the displacement of the Indians to western territories (Figure 7). Through “aggressive use of threats, trickery, and bribery, creating and capitalizing on tribal dissensions, Harrison, in treaty after treaty, gained the cession of millions of acres of Indian lands.” Negotiated in rapid succession over the next several years, these treaties included the 1803 Treaty of Fort Wayne, which granted the United States a portion of southwestern Indiana; the 1804 Treaty of Vincennes, which encompassed an area immediately north of the Ohio River; and the 1805 Treaty of Grousland, which took in territory in southeastern Indiana. Two years later, the 1809 Treaty of Fort Wayne further expanded American holdings in southeastern and southwestern Indiana.

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69 Cayton, Frontier Indiana, 139, 142.
70 Cayton, Frontier Indiana, 160-164; Gates, Public Land Law, 60-61.
71 Madison, Indiana Way, 34.
By this date Native American resistance to American expansion had become more organized than at any time since the early 1790s. Beginning in 1806, elements of the Shawnee, Wyandotte, Potawatomi, and other tribes began gathering at Prophet’s Town on the north bank of the Wabash River, creating a geographic focus for the growing unease with which the Native American population held the United States. Indian resistance was organized by the visionary Shawnee leader Tecumseh, aided by a revitalization movement led by his half-brother Tenskwatawa (the Prophet). In 1811, Tecumseh traveled through the mid-south attempting to garner support for a united native opposition to American encroachment. While Tecumseh was gone, Prophet’s Town became a target for an American military incursion under orders from President James Madison. The invasion culminated in the Battle of Tippecanoe, fought November 7, 1811. Although the Americans won the battle and destroyed Prophet’s Town, the Native American resistance continued with British aid throughout the period known as the War of 1812.

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73 Cayton, Frontier Indiana, 207, 209, 220; Madison, Indiana Way, 43-45.
Indian raids on frontier settlements continued, coupled with the outbreak of armed conflict between the United States and Great Britain. Of the major Indian tribes residing in the Northwest Territory, only the Miami chose to remain neutral. The United States suffered a series of military defeats during 1812, including the loss of Detroit and Fort Dearborn. Indian assaults against settlers took place throughout Indiana and forced the abandonment of outlying (illegal) American settlements. Attacks against Fort Harrison and Fort Wayne also took place. Harrison resigned his commission as governor of the Indiana Territory and took command of the northwestern American army. In October 1813, his forces defeated the British and their Indian allies at the Battle of the Thames.74 The war continued for two more years, culminating in United States victory against the British at the Battle of New Orleans. In negotiating the peace treaty, the United States and Great Britain agreed to restoration of the status quo ante bellum with regard to territorial relations. Longstanding matters of dispute concerning claims to territory that dated back to the 1780s also were resolved, thus securing American rights to exploit the Northwest Territory without interference from European powers.75

As for Indian resistance to American expansionism, Tecumseh was among those killed at the Battle of the Thames. Meanwhile, Tenskwatawa’s credibility had largely been destroyed by his loss at the Battle of Tippecanoe and he ultimately migrated to Canada. The loss of the two Indian leaders spelled the end of organized, united Indian resistance to American expansion into the Northwest Territory. Aside from their military and technological advantage, the sheer scale of the environmental, economic, and demographic transformations the Americans brought to the region proved overwhelming.76 In the two decades following the War of 1812, the Shawnee, Miami, and Delaware were forced to surrender their remaining claims in Indiana. The fact that, unlike other tribes, the Miami had remained neutral during the War of 1812 was given little credence by the United States.

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74 Madison, Indiana Way, 44-45.
75 Madison, Indiana Way, 45; Meinig, Shaping of America, 48.
76 Cayton, Frontier Indiana, 224-225.
The trend of major land cessions by Indians began with the Maumee Treaty of 1817, in which a small area of northeastern Indiana, adjacent to the Ohio border, was ceded. The following year, a treaty signed at St. Mary’s in Ohio by representatives of the Delaware, Miami, Wea, and Potawatomi surrendered title to about 8 million acres and became known as the “New Purchase.” The lands of the New Purchase included most of what is now central Indiana, and these lands were legally opened to settlement in 1820. Thereafter, smaller tracts in northern Indiana were signed over in a succession of treaties: the Chicago Treaty of 1821, the Mississinewa Treaties of 1826, the Carey Mission Treaty of 1828, the Tippecanoe Treaties of 1832, and the Wabash Treaties of 1834 and 1840.

The first American settlement in southern Indiana was near the modern site of Clarksville. It was sited on Virginia military grant lands provided to the officers and men who had participated in the battle at Vincennes under Clark’s command. Legal settlement in the remainder of southern Indiana became possible as a result of the treaties of Greenville (1795), Vincennes (1804), and Grouseland (1805). Spencer County was part of the territory ceded by the Miami, Shawnee, and Delaware tribes with the Treaty of Vincennes. The first federal land survey of this area took place in 1805-1806, and the first legal land entry at the federal office in Rockport was made by Daniel Grass in May 1807. Hostile relations with resident Indian tribes remained problematic for more than a decade thereafter. Additional issues facing settlers in the Northwest Territory were the need to create a method for administering land sales on a large scale and of establishing a system of governance for the area. Addressing these problems required an intensive effort on the part of the Federal government equivalent to that applied to relations with Indians.

The conclusion of the War of 1812 removed the British as a permanent presence in the Northwest Territory and greatly reduced Indian resistance to white settlement in the region. During the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, American settlement required resolution of several critical issues. Land surveys, administration of land sales, and establishment of a system of governance had to be established in a manner that both satisfied would-be settlers and addressed the competing claims of various state governments and land speculators. Moreover, the newly created United States government was anxious to take advantage of the region's untapped economic potential. Under the Articles of Confederation, land sales were one of the few ways available for the national government to generate revenue. The United States Congress responded to these issues with a series of legislative acts that created a rational system for organizing and settling the territory, transferring land ownership from public to private hands, and admitting new states into the Union.

FEDERAL LAND LAWS (1785-1820)

Prior to the 1780s, four eastern states claimed portions of the Northwest Territory on the basis of language in their colonial charters. The most tenuous claim was New York’s. Under its 1699 charter, New York was granted guardianship over the members of the Iroquois Confederacy. The Iroquois had once included part of the Northwest Territory in their sphere of influence, a state of affairs that had become irrelevant by the late eighteenth century. Consequently, New York ceded its claim to western lands in 1780. Virginia, on the other hand, had the strongest claim to the Northwest Territory, since Virginia’s 1609 charter granted it authority over all of the Northwest Territory, as well as portions of present-day Pennsylvania and Kentucky. The commonwealth assumed a large share of responsibility for the military protection of the area during the American Revolution, providing most of the soldiers and material that allowed George Rogers Clark to complete his successful campaign in Vincennes in 1779. In exchange for a reserve of land between the Scioto and Little Miami rivers in eastern Ohio, Virginia agreed to surrender its claims to the remainder of the Northwest Territory; an offer accepted by Congress in 1784. The claims held by Massachusetts to the Northwest Territory were settled in 1785. A year later, Connecticut, too, won a concession of a reserve of land in present-day Ohio. Located in northeastern Ohio, the Western Reserve lay between Lake Erie and the forty-first parallel, and extended 120 miles west from the Pennsylvania border.78

With the issue of western land claims by eastern states resolved, the Federal government possessed all the 265,000 square miles encompassed by the Northwest Territory (Figure 8). Thomas Jefferson headed a committee appointed by Congress to devise a system of government for the area. A revised version of his committee’s report, known as the Ordinance of 1784, was passed by Congress in April 1785. The legislation called for the eventual creation of ten states from the area. Upon attaining a population of 20,000 residents, each prospective state would be admitted to the Union. This was the first concrete evidence of the Federal government’s intention to treat newly established states on equal terms with the original thirteen states. The Ordinance of 1784 also formalized

78 George V. Knepper, Ohio and Its People (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1997), 50.
a number of other basic principles. The new state governments were required to swear permanent allegiance and subordination to the United States; respect the boundaries of Federally owned lands; exempt Federal lands from state taxation; assume a proportional share of the national debt; commit to republican forms of government; and tax resident and nonresident landowners at the same rate. Formal strategies for accomplishing these principles were not laid out in the Ordinance of 1784. Nevertheless, this served as a declaration of Federal authority over the region, with the interests and agents of the United States held supreme above all others.79

THE LAND ORDINANCE OF 1785

Congress established its first public-land policy for the administration and sale of Northwest Territory lands with the Land Ordinance of 1785. This law established that all land would be surveyed into townships with an area of six square miles as soon as questions of Indian title were resolved. Each township would include 36 sections, each containing 640 acres.80 The survey was to begin at the junction of Pennsylvania’s western boundary with the Ohio River and continue westward. A portion of the Northwest Territory, approximately one-seventh of the total area, was set aside to pay bounties to American Revolutionary War veterans. The legislation also required that one section in each township be set aside for the purpose of establishing and maintaining a public school, marking the first time that the issue of public education was addressed at a national level. Remaining sections of land were to be sold in 640-acre tracts at public sale for not less than one dollar per acre.81

79 Cayton, Frontier Indiana, 103-104.
80 Sieber and Munson, Looking at History, 23.
The task of surveying the Northwest Territory was enormous. The work was carried out by hand, and the entire countryside, including swamps, cane breaks, and marshes, was crossed. A survey crew typically consisted of a deputy surveyor, responsible for directing the operation with the use of a magnetic compass; two chainmen, who stretched the traditional four-rod measuring chain on the survey line; at least one flagman to mark the spot toward which the chainmen worked; one or two axmen who cleared the line of vision and blazed corners; and perhaps a hunter and a cook. Although the task was physically arduous, many men competed for surveyors' jobs, since it offered them an opportunity to scout the best land in a given area. 

Surveyors oriented each tract to lines of latitude and longitude based on an arbitrarily placed north-south meridian and an east-west baseline. Numbered range and township lines, running parallel to the meridian and base lines, established the grid of six-mile-square townships. Townships then were divided in the same fashion. Thomas Jefferson has been credited with developing this rationalist approach to surveying, which differed sharply from traditional approaches that relied on the placement of natural features for orientation and measurements. Subsequent legal descriptions for land ownership throughout the Northwest Territory were based upon these land subdivisions. This orderly system was modeled after the New England plan of prior survey, township platting, and granting of a deed in fee simple, and encouraged controlled development and a more compact pattern of settlement. Yet Faragher points out that "a persistent traditionalism" was evident in the surveying efforts. Principal meridians usually were started at the mouths of rivers, which played a critical role in the penetration of the Northwest Territory's interior, instead of relying on pure geometry. Township sections were numbered in oscillating rows from left to right and then right to left, in the same fashion as a plow criss-crossed the land. Jefferson's suggestion for use of a decimal system of measurement was, however, overruled in favor of the traditional 66-foot chain, which allowed incorporation of the traditional rod, acre, and statute mile measurements familiar to most nineteenth century Americans.

This Federal survey method stood in sharp contrast to the more haphazard approach that prevailed in the territory south of the Ohio River, which relied upon a convoluted system of warrants, certificates, caveats, and grants that often obliterated a clear chain of title. The goal of the Federal system was to encourage purchase of land by converting untracked wilderness into an easily traded commodity. The required minimum purchase of 640 acres, however, promoted speculation and precluded many prospective settlers. In response, some established homesteads on land without formally purchasing it, becoming squatters.

Such illegal settlement in the Northwest Territory had been a significant problem for some time, notwithstanding the hostilities engendered by the American Revolution and ongoing Indian resistance to white settlement.

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83 Faragher, Sugar Creek, 42-43; Buley, Old Northwest, 1:95.
84 Faragher, Sugar Creek, 42.
85 Buley, Old Northwest, 1:94-95; Madison, Indiana Way, 31-32.
The Federal government viewed squatting with considerable hostility for several reasons. The presence of squatters conveyed a sense of weakness and inefficacy on the part of the United States, since they demonstrated its inability to control territory over which it claimed dominion. Deeply in debt and with minimal resources, the fledgling government further feared that a rapid influx of squatters would provoke warfare with the resident Indian tribes that had so recently allied themselves with the British. Conflicting popular views of squatters were held. Easterners, for the most part, tended to regard squatters as opportunistic and lawless, while Westerners tended to consider them independent, enterprising, and adventurous. These disparate opinions highlighted both regional differences already emerging in the nascent nation and, perhaps, class conflict between entrenched property owners and the landless.

THE NORTHWEST ORDINANCE OF 1787

With passage of the Northwest Ordinance of 1787, Congress established a formal system of governance for the Northwest Territory. The legislation established a single government for the entire territory, with provision for the eventual creation of three to five smaller territories. Each territory would initially be governed by a governor, secretary, and three judges, all of whom were to be Federally appointed. When the population numbered 5,000 free adult males, a bicameral territorial legislature was to be formed. When the total population in the territory numbered at least 60,000 the territory could apply for statehood on an equal basis with the original thirteen states. Significantly, slavery was prohibited in the Northwest Territory, a condition that would have a significant role in the evolution of the balance of power between free and slave-holding states over the course of the early- to mid-nineteenth century.

As had been the case with the Ordinance of 1784, the Northwest Ordinance reiterated the supremacy of the United States government’s authority over the territory. In essence, according to Cayton, the 1784, 1785, and 1787 ordinances “entailed nothing less than the complete transformation of the region . . . they assumed the adaptation of the Indians, the French, and the natural landscape to the economic and political imperatives of the United States.” As such, the Northwest Territory was to serve as an incubator for the political experiment begun with the American Revolution.

Working to the advantage of the United States in its quest for dominion over the Northwest Territory was the existing power vacuum in the region. Construction of military forts heralded the arrival of Federal power, and the army acted as the primary agent for expressing Federal policies to the area’s residents, including Indian tribes.
French residents, lingering British troops in remote outposts, and illegal settlers. With a few notable exceptions, the Indians displayed an inability to unite against Federal incursions into territory they still regarded as their own. Wartime privations had left the French disillusioned with the British and Virginia (whose government had assumed responsibility for the region during the Revolution). The British were proving reluctant to abandon their northwestern posts, in violation of the terms of the Treaty of Paris. Settlers, finally, were too few and had no legal standing in the region. In the absence of effective opposition, the United States was able to convey the illusion of being both a dominant force and an arbiter of disputes among the various parties, primarily through the actions of its military and the territorial government.\textsuperscript{90}

The first governor of the Northwest Territory under the 1787 ordinance was Arthur St. Clair. A Scotsman whose career included military service in the French and Indian War, service on George Washington’s staff during the American Revolution, and a stint in Congress, St. Clair proved an unpopular choice for the position. His condescending manner and propensity for arbitrary judgements led many to liken his manner to that of the royal governors prior to the Revolution. The 1791 defeat of military forces under his command by Indian tribes further eroded his reputation. He remained, however, governor of the territory until 1798, when a sufficient population was achieved to divide the region into two territories. The eastern division ultimately became the State of Ohio in 1803. The western division was the Indiana Territory, and extended from the west boundary of Ohio to the Mississippi River, and north from the Ohio River to the Canadian border.\textsuperscript{91}

**THE LAND ACT OF 1800 AND THE INTRODUCTION OF A CREDIT SYSTEM**

Disposition of land remained a critical issue in the Northwest Territory in the late 1790s. Jay’s Treaty of 1796 finally resolved the lingering issue of British outposts in the region. The Greenville Treaty cleared title to the southern two-thirds of Ohio, as well as approximately 25,000 square miles in southeastern Indiana. With this resolution of two significant obstacles to legal settlement, and with illegal settlement continuing at a rapid rate, the question of administration of land sales north of the Ohio River was again raised. In 1796, Congress passed new legislation to address land sales, but made few changes to the procedures established in 1785. The rectangular system of surveying was made permanent. The price per acre was increased to two dollars, while the minimum land purchase remained 640 acres. Sales continued to be made at public auctions in the East, with prospective settlers often bidding against speculators with much deeper capital reserves. Under the leadership of William Henry Harrison, who served as congressional delegate for the Northwest Territory during the 1790s, Westerners began to lobby increasingly for smaller tracts, lower prices, a credit system, and preemptive rights.\textsuperscript{92}

\textsuperscript{90} Cayton, Frontier Indiana, 106-110.

\textsuperscript{91} Madison, Indiana Way, 34; Cayton, Frontier Indiana, 120-121, 236; Buley, Old Northwest, 1:68-69.

Congress eventually responded with the Land Act of 1800. This law created a system for the relatively simple, legal acquisition of Federal land by private individuals. To administer the process, four land sale offices were opened within the Northwest Territory, at Chillicothe, Marietta, Steubenville, and Cincinnati. Each office included a staff of two officers; a registrar who recorded applications and land entries, and a receiver who handled financial transactions. A credit system was introduced. Although the price remained two dollars per acre and the minimum purchase remained 640 acres, an applicant had forty days to pay one-fourth the total price, two years to pay another quarter, three years for the third quarter of the purchase price, and four more years to retire the debt. An interest rate of 6 percent was levied on these credit arrangements.93

The legislation proved successful in encouraging more rapid settlement of the Northwest Territory. By the end of the first year under the act, 398,646 acres of land had been sold, at a price of $834,887. With the exception of 1803, sales increased annually each year thereafter, with the peak level of activity taking place in 1805, when 619,266 acres were sold for almost $1.26 million.94 This was the year that land in southern Indiana was opened to legal sale for the first time. Although a fair amount of land speculation took place, it generally did not involve large parcels, and less than 10 percent of the land sold in southern Indiana went to speculators.95

The increased level of sales in 1805 resulted from passage of the Land Act of 1804, which reduced the minimum purchase amount to 160 acres, and the establishment of additional land offices at Detroit, Vincennes, and Kaskaskia. Interest was no longer charged to purchasers until after payment was due and several processing fees were also abolished.96 This law remained in force for sixteen years, with an amendment in 1808 that raised the price per acre to four dollars. It was this legislation under which Thomas Lincoln filed for his farmstead in Spencer County. Additionally, as previously noted, during this same period, Indiana's territorial governor, William Henry Harrison, negotiated a series of treaties that resulted in Indian cessions of vast tracts in Indiana. These included the 1803 Treaty of Fort Wayne, the 1804 Treaty of Vincennes, the 1805 Treaty of Grouseland, and the 1809 Treaty of Fort Wayne. With these agreements, legal settlement became possible throughout the southern third of Indiana.

In the midst of this progress two critical issues developed that threatened the system of land sales in the Northwest Territory. Thousands of individuals had purchased more land than they could afford, and their forfeitures threatened to destabilize this important source of revenue for the Federal government. In addition to the potential loss of revenue, forfeitures placed the government in the position of initiating unpopular evictions and forfeitures upon settlers in areas where Federal authority remained thinly stretched. Second, national political policy affected the credit system. American trade embargoes against European nations drastically reduced demand

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93 Buley, Old Northwest, 1:103; Rohrbough, Land Office Business, 24; Sieber and Munson, Looking at History, 23; Cayton, Frontier Indiana, 264-265.
94 Buley, Old Northwest, 1:105.
95 Gates, Public Land Law, 137.
96 Buley, Old Northwest, 1:104; Gates, Public Land Law, 131.
for agricultural products, and exports fell from an approximate $30 million annual average at the turn of the century to $5 million by 1808. Congress responded to both these problems with a series of relief acts aimed at preventing forfeitures among farmers and preserving the credit system. These were generally stopgap measures that temporarily eased the financial crisis without addressing the systemic faults causing the credit system to fail.

The Land Act of 1800 and the introduction of a credit system had the indisputable consequence of encouraging a steadily increasing rate of settlement in the Northwest Territory during the first decade of the nineteenth century. Along with the growth in population and the penetration of white settlement into the interior, the territorial government matured. In 1805, Michigan Territory was created from Indiana, and in 1809 the Illinois Territory was split off, thus establishing Indiana’s present boundaries (Figure 9). Appointed by Thomas Jefferson, Harrison served as Indiana’s governor from 1800 to 1813. During this period, Indiana passed through the first two stages of government specified in the Northwest Ordinance of 1787: first, rule by a governor, secretary, and three judges (appointed by the President) and, second, by a bicameral legislature with representatives elected by a landed class of voters.

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97 Buley, Old Northwest, 1:105-107.
98 Cayton, Frontier Indiana, 228-230.
Effects of the War of 1812

The outbreak of the War of 1812 had very little impact on the rate of settlement in the Northwest Territory, despite the fact that armed conflicts with British soldiers and their Indian allies necessitated the abandonment of some outlying posts and farms. In Spencer County, for example, the Meeks family in Luce Township was attacked by an Indian war party in May 1811, and William Meeks was killed. Raids by Indians also hampered Federal surveying efforts. By 1812, the southern third of Indiana and Illinois had been surveyed, but of the 2.8 million acres in southwestern Indiana acquired under the terms of the 1809 Treaty of Fort Wayne, the majority remained unrecorded as late as 1815. Nevertheless, a total of 324,000 acres in Indiana were sold at public auction between 1811 and 1814. Settlement advanced northeast from Vincennes along the White River, and northwest from the Ohio border along the Whitewater River. Between 1810 and 1815, Indiana’s population increased from 24,520 residents to 63,897. Federal land offices established in Vincennes (1804) and Jeffersonville (1812) administered the sale of land (Figure 10). 99

Following the end of the War of 1812, the rate of settlement increased at an exponential rate. With Indian resistance broken, what has been termed the “greatest westward migration in the history of the young nation” took place. 100 Land sales at the Federal office in Jeffersonville increased by 30 percent from 1815 to 1816. During the same period, sales increased a staggering 425 percent at the Vincennes office. In 1817, sales at Vincennes totaled more than 286,500 acres at a price of $570,923, while Jeffersonville brought in $512,701 for 256,350 acres. To facilitate land sales in central and northern Indiana, Federal land offices also were established in Brookville and Terre Haute in 1819 (Figure 11). By 1820, the United States had collected almost $5.14

100 Rohrbough, Land Office Business, 89; Faragher, Sugar Creek, 49.
million from the sale of over 2.49 million acres. Approximately 42,000 people are believed to have immigrated to Indiana in 1815 alone, and from 1810 to 1820, Indiana’s population more than quintupled from 24,520 inhabitants to 147,178. The massive demand was partially due to the relative cheapness of land in Indiana, especially compared to Ohio, and the rampant land speculation and muddying of titles occurring in Kentucky. Nationwide economic prosperity, an open and flexible banking system, and rising prices for agricultural products, propelled the westward movement as well.\textsuperscript{101}

\textsuperscript{101} Buley, Old Northwest, 1:25; Rohrbough, Trans-Appalachian Frontier, 158-159, 163; Cayton, Frontier Indiana, 265.
The population explosion in the Northwest Territory was sufficient to allow the creation of five new states, including Indiana, between 1816 and 1821.\textsuperscript{102} Statehood for Indiana had been proposed as early as 1811 by the territorial assembly. Congress passed the enabling legislation for Indiana’s petition for statehood in April 1816. A state constitutional convention took place two months later. Constitutions from the neighboring states of Ohio and Kentucky served as models for Indiana’s, as did the United States Constitution, with its Bill of Rights and system of checks and balances on government power. Indiana’s 1816 constitution divided power among the judicial, legislative, and executive branches of government, with the lion’s share of power concentrated in the hands of the legislature and, at the local level, in county officials. The franchise was limited to white males at least twenty-one years of age and residents of Indiana for a minimum of one year. The state constitution also incorporated Revolutionary-era concepts of individual liberty and freedom of worship, speech, the press, and assembly.\textsuperscript{103}

Several progressive elements also were included in Indiana’s first constitution. A system of free public education was established, as well as a penal system based on reformation of prisoners rather than merely punishment. The issue of slavery also was addressed. The institution had been established in Indiana by French settlers concentrated around Vincennes during the early- to mid-eighteenth century. Although the Northwest Ordinance of 1787 specifically forbade slavery, the territorial government under St. Clair and Harrison had allowed indentured servitude to continue in various guises. In 1802, Harrison made a failed attempt to have the ban upon slavery lifted, arguing that it would attract more settlers to the area. Anti-slavery forces ultimately prevailed, and Indiana’s 1816 constitution confirmed that slavery was illegal in the state. The provision was not made retroactive; however, and 190 slaves were recorded in the 1820 census of Indiana. Shortly thereafter, the Indiana Supreme Court issued several decisions that made slavery and indentured servitude illegal in all instances.\textsuperscript{104}

Indiana’s constitution went into effect on June 29, 1816. Elections took place in August for the state’s first General Assembly, and the first governor, Jonathan Jennings, was elected. In December 1816, President James Madison signed the congressional resolution that admitted Indiana to the Union as the nineteenth state.

\textsuperscript{102} Meinig, Shaping of America, 223.

\textsuperscript{103} Buley, Old Northwest, 1:66-67, 71-72; Cayton, Frontier Indiana, 252-260; Madison, Indiana Way, 50-54.

\textsuperscript{104} Buley, Old Northwest, 1:73-74; Madison, Indiana Way, 53-54; Cayton, Frontier Indiana, 186-188, 192.
The Panic of 1819

Statehood led to a reduced Federal presence in the region, particularly with regard to the military. The emphasis of government passed from the maintenance of security and protection against hostile powers to economic development, particularly via public land sales. Congress had created the institutional framework for achieving this objective with the Northwest Ordinance of 1787 and the various Federal land laws passed between the 1780s and 1805. The first pioneers in the region built upon this administrative structure, creating processes and institutions that suited American goals for transforming the landscape of the Northwest to suit their needs. These constituted the processes followed by the vast majority of settlers in the Northwest who reached the region between 1810 and 1830. Consequently, by 1815, the frontier experience had become increasingly orderly, standardized, and cyclical.105

Public land sales were the engine that powered development within Indiana, and this process continued to be controlled by the Federal land offices established throughout the Northwest. As the chief administrator for placing huge quantities of land on the market and recording sales, the land agent stood at the center of the Federal bureaucracy, hiring clerks and survey crews to undertake the arduous chore of surveying land and recording sales. In recognition of their influential role, land agents also occupied significant positions in frontier society and politics. As such, they became the central figures of Federal authority in the Northwest.106

The methodical and systematic distribution of land from the public domain to private hands suffered a major setback with the national financial panic in 1819. After the War of 1812, unfettered circulation of currency without specie guarantees by the Second Bank of the United States and state-chartered banks created rapid inflation and fictitious values on everything from land and agricultural produce to manufactured goods. When the Bank of the United States was forced by administrative necessities to require guarantees of currency with specie, it was discovered that many state banks lacked the monetary resources demanded. Much of the circulating currency, in essence, proved worthless. The United States Treasury began to refuse acceptance of the currency for discharge of debts, unhinging the credit system through which the majority of settlers had acquired land in the Northwest Territory. Scrambling to remain financially solvent, state banks called in loans of all types, consequently depressing trade and stultifying market activity throughout the country. Rapid deflation, economic depression, forfeitures, and defaults on taxes followed in rapid succession.107

105 Rohrbough, Trans-Appalachian Frontier, 116, 158-160; Cayton, Frontier Indiana, 264.
106 Cayton, Frontier Indiana, 264-265.
107 Buley, Old Northwest, 1:123-128; Rohrbough, Land Office Business, 137, 139; Gates, Land Law Development, 142.
Reversions of land to the United States in 1819 totaled 365,000 acres, of which 153,000 were located in the Northwest Territory. The following year, the unpaid balance due on land sales reached more than $21 million, an amount equal to more than one-fifth of the total national debt. Of that amount, $6.6 million was for land in the Northwest. The situation was made more critical by a slump in agricultural prices. In 1820, the value of export products from the Ohio Valley was only half what it had been the year before. Congress eventually responded to the crisis with two pieces of legislation: the Land Act of 1820 and the Relief Act of 1821.

**The Land Act of 1820**

Passed by Congress on 24 April 1820, the Land Act of 1820 abolished the credit system and required cash sales for public lands after 1 July 1820. The law has been called "the single most important piece of land legislation since the original 1785 ordinance," since it created "the most liberal provisions [for buying title to land claims] in the history of the republic." Tracts as small as 80 acres were made available at a cost of only $1.25 per acre. Only $100 was needed to gain clear title to 80 acres of land, whereas, under the credit system, $80 had been required to make just a one-fourth payment on 160 acres. The new law consequently made land purchases more affordable than ever before to a broader spectrum of the American public. Further, it helped quell land speculation, even in the aftermath of numerous forfeitures brought on by the financial difficulties associated with the Panic of 1819.

The 1820 land law did not address the $23 million in land debt that resulted from overextended buyers and the 1819 panic. Many Westerners petitioned Congress to provide a means of relief, especially in light of the fact that national policies concerning trade and banking practices had contributed greatly to the magnitude of the financial depression. Congress responded with the Relief Act of 1821, which allowed debtors to relinquish a portion of their land and have all previous payments applied to the remaining land. Such a measure allowed many farmers to retain ownership of their land, particularly given the limited availability of credit since 1819. Thomas Lincoln was among many Indiana farmers who secured final title to his land under this law. Within seven months of the law's passage, the balance due to the Federal government on all lands diminished by almost one half. Subsequent relief efforts made steady progress toward eliminating the debt possible by 1830.

The twin objectives of encouraging settlement in the Northwest Territory and maintaining a democratic process for land distribution dated back to the Land Ordinance of 1785. The 1820 land law and the 1821 relief act provided the final impetus required to achieve these goals. According to Cayton, this legislation made pos-

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108 Buley, Old Northwest, 1:131; Rohrbough, Land Office Business, 140; Cayton Frontier Indiana, 266.
109 Faragher, Sugar Creek, 54.
110 Rohrbough, Land Office Business, 141; Gates, Public Land Law, 141; Buley, Old Northwest, 1:134; Faragher, Sugar Creek, 54; Cayton, Frontier Indiana, 266.
111 Gates, Public Land Law, 141; Buley, Old Northwest, 1:135-136; Rohrbough, Land Office Business, 143.
sible the completion of a remarkably egalitarian process of transferring land from one group (Indians) to another through the intermediary action of a government on a scale “unmatched anywhere else in the history of the world.” During the 1820s, Indiana land offices sold 1,963,947 acres at a cost of $2.5 million. Between 1830 and 1837, a staggering 5.55 million acres of land in Indiana transferred from the public domain to private hands. In the year 1837, the Fort Wayne land office alone collected over $1.62 million for 1,294,357 acres.112

SETTLEMENT OF SOUTHERN INDIANA

Federal policies and treaty negotiations played a major role in the location of the earliest settlements in southern Indiana. The first legal settlement in the region was located at Clarksville, on Virginia military grant lands provided to men who had fought at the 1783 Battle of Vincennes. Squatters occupied a considerable amount of land, with upwards of 2,000 illegal settlers believed to have reached the Northwest Territory by 1785. However, ongoing hostilities with Indian tribes and Federal endeavors to control illegal incursions kept the overall number of American settlers in Indiana low. Following the American victory at the Battle of Fallen Timbers in 1794, resident Indian tribes ceded claims to the southern two-thirds of Ohio and a narrow strip of southeastern Indiana. Legal settlement in this area, combined with the long-established French settlements in western Indiana, brought Indiana’s population to an estimated 5,641 by 1800. Further land cessions by Indian tribes occurred in 1803, 1804, and 1805 with the treaties of Fort Wayne, Vincennes, and Grouseland, respectively.113

Thereafter, notwithstanding the vagaries of war and financial crises, settlement of Indiana occurred with remarkable rapidity, and generally proceeded northward from the Ohio River (Figure 12). In 1800, the population was estimated to be at only 5,041 persons. By 1810, the number of inhabitants had more than quadrupled to 24,520. Within six years, the population swelled past 60,000, the required minimum number of settlers before statehood could be accomplished, and by 1820, the number had leapt to 147,178. This was the period of the Great Migration, in which, according to contemporary observers, all of “Old America [seemed] to be breaking up and moving westward.” The rate of population growth slowed somewhat in subsequent decades, reaching 343,031 by 1830, and 685,866 by 1840. Settlement declined precipitously in the following decade, with only 9,080 migrants arriving, and between 1850 and 1860, 40,000 people chose to pull up stakes and move further west with the advancing frontier.114

112 Cayton, Frontier Indiana, 267.
113 Buley, Old Northwest, 1:96; Cayton, Frontier Indiana, 160-164; Gates, Public Land Law, 60-61; History of . . . Spencer County, 258.
114 Sieber and Munson, Looting at History, 24; Madison, Indiana Way, 59; Cayton, Frontier Indiana, 267; Benjamin Moulton, “Changing Patterns of Population,” In Natural Features of Indiana, ed. Alton A. Lindsey (Indianapolis, Ind.: Indiana Academy of Science, 1966), 538; Rohrbough, Trans-Appalachian Frontier, 159, 163.
In addition to political events, geography and topography influenced the patterns of settlement and development in Indiana. The earliest historic frontier settlements in southern Indiana were clustered along navigable (and some not-so-navigable) river valleys in a U-shaped pattern, with the bottom of the U formed by the Ohio River, the eastern arm formed by the Whitewater River, and the western arm formed by the Wabash River (Figure 13). To reach the interior, settlers followed the Buffalo Trace, which crossed the Indiana Territory from the Falls of the Ohio opposite Louisville to the Wabash River at Vincennes. It has been estimated that, in 1810, 80 percent of the population lived within 75 miles of the Ohio River. Between 1810 and 1820, the area within this southern crescent filled, and by 1820 settlement reached as far north as the White River valley. The exploding population was reflected in the amount of improved land in Indiana, which increased from 125,530 acres in 1810 to 1,751,409 acres by 1830.115

The origins of Indiana’s settlers, their socioeconomic and ethnic backgrounds, and their goals for establishing new homesteads profoundly shaped the state’s development throughout the early-to-mid-nineteenth century. Most of Indiana’s early settlers were from the North Carolina Piedmont and the Upland South (Kentucky, North Carolina, Virginia, and Tennessee). These populations usually came to Indiana via the Ohio River or along overland routes.116 According to Meinig, these people were part of the “Greater Virginia migration stream” that drew upon Kentucky, Tennessee, and western North Carolina. Emigration was driven partially by the astonishing rate of population growth in the United States from 1800 to 1850. The average rate of increase each decade was 33 percent, with the total population rising from 5.3 million in 1800 to almost 23.2 million a half-century later.117 In addition to Upland Southerners, a significant number of ethnic German families moved west into Indiana from Ohio and...
Pennsylvania via the Ohio River, settling in the southern portion of the state, and a smaller proportion of settlers moved from New York, Maryland, and the New England states. Throughout the frontier period, southerners constituted the majority of Indiana’s population; as late as 1850, less than 10 percent of the state’s total population was comprised of Yankee-born settlers.\textsuperscript{118}

The first settlers to reach southern Indiana displayed a marked preference for the uplands, colloquially known as the Knobs. This landscape displayed a number of characteristics that were familiar to Upland Southerners and desirable for early-nineteenth century agricultural practices. The hilly terrain was well drained, had plentiful springs, possessed fertile soil, and the dense forests offered plentiful game, fuel, and building materials. The uplands also had fewer pests, such as mosquitoes, and overland travel along the hillsides was immensely easier than in the lower marshlands. The bottomlands were little more than poorly drained thickets filled with briars and dense undergrowth, and prairie farming became attractive only with the development of self-scouring steel plows in the late 1830s.\textsuperscript{119}

\textsuperscript{118} Sieber and Munson, Looking at History, 24; Madison, Indiana Way, 58-59; Cayton, Frontier Indiana, 272.

That many of the original settlers in southern Indiana hailed from the Upland South left a distinctive mark upon the area’s cultural and social development. Upland Southerners were typically of English and Scots-Irish origin, along with some Germanic peoples. They generally were yeoman farmers who raised livestock and farmed their own land. When these settlers came to Indiana, they brought with them their traditional agricultural practices; cultivating corn and raising hogs predominated in the early years. A distinctive Upland South influence on southern Indiana culture persisted for decades, evidenced by patterns of word usage and pronunciation, religion, place names, foodways, and vernacular architecture.

Much has been made of the migration of Upland Southerners from the slaveholding south to the so-called free territory of the Northwest. A disdain for the peculiar institution has been supposed, but the historical record provides a conflicting statement as to the attitudes truly held by Indiana’s white settlers. As previously noted, Indiana’s territorial governors, St. Clair and Harrison, permitted slavery to exist in the territory, despite the ban on involuntary servitude included in the Northwest Ordinance of 1787. Indiana’s 1816 state constitution forbade slavery as well, but the same document expressly prohibited free blacks from voting. Interracial marriage was outlawed by 1818, and blacks also were declared incompetent to serve as witnesses in a trial. The public education system, established in stages between the 1820s and 1850s, was racially segregated, with no provision made for the education of black children.

Such antislavery sentiments as did exist among settlers during the early nineteenth century typically were rooted in fear that bonded labor would diminish the ability of freemen to support themselves and their families. Propertyless whites also harbored the hope that the elimination of slavery would force the breakup of large plantations and improve tenant farmers’ chances to acquire land. Settlers who came to Indiana as part of the Great Migration arrived with the expectation of being able to achieve land ownership, security, and even a measure of material wealth, at least as far as could be measured by the ability to live independently on one’s own homestead. The various Federal legislative acts that made possible large-scale redistribution of land from the public domain to private hands directly benefited these individuals. Of these, the Land Act of 1820, which reduced the minimum unit of land to be sold at public auction to 80 acres at a cost of $1.25 per acre, was the most important. Equally important was the knowledge that Federal surveys ensured that land purchased in Indiana came with a clear title, a fact that also may have contributed to the relatively low number of squatters in Indiana, even during the frontier period. Such circumstances stood in marked contrast to the situation in most southern states, such as Kentucky, where a convoluted system of warrants, certificates, caveats, and grants often obliterated a clear chain of title and resulted in thousands of pioneer families losing the lands they had broken. Consequently, it appears that economic opportunity, rather than antislavery sentiments, appears to have been the primary motivator for Upland Southerners in their decision to relocate.

120 Sieber and Munson, Looking at History, 25.
121 Sieber and Munson, Looking at History, 25; Madison, Indiana Way, 61.
122 Cayton, Frontier Indiana, 194, 296-297.
ORGANIZATION OF SPENCER COUNTY

Located between the river settlements of Louisville and Owensboro, Kentucky, and Evansville, Indiana, present-day Spencer County remained largely untouched by settlement in the first decade of the nineteenth century. The first Federal land survey of the area took place in 1805. The small village of Troy, Indiana, in neighboring Perry County was situated on the east bank of the Anderson River at its confluence with the Ohio River. Squatters settled here as early as 1800 and the locale’s readily available supply of hardwood forests later attracted investors Nicholas J. Roosevelt and Robert Fulton, who established a lumberyard at the site to provide fuel for steamboats. Downriver, the tiny village of Grandview in Spencer County was settled by a group led by Ezekial Ray, and in 1803, John Sprinkle squatted on high ground east of Pigeon Creek. Uriah Lamar also has been suggested as one of the first (albeit illegal) settlers in Spencer County, making his homestead in present-day Hammond Township. Meanwhile, a cluster of cabins midway up a bluff alongside the Ohio River was known as Hanging Rock after a pair of massive columnar rock formations. Arriving in 1807, Daniel Grass changed this community’s name to Mount Duvall. The same year, Grass generally is held to have made the first legal land entry in Spencer County. His homestead was located in Section 26 of Ohio Township. Approximately five years after purchasing the land, Grass and his family moved from Bardstown, Kentucky. At that time, little settlement had taken place on the Indiana side of the Ohio River, and Grass reportedly traveled to Owensboro, Kentucky, to obtain supplies.124

Following the end of the War of 1812, thousands of Kentuckians began to cross the Ohio River into southern Indiana. Thompson’s Ferry, opposite Troy, Indiana, served as a primary entry point for many Kentuckians, including the family of Thomas Lincoln. Other river towns such as Lewisport, Hawesville, Shawneetown, Galconda, and Hamlet’s Ferry also acted as conduits for the northward migration. Arriving around 1815, Thomas Carter has been credited with staking the first claim in Spencer County’s Carter Township. The following year, Thomas Lincoln bought a tract in Section 32 of the township (Figure 14). Other early land entries in the vicinity were made by John Romine, Noah Gordon, James Martin, and Samuel Howell. Nearby, in sections 5 and 6 of Clay Township, original land entries were made by James Gentry, John Carter, Abel Crawford, and Reuben Grigsby, among others. All of the land in both townships had been purchased by the early 1820s.125

123 Stephen Aron, How the West Was Lost: The Transformation of Kentucky from Daniel Boone to Henry Clay (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), 91; Rohrbough, Trans-Appalachian Frontier, 219; Cayton, Frontier Indiana, 192, 246.
Spencer County's first settlers exhibited the previously noted preference for settling first on the Knobs and on the margins of forests. Such a landscape would have been familiar to settlers from Kentucky, and the proximity of the forests provided a ready supply of fuel and building materials. Numerous hilltop springs offered a convenient water source. The wetter bottomlands were generally considered to be breeding grounds for malaria, and the poorly drained soil was believed to be of a lesser quality than that of the uplands. Land entries for the county from 1807 to as late as 1830 show a consistent avoidance of the bottomlands, which did not begin to come under cultivation until the 1840s and 1850s.\footnote{Bearss, Lincoln Boyhood, 41-42, 49; History of... Spencer County, 274.}
Indiana achieved statehood in 1816, and just one year later, all six counties on the state’s southern border had been formed. Warrick County was the earliest, having been organized in 1813, followed by Perry and Posey (1814) and Crawford, Spencer, and Vanderburgh (1818). Spencer County was carved out of portions of Warrick and Perry counties. During his tenure as a state representative, Daniel Grass, who was one of the first settlers in the area, is credited with introducing the legislation authorizing the county’s creation. He reportedly named the county in honor of Captain Spier Spencer, who fought at the Battle of Tippecanoe in 1811. The county consisted of nine townships, which were settled in the following order: Ohio (1807); Luce (1807); Huff (1811); Hammond (1811), Clay (1815); Carter (1817); Jackson (1818); Harrison (1818); and Grass (1818). In late 1816, Abraham Lincoln’s family settled in the area that was designated Carter Township. As the largest settlement in Spencer County, Hanging Rock (also known as Mount Duvall) was designated the county seat. Promoters platted a new village atop the bluff and dubbed it Rockport. Lots were sold beginning in June 1818. A modest amount of commercial development took place over the course of the next decade, with a tannery and a pork packing plant established by 1826.127

Many of Spencer County’s earliest records were destroyed by fire in 1818. Nine years later, the first county courthouse also burned.128 Information concerning the early history of the county consequently is scant. The published historical record, however, shows that during the first three decades of the nineteenth century, the northern portion of Spencer County remained thinly settled with a handful of hamlets interspersed among recently cleared farmsteads. The Pigeon Baptist Church was organized in 1816 in present-day Warrick County, and moved a short time later to Clay Township in Spencer County. The tiny hamlet of Gentryville was established in neighboring Jackson Township by 1827, and was centered around a general store operated by Gideon Romine, Benjamin Romine, and James Gentry.129 Over the course of the next half-century, improved transportation and ongoing settlement began to ease the area’s isolation.

127 Bigham, Towns and Villages, 29-30; History of... Spencer County, 328, 331; Bess V. Ehrmann, comp., History of Spencer County, 1939 (n.p.: Spencer County Historical Society, 1939), 1:5.
128 Ehrmann, History of Spencer County, 1939, 5-6.
129 History of... Spencer County, 365, 426.
BOYHOOD
TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS

The first wave of settlers to southern Indiana generally relied upon the region's rivers and streams to move people and goods. Settlement and economic development were intricately intertwined processes in which transportation was the principal theme. As farms became established and moved beyond a subsistence level of production, transportation improvements to waterways and roads proved critical to their ability to access the national market economy. While rivers and streams initially served as the primary transportation corridors, a network of local roads developed along the system of range and township lines used by the county surveyors and parallel to the waterways. The range and township system defined parcel boundaries, and it was within this imposed grid that local settlement patterning occurred, based on topography, water, roads, and community services such as mills and smiths.

RIVERS AND STREAMS

Rivers and streams comprised the first major transportation network in Indiana. Most of the state’s first farms and communities were established along rivers, such as the Ohio, Wabash, Whitewater, and White. In southern Indiana, tributary streams, including the Little Pigeon Creek, Crooked Creek, Patoka River, and Great Pigeon Creek, provided routes to inland settlements. Waterways were the first and most important outlet for farmers wishing to sell surplus agricultural products in distant markets. Geography dictated that southern Indiana was oriented toward the Ohio-Mississippi river trade from the late eighteenth century through the onset of the Civil War. The Ohio River was the most significant artery for commerce, as it joined the Mississippi River and provided a direct route to New Orleans. From the port city, Indiana’s agricultural products could be shipped to a worldwide market. Furthermore, it was only from New Orleans that Indiana farmers could gain access to the well-established East Coast markets. The Appalachian Mountains posed a major barrier to shipping goods overland to eastern markets in Philadelphia and New York, and rivers and streams generally flowed southwest, making it prohibitively expensive to ship products upriver.\(^\text{130}\)

Manually powered flatboats were the primary means available to farmers for shipping their goods (Figure 15). Measuring approximately 10 feet wide and 40 feet long, the wooden boats had a steering oar (also known as "sweep") at the stern, side sweeps or poles, and often a short bow oar (also called a "gouger") for keeping the boat in the current. For the most part these vessels drifted downstream on the current; flatboats were poorly suited to upstream travel. A rough wood shelter covered the boat, shielding both crew and cargo from the elements. Cargo included agricultural products such as corn, flour, pork, honey, hay, and whiskey, as well as raw materials such as lumber and lime.\(^\text{131}\)

\(^{130}\) Madison, Indiana Way, 75; Sieber and Munson, Looking at History, 27.

\(^{131}\) Sieber and Munson, Looking at History, 27; Madison, Indiana Way, 77; Buley, Old Northwest, 1:414; Rohrbough, Trans-Appalachian Frontier, 176.
Given their small size and light draft, flatboats could navigate narrow and shallow streams, allowing farmers in the remote interior access to the Ohio River trade artery. Farmers often pooled their resources to construct a flatboat and ship their goods to market. The trip downstream to New Orleans generally required from eight to twelve weeks, depending upon weather conditions. Because the boats were so simple and inexpensive, and because upstream travel was so difficult, upon reaching New Orleans farmers usually had their boats broken up and sold for lumber and then set off for home on foot. In 1828, nineteen-year-old Abraham Lincoln was among the farmboys making the journey from the Little Pigeon Creek to New Orleans. This occasion marked the first time he left Indiana outside the company of his family.\textsuperscript{132}

For shipping goods upstream, keelboats were the best option available in the early years of the nineteenth century. Approximately 10 feet wide and 80 feet long, the boat was pointed at both ends to facilitate travel against the current. Keelboats typically were fitted with a mast and sail, but often moved upstream by manually poling the boat against the current or by pulling it with tow ropes like a canal boat. The work was extreme-

\textsuperscript{132} Buley, Old Northwest, 1:414; Sieber and Munson, Looking at History, 28; Madison, Indiana Way, 77; Rohrbough, Trans-Appalachian Frontier, 176; Emanuel Hertz, The Hidden Lincoln: From the Letters and Papers of William H. Herndon (New York: Viking Press, 1938), 356.
ly laborious, and a boat with a cargo of 10 to 40 tons and a crew of 8 to 20 men generally progressed only an average of 6 miles a day. As a result, keelboats were practical only for shipping goods of low bulk and weight, or of very high value. Coffee, molasses, salt, and sugar were among the goods sent upriver from New Orleans to Indiana in keelboats.¹³³

During the 1810s, river transportation was transformed by the introduction of the steamboat. Robert Fulton and his associates, including Nicholas Roosevelt, played an instrumental role in establishing steam navigation on the Ohio River. In 1811, their first steamboat, the New Orleans, traveled from Cincinnati to Louisville and back, and then continued south to New Orleans.¹³⁴ Advances in design allowed the boats to travel in shallow water and at increasing rates of speed. In 1817, a round trip from Louisville to New Orleans could be accomplished in only 41 days; within two decades, the upstream journey from New Orleans required only 8 days. Farmers also had the option of continuing to ship their goods downstream by flatboat, then making the return journey upstream via steamboat; greatly reducing travel time and permitting three or four trips a year to the New Orleans markets instead of only one. Shipping by steamboat proliferated, with the number of boats licensed for the Mississippi trade rising from 72 in 1820 to 130 by 1824; this number increased to 230 by 1834 and to 450 in 1842.¹³⁵

Yet river travel presented a number of obstacles. Low water during the summer and ice during winter often closed the river to navigation. Shipping routes were forced to follow existing waterways, leaving many areas beyond reach. Unpredictable weather, storms, and obstructions in the river, including snags and sandbars, led to numerous accidents. Shipment of high-bulk, heavy freight with a comparatively low value, such as coal and lumber, was not economically profitable. Finally, the primitive steamboat engines often exploded. In Indiana, these problems were fitfully addressed by the State legislature. In 1820, construction of mill dams on navigable rivers was prohibited to preserve the stream flow. In 1827, a safety inspection of steamboats was passed, but enforcement proved lax. The Federal government also initiated efforts to remove river obstructions and improve navigation on the Ohio and Mississippi rivers.¹³⁶ Many of the problems with river travel proved intractable, and as swelling populations sparked settlement away from navigable rivers, improvements in overland travel became increasingly essential.

¹³³ Rohrbough, Trans-Appalachian Frontier, 176; Buley, Old Northwest, 1:412; Madison, Indiana Way, 77.
¹³⁴ Buley, Old Northwest, 417.
¹³⁵ Madison, Indiana Way, 79-80; Buley, Old Northwest, 419, 423, 428.
¹³⁶ Madison, Indiana Way, 80; Buley, Old Northwest, 427.
In the early nineteenth century, most roads were simple dirt tracks maintained on an irregular basis at the county or township level. Local statutes often permitted property owners to “work off” their road tax by spending a few days per year helping with maintenance. The road surface was smoothed using hand-held rakes or horse-drawn scrapers. Deep ruts and holes were usually filled with saplings or cut logs and then covered with a layer of dirt.\textsuperscript{137} The haphazard character of the maintenance, the essentially unstable quality of the building material, and changing weather conditions generally assured that dirt roads of this type were in very poor condition, if passable at all.

In an effort to address the shortcomings of dirt roads, several other road building technologies were employed. During the early to mid-1800s, timber plank roads enjoyed a popularity far out of proportion to their durability and cost. This paving was created by laying milled wood planks over longitudinal stringers compressed into a sand ballast, creating a wood roadway flush with the ground. Most plank roads had only one lane, albeit with wide earthen shoulders that could be used for passing. Turnpike companies, which charged users a toll, were responsible for construction of many plank roads. The paving originally was touted as lasting seven to twelve years, which would have allowed turnpike companies to recoup construction costs through tolls. In fact, plank roads generally lasted scarcely three years, and their unexpectedly high maintenance costs bankrupted many turnpike companies.\textsuperscript{138}

Gravel proved a highly effective road surface, although construction and maintenance remained labor intensive. Several means of gravel construction were pioneered during the nineteenth century. Developed in 1805, the Telford system called for a foundation of large flat stones topped with layers of smaller, broken pieces. The pressure of passing traffic would compress the stone layers into a firm surface.\textsuperscript{139} Perhaps the best known graveling technique is macadam, named for its inventor, John Loudon McAdam (or Macadam). With a macadam road, the roadbed began with a twelve-to-fifteen foot wide trough cut slightly below grade and compacted. Three layers of broken stone gravel were laid into the trough. The first layer was about four inches thick and comprised of stone pieces between two and two-and-one-half inches in size. The middle four-inch course was made of stone broken into pieces between three-quarters of an inch and two inches in size. The top two-inch layer featured rock varying in size from sand to three-quarter inches. Each layer was compacted before the next layer was

\textsuperscript{137} KFS Cultural Resources Group, \textit{Overview History of New Jersey Highway Development} (Prepared for State of New Jersey Department of Transportation, 1997), 22-23.


\textsuperscript{139} KFS Cultural Resources Group, \textit{New Jersey,} 24.
applied. The dust created from breaking the stone was applied last, and then the top layer was regraded to create a crowned roadbed with slight berms and ditches flanking the road for drainage. A final rolling was undertaken to compact the sand and dust into the gravel, creating a smooth hard surface capable of shedding water.\footnote{140} Although gravel surfacing was extremely effective, the laborious process of building such roads meant that they generally were concentrated around larger communities and densely settled areas, such as the moderately prosperous town of Rockport in Spencer County.

Consequently, in frontier Indiana during the early nineteenth century, dirt roads predominated. A modest network of overland routes developed by the 1820s, including local roads, stagecoach routes, and turnpikes (Figure 16). Local roads often followed the system of range and township lines used by the county surveyors or paralleled waterways such as Little Pigeon Creek. Tax-supported county roads were not common in Indiana until after State legislation in 1879; before that date most local roads were either informally maintained or private toll roads.\footnote{141} 

\textit{Roads in Southern Indiana}

The Vincennes-Troy Road ranked among the earliest roads in southern Indiana. In 1814, a survey was undertaken for the portion of this route that ran from Darlington, the county seat of Warrick County, to Troy, the seat of Perry County. The following year, the Perry County Court authorized construction along an alignment that followed an earlier trail to Polk Patch in Warrick County. The roadway was to be twelve feet wide and sufficiently cleared to allow the passage of carriages. In 1816, this was the road followed by Thomas Lincoln and his family as they traveled to their new homestead in Section 32 of Carter Township in Spencer County. How much the road had been improved by that time is unknown. According to family tradition, the sixteen-mile trip from Troy to the new farmstead was the most difficult part of the Lincolns’ migration from Kentucky. Although the Vincennes-Troy Road presumably had been cleared by this date, its unimproved earthen surface was undoubtedly in poor

\footnote{140} Miller, et al., National Road, 28; John L. Butler, First Highways of America (Iola, Wis.: Krause Publications, 1994), 99. 
\footnote{141} WPA, Indiana, 59-62; Madison, Indiana Way, 82.
condition. Moreover, the farm site was located four miles west of the road, and the bottomlands in between were filled with dense, almost impenetrable thickets and underbrush. The Lincolns reportedly had to cut their way through the thickets and fell trees with an ax in order to make room for their wagon's passage.\textsuperscript{142}

Another early overland route was the Buffalo (or Vincennes) Trace. Originally surveyed in 1805, this route began at the Ohio River near Jeffersonville and continued across the state to Vincennes and the Wabash River. During the early nineteenth century, this roadway was the principal means for crossing southern Indiana and provided settlers with a way to reach Indiana's remote inland areas. Established in 1820, the first stagecoach line in southern Indiana followed the Buffalo Trace. Another road ran from Vincennes south to the Ohio River along the Red Banks Indian trail and extended north to Terre Haute. The Three-Notch Road followed an Indian trail from the Falls of the Ohio to Indianapolis. It was joined at the East Fork of the White River by Berry’s Trace, which led to settlements in southeastern Indiana.\textsuperscript{143}

Statehood brought increased government interest in road construction. The Enabling Act of 1816 allowed the allocation of 3 percent of proceeds from the sale of government lands within Indiana to be used for transportation improvements. In 1821, the State Legislature appropriated funds for the construction of 24 state roads, with the majority of these radiating from the new state capital at Indianapolis. The legislation's intent was to develop a road system that would reach all areas of the state. Unfortunately, primitive road building technologies and high costs meant that the designated roads were poorly constructed and maintained. Many were little more than partially cleared trails with numerous stumps. The road from Vincennes to Indianapolis, for example, was laid out by dragging a log behind an ox team through the woods, prairies, and marshes that comprised the route. During rainy spring and fall weather, the roads became quagmires that challenged the most daring traveler.\textsuperscript{144}

Beginning in 1826, the State government also undertook construction of the Michigan Road, which was intended to connect Lake Michigan to the Ohio River at Madison, by way of Indianapolis. Construction of the federally funded National Road through Indiana began at around this same time. The project's goal was to provide an east-west corridor from Maryland to the western frontier. Construction began as early as 1806 in Maryland, but proceeded at a slow and fitful pace for the next two decades. The road crossed Indiana through Richmond, Indianapolis, and Terre Haute, and ultimately terminated in Vandalia, Illinois. West of Indianapolis, however, the National Road was never fully improved by the Federal government and this segment reverted to state control in 1839. Despite this shortcoming, the road created an important link for the small Indiana towns along its route, and served as the main overland route to and from the East. Both the Michigan and National roads also facilitated settlement of Indiana's interior beyond those areas accessible by waterway.\textsuperscript{145}

\textsuperscript{142} Louis A. Warren, Lincoln's Youth: Indiana Years, 1816-1830 (Indianapolis, Ind.: Indiana Historical Society, 1991), 19-20; Bearss, Lincoln Boyhood, 7; Lake, Illustrated Historical Atlas, 10.

\textsuperscript{143} Sieber and Munson, Looking at History, 43; Madison, Indiana Way, 76; Buley, Old Northwest, 1:451-452.

\textsuperscript{144} Madison, Indiana Way, 81-82; Buley, Old Northwest, 1:452.

\textsuperscript{145} Madison, Indiana Way, 81; WPA, Indiana, 59-60; Buley, Old Northwest, 1:449, 453. According to Buley, the National Road reverted to state control in Indiana in 1849, and the state then leased it to a plank road company.
As the frontier receded and southern Indiana became more densely populated, the need for improved transportation became increasingly critical. Expensive improvements also became feasible for the first time, as the population base was sufficient to support such projects. In Spencer County, the Rockport & Gentryville Plank Road Company was established in November 1850. This organization sprang from the demand for rapid transportation from the farms in the northern half of the county to shipping points along the Ohio River. The road extended a distance of 17 miles, operating as a toll road for seven years, before it fell victim to the falling revenues and high maintenance expenses that typically forced such companies to cease operations.\textsuperscript{146}

**AGRICULTURAL HISTORY**

**SIGNIFICANT FACTORS IN LAND SETTLEMENT**

As previously noted, the Upland South origins of many of southern Indiana's first settlers profoundly shaped the cultural and social development of the region. Typically of English and Scots-Irish origin, most were either yeoman farmers who raised livestock and farmed their own land, or they aspired to that level of independence. They arrived with the expectation of acquiring secure title to land and even a measure of material wealth, at least as far as could be measured by the ability to hold title to one's own homestead.\textsuperscript{147} The knowledge that a clear title was guaranteed in Indiana, as a result of the federal land system, was of particular importance to many settlers, such as Thomas Lincoln, who had lost their holdings as a result of competing land claims and the confusion brought on by the Virginia survey system. Ruinous speculation and litigation proliferated in Kentucky, where overlapping claims made it almost impossible to establish proper ownership. Legislative attempts to resolve the problems generally favored the powerful upper classes and left many homesteaders dispossessed of land they had cleared and tilled, sometimes for years. Furthermore, slavery spread rapidly in Kentucky during the late eighteenth century, partly due to repeated confirmation by the State courts and legislature of the institution's legality. Many settlers who came to Indiana held antislavery sentiments, although these opinions were primarily rooted in fear that bonded labor would diminish the ability of freemen to support themselves and their families.\textsuperscript{148}

Just as the political and legal systems of Kentucky failed to promote a democratic distribution of land ownership and free labor competition, the Federal, territorial, and State governments assured the opposite in Indiana. While a few pockets of slavery existed in Indiana from the 1780s through the late 1820s, no govern-

\textsuperscript{146} History of . . . Spencer County, 290.

\textsuperscript{147} Sieber and Munson, Looking at History, 25; Aron, How the West Was Lost, 91; Rohrbough, Trans-Appalachian Frontier, 219; Cayton, Frontier Indiana, 246.

\textsuperscript{148} Aron, How the West Was Lost, 82-83, 100.
ment legislation recognized the legality of the institution. As a result, slavery was unlikely to spread north of the Ohio River and pose a threat to the livelihoods of small landholders. Equally important was the knowledge that Federal surveys ensured that land purchased in Indiana came with a clear title, a fact that may have contributed to the relatively low number of squatters in Indiana, even during the frontier period. Finally, legislation such as the Land Acts of 1800 and 1820 created systems for more equitable distribution of land than existed in Kentucky or elsewhere in the Upland South.

Following the end of the War of 1812, thousands of Kentuckians crossed the Ohio River to settle in southern Indiana. As one of the southernmost counties in Indiana, Spencer County was quickly settled, with many townships entirely bought up by the 1820s. The majority of the county’s settlers exhibited the previously noted preference for settling first on the Knobs and along the margins of forests. Such a landscape was familiar to Kentuckians and also offered strategic advantages. The nearby forests provided a ready supply of fuel and building materials, while numerous springs offered a convenient water source. A variety of game filled the forests, providing an important supplement to settlers’ diets, and hogs could be left to range freely through the woods. The unglaciated soil of the Knobs was more easily tilled, than the prairies, where sodbreaking proved an arduous task that required heavy plows and oxen beyond the financial means of many settlers. Finally, the Knobs were removed from the wetter bottomlands, which were generally considered to be breeding grounds for malaria, and the poorly drained soil was believed to be of a lesser quality than that of the uplands.149

Land quality was of critical importance to Indiana’s first settlers, as farming was their primary occupation throughout the early to mid-nineteenth century. Other economic endeavors in southern Indiana during this period, such as milling, distilling, tanning, and salt making, largely entailed the processing of agricultural products. Indeed, in 1816, the only factories in Indiana were grist or sawmills. This included Uriah Lamar’s small gristmill on Big Sandy Creek, George Taylor’s mill in Warrick County, Whittinghill’s gristmill in Jackson Township, and Captain Finch’s sawmill at Grandview in Spencer County. A limited range of additional commercial activity, including store- and inn-keeping, blacksmithing, quarrying, and iron production, also existed, but the majority of the states’ residents lived in rural areas and practiced agriculture.150 From circa 1800 to 1830, farmers in southern Indiana generally engaged in subsistence farming, but the combination of a favorable climate and rich soils within the study area made small family farms economically viable from an early date.151

Settlement in Spencer County began during the early 1800s, but proceeded most rapidly between 1816 and 1820. Often, members from one or two families or groups of settlers from the same region migrated together. This pattern is evident in the Little Pigeon Community where the Lincolns settled (Figure 17). The Grigsby,
Carter, Gentry, and Wright families had extensive relations in the area and intermarriage was common; Sarah Lincoln, older sister of Abraham, married Aaron Grigsby. On that basis, Spencer County’s agricultural community established close-knit relationships strengthened by cooperative efforts to accomplish the large amounts of work necessary to make the land ready for farming. The farm household acted as the center of production, with everyone working together to provide for the family. Many of these close-knit relationships were established before the family moved north.152

HOUSING

No matter where the family settled, their first task focused on establishing a temporary shelter, which often was nothing more than an open-faced camp or lean-to that served as the family’s home for the first year. This type of shelter was built because it was much easier and less time consuming to construct than a full-scale dwelling. Constructed of a pair of forked trees that supported a cross-beam, the shelter did not require hewing of logs or measuring. Large logs placed onto the frame served as walls and a sapling roof was added. The walls were daubed with clay, mud, and brush for insulation. Animal skins, along with a large hearth, provided interior warmth.153

This rude shelter normally was replaced within a year by the family’s first permanent dwelling. Built of log, a typical house was usually one story in height, with one or two rooms, and measured approximately 10 feet by 16 to 20 feet. A farmer and his neighbors would raise the hand-hewn and notched logs. The cracks between the logs were chinked with wedges of wood and

152 History of ... Spencer County, 259; Hertz, Hidden Lincoln, 355; Sally McMurry, Families and Farmhouses in Nineteenth Century America: Vernacular Design and Social Change (Knoxville, Tenn.: University of Tennessee Press, 1997), 57.
153 Buley, Old Northwest, 1:142.
rocks, and then plastered with mud or clay. Windows and doors were frame and normally planked wood. Greased paper or animal skins served as windowpanes until glass became available. Within these modest structures, family members often slept, cooked, ate, worked, and entertained in the same room. There is evidence to suggest that privies were also included on most pioneer farmsteads. With regard to other ancillary structures, fences typically ranked high among the pioneer’s priorities, as they kept animals out of vulnerable cultivated fields and indicated the perimeter of a farm’s holdings. Frontier farmers built few outbuildings, although these became more commonplace by the 1830s. Among the first outbuildings constructed were a smokehouse and/or meathouse. Both buildings were used to shelter the meat curing process, a process essential to the frontier family. In later years, crop storage facilities and animal housing were added, including corncribs, granaries, stables, and chicken houses.\textsuperscript{154}

Taking precedence even over construction of a dwelling, however, was the task of clearing the land. Settlers viewed this as their most laborious task since it was both time-consuming and backbreaking labor. Trees were cut down or girdled by removing the bark and cambium to kill the tree. Downed trees were rolled into piles and burned. Many times, brush was piled at the base of large trees and set ablaze. This burning of excess timber and brush was said to create a permanent smoky haze over the territory.\textsuperscript{155}

After clearing the forest, farmers undertook the arduous task of manually breaking the land for cultivation. Typically, the plows used did not till the land deeply, which tended to encourage soil exhaustion after a few growing cycles. Early plows were made of wood and wrought iron and had a 10-foot beam. A farmer or carpenter hewed the moldboard from a tree, then iron was added, along with old horseshoes. The point of the plow was often made of metal and had to be sharpened frequently. By 1820, numerous patents for improved plow designs had been issued, but most farmers continued to use a traditional plow or plain shovel.\textsuperscript{156}

Once the field was plowed, the first crop was sown. Corn usually was the first crop planted, for it provided the maximum amount of food per acre and could be used to feed hogs or distilled into whiskey. Corn also grew well in rich soil with high levels of phosphate, a byproduct of the burning of trees. Corn and pork served as the principal staples for the frontier family’s diet. Pioneer women prepared corn for consumption as mush, johnnycakes, corn pone, and hominy. Raising hogs was a relatively simple task, with the animals left to forage freely in the nearby forests. They were rounded up in the fall and penned for a few weeks, during which time they were fed surplus corn in order to fatten them prior to butchering. Virtually all of the hog carcass was used. The meat was seasoned or cured to make sausage, headcheese, pickled pork, hams, and bacon. The intestines provided sausage casings, while the fat renderings were used in making soap. Even the bladder could be turned into a ball for children’s play. What little remained of butchered hogs ultimately was fed to chickens.\textsuperscript{157}

\textsuperscript{154} Buley, Old Northwest, 1:143; Sieber and Munson, Looking at History, 40.
\textsuperscript{155} Rachel Kennedy and William Macintire, Agricultural and Domestic Outbuildings in Central and Western Kentucky, 1800-1865 (Frankfort, Ky.: Kentucky Heritage Council, 1991), 4; Cayton, Frontier Indiana, 183.
\textsuperscript{156} Buley, Old Northwest, 1:170.
\textsuperscript{157} Buley, Old Northwest, 169, 214.
As frontier farms became more established and surplus products proliferated, the Ohio River provided a critical means of transporting these goods to distant markets. Animal and agricultural products, timber, furs, and hides were shipped via flatboat or steamboat to the Mississippi River and eventually to the Gulf Coast. In a typical year, flatboats carried a quarter-million bushels of corn, 100,000 barrels of pork, 10,000 hams, and 2,500 head of cattle down the Ohio River to New Orleans, which was the leading market center for the West. Auxiliary industries related to export, such as boat building and pork packing, also proliferated in many riverside communities. The proximity of the Ohio River and access to these distant markets meant that Indiana was not an isolated frontier area, but rather an active participant in the national economy. A "triangular trade" pattern developed, in which Midwestern agricultural products were shipped to Gulf Coast market centers, where merchants used their profits to acquire and ship essential commodities, such as cotton, or highly valued products, such as sugar, to East Coast cities. Eastern factories, in turn, produced manufactured goods that reached Midwestern markets by floating down the Ohio River. Farmers used the cash income they received from selling their surplus products in Gulf Coast markets to acquire these manufactured goods. Although somewhat crude, given the transportation technology that was available during the 1810s and 1820s, this trade pattern represented an important stage in the development of a national economy that bound together all the regions of the United States into an interdependent entity.

Surplus agricultural products allowed frontier farmers to purchase manufactured goods, such as stoves, shoes, and woven cloth, as well as luxury items like coffee and sugar, but for their daily foodstuffs, the family typically remained a self-supporting unit. The forests provided ample game, while fruit-bearing trees and vines were cultivated. Some farmers kept honeybees as well. Women tended a "kitchen garden" that included beans, potatoes, onions, and squash. Many of the vegetables were harvested for out-of-season use. Beans, peppers and strips of pumpkin could be dried, while jellies and preserves commonly included pickled cucumbers and kraut. Root vegetables, such as potatoes and carrots, were buried in either a root cellar or a simple hole in the ground near the house. Such produce helped to diversify the frontier diet, which was based primarily on corn and pork. Additional domestic activities including churning butter and making cheese. These latter chores, along with soap making, weaving cloth, and raising poultry were important elements of the "domestic economy." Although such duties were viewed primarily as tasks to be performed by the females of a family, the cooperative character of the farm was driven by profit and all family members could be expected to help. The arrangement worked in the reverse as well, with women often performing chores, such as plowing fields and harvesting crops, that were customarily the provenience of men.

159 Cayton, Frontier Indiana, 184.
160 McMurry, Families and Farmhouses, 61
SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS

Agricultural societies in Indiana were established as early as 1809, with the first on record organized in Vincennes. These societies promoted progressive farming practices and reforms that emphasized technological innovations and sought to make businessmen of farmers. In 1835, Indiana, by act of the State legislature, provided for the organization of county societies and created a state board of agriculture. This was followed by the organization of the Indiana Horticultural Society in 1840. Annual state fairs were first organized during this period. All these organizations promoted the creation of an organized, record-keeping, profit-making farm that did not rely on a single cash crop, but grew diverse products using the latest technologies to promote higher yields while conserving the soil. Many of these organizations published farm journals and agricultural articles. Although their influence between 1800 and 1850 on the typical farmer in southern Indiana is unknown, progressive farming practices became commonplace by the second half of the nineteenth century.\textsuperscript{161}

Another significant institution in frontier Indiana was the church. A wide range of denominations were active in southern Indiana, with the most common being Methodist and Baptist. Churches often were the first organized presence in a newly settled area. For example, the Pigeon Baptist Church was founded in 1816, only a couple of years after the pace of settlement in northern Spencer County began to increase. The Pigeon Baptist Church was similar to other churches in the region, since it reflected the shared values and beliefs of the community and gave individuals a place to meet and socialize. The first church meetings were held in individual homes until a church building could be erected. The construction of a church normally occurred within the first five years of its founding and all the land, materials, and labor were donated by its members. The Pigeon Baptist Church was constructed in 1820 and was originally called the “Little Pigeon Meeting House.” From the name, it may be inferred that the building was conceived for multiple purposes, including functioning as a school and community center. The church itself served multiple roles, including educating youth, promoting social order, and uplifting the morals of local residents.\textsuperscript{162}

As the frontier society stabilized, and population increased, additional institutions were introduced, including schools. During the early frontier period, many children were home-schooled by their mothers and the family typically possessed only one or two books, including a Bible and perhaps a volume such as Pilgrim’s Progress. Sunday schools were introduced in Indiana during the 1810s, and by 1829, there were 100 such schools in the state. The schools emphasized religious instruction, including Bible verses, hymns, and moral principles, but they also taught spelling and reading, and many times provided children with their only opportunity to read a book other than the family Bible. Other informal schools also were established. Parents usually paid a small subscription fee of around $1.50 to $2.00 per pupil to finance the exceedingly modest salary that teachers earned. The school calendar often was limited to only two or three months, and teachers seldom were available in remote school districts more than once every two years. Children could attend the schools only in seasons when they could be spared from work on the family farm.\textsuperscript{163}

\textsuperscript{161} McMurry, Families and Farmhouses, 57; Buley, Old Northwest, 199-200.
\textsuperscript{162} Sieber and Munson, Looking at History, 31; Rockport-Spencer County Sesquicentennial, 1818-1968 (n.p., 1968), 52.
\textsuperscript{163} Madison, Indiana Way, 108-110; Warren, Lincoln’s Youth, 81.
Indiana's 1816 state constitution called for the establishment of a public school system, but a statewide system was not introduced until after 1850. As the countryside became more densely settled, however, county governments began to make provisions for the establishment of a school system financed through public land sales, thereby following the principles that first had been set forth in the original Northwest Ordinance of 1787. Parents often still had to pay subscription fees to finance the educational system as no state or local tax was levied to support schools, but modest one-room schoolhouses began to spring up alongside dusty country roads and a more regular calendar was kept. Children learned by rote to read, write, spell, and cipher to the rule of three, which provided them with at least a rudimentary set of intellectual skills. No system existed for certifying teachers and their level or education and dedication varied widely, but most parents believed it to be sufficient if teachers conveyed to children the ability to read and write and perform simple arithmetic. Attempts to establish more advanced educational levels met with public resistance well into the mid-nineteenth century, particularly in southern Indiana. Many people believed education to be a luxury that should not be indulged until improvements such as roads, canals, and railroads had been provided. Others opposed the introduction of taxes, or believed that education beyond a basic level simply was not necessary to everyday life in the West, or were wary of any attempt to establish a centralized system that would erode local control and, ultimately, individual liberty. As a result, the schools that were available in southern Indiana in the early decades of the nineteenth century typically were a haphazard collection with irregular calendars, teachers of uncertain merit, and pupils who attended only when weather, chores, and family means to pay tuition did not interfere.\footnote{Warren, Lincoln's Youth, 81-83, 127; Madison, Indiana Way, 110-115.}

While the public resisted establishment of a formal school system, there is evidence of strong support to other educational institutions, such as libraries, despite the fact that books were very expensive. In Spencer County, an 1831 law set aside 10 percent of the proceeds from the sale of town lots for the purpose of founding and maintaining a county library. The same year, several books were purchased for the library, including a theological dictionary, collections of sermons and meditations, monographs on ancient history and geography, and a few literary works such as Shakespeare's plays and Byron's works. By 1855, Spencer County could boast six small libraries with a combined collection of 300 volumes.\footnote{History of... Spencer County, 288.}

In a matter of only a few decades, Spencer County's settlers transformed the landscape from a nearly trackless wilderness to a prosperous agricultural community. With easy access to waterways and gradually improving roads, local farmers participated in the national market economy from an early date, moving from subsistence to commercial farming with rapidity. Commercial success allowed the continuation of social and cultural development, as evidenced by the presence of agricultural societies, churches, and libraries. It was within this rapidly evolving environment that the Lincoln family established their homestead in 1816.
BOYHOOD
Chapter VII. Lincoln Occupation Period

Thomas Lincoln made his first journey to Indiana to inspect lands available for purchase in the autumn of 1816. He settled upon a quarter-section of land in what was then Hurricane Township, Perry County. It comprised the southwest quarter of Section 32, Township 4 S, Range 5 W, and was located along the east-west trace separating Congressional townships 4 and 5. After the organization of Spencer County in 1818, the Lincoln farm was part of Section 32 in Carter Township, and was bounded on the south by Sections 5 and 6 of Clay Township. This area was among the territory originally surveyed by Federal surveyors in 1805. At that date, the surveyors described the terrain as level, with some stands of oak and hickory trees, and dense brush. Much of the timber had been burned, but second growth forests were becoming established when Lincoln first visited. The territory in nearby Section 31 of Carter Township was noted as level barrens with poor drainage, while Section 33 was chiefly bottomland prone to flooding from a nearby creek. These descriptions indicate that Thomas Lincoln adhered to the tendency of southern Indiana’s early settlers to choose upland areas with close proximity to springs and forests for settlement. He further followed custom by piling brush at the four corners of the tract he intended to claim and building a makeshift shelter. These measures provided temporary shelter for his family when they arrived at the new homestead and satisfied the frontier custom of establishing a legitimate claim to land before a formal entry was made at a Federal land office.\[^{166}\]

THE LINCOLNS IN KENTUCKY

Thomas’s claim on the quarter-section in Section 32 marked his fourth attempt to secure ownership of a farm. A native of Virginia, Thomas was born in 1778, the fourth of Bathsheba and Abraham Lincoln’s five children. During the early 1780s, the family relocated to Washington County, Kentucky. Around 1797, Thomas worked as a hired hand in Tennessee for one of his uncles, but otherwise he spent his formative years in Kentucky. In 1803, at the age of 25, he purchased his first farm, a 238-acre tract at Mill Creek in Hardin County. This was the first of three farms the Lincolns occupied over the course of the next decade; all were within a fifteen-mile radius of one another. Census and tax records indicate Thomas engaged in farming as well as carpentry for his livelihood. In 1806, he sold 2400 pounds of pork and 494 pounds of beef to a merchant in Elizabethtown. The same year, he was contracted by the merchant to construct a flatboat and served on the crew that shipped the boat to New Orleans.\[^{167}\]

Thomas lost title to 38 acres of the Mill Creek farm as a result of conflicting land claims; a common occurrence in frontier Kentucky. When he sold the remainder of the farm, he took an additional loss due to a faulty survey. As previously noted, the haphazard system of land surveys in Kentucky often led to competing legal claims for the same tract. Not long thereafter, Thomas married Nancy Hanks, with whom he had been acquainted since they were children. Thomas retained ownership of his farm at Mill Creek, but the couple established their first home in Elizabethtown. Their first child, Sarah, was born here. In 1808, the family moved to a farm on Nolin Creek, about three miles from Hodgenville. The following year, their second child, Abraham, was born.

\[^{166}\] Warren, Lincoln’s Youth, 16, 20-21, 41-42; Bearss, Lincoln Boyhood, 54.
\[^{167}\] Warren, Lincoln’s Youth, 4-5.
The Lincolns' rightful claim to the new farm soon was litigated; however, and Thomas ultimately lost title to the property, as well as all rights to his $200 down payment and the improvements he had made to the land. In 1811, the Lincolns moved again, this time to a 230-acre farm on Knob Creek in Larue County. Within four years, litigation again caused the family to lose their claim to the farmstead. During this time, they also had a third child, Thomas, who died as an infant.168

Frustrated by their inability to establish a clear title to land holdings in Kentucky, the Lincolns turned to new territory when they established their fourth farm. Their choice to move to the Indiana Territory has engendered much speculation, for as a part of the Northwest Territory, the institution of slavery legally was forbidden here. During the early decades of the nineteenth century, the presence of slavery in Kentucky generated controversy and hostility among different factions. Many small landowners, such as Thomas Lincoln, feared the threat that bonded labor could pose to the ability of freemen to provide for their families, and further found the institution morally repugnant. Such was the case for the members of the Little Mount Separate Baptist Church, of which Thomas and Nancy Lincoln were members. Church records from 1808 and 1811 established the church's anti-slavery sentiments. Consequently, it may be assumed that the Lincolns preferred Indiana to other territories where settlement would have been possible, because slavery was forbidden here and because Federal land surveys guaranteed establishment of a clear title.169

THE INDIANA HOMESTEAD

The Lincoln family set out for their new homestead in late 1816. They crossed the Ohio River and entered Indiana at the small river town of Troy. This community had been platted only a year earlier by Francis Posey, but already had become an important shipping point for the newly arrived settlers in the area. As many as twenty lots had been built on by 1818, and James McDaniel operated a tavern there. The Lincolns probably did not linger in Troy, but instead pressed on with the last leg of their journey. As previously noted, the final sixteen miles of the trip ranked among the most difficult for the family. Southern Indiana at that date was covered with hardwood forests, with trees as much as three to four feet in diameter and sixty feet in height. Gum, sycamore, hackberry, cherry, persimmon, and apple were abundant, as well as enormous wild grape vines. Such dense growth was present even in the previously burned over area where the Lincoln farm was located. The landscape also teemed with wildlife. The Little Pigeon Creek was a nesting ground for thousands of passenger pigeons, while deer, antelope, bear, wolves, groundhogs, rabbits, mink, weasels, wild turkeys, opossums, and wildcats remained plentiful in the woods.170

169 Warren, Lincoln's Youth, 12-14.
170 History of. . . Spencer County, 259-260, 668; Bearss, Lincoln Boyhood, 10; Warren, Lincoln's Youth, 26-27, 38, 148; Madison, Indiana Way, 60; Hertz, Hidden Lincoln, 277. Note that many of the accounts contained in Hertz's volume have been discredited by scholars. In instances in which versions of events provided in Hertz conflict with scholarly accounts, the latter are assumed to be the most reliable.
By the time the Lincolns reached their new home, a small community was on its way to being established around the Little Pigeon Creek (Figure 18). The Carter, Grigsby, Gentry, Wright, and Gordon families were among those already in residence in the vicinity. John Jones and David Casebier each owned tracts in Section 31, west of the Lincolns, while Thomas Barrett owned property in Section 32, and Thomas Carter and Noah Gordon had farms in sections 33 and 34, respectively. Each of these extended families owned at least a quarter-section of land, and some, such as the Grigsbys, held several tracts totaling hundreds of acres. The Pigeon Baptist Church was organized in 1816 and a frame meeting house constructed within four years in Section 7 of Clay Township, almost due south of the Lincoln farm. Among the earliest congregation members were the families of James Gentry, Thomas Lincoln, David Turnham, Noah Gordon, William Barker.

Troy was the nearest trading center and a gristmill also was located there. George Huffman operated a mill on Anderson River, about ten miles north of Troy and sixteen miles west of the Lincoln farm. In 1818, Noah Gordon built a grist mill less than two miles from the Lincolns that the family used as well. That same year, a schoolhouse was established on the Gordon farm. The schoolhouse clearly was needed; since within a four-mile radius there were 90 children under the age of 7 and another 48 between the ages of 7 and 17. By 1820, at least 40 families had settled within five miles of the Lincolns, with an average of three families per section. Most of these settlers were from Kentucky, and a few, such as the Carters and Gordons, even hailed from Hardin County, where the Lincolns had last resided. Nancy Lincoln's aunt and uncle, Elizabeth and Thomas Sparrow, moved to the area shortly after the Lincolns arrived, and stayed with them for a brief time.

The makeshift shelter Thomas had erected the previous year probably proved sufficient for the family's needs upon their arrival, or they may have stayed with a nearby neighbor. One of the first tasks Thomas completed, however, was erection of a single-room log house that measured around 18 feet by 20 feet. Thomas probably was assisted by several of his neighbors, who would have had time to help with the chore since the harvest season had passed. According to Warren, approximately forty logs would have been used to construct the house. A large stone was placed at each corner to serve as a foundation and the notched logs were placed directly atop these. After the walls were raised, a loft area was built using smaller logs, and the joists and ridge pole set in position. The joists were sheathed with half-inch thick clapboards to make a watertight covering. Door, window, and fireplace openings were cut in the walls and a stick chimney was built on the outside of the cabin. All this construction could be accomplished in about four days. Chinking the openings between the logs and adding a floor made of puncheons followed soon after.
The following spring, the Lincolns planted their first crop, which probably included corn and smaller amounts of wheat, flax, and cotton. Corn was both a food source and a cash crop, while wheat, flax, and cotton could be used to provide needed materials for the pioneer household. A kitchen garden with vegetables such as melons, squash, pumpkins, and potatoes also probably was planted to provide variety to the family diet. After that year's harvest had been completed, Thomas undertook the 60-mile journey to the Federal land office at Vincennes to secure title to this land. William Whitman and Noah Gordon, Thomas's nearest neighbors, accompanied him on the trip. All three made official land entries on 15 October 1817. Thomas's were for two tracts of 80 acres...
LINCOLN

apiece, located in the southwest quarter of Section 32. He made an initial payment of sixteen dollars to secure his right to the land. Two months later, he paid sixty-four dollars, thus meeting the required one-fourth of the total purchase price, which amounted to three hundred twenty dollars, as required under the Land Act of 1804. Thomas Lincoln thereby achieved his goal of obtaining a clear and undisputed title to the land he tilled.174

Just under a year later, however, Nancy Lincoln died of milk sickness. This malady was caused by the poisonous snakeroot, which was consumed by foraging cows. The poison contained in the plant's fibrous roots was transferred to milk and rendered ill anyone who drank it. Milk sickness was not a rare occurrence on the frontier. Its name indicates that pioneers were aware that the disease was somehow transmitted by cow's milk, but they did not know by what process the milk became tainted. Entire families and sometimes communities could be ravaged by the illness. Such was the case at the Lincoln farmstead. Nancy's uncle, Thomas Sparrow, was the first to fall ill and die. Within a matter of days, he was followed by his wife, Elizabeth, a neighbor, Mrs. Peter Brooner, and finally Nancy Lincoln, who died on 5 October 1818. Thomas built coffins for all four of the deceased. All were taken to the crest of a hill located approximately fifteen hundred feet south of the cabin site and interred. The graves are believed to have been marked with fieldstones at the head and foot, and Thomas may have carved Nancy's initials in her headstone. Such simple markers were the only ones available to families on Indiana's frontier.175

At the time of their mother's death, Sarah Lincoln was eleven years of age, while Abraham was nine. Thomas Lincoln soon married again, choosing for his wife Sarah (Sally) Bush Johnston, a widow, whom he and Nancy had known when they lived in Elizabethtown, Kentucky. They were wed in December 1819, in Hardin County. Sally had three children by her first husband, Elizabeth, John D., and Matilda, all of whom accompanied her and Thomas back to Indiana. They arrived at the farm in early 1820. The household at this date consisted of Thomas (aged 42), Sally (32), Dennis Hanks (21), who had been a ward of the Sparrows, Sarah (13), Elizabeth Johnston (13), Abraham (11), John D. Johnston (10), and Matilda Johnston (9). Dennis and Elizabeth married the following year and set up their own household nearby, while the rest of the family members remained at Thomas's farm.176

LINCOLN'S BOYHOOD

As with many youth, Abraham Lincoln's parents played a major role in the development of the boy's character and disposition. His father, Thomas, often has been portrayed as shiftless and uneducated, but as a skilled carpenter and farmer, he was well equipped to provide for the needs of his family. The socioeconomic status they attained was on a par with that of their neighbors in Indiana, most of whom were farmers and trades-

174 Warren, Lincoln's Youth, 41-42, 97; Lake, Illustrated Historical Atlas, 10; Cayton, Frontier Indiana, 184.
men. The location Thomas selected for their farmstead proved to be fertile and well-suited to farming, and he was able to obtain a clear title to the property in a relatively short period, thereby assuring his family a measure of economic stability. Thomas also undertook his civic duties, serving as a jury member and a guard for county prisoners, and consistently was listed as a taxpayer in county rolls in Kentucky and Indiana. That he was selected to supervise construction of the Pigeon Baptist Church likely indicates the esteem with which both his carpentry skills and his moral character were held by his contemporaries. Thomas also was noted for his flair for storytelling and his consistent encouragement of Abraham in attaining an education, at least to a level he considered to be adequate.177

In later years, a certain distance is known to have developed between father and son. Historians have offered a number of explanations for the rift, ranging from Thomas’s inability to understand his son’s aversion to hunting and fishing, his disapproval of Abraham’s iconoclastic humor, and his failure to comprehend Abraham’s ambition to move beyond subsistence farming on the frontier. Winkle argues the estrangement related to larger cultural phenomena associated with the emergence of the myth of the self-made man and changing socioeconomic and demographic patterns related to the unprecedented opportunity for upward mobility that existed in the mid-nineteenth century United States. Family members traditionally had pooled resources and worked together to assure a legacy to pass on to succeeding generations, thus creating a setting in which the collective good was valued above individual needs. This tradition began to be supplanted during the mid-nineteenth century by individual pursuit of success and achievement, unfettered by the social constraints of family ties.178

Nancy Hanks Lincoln, on the other hand, has been highly regarded since her death in 1818. Noted for her intelligence, gentle manner, and Christian morality, she is credited with having a profound influence upon Abraham’s early development, particularly his intellectual curiosity. A woman of reputed thrift and industry, she also proved capable at establishing and maintaining a pioneer homestead. She oversaw all of the household duties, made her family’s clothing from buckskin and homespun cloth, and cared for those who fell ill. In the aftermath of Abraham’s assassination in 1865, Nancy’s reputation became endowed with an exaggerated nobility and wholesomeness that was reflective of Victorian-era sensibilities. The memorial established at the site of her family’s farmstead in the late nineteenth century originally focused on transforming her into a sainted ideal of motherhood, an emphasis that was in keeping with the period’s emerging cult of motherhood. Mothers were elevated to the status of supremely moral beings, responsible for perfecting an alternative to the harsh commercial world and providing children, particularly sons, with a moral education. Consequently, an accurate sense of Nancy’s life and personality is difficult to establish.179

177 Warren, Lincoln’s Youth, 10, 24, 34, 81, 84-86, 213-214.
179 Warren, Lincoln’s Youth, 10, 24, 55-56; Winkle, Young Eagle, 14; Gwendolyn Wright, Building the Dream: A Social History of Housing in America (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1992), 76.
Winkle argues that Abraham viewed his mother’s death as a tragic but common event that was typical of frontier life. Indeed, Abraham’s experience with parental loss is termed “thoroughly unremarkable.” In addition, nineteenth-century parenting styles, in which mothers dominated child-rearing only until boys were old enough to perform farm labor (or roughly around the age of seven), encouraged an emotional separation of boys from their mothers at a relatively young age and thus lessened the blow of an untimely death. Other documentary evidence, however, suggests that Nancy’s death was difficult for both of her children to bear. Twelve-year-old Sarah attempted to assume all of the household duties, but was said to be so exhausted by the constant labor that she often sat before the fire and cried. Abraham’s intensely painful feelings on the subject are perhaps best indicated by a letter he wrote to a bereaved child many years after the fact, in which he said, “In this sad world of ours, sorrow comes to all; and, to the young, it comes with bitterest agony, because it takes them unawares. . . I have had experience enough to know what I say.”

Abraham Lincoln otherwise was quite reticent regarding the subject of his mother. In general, he rarely spoke or wrote about any of his parents and returned to his boyhood home only once in his adult life. In 1844, after a campaign stop for the Whig party in Rockport, Indiana, he spent some time visiting Nathaniel Grigsby, an old schoolmate, and traveled with him to Gentryville to see other old friends. In the next several months following the visit, Lincoln composed several lines of poetry that captured his complex feelings on the subject of his childhood: “My childhood’s home I see again / And sadden with the view; / And still, as mem’ries crowd my brain, / There’s pleasure in it too. / . . . I range the fields with pensive tread, / And pace the hollow rooms, / And feel (companion of the dead) / I’m living in the tombs.” He went on to describe it as the place “Where things decayed, and loves ones lost/ In dreamy shadows rise.” But upon reflection, Lincoln determined that his memories of his boyhood now were “freed from all that’s early vile. . . Like scenes in some enchanted isle,/ All bathed in liquid light.”

Sally Johnston Lincoln also receives substantial credit for Abraham’s upbringing. She is generally praised for her impartial treatment of her own children and the two Lincoln children, Abraham and Sarah. Upon her arrival at the frontier farmstead, she reportedly set to work at once with seeing the children bathed and their clothing mended, and she instructed Thomas to install a floor in the cabin, add a loft bedroom for the boys, cut a window, construct a proper door, and finish the roof. While it is assumed that the influence that Sally and Nancy Lincoln had on the boy has been conflated in various historical accounts, Sally Johnston Lincoln is noted for encouraging Abraham’s educational pursuits and reportedly encouraged him to begin his political career.

Following Nancy’s death and Sarah’s arrival in Indiana, the Lincoln family appears to have stabilized and applied the lion’s share of their energies to improving their farmstead. Their efforts apparently succeeded, in that the family held a social standing equal to that of their neighbors, and were exceeded economically only by

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181 Donald, Lincoln, 27, 118.  
the Gentry family. By 1825, Thomas, Abraham, and John Johnston had cleared twenty acres of land and brought it under cultivation, generally on slopes surrounding the cabin site. They planted about half of the acreage in corn and the remainder in wheat and oats, along with about an acre of grass. Their livestock included sheep, hogs, and several head of cattle. By the late 1820s, the amount of cultivated acreage doubled to forty, and Thomas had also acquired an additional twenty acres of land immediately west of his original holding from his neighbor, David Casebier. This land included a spring, a valuable feature for a pioneer farmstead. In 1827, Thomas relinquished one-half of his original quarter-section and applied credit to the remaining eighty acres. This shrewd action was taken under the auspices of the Relief Act of 1821, which allowed overextended farmers to retain ownership of at least a portion of their holdings. Nearly all the Lincolns’ neighbors took advantage of the act, because it allowed them to relinquish ownership of poor and undeveloped land for the same price that the better land had cost.\footnote{Bearss, Lincoln Boyhood, 1-2, 33, 39; Warren, Lincoln’s Youth, 141, 159, 232.}

At the same time the Lincolns were improving their property, the remoteness and isolation of northern Spencer County began to ease as a result of denser settlement and improved transportation. Located at the confluence of the Anderson and Ohio rivers, Troy remained the principal shipping center for local residents. The Anderson River was the largest stream in southern Indiana between the Blue and Wabash rivers. The advent of steamboats during the 1810s enhanced Troy’s status as a trading center, and provided local farmers with a convenient location to bring their agricultural goods for shipment to distant markets. Around 1826, in northern Spencer County, Gideon Romine, Benjamin Romine, and James Gentry opened a general store. Country stores of this type typically operated on a barter system, with farmers trading their produce for manufactured goods. This usually provided the storekeeper with an ample surplus, which could be shipped to New Orleans by flatboat, thus earning him the cash required to purchase new goods and further weave Spencer County farmers into the wider national market economy. The general store became the nucleus around which the community of Gentryville grew. A post office called Gentry’s Store was established, with Romine serving as postmaster. Gentry also operated a cotton gin for a time at this location. To the west another small hamlet, Jonesboro, sprang up in Warrick County at the intersection of the state road leading from Rockport to Bloomington and the state road from Corydon to Boonville. This settlement included a store, a mill, and a blacksmith shop. A tannery operated along the Troy-Vincennes Road, approximately four miles east of the Lincolns’ farm.\footnote{History of... Spencer County, 365-366; Bearss, Lincoln Boyhood, n.p; Warren, Lincoln’s Youth, 176, 187-188.}

As the eldest son, Abraham played an important role in assisting his family with their farmsteading efforts, although historical accounts indicate he was not always an enthusiastic laborer. He also had a definite distaste for hunting, which may have been related to his personal aversion to the cruelty to animals that was a common aspect of frontier life. Numerous personal recollections from Abraham’s acquaintances and neighbors state that he was far more interested in reading and arithmetic than tilling fields and splitting rails, to the point that his intellectual curiosity reached mythic proportions by the late nineteenth century. Various historical accounts
state that Thomas, Nancy, and Sally Lincoln encouraged Abraham’s desire to increase his education, although Thomas was said to have very definite ideas about what amount of education would be adequate. He and his sister, Sarah, attended a subscription school during their early childhood years in Kentucky. By the time the boy was six years old, he had learned his letters and could read a little. After the Lincolns relocated to Indiana and the family situation stabilized with Thomas’s remarriage, all the Lincoln children began attending school in 1820 at the Little Pigeon community school. This schoolhouse was located on Noah Gordon’s farm, about one-and-one-half miles south of the Lincoln property. Subscriptions paid the costs of construction for the one-room building. Abraham excelled in many of his subjects and was noted for his retentive memory, oratory skills, and intellectual curiosity.\textsuperscript{185}

The exigencies of frontier life, however, required Abraham to devote much of his time and energy to other pursuits. His formal schooling ultimately totaled only about one full year and it ended by the time he was sixteen, after which he turned to various means of finding steady employment. He learned basic aspects of the carpentry trade from his father and helped with the family farm. His skills with an ax helped him earn money splitting rails; typically, a flat rate of 25 cents per day was paid, with a skilled woodsman capable of splitting up to 400 rails a day. In 1826, working with his cousin, Dennis Hanks, Abraham cut cordwood for passing steamboats. While loading the wood, Abraham had the opportunity to speak with steamboat captains, crew, and passengers, an experience that reportedly opened the young man to the wide world beyond his frontier home. He later began working for James Taylor, who owned a packinghouse and ferry at the confluence of the Anderson and Ohio rivers. For a salary of six dollars per month, Abraham operated the ferry across the Anderson River. In addition to the social experience of living in a bustling riverside community, it is presumed that Abraham's intellectual horizons also were broadened by regular access to newspapers and printed broadsides that came through the town’s post office.\textsuperscript{186}

In the spring of 1827, Abraham returned to his family’s farm to help with planting the spring crops. He also began to work for James Gentry at his country store. The same year, his elder sister, Sarah, became engaged to Aaron Grigsby, son of one of the well-established families in northern Spencer County. Sarah died the following winter in childbirth, a tragic event that had a profound effect on Abraham. His habit of melancholic brooding was exacerbated, and the trait became one of his most recognized characteristics in later years. Toward the end of 1828, Abraham had the opportunity to join the crew of a flatboat being sent down the river to New Orleans by his employer, James Gentry. This occasion marked the first time Abraham left Indiana outside the company of his family. The trip required about three months, and Abraham was home by March 1829, in time once again to help his family with the year’s spring planting. Life as a frontier farmer held less and less appeal to the young man, however, as evidenced by his growing interests in politics and the proceedings of local courts. These avocations were encouraged by Abraham’s friendships with local men, such as James Gentry, William Jones, and William Davis. Their shops were popular gathering places where the political issues of the day were discussed in a lively fashion.\textsuperscript{187}

\textsuperscript{185} Warren, Lincoln's Youth, 11, 80-83, 127-128, 133; Hertz, Hidden Lincoln, 347, 354-355; Donald, Lincoln, 27.

\textsuperscript{186} Warren, Lincoln's Youth, 139, 143-145, 149, 168.

\textsuperscript{187} Warren, Lincoln's Youth, 150, 174-175, 187, 193; Madison, Indiana Way, 77; Hertz, Hidden Lincoln, 356.
Throughout this period, the Lincolns continued to occupy the dwelling that Thomas and his neighbors had constructed in 1817; according to Warren, the nearby original shelter that Thomas erected in 1816 also remained standing at this time. In 1829, Thomas and Abraham began work on a larger house built of hewn logs. It was situated on a knoll near the original dwelling, and was approximately 50 feet above and 150 yards north of the road. The 1817 cabin originally stood on line with the east side of the new two-room house, but was moved some distance to the south after 1830. The 1829 dwelling measured around 12 feet by 24 feet and remained standing until 1874, when it began to be demolished, with pieces sold as relics to tourists in search of mementos associated with Abraham Lincoln’s life. A contemporary of the Lincolns, Nat Grigsby, described the farmstead as he saw it in 1865:

Went to the Lincoln farm about one and a half miles east of Gentryville, and a little north. The house is a one story hewed log one, porch in front; it is not the house that [Lincoln] lived in, though he built it. The old house – the first and second are gone – fronts south, chimney at east end, has two rooms, the east one and west one, stands on a knoll or knob about 50 feet above the road and about 150 yards north of the road. On the Gentryville road leading to the Hoffman [sic] Mills.

The Lincolns, however, never occupied the 1829 house, but instead divested themselves of their farmstead and moved to Illinois. Their decision was partially influenced by letters from family friend John Hanks, who lived in Macon County, Illinois, and reported enthusiastically on the remarkable fertility of the land. Both of Sally Johnston Lincoln’s daughters and their husbands expressed great interest in moving to Illinois, and Sally persuaded Thomas that the entire family should go. In 1830, she and Thomas returned to Elizabethtown, Kentucky, so she could sell the town lot and cabin she had purchased prior to their marriage. They cleared $123 from the sale. In February 1830, Thomas sold to Charles Grigsby his 80-acre farmstead for the sum of $125; he also sold the 20-acre tract he had acquired a decade earlier from David Casebier, although records of that transaction have been lost. The family liquidated their livestock and crops, selling approximately 100 hogs and 400 to 500 bushels of corn. By the time they left for Illinois, the family had almost $500 in cash.

The Lincolns’ removal to Illinois provides occasion to assess the family’s economic status. In 1830 Thomas Lincoln held clear title to 100 acres of land, without any encumbrances. The number of stock and the amount of surplus corn he sold prior to the move to Illinois indicates that the farm was productive, and it was noted that 40 acres were under cultivation at the time the family decided to relocate. Yet the event also highlights the profound changes that had occurred in the family since their arrival in Indiana in 1816. Both Nancy and Sarah had died, and Thomas’s marriage to Sally brought three more children to the household. The daughters’

189 Hertz, Hidden Lincoln, 357.
190 Warren, Lincoln’s Youth, 204-206; Bearss, Lincoln Boyhood, 33; Donald, Lincoln, 19, 21-22.
marriages to Dennis Hanks and Squire Hall created an extended family with all the mutual obligations and rewards such arrangements typically entail. At the age of twenty-one, Abraham was no longer a boy, although he chose to move with his family to the new Illinois homestead. The decision likely was because he had little interest in remaining alone as a backwoods farmer and anticipated greater economic opportunity in Illinois. Thus, a discrete period in Abraham’s life came to a close, but the experiences of the preceding fourteen years continued to inform his character and intellectual development for the rest of his life.\textsuperscript{191}

THE INDIANA LEGACY

Shortly after reaching Illinois, Abraham Lincoln struck out on his own and left frontier farming for good. In a process of steady upward social mobility, he worked variously as a flatboatman, store clerk, miller, militiaman, merchant, postmaster, surveyor, legislator, and lawyer. His 1860 election to the presidency of the United States was the culmination of a career of shrewd political maneuvering that was strongly informed by his multitudinous experiences on the Indiana and Illinois frontiers. Indeed, Lincoln deliberately cultivated a humble, rural image to advance his political career; on this basis, Winkle refers to Lincoln as an “astute myth maker,” who based his career “within the context of personal triumph over inherited adversity.”\textsuperscript{192}

In Illinois, political campaigning during the mid-nineteenth century required a homespun approach in which candidates traveled through their districts and addressed (often raucous) public gatherings as well as calling upon people within their private dwellings. A contemporary noted, “It was in the family circle, around the fireside, no matter how humble and lowly, that Lincoln felt at home. He entered into conversation with the father and mother relative to their hopes and prospects in life, the schools, farm, crops, stock.” His own humble origins, he claimed, allowed him to be especially empathetic to these common concerns. As he said in his first campaign for public office, “I was born and have ever remained in the most humble walks of life,” and he came from “undistinguished families,” with parents who were “poor and uneducated.” In this way, Lincoln was able to couch himself as a humble, ordinary man, while his personal accomplishments showed him to be an epitome of the self-made man and a natural leader. Furthermore, by portraying himself as a humble, ordinary man, he was able to parlay his visually striking appearance into an asset rather than a liability. His unusual height and rawboned frame always attracted his audience’s attention, as it was not in keeping with the polished countenances of most nineteenth century politicians. Lincoln used his audience’s initial puzzlement to seize their attention. Typically, he began a speech by “leaning himself up against the wall ... and talking in the plainest manner, and in the most indifferent tone, yet gradually fixing his footing, and getting command of his limbs, loosening his tongue, and firing up his thoughts, until he had got entire possession of himself and of his audience.” While not everyone was favorably impressed by this approach, the technique worked more often than not.\textsuperscript{193}

\textsuperscript{191} Warren, Lincoln’s Youth, 206-215.
\textsuperscript{192} Winkle, Young Eagle, ix-x.
\textsuperscript{193} Winkle, Young Eagle, 189; Donald, Lincoln, 131.
Later, during his presidency, Lincoln recalled the occasion on which he earned his first dollar, when he worked on the Ohio River and assisted a pair of travelers with their luggage. Each tossed him a half-dollar for his services. Lincoln said, “I could scarcely credit that I, a poor boy, had earned a dollar in less than a day... you may think it a very little thing, and in these days it seems like a trifle, but it was the most important thing in my life.” He also maintained an open-door policy and patiently received hundreds of petitioners, office-seekers, and well-wishers at his office. The approach fostered a sense among the American people that this president was one of their own. They dubbed him “Father Abraham,” and many brought simple gifts – a firkin of butter, a crate of pears – that indicated their belief in the unpretentious image he projected. With his anecdotes and his patience with an admiring public, Lincoln succeeded at conveying that he was capable of fully empathizing with the people’s hopes, fears, wants, and needs. They belied the fact that during his decades of public service, Lincoln became an adroit political organizer and manipulator of party politics.\(^{194}\)

His political opponents occasionally attempted to sabotage his public image by pointing out that he had married into the very wealthy and exclusive Edwards-Stuart-Todd family. In an 1843 campaign for office in Illinois’ Seventh Congressional District, supporters of a rival politician labeled Lincoln as “the candidate of pride, wealth, and aristocratic family distinction.” Their allegations played a role in undermining Lincoln’s support and he lost the party nomination to another candidate. Although Lincoln was both surprised and outraged by the charge of aristocracy, there was an undeniable element of truth to it. By the 1850s, many of his most loyal supporters were large-scale farmers, landlords, and land speculators, and he did not find it incongruous that railroads, which were the largest corporations in the country, ranked among the clients of his law practice.\(^{195}\)

But aside from meeting the needs of his political aspirations, Lincoln’s self-conscious cultivation of a homespun, humble image also may have served a very personal purpose. He always was very aware of his shortcomings as a proper Victorian-era society man, in that he lacked the polish of many of the well-bred, upper-class contemporaries he encountered. His wife, Mary Todd Lincoln, was known to berate him on a regular basis for failing to maintain the appropriate social distance from servants and flaunting genteel values by such acts as answering the door in his shirtsleeves. Lincoln’s response typically was to shield himself from criticism with self-deprecating whimsicality or to rely on traditional gender roles that dictated separate social spheres for men and women.\(^{196}\)

\(^{194}\) Winkle, Young Eagle, 21, 236-238; Donald, Lincoln, 311.

\(^{195}\) Donald, Lincoln, 111-112, 234.

\(^{196}\) Winkle, Young Eagle, 226.
When he determined that he would run for the presidency in 1859, Lincoln orchestrated a careful, and successful, campaign of building support within the newly formed Republican party and partisan press publications. He and his supporters also continued to play on his humble roots during the campaign. Richard J. Oglesby coined the nickname “The Rail Splitter” for Lincoln, and had brought to a Republican nominating convention at Decatur a pair of wooden rails that reportedly were from a split rail fence that Lincoln had put up in 1830 with his cousin John Hanks. The gamut was highly successful. As Donald noted:

He acquired an image with enormous popular appeal: he could be packaged not merely as a powerful advocate of the free-soil ideology or as a folksy, unpretentious storytelling campaigner, but also as the embodiment of the self-made man, the representative of free labor, and the spokesman of the great West. It mattered very little that this myth – like most myths – was only partially true: Lincoln, in fact, had little love for his pioneer origins; he disliked physical labor and left it as soon as he could; he owed his early advancement as much to the efforts of interested friends like John Todd Stuart, Stephen T. Logan, and David Davis as to his own exertions. Rather than a simple backwoodsman, he was a prominent and successful attorney representing the most powerful interests in emerging corporate America. The delegates at Decatur understood that myth was more important than reality. They cheered now not just for a favorite son but for a viable presidential candidate. 197

Interestingly, many of Lincoln’s closest advisors appear to have believed more in the homespun image he projected than in the reality of his political skills. After winning the presidency, Lincoln proved himself to be quite successful at playing bickering politicians against one another, often within the context of mocking himself or his humble roots. So skillful was he at this mild dissembling that one close advisor, Nathan M. Knapp, remarked, “He has not known his own power – uneducated in Youth, he has always been doubtful whether he was not pushing himself into position to which he was unequal.” 198

In the aftermath of his assassination, Lincoln’s closest friends and political allies cooperated to cement his reputation as a plain-spoken democrat, friend of the common man, and humble yet dignified savior of the Union. One longtime friend said, “the amazing popularity he obtained was attributable to two things[,] He had been successful under the most trying circumstances and then he was most emphatically one of the People.” 199 Such is the impression that has remained to the present day.

197 Donald, Lincoln, 245.
198 Donald, Lincoln, 242.
As previously noted, the Lincolns sold their original quarter-section farmstead to Charles Grigsby in February, 1830, for the sum of $125. Grigsby owned the property for five years, then sold it to Edley Brown in December, 1835. Ownership changed hands twice more in the next three years, from Brown to James Sally in 1837, and from Sally to Joseph Gentry in 1838. Gentry retained the property until 1850, then sold the north forty acres to Elijah Winkler. Three years later, Gentry sold the south forty acres to William Oskins. Within six years, the latter parcel again was acquired by the Gentry family when James Gentry, Jr., purchased it from Oskins. Throughout these exchanges of ownership, it is presumed that the land continued to be cultivated or at least used for pasturage. No one is believed to have lived at the Lincoln farm, however, as the 1817 cabin had been removed by 1865 and later descriptions of the 1829 house indicate it had been left to deteriorate for a number of years.

LINCOLN CITY

Like much of the rest of the country, Indiana experienced an astonishing burst of railroad construction during the middle decades of the nineteenth century. The majority of the state’s rail lines traversed central and northern Indiana, particularly around the growing industrial centers of Indianapolis and Gary. In southcentral Indiana, only a few rail lines existed by 1880, including the Lake Erie, Evansville & Southwestern, the Evansville & Terre Haute, and the Louisville, New Albany & Chicago. In Spencer County, the Board of Commissioners accepted a petition signed by more than 100 local residents who requested an election on the issue of local aid to the Rockport & Northern Central Railway Company for construction of a route through the county. Spencer County voters approved provision of 2 percent of the county’s 1868 tax levy (a total of $97,891) for the project. Residents of neighboring Dubois County approved a similar levy and construction on the road bed between Rockport and Jasper began in 1869. Around 1872, the Rockport & Northern Central Railway and the Cincinnati & Southwestern Railway companies consolidated to form the Cincinnati, Rockport & Southwestern Railway Company.

Financial shortfalls plagued the company and halted construction for a time. Eventually, the Rockport Banking Company came to the struggling company’s aid, agreeing to advance $10,000 for each five miles of track. Construction resumed at a more rapid pace and in May, 1874, the first excursion train left Rockport bound for Coal Hill Station at the Spencer/Dubois county line. Construction of the rail line continued at a fitful pace through the late 1870s, finally reaching Jasper in February, 1879. A few months later, the Cincinnati, Rockport & Southwestern Railway sold its assets to the Evansville Local Trade Railway Company. In 1881, this consolidated company became the Evansville, Rockport & Eastern Railway Company, but within the year it had been

199 Winkle, Young Eagle, 231.
200 Bearss, Lincoln Boyhood, 33-35; Rockport-Spencer County Sesquicentennial, 30.
absorbed by the Louisville, New Albany & St. Louis Railway Company, which in turn was soon renamed the Louisville, Evansville & St. Louis Company. Such convoluted reorganizations and consolidations were typical of railroad companies during this period. The various mergers meant that the short line from Rockport to Jasper ultimately became connected to a much larger rail system that extended from Louisville to St. Louis.202

Construction of railroad routes almost invariably prompted land speculation and development along the proposed routes. The rail line through Spencer County was no exception. In 1871, James Gentry sold the former Lincoln farmstead to John Shillito, Henry Lewis, Robert Mitchell, and Charles West. These four speculators from Cincinnati intended to plat a community along the Cincinnati, Rockport & Southwestern's new line (Figure 19). The post office originally was called Kercheval, undoubtedly after R. T. Kercheval, who had rescued the company in 1874. By 1881, the town's name had been changed to Lincoln City, in recognition of its proximity to the old Lincoln farm. The community had several stores, including those maintained by James Gentry, Jr., William Gaines, W. J. Chinn, and Walter Howard. S. N. Hilt operated a blacksmith shop, while T. N. Robinson kept a hotel. The village also had a saloon and train station.203

The community prospered for a time, with as many as twelve passenger trains passing through on a daily basis. Three rounds trips were made to Cannelton and Rockport, and six to Evansville. The railroad company constructed a fourteen-acre lake to furnish a water supply and the site also was used for recreational activities, but few traces remained of the forest that had covered much of the area when the Lincolns arrived in 1816. At its height, Lincoln City supported two hotels, four stores, two restaurants, a livery barn, and a tavern. In 1904, a brick schoolhouse was erected just southwest of the Lincoln cabin site.204

Published plat maps from the late-nineteenth century identified the site of Nancy Hanks Lincoln's grave, on the south side of Lot 56, a short distance south of the town center (Figure 20). In 1879, the town founders donated a half-acre around the Lincoln grave to the Spencer County Commissioners to preserve the site. Around the turn of the century, the cemetery was enlarged with the addition of several new graves. Several efforts also were undertaken to mark Nancy Lincoln's grave and to commemorate her role as the mother of the nation's sixteenth president.205 The reasons that this previously abandoned grave began to be transformed into a shrine are rooted in the popular culture of the late nineteenth century.

202 Weber, "Railroad History," 2-6, 9, 11-12.
204 Rockport-Spencer County Sesquicentennial, 34-35.
205 Rockport-Spencer County Sesquicentennial, 29.
FIGURE 19

1879 Map of Lincoln City (Griffing, 1879)
1896 Map of Lincoln City (Wright, 1896)
MEMORIALIZING THE LINCOLNS

By the 1870s, the popular perception of Abraham Lincoln began a gradual process in which the slain president was elevated to an almost mythic status. Sites associated with his life grew to be popular destination points for tourists and souvenir seekers. The farmstead where he spent his formative years became one of many memorials, along with that of his birthplace in Hodgenville, Kentucky, and his law office in Springfield, Illinois, that were established in the half-century following his death. The Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial commemorates the period Abraham Lincoln spent in southern Indiana and also includes the final resting place of his mother, Nancy Hanks Lincoln. The memorial has passed through three interpretation phases. It began as a shrine to Nancy Hanks Lincoln and, by extension, the cult of motherhood that characterized the Victorian era. During the 1930s, the memorial was transformed to commemorate Lincoln and his lifetime of accomplishments. Thirty years later, the site's programs were expanded to include a parallel interpretive theme with the construction of the Living History Farm.

THE FIRST MEMORIAL TO NANCY HANKS LINCOLN

From the 1830s to the 1870s, the Lincoln homestead was transferred from landowner to landowner. The dwellings the Lincolns constructed during their tenure fell into disrepair. Many of the area's original settlers moved away or died, leaving fewer and fewer people to visit and care for the cemetery where Lincoln's mother lay buried. By the time Lincoln was assassinated on 15 April 1865, the cemetery had been all but forgotten. His death rekindled a local interest in the Lincolns' Indiana connections, however, and efforts began to locate the family homestead and cemetery. By this date, the 1817 cabin had disintegrated, while the remnants of the 1829 cabin, which the Lincolns never occupied, became a popular spot for tourists to be photographed, at least until it was literally pulled to pieces by souvenir hunters.206

A group of twenty-four local residents reportedly convened to determine the correct location of the pioneer cemetery. They included John Richardson and descendants of Nancy Brooner, who died shortly before Nancy Hanks Lincoln. After gathering at the former Lincoln farmstead, this group agreed that the cemetery was situated in a corner of a field then owned by John Carter. In July 1874, a story appeared in the local newspaper stating that the grave of Nancy Lincoln was unmarked. Moved to redress the shortcoming, Professor Joseph D. Armstrong, editor and superintendent of schools, placed a sandstone marker at the grave in the fall of 1874.207 This marker, however, was destroyed within only a few years by souvenir hunters who chipped away pieces to take with them. The vandalism made it apparent to local leaders that the site was becoming a popular memorial site and thus prompted the first efforts at preservation.

206 O'Bright, "There I Grew Up...", 5.
207 Rockport-Spencer County Sesquicentennial, 29; O'Bright, "There I Grew Up..., 10.
In 1879, P.E. Studebaker, vice president of the Studebaker Corporation, presented a contemporary marker to the site (Plate 1). This marble marker remains the official marker of Nancy Hanks Lincoln’s grave. It stands approximately two feet in height on a marble base. The lancet-shaped monument is made of Italian marble and inscribed with “Nancy Hanks Lincoln | Mother of President Lincoln | Died Oct 5, A.D. 1818 | Aged 35 years | Erected by a friend of her martyred son 1879.” Around this same time, Civil War General John Veatch of Rockport coordinated a local fundraising effort to pay for an ornamental iron fence around the graves of both Nancy Hanks Lincoln and Nancy Brooner.208

Preservation efforts such as these were akin to similar undertakings associated with other former American presidents, including Ann Pamela Cunningham’s work to save George Washington’s Mount Vernon and the Ladies’ Hermitage Association’s acquisition of Andrew Jackson’s home, The Hermitage. These movements were part of a larger search for national identity taking place in the United States, with Americans focusing on the deeds of great leaders for inspiration.209 The establishment of historical associations ranked among the first manifestations of this process. On an ad hoc basis, the organizations also established the first guidelines concerning the types of sites considered worthy of preservation, who should be responsible for their maintenance, and how they should be interpreted. A critical underpinning to these directives was the assumption that private citizens, rather than government, should undertake the care of historic sites. Equally important was the notion that sites associated with military and political figures properly must be treated as shrines or icons. The initial efforts to preserve the Nancy Hanks Lincoln site clearly falls within this period of preservation theory.

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The gravesite became symbolic of motherly devotion to one of America's greatest political leaders. The emphasis on a "sainted mother" also played into the cult of motherhood that was popularized in the literature of the early and mid-nineteenth century. A central tenet of the cult of motherhood was that women were responsible for perfecting an alternative to the commercial world and providing children (especially sons) with a moral education. Domestic writings and sermons across the country popularized these ideas. Collected decades after the fact, oral histories concerning Nancy Hanks Lincoln's death clearly show the influences of this movement. With her supposed dying words, she asked her children "to be good and kind to their father, to one another, and to the world." She also reportedly expressed a hope that the children would live as they had been taught by her, to love, revere, and worship God. Many of the oral histories taken in the late nineteenth century describe Nancy Hanks Lincoln as "a woman of great good sense and morality." Her nephew, Dennis Hanks, offered this description in 1865: "Mrs. Lincoln always taught Abe, goodness, kindness, read the good Bible to him, taught him to read and to spell, taught him sweetness and benevolence as well."211

ESTABLISHING NON-PROFIT ASSOCIATIONS

By the late nineteenth century, the emotional power of the cult of motherhood had begun to fade and popular interest in the grave of Abraham Lincoln's mother waned. By 1897, the gravesite again was neglected, although the adjacent cemetery remained in use by local residents. In response, Governor James Mount helped form the Nancy Hanks Lincoln Memorial Association (NHLMA), which was charged with raising money for the site's maintenance. Initial fundraising efforts were less than successful, with only $56.52 raised by 1900. That year, however, the Spencer County Commissioners deeded 16 acres of land to the NHLMA, giving the organization full control over the site, while Robert Todd Lincoln donated $1000 toward the maintenance of the grave. Other changes included the addition of a second memorial stone in 1902. The stone was donated by J. L. Culver of Springfield, Illinois, and stood outside of the 1879 iron fence. The inscribed stone rested on a substantial stone base and measured approximately three feet tall and one foot deep. Its inscription is illegible from the available photographs.212

In the early 1900s, the NHLMA also began plans to turn the site into a park. NHLMA constructed a large picnic shelter near the cemetery and drilled a well to supply fresh water. Local citizens soon complained that the site was not being maintained properly, with visitors leaving picnic trash and carelessly walking on graves. In 1907, the General Assembly responded by creating a Board of Commissioners to care for the site. Some of the

210 Wright, Building the Dream, 76.
211 Warren, Lincoln's Youth, 54.
213 McEnaney, A Noble Avenue, 8-9; Rockport-Spencer County Sesquicentennial, 29-30; O'Bright, "There I Grew Up. . .", 14-15.
first steps to improve the site included construction of a new fence around the entire sixteen-acre site and establishment of a monumental driveway between the grave and the nearby road, which was then known as Lincoln Trace. Landscape architect J. C. Meyerburg of Tell City designed a gated entry featuring an eagle and lion statuary to highlight the driveway. Dead trees also were removed and ornamental plantings were added.213

In 1917, preservation efforts began to expand beyond Nancy Lincoln’s grave, when local residents attempted to locate the site of Thomas Lincoln’s cabin. Preceding these efforts had been much discussion concerning the actual location of the cabin and whether the dwelling remained standing in 1865, when tourists began making pilgrimages to the site.214 This alleged site was located in the schoolyard of the Lincoln City graded school, which was erected in 1904. Approximately twenty people gathered here in 1917, at which time they located three or four stones and some bits of crockery, thus substantiating in the popular mind that the actual hearth from the cabin had been located. On April 28, 1917, a stone marker was erected in the schoolyard and read “Spencer County Memorial to Abraham Lincoln who lived on this spot from 1816-1830.”215

DESIGNING THE LINCOLN STATE MEMORIAL

The enlarged commemorative project, now known as Nancy Hanks Lincoln Memorial Park, continued to attract visitors, and local citizens remained displeased with the behavior of visitors. Finally, in 1923, Col. Richard Lieber, who served as Director of the Indiana Department of Conservation, determined that designation of the memorial site as a state park was in keeping with his department’s plan for developing a statewide system of parks. The State legislature created the Lincoln Memorial Commission to replace the park’s Board of Commissioners as administrators of the site. The organization received a $5000 appropriation to erect a suitable memorial. In 1925, the State acquired the cemetery and a surrounding tract of land, totaling 60 acres; this was augmented in 1929 when Frank C. Ball of Muncie, Indiana, bought an additional 29 acres and donated it to the state.216 Indiana Governor Ed Jackson also appointed 125 people to the Indiana Lincoln Union (ILU), which was to be responsible for raising funds to create a new memorial to Abraham Lincoln. The group was led by some of the most prominent professionals in Indiana, including Anne Studebaker Carlisle and Paul V. Brown. Thus began the second phase in the site’s interpretive development, as this board represented the instigation of corporate philanthropy in the maintenance and interpretation of historic sites, a trend that was occurring nationwide at numerous historic sites.

214 Rockport-Spencer County Sesquicentennial, 29-30; O’Bright, “There I Grew Up…”; 6, 17. Abraham Lincoln continued to correspond with friends from Indiana and mentioned wanting to see his family home in 1844 and 1860. It is therefore presumed that the cabin remained standing as late as 1860. By 1874, all the Lincoln farm buildings had been removed, including the cabin where citizens had their pictures taken after Lincoln’s death in 1865. Around the same time, William Herndon argued that this latter cabin was not actually associated with the Lincolns, but he was overruled by popular sentiment. The cabin depicted in tourists’ photographs continued to be accepted as the actual dwelling once occupied by the Lincolns.

215 Rockport-Spencer County Sesquicentennial, 31; O’Bright, “There I Grew Up…”, 17.

216 Rockport-Spencer County Sesquicentennial, 31; O’Bright, “There I Grew Up…”, 18, 20, 29; York, Friendly Trees, Hallowed Ground, 1, 4.
During this phase of development, the park began to be transformed into a carefully designed landscape intended to convey a specific emotional experience. In December 1926, the ILU invited nationally known landscape architect Fredrick Law Olmsted, Jr., and architect Thomas Hibben to the site. Olmsted's services were contracted to assess the existing commemorative landscape and to create a preliminary plan that would clearly define future development. The two architects intended to simplify and rationalize the park's plan while remaining true to the original mission of developing a monument to Abraham Lincoln's greatness. In so doing, they created the foundation for the memorial's development throughout the remainder of the twentieth century.

Olmsted's first assessment of the site concluded that it contained too many distractions. He stated that the combination of utilitarian structures, such as the road, railroad, and picnic shelter, along with the cast iron fences, gilded lions, and exotic shrubs distracted attention from the peaceful surroundings of the cabin site and Nancy Lincoln's grave. To remedy the situation, Olmsted sought to simplify the site and create what he termed "the Sanctuary."  

Olmsted's plan removed most of the elements that had been added to the park over the preceding fifty years. The project was strikingly similar to preservation activities elsewhere in the United States, such as at Colonial Williamsburg, in which major elements of the existing built environment were stripped away to create a visitor's experience that would satisfy contemporary tastes. The result was a divorce of the park site from its historic context and the creation of a frozen moment in time that seemed to represent an experience visitors would accept as authentic. Such a selective vision of the past is characteristic of efforts to interpret historic events, with the popular audience and scholars alike engaging in a deliberate selection and evaluation of past events, experiences, and processes. At the Lincoln park, this process of "reconstructing" the past included removal of most of the structures associated with the small town of Lincoln City that stood near the cabin site, as well as the removal of ornamental shrubs and other plants located at the cemetery. The only monument not removed was the Studebaker grave marker. Other efforts under the direction of Olmsted included the Lincoln Memorial Commission's acquisition of 428 acres, which they reforested with native trees and shrubs, and the ILU's plans to move the old Lincoln trace that bisected the cabin and gravesite. All of this work resulted in the creation of a blank slate from which to begin a new effort at memorializing Abraham Lincoln. Olmsted sought to create a landscape that was monumental and would stimulate visitors to have "their own inspiring thoughts and emotions about Lincoln."

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217 McEnaney, A Noble Avenue, 10; O'Bright, "There I Grew Up...", 20.
218 McEnaney, A Noble Avenue, 10; O'Bright, "There I Grew Up...", 21; York, Friendly Trees, Hallowed Ground, 7-11.
220 McEnaney, A Noble Avenue, 11-12.
Olmsted’s landscape design for the Lincoln park was derived from the City Beautiful Movement of the early twentieth century. This movement evolved out of a relationship between architects, landscape architects, and urban planners and involved creating picturesque landscapes with carefully controlled views framed by naturalistic features that were either part of the original landscape or man-made. A central element of the Olmsted plan was the creation of a primary vista known as the allee, with a cruciform arrangement that had the United States flag at its center (Figure 21). The cruciform arrangement provided for east-west and north-south traffic along with a strong spiritual image. Although religious symbolism imbued Olmsted’s plan, his only overt reference to this was in the use of the religious word “Sanctuary.”

The ILU added additional elements that emphasized the religious context of the site, especially through references to Nancy Lincoln as the “sainted Mother,” while the site itself was “sacred soil.” Another aspect of commemorating this sacred quality was the effort to preserve the cabin site in a way deemed appropriate by the ILU. The Lincoln City schoolhouse had been constructed near the site in 1904 and thirteen years later, a marker was

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221 McEnaney, A Noble Avenue, 12; O’Bright, “There I Grew Up . . .”, 22.
erected that identified the location as the cabin site. Following a major fundraising drive, the ILU purchased the school property and demolished the building and other surrounding structures. After deciding a cabin reconstruction would be inappropriate, the organization hired architect Thomas Hibben to design an appropriate marker. The extant bronzed sill logs, fireplace, and hearthstones were the centerpiece of his design; these were accented with masonry retaining walls built of Bedford limestone, stone benches, and flagstone walkways. The symbolism of the hearth, as the “altar of the home,” was in keeping with the ILU’s predilection for treating the Lincoln Memorial as holy ground.\textsuperscript{222}

Also during the early to mid-1930s, a state park encompassing the Lincoln site was established (Figure 22). In order to undertake the state park plan and Olmsted’s landscape design, Donald Johnston, the state landscape architect, was appointed to oversee implementation of these two separate but interconnected projects. Between 1929 and 1933, much of the memorial was constructed according to Olmsted’s plan, although Johnston slightly revised the designs for the allee and plaza. The allee consisted of a central lawn flanked by gravel walks, which were lined on the outside by dogwood trees, tulip poplars, and sycamore trees. Furthermore, much of Lincoln City’s built environment was razed. In addition to the schoolhouse, a restaurant, garage, hotel, church, 11 houses, 7 barns, and 20 outbuildings were removed from the community during the first phase of development. The 1909 ornamental fence and statuary around Nancy Lincoln’s grave also were removed. Further work at the memorial included grading the site, constructing a boundary fence, relocating state highway 162, adding a drainage system and reservoir, and reforesting the grounds based on notes taken during the 1805 Federal land survey. Working with the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), the State planted 22,441 native trees and 15,218 shrubs at the memorial. CCC Camp 1543 also was responsible for developing the nearby Lincoln State Park, where they planted 57,000 trees and 3,200 shrubs between July 1933 and June 1934.\textsuperscript{223} In 1931, the concept for a Trail of Twelve Stones was developed, and installation of the stones was completed in 1934. The state also integrated the cabin site into the rest of the memorial by constructing a “Boyhood Trail” that led to the family cemetery.

THE TRAIL OF TWELVE STONES AND THE CABIN SITE MEMORIAL (1931-1938)

The Trail of Twelve Stones was not part of the original Olmsted plan nor was the final plan for commemorating the cabin site. The one-mile Trail of Twelve Stones was suggested by J.I. Holcomb, president of the ILU. Holcomb proposed that a collection of stones from places associated with Abraham Lincoln should be gathered and placed along a trail linking Nancy Lincoln’s grave and the cabin site. These stones were installed in 1934 and ILU members added bronze plaques in 1935. The stones include one from Lincoln’s birthplace in Kentucky and another from the William Jones store in Jonesboro. Another stone came from the Western Sun and Advertiser building in Vincennes, Indiana, and a stone was taken from the Berry-Lincoln Store in New Salem, Illinois.

\textsuperscript{222} McEnaney, A Noble Avenue, 12, 22.
\textsuperscript{223} O’Bright, “There I Grew Up . . .”, 34, 36, 41; York, Friendly Trees, Hallowed Ground, 14, 17-18.
There are two bricks from Lexington, Kentucky, a marker commemorating his first Inaugural address, and a stone from the Old Capitol in Springfield, Illinois. Additional relics include a rock from Gettysburg and stones from the White House, the Anderson Cottage Soldiers Home, and the Petersen House where Lincoln died. The introduction of this Trail of Twelve Stones marks a change in the interpretation of the site, as the park’s mission evolved from acting as a shrine to motherhood to a memorial to Lincoln himself. Nevertheless, the underlying religious tones that had characterized the park also continued to be expressed. A 1934 newspaper article entitled “Stones Taken from Scenes Vitally Linked with Life of Lincoln Made into Shrines at Nancy Hanks Park” described the stones as “shrines” where “pilgrims” could rest.224

224 McEnaney, A Noble Avenue, 37; O’Bright, “There I Grew Up . . .”, 40-41.
The introduction of an element such as the Trail of Twelve Stones was in keeping with early twentieth century preservation practices, which often involved creating a monument for the sake of the monument, instead of focusing on actual historic events at a site. The trend continued with the development of the cabin site. In 1931, the site had no landscaping and was located in a clearing. It featured only the exposed hearthstones and the simple plaque placed at the site in 1917 by the Spencer County Commissioners. In 1931, the plaque was moved to the Trail of Twelve Stones. The Indiana Lincoln Union had previously decided that reconstruction of the cabin was not an option since there were no records of the cabin's actual appearance. Instead, architect Thomas Hibben and ILU president Colonel Richard Lieber developed a variety of models for creation of a memorial from the existing elements. The model selected was described by Hibben as follows:

The log sill is chosen as appropriate to mark the outline of the cabin; the hearth and fireplace are chosen because they have been, since time immemorial, the altar of the home, the center around which all life moved. The entire conception is cased in bronze in order that it may be durable and that it may not in any way seem a reconstruction of the original cabin.\(^{225}\)

Although the final design was accepted in 1931, the bronze-cast sill logs were not placed in situ until 1935. Paul V. Brown, who served as the Executive Secretary for the ILU, began soliciting bids for the construction work in early 1933. Edwin Pearson's New York City firm submitted a winning bid to manufacture a fireplace, hearth, and five logs for $5,400. The fireplace measured 10' x 4.5' x 5', and the hearth was 10' x 4.5'. Two of the sill logs were 20' x 8" x 9", one was 17'8" x 12" x 6", and two were 3'7" x 16" x 6". They were manufactured in Munich by Pressmann Bauer & Company using the French sand method.\(^{226}\)

To further memorialize the site, a 42' x 42' limestone wall and plaza with benches were added (Plate 2). The wall measures 1 foot, six inches thick by 4 feet, six inches in height and is constructed to enclose the cabin site. The wall and plaza were meant to enhance the cabin site. Another element was a large bronze sign that explained the memorial in Hibben's words. It read:


\(^{226}\) National Park Service file, "Park History Cabin Site – Correspondence on Bronze Logs and Hearthstone Memorial," on file at the Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial.
This symbol of the sills and hearthstone of a pioneer cabin is placed here to mark and set aside this bit of Indiana soil as more hallowed than the rest. Here lived for a time, Abraham Lincoln, and here died his mother, Nancy Hanks Lincoln. For countless generations mankind has held the hearthstone as the altar of his home, a place of joy in the times of his prosperity, as a refuge in adversity; a spot made sacred by the lives of those spent around it. This is the hearth set here to mark the place where Lincoln at his mother’s knee learned that integrity and strength, that kindliness and love of all beauty, which have made the memory of his life and work a priceless heritage to all the world.²²⁷

Such a display technique was common at many early twentieth century historic sites. The introduction of a wall, tower, or building to house an artifact, however, often overwhelms the artifact and distracts from its setting. Sites where this phenomenon can be seen include Lincoln’s Birthplace in Hodgenville, Kentucky, where a small log cabin is located within a massive limestone, Greek Revival temple, or at Plymouth Rock, where the rock is located in a stone box approximately 5 feet below the viewing platform.²²⁸ While the cabin memorial’s limestone walls, plaza, and plaque are not as obtrusive as some examples, the wall serves to encapsulate a remnant of a single structure without reference to its surroundings. Prior to its removal, the Hibben plaque interpreted the site as a shrine to both Lincoln and the virtues he learned from his mother. A different interpretive approach was undertaken with the construction of the Memorial Building and Court.

CONSTRUCTION OF THE MEMORIAL BUILDING AND COURT (1938-1945)

The ILU members proposed the Memorial Building and Court as an anchor for visitor activities. In 1931, Thomas Hibben offered an elaborate design consisting of a 150-foot tower and a pipe organ, but by May 1939, his scheme was deemed to be inappropriate. Initial plans also considered locating the Memorial Building close to Nancy Lincoln’s grave, but this idea, too, was discarded. Therefore, Colonel Richard Lieber, president of ILU, sought the advice of Olmsted for both the building’s design and its location on the completed landscape. Olmsted responded to the ILU in 1939 with five options that revolved around placing the building at various locations. The plan that was selected involved placement of two small buildings joined by a semi-circular cloister on the south side of the plaza, where a landscaped exedra was situated (Figure 23).²²⁹

In 1940, the ILU hired National Park Service architect Richard Bishop to finalize the plans for the Memorial Building and to supervise the on-site work. Bishop reviewed the many suggestions taken from ILU members and Olmsted and combined these with his own thoughts. Bishop’s plan evolved out of the design ethic that proliferated during the New Deal era. The design’s emphasis on native Indiana materials, use of local craftsmen,
and simplified and stylistic Classical architecture are characteristic of Federal public works projects from the 1930s. The final design and construction included two buildings, the Nancy Hanks Lincoln Hall and Abraham Lincoln Hall, which were connected by a semi-circular cloister with five, life-sized, demi-relief sculptured panels depicting the life of Abraham Lincoln (Figure 24; Plate 3). The Nancy Lincoln Hall measured thirty feet by forty-five feet, and the Abraham Lincoln Hall measured thirty feet by sixty feet. Ground was broken in 1940, the cornerstone was laid in 1941, and construction was completed in 1943. The building was set back with a hierarchy of steps, and landscape designs emphasized its place within the landscape. Edson Nott, a landscape architect with the Indiana Department of Conservation, contributed to the final landscape designs and Indiana sculptor E.H. Daniels designed the five panels. As part of this project, the 1931 flagpole was relocated from the plaza to a terrace at

Allee and Plaza Site Plan, 1938-1944 (McEnaney, 2001: 27)
the north end of the allee, and stone benches that originally were relocated at the cabin site memorial were moved to the corners of the plaza. Nott also prepared several plans for plantings and landscaping at the memorial, but these were implemented on an ad hoc basis. For example, a circular walk he planned for the north end of the allee was never constructed, and the present rectilinear configuration was in place by 1936.

The sculptural panels and halls changed the symbolic character and interpretation of the site. Although the building was designated as the “Nancy Hanks Lincoln Memorial Building,” published descriptions of the site begin to change following its construction. Earlier newspaper articles described the site as “sacred soil” and the memorial as the grave of the “sainted mother.” The introduction of the Memorial Building and Court was seen as a memorial to the lives of Nancy Hanks and Abraham Lincoln, as well as the time they spent in Indiana. During Governor Henry F. Schricker’s commemoration of the site he described it as follows:

Surely we may feel that we are on sacred ground. It contains the mortal remains of Nancy Hanks Lincoln and it was pressed for fourteen years by the bare feet of Abraham Lincoln. From it grew the bread that formed his bones as a growing boy. Surely we may feel that we are in

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230 O’Brien, “There I Grew Up . . .”, 59-61, 63, 66-68, 79-80; “Sculptural Panels on Lincoln’s Life Completed—Part of Hoosier Memorial,” Outdoor Indiana (n.d.), 16; York, Friendly Trees, Hallowed Ground, 31, 33. The five panels depict periods in Lincoln’s life, beginning with the Lincoln family in Kentucky, listening to tales of the attractions of Indiana from a traveler; a vignette of the fourteen years spent in Indiana, featuring Lincoln’s participation in the construction of a log cabin; an illustration of Lincoln’s years in Illinois and his election to Congress; a depiction of his years in Washington as President and his visits with Ulysses Grant on a battlefield; and an apotheosis representing the spirit of Lincoln and his influence on future generations.
spirit associating here with Nancy Hanks and Abraham Lincoln. We are erecting here a shrine to Motherhood and to the family hearthstone. We are memorializing democracy and religion. Here we pledge ourselves anew to freedom and union, to the cause of popular government and the American way of life and refresh ourselves anew with the principles of life that formed our pioneers.\textsuperscript{231}

Governor Schricker’s comments indicate that the shrine was increasingly being viewed as a patriotic memorial. It was common in the post-World War I and Great Depression years for both the Federal government and private organizations to commemorate the spirit of America.

At the Lincoln memorial, this was manifested in part by the Federal government’s increasing role in the site’s preservation, which ultimately led to the initiation of a study in 1959 to determine if the park merited inclusion in the National Park system. Among the sites photographed for the 1959 report were the railroad tracks that passed through the park (Plate 4), Lake Lincoln (Plate 5), State Route 162, which accessed the park entry (Plate 6), the allee (Plate 7), and the Memorial Building (Plate 8). Both the railroad tracks and the road were felt to detract from the park’s setting, even though both elements actually predated the park’s existence. The railroad tracks were laid during the 1870s, while the state highway followed an alignment that dated to the early nineteenth century.

DESIGNATION AS A NATIONAL MEMORIAL

The 1959 study concluded that the park should remain under state ownership and control. The State of Indiana, however, recognized the status assigned to parks controlled by the National Park Service and spent the next two years lobbying for its designation as a national memorial. Congressman Winfield K. Denton was especially instrumental to persuading the National Park Service to reconsider its position. In 1962, these efforts were rewarded with the passage of PL. 87-407, 46 Stat. 9 (PL. 87-407), authorizing the establishment of the Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial.232

In June 1963, the State of Indiana transferred ownership of 114.49 acres to the Federal government. An additional fourteen acres were acquired the following year. Only twenty-five acres of this tract, however, were part of the original Lincoln farmstead. Once the boundaries of the memorial were established and transferred to the Federal government, the National Park Service considered several changes, many of which were never completed. Among the proposed alterations actually implemented were construction of a larger parking lot, paving of the walks that paralleled the allee as well as trails through the woods, and relocation of state highway 162, which extended between the allee and the Memorial Building. The Memorial Building was adapted for use as a visitor’s center, which required enclosing the cloister and adding a wing to the south side of the structure. A maintenance area and employee housing were constructed to the west of the allee and an exhibit shelter was placed to the north.233

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232 McEnaney, A Noble Avenue, 34.
233 McEnaney, A Noble Avenue, 4; O’Bright, “There I Grew Up...”, 139, 143, 146.
In 1968, a Living History Farm also was introduced to the interpretation program (Plate 9). This feature was representative of a nationwide effort undertaken by museum professionals who were dissatisfied with the static displays and dioramas that were found in most museums. Using “living history,” museums sought ways to create a dynamic picture of a historic period. They trained interpreters in period customs, provided period dress and tools, and developed structures that were as historically accurate as was feasible.\textsuperscript{234}

The Living History Farm at the Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial was developed by the National Park Service under the direction of the agency’s director, George B. Hartzog, Jr., who wanted to develop a series of farms in national parks. This effort was separate from the 1960s-era joint venture involving the National Park Service, Department of Agriculture, and Smithsonian Institution to establish a nationwide system of living history farms. The addition of this feature to the park was not without controversy, as some officials felt that the living history farm would distract from the visitor’s experience of the rest of the memorial. In its original conception, the farm also would have had a deleterious effect on other aspects; the 1970 Interpretive Prospectus proposed removing the cabin site entirely and relocating the Trail of Twelve Stones. Neither of these measures, however, was implemented.\textsuperscript{235}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{234}Wallace, “Visiting the Past,” 155.
\item \textsuperscript{235}McEnaney, A Noble Avenue, 35; Bartelt, “The Cabin Site Memorial and Its Architect,” 9. The 1970 Interpretive Prospectus stated that the Cabin Site Memorial surrounded by a retaining wall was a definite intrusion on the Living Historical Farm as the park’s development moved from the formal memorial to a more educational use. This report recommended that the retaining wall be removed to minimize the cabin site’s “intrusion.” This aspect of the 1970 plan was never implemented and, in fact, the plan no longer is endorsed by current park management.
\end{itemize}
The Living History Farm was constructed using historic agricultural buildings from throughout Indiana. Each building was disassembled and moved to the park for reconstruction. Once in place, the buildings functioned as an outdoor museum with guides dressed in period costumes and performing typical chores of a nineteenth century farm. The farm continues to perform its educational mission to the present day.
The Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial is historically significant for its association with the early life of Abraham Lincoln and as the final resting place of Nancy Hanks Lincoln. Furthermore, the property retains a high level of integrity with regard to its historic landscape design, and the Memorial Building is an important contributing element to the property’s architectural significance. Finally, the property is significant for its association with the development of historic preservation theory over the course of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It began as a shrine to Nancy Hanks Lincoln and, by extension, the cult of motherhood that characterized the Victorian era. During the 1930s, the memorial was transformed to commemorate Lincoln and his lifetime of accomplishments. Thirty years later, the site’s programs were expanded to include a parallel interpretive theme with the construction of the Living History Farm. The influences of each interpretive theme are clearly visible upon the extant cultural landscape and contribute to our understanding of the constantly evolving cultural and social phenomena of memorializing important personages in American history.

The memorial’s current overall appearance (Figures 25 and 26) has seen few major changes since completion of the addition to the Memorial Building in the mid-1960s. In 1986, the iron gate that once marked the entrance to the park was removed from storage and placed at the east end of the plaza. The most recent alterations have included the replanting of the beds around the allee and removal of an isolated section of State Highway 162 in 1993. This removal included replanting the former east arm of the original cross-axial design with native trees. Several picnic tables were added to the space as well. As a part of the current Historic Resource Study, a comprehensive cultural base map was prepared to identify all of the cultural resources within the memorial property and their relationship to one another (Figure 27). This was accomplished by using the scaled site plan created by McEnaney and overlaying it upon a topographic map that shows the contours of the landscape. A few additional elements beyond those listed by McEnaney also were identified. The dates and architects or landscape architects who were responsible for major features of the memorial are included on the map as well.

ADDITIONAL RESEARCH NEEDS

Some details of the historical development of the Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial and the surrounding area have yet to be clarified. A number of the questions will be difficult to answer, and thus care should be taken to present an unbiased accounting during interpretive efforts. Others simply represent gaps in current research that can be addressed through additional documentary efforts.
AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES

An area of particular concern in which primary data is lacking relates to the agricultural practices undertaken by early settlers in Spencer County. The use of the natural environment during the pioneer period is not well recorded in historic documents. Information specific to the Lincoln family’s farming activities was not discovered during a check of archival repositories in Indianapolis, Rockport, and the Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial. The State of Indiana apparently did not undertake an agricultural census of the state in 1820 or 1830, the years directly relevant to the Lincoln period of occupation in Spencer County. As previously noted, fires destroyed Spencer County’s records dating from the 1810s and 1820s. In any case, written documents typically provide skewed insight into pioneer agriculture because they focused on the foodstuffs and livestock that peo-
ple raised for their own subsistence or surplus goods sold in the market economy, but they often did not include native flora components that were used to supplement diets. Recent archaeological research indicates that there is little opportunity for reconstructing the Lincoln-era agricultural landscape due to the development of Lincoln City and early landscaping activities conducted as part of the development of the Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial.\textsuperscript{237}

Despite a lack of specific data on the Lincoln family's farming practices and physical landscape of the farm, it is possible to reconstruct the types of environments and corresponding potential subsistence practices by using soil surveys, such as Williamson's 1973 survey of Spencer County.\textsuperscript{238} In addition, texts on Indiana plant communities provide extensive information on the natural environment at various periods. Studies such as Petty and Jackson's 1966 discussion of plant communities in Natural Features of Indiana and the 1970 monograph Natural Areas in Indiana and Their Preservation, can be used in tandem with soil surveys to predict with a consistent level of accuracy the natural flora and faunal components that would have occurred when the Lincoln family first arrived.\textsuperscript{239}


\textsuperscript{239} Petty and Jackson, "Plant Communities," 264-296; Alton A. Lindsey, Damian V. Schmelz, and Stanely A. Nichols, Natural Areas in Indiana and Their Preservation (Notre Dame, Ind.: American Midland Naturalist, 1966).
The resulting taxa lists, when compared with ethnobotanies of Native American tribal groups from the Eastern Woodlands and early historical records, offer insights for developing a comparative analysis of potential Native American and early pioneer uses of comparable environments. Ethnobotanies and soil surveys also assist with developing predictive models for identifying alternate food sources that were used to supplement cultivated products during the frontier period as well as times of crop failures. Finally, a richer, more nuanced analysis can be undertaken of the contributions of women and children to survival strategies, as they typically were responsible for cultivating and gathering plants in both Indian and pioneer societies. The information derived from these analyses can be used to provide a broader interpretive base for educational programs at the Living History Farm and at displays featured at the Memorial Building visitor’s center. The data also can be incorporated into interpretive displays that are recommended for the nature trails throughout the property and can be included in the suggested audio tour.

Analysis of agricultural practices also provides an opportunity to begin exploring the cultural affiliations of Indian tribes that historically were associated with southern Indiana. A cultural affiliation study is one in which ethnographic study is undertaken to identify cultural ties among past and present groups that occupied or used, and may still use, the land encompassed by the present memorial and its natural and cultural resources. A study of this type is not known to have been undertaken with regard to the Native American groups who once occupied Spencer County in the contact and pre-contact periods. Information gained from such a study can be incorporated into expanded interpretation and education programs that are designed to shed light on the cultural and historical context within which frontier Indiana evolved and which the Lincoln family encountered upon their arrival in the area.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

In order to develop a full historic context of the socioeconomic and cultural milieu that existed in Spencer County during the early to mid-nineteenth century, the Little Pigeon community’s place in the regional market needs to be further examined. This can be accomplished through a closer study of market development in Spencer County, such as at Troy and Rockport, as well as nearby river communities in both Indiana and Kentucky, including Evansville, Owensboro, and Louisville. Among the questions that should be addressed in this study are the level of trade that existed among communities within southern Indiana, and how that trade fit into the overall economy of the region. An area in need of particular attention is the development of industry and manufacturing and the influences these sectors exercised on economic and social development in northern Spencer County. Along the same lines, the impact of the availability of manufactured goods to the county’s frontier residents and concomitant changes this caused in their lifestyle also require consideration. A potential model for this type of study is Faragher’s Sugar Creek: Life on the Illinois Prairie, which was cited as a part of this report. Furthermore, later technological and transportation advances, such as improvements to the navigability of the Ohio River, construction of canals, and the proliferation of railroads, are in need of further attention.

Consideration of twentieth century economic and social development in northern Spencer County also is in need of further study. Specifically, the impact of the development of the memorial and state park has not previously been analyzed. The full effects of the demolition of many key buildings in Lincoln City, the role played by the Civilian Conservation Corps in local work-relief programs, and the economic and social impact of tourism are among the topics that could be addressed. The influence (if any) on the local economy of 1930s-era and later reforestation and natural conservation efforts is a related subject in need of attention. A fuller explication of all these social and cultural phenomena may provide insight into the motives of the many individuals and organizations that have deemed the Lincoln site worthy of preservation for more than a century, as well as the various approaches that have been taken to preserving the site during that time.
NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATION FORM

Information generated as a result of the research conducted for this Historic Resource Study also was used to update and revise the original National Register Nomination Form for the Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial. This nomination was completed in 1976. While it lists all of the major cultural resources located on the property, it provides very little detailed information concerning the overall landscape design and the relationship of the various major sites, such as the allee, Memorial Building, cemetery, and cabin site memorial, to one another. The original statement of significance also lacks information concerning the period that the site was occupied by the Lincoln family and the development of the overall memorial from the late nineteenth through the twentieth centuries.

As this Historic Resource Study demonstrates, the Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial is historically significant for its association with the early life of Abraham Lincoln and as the final resting place of Nancy Hanks Lincoln. Furthermore, the property retains a high level of integrity with regard to Olmsted’s and Hibben’s landscape designs, and Richard Bishop’s Memorial Building is an important contributing element to the property’s architectural significance. Finally, the property is significant for its association with the development of historic preservation theory over the course of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It began as a shrine to Nancy Hanks Lincoln and, by extension, the cult of motherhood that characterized the Victorian era. During the 1930s, the memorial was transformed to commemorate Lincoln and his lifetime of accomplishments. Thirty years later, the site’s programs were expanded to include a parallel interpretive theme with the construction of the Living History Farm. The influences of each interpretive theme are clearly visible upon the extant cultural landscape and contribute to our understanding of the constantly evolving cultural and social phenomena of memorializing important personages in American history. Both the description (Section 7) and statement of significance (Section 8) were revised with continuation sheets to provide a fuller narrative of the property’s physical appearance and its historical significance. Major bibliographical references (Section 9) also were provided, as well as updated photographs of the memorial’s key sites. All of these sections are included as an addendum to this report.

ADDITIONAL INTERPRETIVE PROGRAMS

Using currently available knowledge as well as information derived from the aforementioned recommended further studies, a range of options are available for enhancing the interpretive programs at the Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial. The goals of such programs are to enhance the visitor experience at the site and to provide a full understanding of the historical, social, cultural, and natural significance of the assorted resources that are featured. An audio tour, interpretive displays, and brochures are suggested for several aspects of the Memorial that presently are under-represented in the current interpretive program. Educational materials such as these have several advantages. Their format and uses will be familiar to much of the visiting public; they are gen-
erally cost effective and easily updated or revised to meet changing needs; they can convey a large volume of
diverse material that can be tailored to specific audiences; and they do not constitute major intrusions upon the
cultural landscape. The cultural resources and physical landscape at the Memorial are quite diverse and offer
visitors a potentially wide range of sights and experiences. It is recommended that a common design theme and
color palette be developed to link these materials visually and provide consistent reference points for visitors as
they explore the various sites.

AUDIO TOUR

An audio tour is perhaps the best vehicle available to inform visitors about the interrelationships of the
park’s various elements, which are dispersed across the park’s extensive acreage. As opposed to videos, the
audio tour has the advantage of allowing visitors to stand before the actual resource being discussed and to start
and stop the narrative to meet their own needs. Consequently, a feasibility study for an audio tour is recom-
mended to determine if this type of media would help visitors to understand the relationship between the memo-
rials and the living history farm. Such a tour could explain early efforts to memorialize Nancy Hanks Lincoln and
the evolution of the site from a rural cemetery commemorating the cult of motherhood into a national memori-
al honoring Abraham Lincoln.

The audio tour also could be used to expand upon the history of the Lincolns’ occupation of the farm-
stead. It would allow the visitor to view the cabin site while providing insight into the use of the space, including
the number of people who often lived within a cabin of this size and the types of furnishing commonly owned by
a nineteenth century farm family. The audio tour could discuss why the Lincolns left Kentucky for Indiana and
introduce some of the hardships encountered by pioneers, such as milk sickness. Interpreters at the Living History
Farm can elaborate on both of these aspects. Further emphasis on the remainder of the farmstead could be incor-
porated into the tour as well, along with discussion of the changing landscape of Spencer County, including the
reforestation of this area and the removal of buildings associated with Lincoln City.

The cassettes, cassette players, and headphones used for the audio tour could be rented on a deposit
basis, both in an effort to pay for their cost and to ensure their timely return. Conceivably, the cassettes also may
be a vehicle for the visually impaired who would, of necessity, also need a guide with them.

TRAIL OF TWELVE STONES

This wooded Trail serves to link the cemetery to the cabin site and also has the important symbolic func-
tion of allegorically illustrating the different stages and events of Abraham Lincoln’s life. The Trail features a col-
lection of stones taken from places that were associated with Lincoln, such as the building that housed his law
office in Springfield, Illinois, and the White House. Each stone was placed upon a small base with a metal plaque
that identified its origin. The displays were envisioned as small shrines to Lincoln, and stone benches were placed alongside several to provide visitors with an opportunity to rest and reflect. All of the stones are extant, but some are believed to have been moved from their original locations during the development of the Living History Farm in 1968. A number of stone culverts constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) during the mid-1930s are extant along the Trail, as well as some later (and unobtrusive) culverts and water bars.

The Trail’s setting is quite bucolic and conducive to an unhurried meandering through the landscape. Typical visitors, however, are believed likely to lack sufficient background information to appreciate the Trail’s original purpose and its association with early twentieth century historic preservation and commemoration practices. To provide a more informative visitor’s experience, a brochure is recommended to be developed that pertains exclusively to the Trail of Twelve Stones. It should include a map of the Trail’s route and information about accessibility and distance to other attractions, such as the Living History Farm. The brochure is suggested to include a brief thumbnail sketch for each stone that is located along the trail, including those, such as the Culver Stone, that were not part of the trail’s original conception. Information concerning the Indiana Lincoln Union, which sponsored the Trail’s development, and landscape architect Edson Nott, who designed the Trail, also would be appropriate to include in the brochure.

This brochure can be used to complement the information provided in the recommended audio tour. In addition, the Trail is recommended to be slightly modified with the use of low-profile interpretive displays at a series of unobtrusive locations. Information contained on the displays panels could focus on aspects of Lincoln’s life and career that relate directly to the buildings and sites from which the stones were taken, and can include historic photos of these locations. The commemorative efforts that led to the creation of the trail also could be explained. The integrity of the present trail should be maintained, however, and the trail’s original purpose of providing a pilgrimage for visitors should be respected.

A variety of materials are available to use for the interpretive displays. Engraved limestone and cast stone would be appropriate to the setting, as similar materials are used throughout the Memorial grounds and they will blend effectively with the natural environment. Bronze plaques and acid-etched metal signs also are options that could be explored. It is recommended that the services of a landscape architect should be retained to create a design theme for the displays, to develop a range of sign and display panel designs, and to provide a plan for installing the displays at appropriate locations along the Trail. The design theme also should be complementary to the graphic design used for the suggested Trail brochure.

241 McEnaney, A Noble Avenue, 21-22, 58.
The nature trails within the park's boundaries represent an opportunity to incorporate additional interpretive materials such as display panels and labeled plantings of native vegetation. A trail head or orientation point is recommended to include a large display panel with an overall trail map depicted. This sign could be a full-color, computer-generated image on a resin-backed material that could be cut into any shape designed. A sign of this type is somewhat less expensive to produce than stone, metal, or etched wood signs, which is an important consideration given that this sign likely will change more often over the years to reflect new points of observation and interpretation. Resin-backed signs also have the advantage of being durable and resistant to vandalism, weathering, and discoloration. They would be appropriate to use for other display panels included along the nature trails. Mounting the signs on naturalistic bases, such as wood or stone, would help the panels to blend unobtrusively into the natural environment.

Information included on the display panels can be focused on the various topics discussed within this report. For example, a series of panels concerning environmental history could discuss the effects of glaciation, the ecology that existed during the precontact period, the destructive effects of nineteenth century agriculture, and twentieth century reforestation programs. Similarly, Native American habitation of the area could be described, with information provided on the impact that displacement and migration had on tribes in the area, traditional lifeways of tribes present during the contact period, and social and trade relationships Indian tribes conducted among themselves and with Euroamerican explorers and traders. Labeled plantings of native vegetation can give visitors an idea of the types of plants cultivated by Native Americans and those brought to the area by American settlers. A comparison of these plants with the types of vegetation that presently predominates in the park would offer a vivid illustration of the scale of the transformations that human endeavors can have on a landscape. Information gained from the recommended use of soil surveys and ethnobotanies to reconstruct the pioneer-era natural landscape will be especially helpful in developing these displays.

As with the Trail of Twelve Stones, it is recommended that the services of a landscape architect should be retained to create a consistent design theme for the displays, to develop a range of sign and display panel designs, and to provide a plan for installing the displays at appropriate locations along the trails. In addition, a brochure that pertains specifically to the natural trails also is recommended. This brochure should present the overall trail system and accessibility information, including trail distances and their location with reference to other major features, such as the allee and the Living History Farm. Topics that should be discussed in the brochure include the locations of former farmsteads and Lincoln City resources, natural features such as springs and land forms, the reforestation program of the 1930s, and the historic landscape designs that have been developed over the years and their impact upon the topography at the Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial.
BOYHOOD
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APPENDIX A: ADDENDUM TO THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF
HISTORIC PLACES NOMINATION FORM FOR THE LINCOLN BOYHOOD
NATIONAL MEMORIAL
7. Summary Description:

In the late nineteenth century, a portion of this property was set aside to commemorate the life of Nancy Hanks Lincoln. Additional parcels of land were acquired in the early to mid-twentieth century, bringing the property to its current size of approximately 428 acres. Also during this period, commemoration of Abraham Lincoln’s boyhood in Indiana and his political career received increasing attention. Most of the property’s extant resources date from this latter period.

The following architects and landscape architects were involved with designing various features at the Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial:

Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., and Donald Johnston
- Plaza/Highway (1930-1931)
- Restored Forest (1930-1935)
- Allee (1932-1934)

Edson Nott
- Trail of Twelve Stones (1933-1934)

Thomas Hibben and Edson Nott
- Cabin Site Memorial (1934-1935)

Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., and Richard Bishop
- Memorial Building (1938-1944)

Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., Edson Nott, and Richard Bishop
- Memorial Court (1941-1944)

Historic Resources

In 1994, an updated inventory of historic resources on the property was undertaken. A number of the resources included in the inventory were either not specifically mentioned or were not described in the original National Register nomination. They are as follows:

1.) Culverts (1927-1931) – Dry-laid stone facing tile drains, throughout the property. Architect: Donald B. Johnston.

2.) Stone Pillars (1932-1938) – Mortared pillars with battered sides were installed near the state
highway; these measured 8 feet in height and were 4 feet square. Similar pillars were located at the main parking lot, and measured 5 feet, three inches in height and were 3 feet square. Presently two of the pillars are extant at the park entrance along the state highway.

3.) Spencer County Memorial (1917) – Commemorated the location of the Lincoln cabin site. The eight-foot tall marker was installed in 1917 in the Lincoln City schoolyard. In 1934, it was relocated to the Trail of Twelve Stones when the present Cabin Site Memorial was constructed.

4.) Studebaker Marker (1879) – P.E. Studebaker, vice president of the Studebaker Corporation, donated a marble tombstone, which remains the official marker of Nancy Hanks Lincoln’s grave. It stands approximately two feet in height on a marble base. The lancet-shaped monument is made of Italian marble and inscribed with “Nancy Hanks | Lincoln | Mother of President | Lincoln | Died Oct 5, A.D. 1818 | Aged 35 years | Erected by a friend of her martyred son 1879.” Around this same time, local residents also raised money to install an ornamental iron fence around the graves of both Nancy Hanks Lincoln and Nancy Brooner. This fence has since been removed.

5.) Culver Stone (1902) – Originally located next to Nancy Hanks Lincoln’s grave, it was relocated to the Trail of Twelve Stones in 1933. The marker measures 4 feet by 3 feet, 4 inches by 2 feet, three inches. It rests upon a stone base measuring 4 feet, 6 inches by 6 feet. The stone is inscribed as follows: “Nancy Hanks Lincoln | In Memoriam | This Stone from Lincoln’s Tomb in Springfield, Illinois | was Presented by a Grateful People in Contribution to his | Mother.”

6.) Lincoln Spring Marker (1961-1963) – This simple marker was installed by the National Park Service at the location of the spring that provided the Lincoln family with their fresh water supply.

7.) State Highway Right-of-Way Marker (1931-1933) – Located south of the entry road to the Memorial, this marker measures 1 foot tall and 4 inches thick.

8.) State Road Culvert (1850-1920) – Located on the original road alignment, this is a tile drain measuring 20 feet by 18 inches.

9.) Old Lincoln Trace – This road followed the township line between Carter and Clay townships. The highway was removed when the memorial was established as a state park during the 1930s, but the alignment still is visible through the reforested landscape.
Historic Landscape Design

The present appearance of the cultural landscape at the Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial is due in large part to the efforts of a group of landscape architects and architects who completed a variety of projects at the site between the late 1920s and the 1940s. In 1927, Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., developed a landscape plan for the memorial at the request of the managing agency, the Indiana Lincoln Union (ILU). Olmsted’s plan designated a sacred space that he termed the “Sanctuary,” which included the grave of Nancy Hanks Lincoln and the cabin site, both of which had been identified as a result of earlier preservation efforts (see Section 8). To clear this space of distractions, Olmsted called for the removal of most of the buildings associated with Lincoln City, as well as ornamental shrubs and other plants that had been placed around the grave, and decorative elements such as an iron fence with gilded statuary. His conceptual plan combined an allee, which would serve to frame the primary vista toward the hilltop cemetery, with a cross-axis created by a parking plaza and flagpole next to state highway 162, which was located south of the cemetery. This design is largely extant within the extant cultural landscape.

The ILU accepted Olmsted’s plan, but hired landscape architect Donald Johnston to complete some modifications and supervise construction activities, which began in 1929. During this period, most of the buildings associated with Lincoln City were demolished, including the 1904 school house, a church, general store, hotel, and numerous residences. The streets and alleys were filled and graded and corrective measures were taken against eroded hillsides. Between the cemetery and the state highway, the existing topography was almost entirely regraded to its present configuration. Over 17,000 cubic yards of earth were moved during the course of the project.1

The extant stone walls were erected around the perimeter of the parking plaza, and stone pylons were erected along the highway. Four of the pylons remain extant and are located directly east of the parking plaza; these pylons flanked two unpaved parking areas (which are now revegetated). These two parking areas were not part of Olmsted’s original plan, but were carried out under the direction of state landscape architect Edson Nott, who succeeded Johnston as the project manager. The parking areas were deliberately designed to appear like meadows when they were not in use. According to McEnaney, these areas, along with Olmsted’s main parking plaza, created a sequence of open and enclosed spaces that created a transition between rural Spencer County and the formal landscape design at the memorial. Sequencing of open and enclosed spaces and large and small-scale

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outdoor spaces was a typical feature of late nineteenth and early twentieth century landscape designs. The approach originated in the English Landscape School in the mid-nineteenth century, but was adopted in the United States by pioneering landscape architect Andrew Jackson Downing.²

The cemetery has not been significantly altered since Olmsted’s plan was implemented. In 1944, the flagpole was moved from the plaza to a terrace directly south of the cemetery. In 1988, the original stone steps that provided access to the terrace were replaced and new iron handrails were installed. The terrace was accessed by a pair of trails that flanked the allee. At the top of the terrace stairs, the trails converge at the center of the terrace, an arrangement that appears to have been the work of Nott rather than Olmsted. A single gravel path provides a direct route to the flagpole (moved to its present location in 1944), and then continues to the cemetery. The allee itself has been virtually unaltered since it was completed in 1932, but for the size and condition of the flanking vegetation.

The vicinity of the plaza has witnessed several changes since Olmsted’s plan was completed. The relocation of the state highway in 1964 resulted in the removal of the eastern vehicular entrance to the memorial and obliterated one of the two primary orientation points for the memorial. The symmetry and views down the east-west axis also were irrevocably altered, and the original cruciform arrangement was lost when the roadbed was removed and the corridor was revegetated. The plaza itself has seen few alterations, with all of the original stone walls and benches, walkways, and red oak trees intact. The island originally featured the flagpole (which was moved to the terrace in 1944), and its landscaping has been altered several times over the years.

Olmsted also suggested recreating a portion of the native forested landscape that would have been present at the time the Lincoln family settled in Spencer County in 1816. The forest was symbolic of the rugged character of the area during the pioneer period, and was the only aspect of the environment in which the Lincolns dwelt that could be “reproduced without sham or falsehood.”³ Almost 40,000 native trees and shrubs were planted between 1930 and 1935. Much of this reforested landscape is intact, although some plantings in the immediate vicinity of the allee have been revised over the years. Since the 1930s, efforts have continued to control invasive plant species and provide for the continued presence of native trees, shrubs, and plants.

The extant Trail of Twelve Stones was added in 1933-1934. Not a part of Olmsted’s original plan, this feature instead was the concept of J. I. Holcomb, who served as president of the ILU.

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Edson Nott oversaw the trail’s design and landscaping. The wooded trail served to link the cemetery to the cabin site, which had not been done previously. It also had an important symbolic function as an allegorical illustration of the different stages and events of Lincoln’s life, including the tragic loss of his mother. The trail features a collection of stones taken from places that were associated with Lincoln, such as the building that housed his law office in Springfield, Illinois, and the White House. Each stone was placed upon a small base with a metal plaque that identified its origin. The displays were envisioned as small shrines to Lincoln, and stone benches were placed alongside several to provide visitors with an opportunity to rest and reflect. All of the stones are extant, but some are believed to have been moved from their original locations during the development of the Living History Farm in 1968. A number of stone culverts constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) during the mid-1930s are extant, along with some later (and unobtrusive) culverts and water bars.4

The cabin site memorial was the final component of the initial landscape development, but was not a part of Olmsted’s original plan. Instead, like the Trail of Twelve Stones, it was undertaken at the behest of the ILU and was designed by architect Thomas Hibben, with Edson Nott again contributing some modifications. In 1934, the site was excavated by the CCC and hearthstones were uncovered about 18 inches below the existing grade. These were removed and were displayed in a steel and glass case at the site until 1946, when they were moved to the State Library Building in Indianapolis. The extant memorial consists of bronzed log sills and hearthstones enclosed by a limestone retaining wall. Flagstone walkways originally surrounded the perimeter of the retaining wall, but these were removed in 1968; the paths now are gravel with brick edging. A massive stone bench built by the CCC remains at the edge of the cabin site memorial, while the other benches were moved to the parking plaza over the years.5 Development of the Living History Farm in 1968 resulted in the removal of a substantial amount of vegetation, thus irrevocably changing the viewshed from the cabin site memorial.

A second major construction phase began at the memorial with the erection of the Memorial Building and Court between 1938 and 1944. The ILU sought input on the building’s design from Olmsted and Hibben, but state architect Edson Nott and National Park Service architect Richard Bishop were responsible for the final rendition. As originally constructed, it featured two memorial halls, one of which was dedicated to Abraham Lincoln and the other to Nancy Hanks Lincoln, and these were connected by a semi-circular cloister. The front (north) wall of the cloister featured a

series of carved stone panels that depicted allegorical scenes related to Abraham Lincoln’s life. According to McEnaney, Bishop and Nott created a hierarchy of spaces along the progression from the plaza, through the court, and into the halls and cloister. The Memorial Building project was completed in 1945 under Bishop’s supervision. Based on plans drawn up by Nott, an extensive landscaping project around the Memorial Building was undertaken the following year. It included the installation of walkways around the building and planting of native shrubs and perennials. In 1965, the National Park Service decided to enclose the cloister’s front (north) wall and added a wing to the south side to create a museum space and administrative offices. The alterations affected the linear relationship of the flagpole terrace, allee, and Memorial Building, and changed the cloister’s function from that of a transition space to the primary indoor space for visitors. The court on the north side of the building was altered by the addition of a central walkway, which divided the space into four symmetrical planting beds. In 1979, the brick walls around the court were replaced with sandstone walls.\(^6\)

Recent Alterations

The park’s current overall appearance has seen few major changes since completion of the addition to the Memorial Building in the mid-1960s. In 1986, the iron gate that once marked the entrance to the park was removed from storage and placed at the east end of the plaza. The most recent alterations have included the replanting of the beds around the allee and removal of an isolated section of State Highway 162 in 1993. This removal included replanting the former east arm of the original cross-axial design with native trees. Several picnic tables were added to the space as well.\(^7\)

\(^7\) McEnaney, *A Noble Avenue*, 35.
8. Statement of Significance

The Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial is historically significant for its association with the early life of Abraham Lincoln and as the final resting place of Nancy Hanks Lincoln. Furthermore, the property retains a high level of integrity with regard to Olmsted’s and Hibben’s landscape designs, and Richard Bishop’s Memorial Building is an important contributing element to the property’s architectural significance. Finally, the property is significant for its association with the development of historic preservation theory over the course of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It began as a shrine to Nancy Hanks Lincoln and, by extension, the cult of motherhood that characterized the Victorian era. During the 1930s, the memorial was transformed to commemorate Lincoln and his lifetime of accomplishments. Thirty years later, the site’s programs were expanded to include a parallel interpretive theme with the construction of the Living History Farm. The influences of each interpretive theme are clearly visible upon the extant cultural landscape and contribute to our understanding of the constantly evolving cultural and social phenomena of memorializing important personages in American history.

The Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial originally was listed in the National Register in 1976 for its significance as the boyhood home of Abraham Lincoln and as the final resting place of his mother, Nancy Hanks Lincoln. The nomination also noted the property’s significance as a Fredrick Law Olmsted, Jr., landscape design. The classically inspired Memorial Building with its bas relief sculptures contributed to the architectural significance as well.

Documentation of the Memorial Site

More recent efforts by the National Park Service to document the history of this site, its administration as a national memorial, and its cultural resources have included the following studies:

These projects represent an ongoing initiative on the part of the National Park Service to reach a thorough understanding of the Lincoln Memorial’s evolution over the course of more than a century of development, as well as to develop an extensive foundation of knowledge concerning the history of the site prior to its designation as a memorial.

These recent documentation undertakings also have demonstrated that the property remains historically significant as the site of the farmstead where Abraham Lincoln lived from 1816 through 1830 and as the location of Nancy Hanks Lincoln’s interment in 1818, despite the fact that no features (such as a dwelling or outbuilding) that date from this period are extant. The historic landscape design and the extant architectural resources generally date from the early to mid-twentieth century. A recent assessment of these aspects of the property demonstrates that they are equally important to the property’s historic and architectural significance.

Furthermore, study undertaken in 2001 has shown that the property also is significant for its association with the development of historic preservation theory from the late nineteenth through the late twentieth century. By the 1870s, the popular perception of Abraham Lincoln began a gradual process in which the slain president was elevated to an almost mythic status. Sites associated with his life grew to be popular destination points for tourists and souvenir seekers. The farmstead where he spent his formative years became one of many memorials, along with that of his birthplace in Hodgenville, Kentucky, and his law office in Springfield, Illinois, that were established in the half-century following his death. The Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial commemorates the period Abraham Lincoln spent in southern Indiana and also includes the final resting place of his mother, Nancy Hanks Lincoln. The memorial has passed through three interpretation phases. It began as a shrine to Nancy Hanks Lincoln and, by extension, the cult of motherhood that characterized the Victorian era. During the 1930s, the memorial was transformed to commemorate Lincoln and his lifetime of accomplishments. Thirty years later, the site’s programs were expanded to include a parallel interpretive theme with the construction of the Living History Farm.
The Lincoln Period of Occupation

In late 1816, the Lincoln family left Kentucky for their new homestead in Indiana. At that time the family included Thomas Lincoln, age 38, Nancy Hanks Lincoln, age 32, their daughter Sarah, age 9, and their son Abraham, age 7. The farm was located near the Little Pigeon community, where the Carter, Grigsby, Gentry, Wright, and Gordon families were among those already in residence. The Pigeon Baptist Church was organized in 1816 and a frame meeting house constructed within four years in Section 7 of Clay Township, almost due south of the Lincoln farm. Troy was the nearest trading center and a gristmill also was located there. George Huffman operated a mill on Anderson River, about ten miles north of Troy and sixteen miles west of the Lincoln farm. In 1818, Noah Gordon built a grist mill less than two miles from the Lincolns that the family used as well. That same year, a schoolhouse was established on the Gordon farm. The schoolhouse clearly was needed; since within a four-mile radius there were 90 children under the age of 7 and another 48 between the ages of 7 and 17. By 1820, at least 40 families had settled within five miles of the Lincolns, with an average of three families per section. Most of these settlers were from Kentucky, and a few, such as the Carters and Gordons, even hailed from Hardin County, where the Lincolns had last resided. Nancy Lincoln’s aunt and uncle, Elizabeth and Thomas Sparrow, moved to the area shortly after the Lincolns arrived, and stayed with them for a brief time.8

One of the first tasks Thomas completed was erection of a single-room log house that measured around 18 feet by 20 feet.9 Thomas probably was assisted by several of his neighbors, who would have had time to help with the chore since the harvest season had passed. According to Warren, approximately forty logs would have been used to construct the house. A large stone was placed at each corner to serve as a foundation and the notched logs were placed directly atop these. After the walls were raised, a loft area was built using smaller logs, and the joists and ridge pole set in position. The joists were sheathed with half-inch thick clapboards to make a watertight covering. Door, window, and fireplace openings were cut in the walls and a stick chimney was built on the outside of the cabin. All this construction could be accomplished in about four days. Chinking the

9 Bearss, Lincoln Boyhood, 143.
openings between the logs and adding a floor made of puncheons followed soon after.\textsuperscript{10}

The following spring, the Lincolns planted their first crop, which probably included corn and smaller amounts of wheat, flax, and cotton. Corn was both a food source and a cash crop, while wheat, flax, and cotton could be used to provide needed materials for the pioneer household. A kitchen garden with vegetables such as melons, squash, pumpkins, and potatoes also probably was planted to provide variety to the family diet. After that year’s harvest had been completed, Thomas undertook the 60-mile journey to the Federal land office at Vincennes to secure title to this land. William Whitman and Noah Gordon, Thomas’s nearest neighbors, accompanied him on the trip. All three made official land entries on 15 October 1817. Thomas’s were for two tracts of 80 acres apiece, located in the southwest quarter of Section 32.\textsuperscript{11}

Just under a year later, Nancy Lincoln died of milk sickness (brucellosis). This malady is caused by the poisonous snakeroot, which was consumed by foraging cows. Its name indicates that pioneers were aware that the disease was somehow transmitted by cow’s milk, but they did not know by what process the milk became tainted. Entire families and sometimes communities could be ravaged by the illness. Such was the case at the Lincoln farmstead. Nancy’s uncle, Thomas Sparrow, was the first to fall ill and die. Within a matter of days, he was followed by his wife, Elizabeth, a neighbor, Mrs. Peter Brooner, and finally Nancy Lincoln, who died on 5 October 1818. Thomas built coffins for all four of the deceased. All were taken to the crest of a hill located approximately fifteen hundred feet south of the cabin site and interred. The graves are believed to have been marked with fieldstones at the head and foot, and Thomas may have carved Nancy’s initials in her headstone. Such simple markers were the only ones available to families on Indiana’s frontier.\textsuperscript{12}

At the time of their mother’s death, Sarah Lincoln was eleven years of age, while Abraham was nine. Thomas Lincoln soon married again, choosing for his wife Sarah (Sally) Bush Johnston, a widow, whom he and Nancy had known when they lived in Elizabethtown, Kentucky. They were wed in December 1819, in Hardin County. Sally had three children by her first husband, Elizabeth,

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\textsuperscript{12} Warren, \textit{Lincoln’s Youth}, 52-55; Hertz, \textit{Hidden Lincoln}, 279.
\end{flushright}
John D., and Matilda, all of whom accompanied her and Thomas back to Indiana. They arrived at the farm in early 1820. The household at this date consisted of Thomas (aged 42), Sally (32), Dennis Hanks (21), who had been a ward of the Sparrows, Sarah (13), Elizabeth Johnston (13), Abraham (11), John D. Johnston (10), and Matilda Johnston (9). Dennis and Elizabeth married the following year and set up their own household nearby, while the rest of the family members remained at Thomas’s farm.\(^{13}\)

Following Sarah’s arrival in Indiana, the Lincoln family appears to have stabilized and applied the lion’s share of their energies to improving their farmstead. Their efforts apparently succeeded, in that the family held a social standing equal to that of their neighbors, and were exceeded economically only by the Gentry family. By 1825, Thomas, Abraham, and John Johnston had cleared twenty acres of land and brought it under cultivation, generally on slopes surrounding the cabin site. They planted about half of the acreage in corn and the remainder in wheat and oats, along with about an acre of grass. Their livestock included sheep, hogs, and several head of cattle. By the late 1820s, the amount of cultivated acreage doubled to forty, and Thomas had also acquired an additional twenty acres of land immediately west of his original holding from his neighbor, David Casebier. This land included a spring, a valuable feature for a pioneer farmstead. In 1827, Thomas relinquished one-half of his original quarter-section and applied credit to the remaining eighty acres. This shrewd action was taken under the auspices of the Relief Act of 1821, which allowed overextended farmers to retain ownership of at least a portion of their holdings. Nearly all the Lincolns’ neighbors took advantage of the act, because it allowed them to relinquish ownership of poor and undeveloped land for the same price that the better land had cost.\(^{14}\)

At the same time the Lincolns were improving their property, the remoteness and isolation of northern Spencer County began to ease as a result of denser settlement and improved transportation. Located at the confluence of the Anderson and Ohio rivers, Troy remained the principal shipping center for local residents. The Anderson River was the largest stream in southern Indiana between the Blue and Wabash rivers. The advent of steamboats during the 1810s enhanced Troy’s status as a trading center, and provided local farmers with a convenient location to bring their agricultural goods for shipment to distant markets. Around 1826, in northern Spencer County, Gideon Romine, Benjamin Romine, and James Gentry opened a general store, which became the nucleus around which the community of Gentryville grew. A post office called Gentry’s Store was established, with Romine serving as postmaster. Gentry also operated a cotton gin for a time at this

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location. To the west another small hamlet, Jonesboro, sprang up in Warrick County at the intersection of the state road leading from Rockport to Bloomington and the state road from Corydon to Boonville. This settlement included a store, a mill, and a blacksmith shop. A tannery operated along the Troy-Vincennes Road, approximately four miles east of the Lincolns’ farm.¹⁵

As the eldest son, Abraham played an important role in assisting with his family’s farming, although numerous personal recollections from Abraham’s acquaintances and neighbors state that he was far more interested in reading and arithmetic than tilling fields and splitting rails, to the point that his intellectual curiosity reached mythic proportions by the late nineteenth century. The exigencies of frontier life, however, required Abraham to devote much of his time and energy to other pursuits. His formal schooling ended by the time he was sixteen, after which he turned to various means of finding steady employment. He learned basic aspects of the carpentry trade from his father and his skills with an ax helped him earn money splitting rails; typically, a flat rate of 25 cents per day was paid, with a skilled woodsman capable of splitting up to 400 rails a day. In 1826, working with his cousin, Dennis Hanks, Abraham cut cordwood for passing steamboats. He later began working for James Taylor, who owned a packinghouse and ferry at the confluence of the Anderson and Ohio rivers. For a salary of six dollars per month, Abraham operated the ferry across the Anderson River.¹⁶

In the spring of 1827, Abraham returned to his family’s farm to help with planting the spring crops. He also began to work for James Gentry at his country store. The same year, his elder sister, Sarah, became engaged to Aaron Grigsby, son of one of the well-established families in northern Spencer County. Sarah died the following winter in childbirth, a tragic event that had a profound effect on Abraham. His habit of melancholic brooding was exacerbated, and the trait became one of his most recognized characteristics in later years. Toward the end of 1828, Abraham had the opportunity to join the crew of a flatboat being sent down the river to New Orleans by his employer, James Gentry. This occasion marked the first time Abraham left Indiana outside the company of his family. The trip required about three months, and Abraham was home by March 1829, in time once again to help his family with the year’s spring planting. Life as a frontier farmer held less and less appeal to the young man, however, as evidenced by his growing interests in politics and the proceedings of local courts. These avocations were encouraged by Abraham’s friendships with local men, such as James Gentry, William Jones, and William Davis. Their shops were popular gathering

¹⁵ History of . . . Spencer County, 365-366; Bearss, Lincoln Boyhood, n.p; Warren, Lincoln’s Youth, 176, 187-188.
¹⁶ Warren, Lincoln’s Youth, 139, 143-145, 149, 168.
places where the political issues of the day were discussed in a lively fashion.17

Throughout this period, the Lincolns continued to occupy the dwelling that Thomas and his
neighbors had constructed in 1817; according to Warren, the nearby original shelter that Thomas
erected in 1816 also remained standing at this time. In 1829, Thomas and Abraham began work on
a larger house built of hewn logs. It was situated on a knoll near the original dwelling, and was
approximately 50 feet above and 150 yards north of the road. The 1817 cabin originally stood on line
with the east side of the new two-room house, but was moved some distance to the south after 1830.
The 1829 dwelling measured around 12 feet by 24 feet and remained standing until 1874, when it
began to be demolished, with pieces sold as relics to tourists in search of mementos associated with
Abraham Lincoln's life.18 A contemporary of the Lincolns, Nat Grigsby, described the farmstead as
he saw it in 1865:

Went to the Lincoln farm about one and a half miles east of Gentryville, and a little
north. The house is a one story hewed log one, porch in front; it is not the house that
[Lincoln] lived in, though he built it. The old house – the first and second are gone
– fronts south, chimney at east end, has two rooms, the east one and west one, stands
on a knoll or knob about 50 feet above the road and about 150 yards north of the
road. On the Gentryville road leading to the Hoffman [sic] Mills.19

The Lincolns, however, never occupied the 1829 house, but instead divested themselves of
their farmstead and moved to Illinois. Their decision was partially influenced by letters from family
friend John Hanks, who lived in Macon County, Illinois, and reported enthusiastically on the
remarkable fertility of the land. Both of Sally Johnston Lincoln's daughters and their husbands
expressed great interest in moving to Illinois, and Sally persuaded Thomas that the entire family
should go. In February 1830, Thomas sold to Charles Grigsby his 80-acre farmstead for the sum of
$125; he also sold the 20-acre tract he had acquired a decade earlier from David Casebier, although
records of that transaction have been lost. The family liquidated their livestock and crops, selling
approximately 100 hogs and 400 to 500 bushels of corn, and departed for Illinois.20

Grigsby owned the property for five years, then sold it to Edley Brown in December, 1835.
Ownership changed hands twice more in the next three years, from Brown to James Sally in 1837,

19 Hertz, *Hidden Lincoln*, 357.
and from Sally to Joseph Gentry in 1838. Gentry retained the property until 1850, then sold the north forty acres to Elijah Winkler. Three years later, Gentry sold the south forty acres to William Oskins. Within six years, the latter parcel again was acquired by the Gentry family when James Gentry, Jr., purchased it from Oskins. Throughout these exchanges of ownership, it is presumed that the land continued to be cultivated or at least used for pasturage. No one is believed to have lived at the Lincoln farm, however, as the 1817 cabin had been removed by 1865 and later descriptions of the 1829 house indicate it had been left to deteriorate for a number of years. Abraham Lincoln himself never returned to the area after his departure with his family in 1830.

In 1871, James Gentry sold the former Lincoln farmstead to John Shillito, Henry Lewis, Robert Mitchell, and Charles West. These four speculators from Cincinnati intended to plat a community along the Cincinnati, Rockport & Southwestern’s new line. The post office originally was called Kercheval, undoubtedly after R. T. Kercheval, who had rescued the company from bankruptcy in 1874. By 1881, the town’s name had been changed to Lincoln City, in recognition of its proximity to the old Lincoln farm. The community had several stores, including those maintained by James Gentry, Jr., William Gaines, W. J. Chinn, and Walter Howard. S. N. Hilt operated a blacksmith shop, while T. N. Robinson kept a hotel. The village also had a saloon and train station.

The community prospered for a time, with as many as twelve passenger trains passing through on a daily basis. The railroad company constructed a fourteen-acre lake to furnish a water supply and the site also was used for recreational activities, but few traces remained of the forest that had covered much of the area when the Lincolns arrived in 1816. At its height, Lincoln City supported two hotels, four stores, two restaurants, a livery barn, and a tavern.

Evolution of the Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial

From the 1830s to the 1870s, the Lincoln homestead was transferred from landowner to landowner. The dwellings the Lincolns constructed during their tenure fell into disrepair. Many of the area’s original settlers moved away or died, leaving fewer and fewer people to visit and care for the cemetery where Lincoln’s mother lay buried. By the time Lincoln was assassinated on 15 April 1865, the cemetery had been all but forgotten. His death rekindled a local interest in the Lincolns’

22 *History of . . . Spencer County*, 365.
Indiana connections, however, and efforts began to locate the family homestead and cemetery. By this date, the 1817 cabin had disintegrated, while the remnants of the 1829 cabin, which the Lincolns never occupied, became a popular spot for tourists to be photographed, at least until it was literally pulled to pieces by souvenir hunters.  

A group of twenty-four local residents reportedly convened to determine the correct location of the pioneer cemetery. They included John Richardson and descendants of Nancy Brooner, who died shortly before Nancy Hanks Lincoln. After gathering at the former Lincoln farmstead, this group agreed that the cemetery was situated in a corner of a field then owned by John Carter. In July 1874, a story appeared in the local newspaper stating that the grave of Nancy Lincoln was unmarked. Moved to redress the shortcoming, Professor Joseph D. Armstrong, editor and superintendent of schools, placed a sandstone marker at the grave in the fall of 1874. This marker, however, was destroyed within only a few years by souvenir hunters who chipped away pieces to take with them. The vandalism made it apparent to local leaders that the site was becoming a popular memorial site and thus prompted the first efforts at preservation.

In 1879, P.E. Studebaker, vice president of the Studebaker Corporation, presented a contemporary marker to the site. This marble marker remains the official marker of Nancy Hanks Lincoln’s grave. It stands approximately two feet in height on a marble base. The lancet-shaped monument is made of Italian marble and inscribed with “Nancy Hanks Lincoln | Mother of President | Lincoln | Died Oct 5, A.D. 1818 | Aged 35 years | Erected by a friend of her martyred son 1879.” Around this same time, Civil War General John Veatch of Rockport coordinated a local fundraising effort to pay for an ornamental iron fence around the graves of both Nancy Hanks Lincoln and Nancy Brooner.  

Preservation efforts such as these were akin to similar undertakings associated with other former American presidents, including Ann Pamela Cunningham’s work to save George Washington’s Mount Vernon and the Ladies’ Hermitage Association’s acquisition of Andrew

26 Rockport-Spencer County Sesquicentennial, 29; O’Brien, “There I Grew Up. . .”, 11; York, Friendly Trees, Hallowed Ground: An Expression of Sentiment and Reason – Historic Grounds Report, Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial (n.p.: National Park Service, 1984), 2. Nancy Lincoln and Nancy Brooner were buried side by side. In 1874, the Brooner family was among those who helped locate the graves of Nancy Lincoln and Nancy Brooner. However, the family members could not remember which grave lay to the north and which to the south. Therefore, the ornamental iron fence enclosed both graves.
Jackson's home, The Hermitage. These movements were part of a larger search for national identity taking place in the United States, with Americans focusing on the deeds of great leaders for inspiration.\(^{27}\) The establishment of historical associations ranked among the first manifestations of this process. On an ad hoc basis, the organizations also established the first guidelines concerning the types of sites considered worthy of preservation, who should be responsible for their maintenance, and how they should be interpreted. A critical underpinning to these directives was the assumption that private citizens, rather than government, should undertake the care of historic sites. Equally important was the notion that sites associated with military and political figures properly must be treated as shrines or icons. The initial efforts to preserve the Nancy Hanks Lincoln site clearly falls within this period of preservation theory.

The gravesite became symbolic of motherly devotion to one of America's greatest political leaders. The emphasis on a "sainted mother" also played into the cult of motherhood that was popularized in the literature of the early and mid-nineteenth century. A central tenet of the cult of motherhood was that women were responsible for perfecting an alternative to the commercial world and providing children (especially sons) with a moral education.\(^{28}\) Domestic writings and sermons across the country popularized these ideas. Collected decades after the fact, oral histories concerning Nancy Hanks Lincoln's death clearly show the influences of this movement. With her supposed dying words, she asked her children "to be good and kind to their father, to one another, and to the world." She also reportedly expressed a hope that the children would live as they had been taught by her, to love, revere, and worship God. Many of the oral histories taken in the late nineteenth century describe Nancy Hanks Lincoln as "a woman of great good sense and morality." Her nephew, Dennis Hanks, offered this description in 1865: "Mrs. Lincoln always taught Abe, goodness, kindness, read the good Bible to him, taught him to read and to spell, taught him sweetness and benevolence as well."\(^{29}\)

By the late nineteenth century, the emotional power of the cult of motherhood had begun to fade and popular interest in the grave of Abraham Lincoln's mother waned. By 1897, the gravesite again was neglected, although the adjacent cemetery remained in use by local residents. In response, Governor James Mount helped form the Nancy Hanks Lincoln Memorial Association (NHLMA), which was charged with raising money for the site's maintenance. Initial fundraising efforts were

\(^{28}\) Wright, *Building the Dream*, 76.
\(^{29}\) Warren, *Lincoln's Youth*, 54.
less than successful, with only $56.52 raised by 1900. That year, however, the Spencer County Commissioners deeded 16 acres of land to the NHLMA, giving the organization full control over the site, while Robert Todd Lincoln donated $1000 toward the maintenance of the grave. Other changes included the addition of a second memorial stone in 1902. The stone was donated by J. L. Culver of Springfield, Illinois, and stood outside of the 1879 iron fence. The inscribed stone rested on a substantial stone base and measured approximately three feet tall and one foot deep. Its inscription is illegible from the available photographs.30

In the early 1900s, the NHLMA also began plans to turn the site into a park. NHLMA constructed a large picnic shelter near the cemetery and drilled a well to supply fresh water. Local citizens soon complained that the site was not being maintained properly, with visitors leaving picnic trash and carelessly walking on graves. In 1907, the General Assembly responded by creating a Board of Commissioners to care for the site. Some of the first steps to improve the site included construction of a new fence around the entire sixteen-acre site and establishment of a monumental driveway between the grave and the nearby road, which was then known as Lincoln Trace. Landscape architect J. C. Meyerburg of Tell City designed a gated entry featuring an eagle and lion statuary to highlight the driveway. Dead trees also were removed and ornamental plantings were added.31

In 1917, preservation efforts began to expand beyond Nancy Lincoln’s grave, when local residents attempted to locate the site of Thomas Lincoln’s cabin. Preceding these efforts had been much discussion concerning the actual location of the cabin and whether the dwelling remained standing in 1865, when tourists began making pilgrimages to the site.32 This alleged site was located in the schoolyard of the Lincoln City graded school, which was erected in 1904. Approximately

31 McEnaney, A Noble Avenue, 8-9; Rockport-Spencer County Sesquicentennial, 29-30; O’Bright, “There I Grew Up. . .”, 14-15.
32 Rockport-Spencer County Sesquicentennial, 29-30; O’Bright, “There I Grew Up. . .”, 6, 17. Abraham Lincoln continued to correspond with friends from Indiana and mentioned wanting to see his family home in 1844 and 1860. It is therefore presumed that the cabin remained standing as late as 1860. By 1874, all the Lincoln farm buildings had been removed, including the cabin where citizens had their pictures taken after Lincoln’s death in 1865. Around the same time, William Herndon argued that this latter cabin was not actually associated with the Lincolns, but he was overruled by popular sentiment. The cabin depicted in tourists’ photographs continued to be accepted as the actual dwelling once occupied by the Lincolns.
twenty people gathered here in 1917, at which time they located three or four stones and some bits
of crockery, thus substantiating in the popular mind that the actual hearth from the cabin had been
located. On April 28, 1917, a stone marker was erected in the schoolyard and read “Spencer County
Memorial to Abraham Lincoln who lived on this spot from 1816-1830.”

The enlarged commemorative project, now known as Nancy Hanks Lincoln Memorial Park,
continued to attract visitors, and local citizens remained displeased with the behavior of visitors.
Finally, in 1923, Col. Richard Lieber, who served as Director of the Indiana Department of
Conservation, determined that designation of the memorial site as a state park was in keeping with
his department’s plan for developing a statewide system of parks. The State legislature created the
Lincoln Memorial Commission to replace the park’s Board of Commissioners as administrators of
the site. The organization received a $5000 appropriation to erect a suitable memorial. In 1925, the
State acquired the cemetery and a surrounding tract of land, totaling 60 acres; this was augmented
in 1929 when Frank C. Ball of Muncie, Indiana, bought an additional 29 acres and donated it to the
state. Indiana Governor Ed Jackson also appointed 125 people to the Indiana Lincoln Union (ILU),
which was to be responsible for raising funds to create a new memorial to Abraham Lincoln. The
group was led by some of the most prominent professionals in Indiana, including Anne Studebaker
Carlisle and Paul V. Brown. Thus began the second phase in the site’s interpretive development, as
this board represented the instigation of corporate philanthropy in the maintenance and interpretation
of historic sites, a trend that was occurring nationwide at numerous historic sites.

During this phase of development, the park began to be transformed into a carefully designed
landscape intended to convey a specific emotional experience. In December 1926, the ILU invited
nationally known landscape architect Fredrick Law Olmsted, Jr., and architect Thomas Hibben to
the site. Olmsted’s services were contracted to assess the existing commemorative landscape and to
create a preliminary plan that would clearly define future development. The two architects intended
to simplify and rationalize the park’s plan while remaining true to the original mission of developing
a monument to Abraham Lincoln’s greatness. In so doing, they created the foundation for the
memorial’s development throughout the remainder of the twentieth century.

Olmsted’s first assessment of the site concluded that it contained too many distractions. He

33 Rockport-Spencer County Sesquicentennial, 31; O’Bright, “There I Grew Up . . .”, 17.
34 Rockport-Spencer County Sesquicentennial, 31; O’Bright, “There I Grew Up . . . .”, 18, 20, 29; York, Friendly
Trees, Hallowed Ground, 1, 4.
35 McEnaney, A Noble Avenue, 10; O’Bright, “There I Grew Up . . .”, 20.
stated that the combination of utilitarian structures, such as the road, railroad, and picnic shelter, along with the cast iron fences, gilded lions, and exotic shrubs distracted attention from the peaceful surroundings of the cabin site and Nancy Lincoln’s grave. To remedy the situation, Olmsted sought to simplify the site and create what he termed “the Sanctuary.”

Olmsted’s plan removed most of the elements that had been added to the park over the preceding fifty years. The project was strikingly similar to preservation activities elsewhere in the United States, such as at Colonial Williamsburg, in which major elements of the existing built environment were stripped away to create a visitor’s experience that would satisfy contemporary tastes. The result was a divorce of the park site from its historic context and the creation of a frozen moment in time that seemed to represent an experience visitors would accept as authentic. Such a selective vision of the past is characteristic of efforts to interpret historic events, with the popular audience and scholars alike engaging in a deliberate selection and evaluation of past events, experiences, and processes. At the Lincoln park, this process of “reconstructing” the past included removal of most of the structures associated with the small town of Lincoln City that stood near the cabin site, as well as the removal of ornamental shrubs and other plants located at the cemetery. The only monument not removed was the Studebaker grave marker. Other efforts under the direction of Olmsted included the Lincoln Memorial Commission’s acquisition of 428 acres, which they reforested with native trees and shrubs, and the ILU’s plans to move the old Lincoln trace that bisected the cabin and gravesite. All of this work resulted in the creation of a blank slate from which to begin a new effort at memorializing Abraham Lincoln. Olmsted sought to create a landscape that was monumental and would stimulate visitors to have “their own inspiring thoughts and emotions about Lincoln.”

Olmsted’s landscape design for the Lincoln park was derived from the City Beautiful Movement of the early twentieth century. This movement evolved out of a relationship between architects, landscape architects, and urban planners and involved creating picturesque landscapes with carefully controlled views framed by naturalistic features that were either part of the original landscape or man-made. A central element of the Olmsted plan was the creation of a primary vista known as the allee, with a cruciform arrangement that had the United States flag at its center.

36 McEnaney, A Noble Avenue, 10; O’Bright, “There I Grew Up . . .”, 21; York, Friendly Trees, Hallowed Ground, 7-11.
38 McEnaney, A Noble Avenue, 11-12.
cruciform arrangement provided for east-west and north-south traffic along with a strong spiritual image. Although religious symbolism imbued Olmsted’s plan, his only overt reference to this was in the use of the religious word “Sanctuary.”

The ILU added additional elements that emphasized the religious context of the site, especially through references to Nancy Lincoln as the “sainted Mother,” while the site itself was “sacred soil.” Another aspect of commemorating this sacred quality was the effort to preserve the cabin site in a way deemed appropriate by the ILU. The Lincoln City schoolhouse had been constructed near the site in 1904 and thirteen years later, a marker was erected that identified the location as the cabin site. Following a major fundraising drive, the ILU purchased the school property and demolished the building and other surrounding structures. After deciding a cabin reconstruction would be inappropriate, the organization hired architect Thomas Hibben to design an appropriate marker. The extant bronzed sill logs, fireplace, and hearthstones were the centerpiece of his design; these were accented with masonry retaining walls built of Bedford limestone, stone benches, and flagstone walkways. The symbolism of the hearth, as the “altar of the home,” was in keeping with the ILU’s predilection for treating the Lincoln Memorial as holy ground.

Also during the early to mid-1930s, a state park encompassing the Lincoln site was established. In order to undertake the state park plan and Olmsted’s landscape design, Donald Johnston, the state landscape architect, was appointed to oversee implementation of these two separate but interconnected projects. Between 1929 and 1933, much of the memorial was constructed according to Olmsted’s plan, although Johnston slightly revised the designs for the allee and plaza. The allee consisted of a central lawn flanked by gravel walks, which were lined on the outside by dogwood trees, tulip poplars, and sycamore trees. Furthermore, much of Lincoln City’s built environment was razed. In addition to the schoolhouse, a restaurant, garage, hotel, church, 11 houses, 7 barns, and 20 outbuildings were removed from the community during the first phase of development. The 1909 ornamental fence and statuary around Nancy Lincoln’s grave also were removed. Further work at the memorial included grading the site, constructing a boundary fence, relocating state highway 162, adding a drainage system and reservoir, and reforesting the grounds based on notes taken during the 1805 Federal land survey. Working with the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), the State planted 22,441 native trees and 15,218 shrubs at the memorial. CCC Camp 1543 also was responsible for developing the nearby Lincoln State Park, where they planted 57,000

39McEnaney, A Noble Avenue, 12; O'Bright, “There I Grew Up. . .”, 22.
40 McEnaney, A Noble Avenue, 12, 22.
trees and 3,200 shrubs between July 1933 and June 1934. In 1931, the concept for a Trail of Twelve Stones was developed, and installation of the stones was completed in 1934. The state also integrated the cabin site into the rest of the memorial by constructing a “Boyhood Trail” that led to the family cemetery.

The Trail of Twelve Stones was not part of the original Olmsted plan nor was the final plan for commemorating the cabin site. The one-mile Trail of Twelve Stones was suggested by J.I. Holcomb, president of the ILU. Holcomb proposed that a collection of stones from places associated with Abraham Lincoln should be gathered and placed along a trail linking Nancy Lincoln’s grave and the cabin site. These stones were installed in 1934 and ILU members added bronze plaques in 1935. The stones include one from Lincoln’s birthplace in Kentucky and another from the William Jones store in Jonesboro. Another stone came from the Western Sun and Advertiser building in Vincennes, Indiana, and a stone was taken from the Berry-Lincoln Store in New Salem, Illinois. There are two bricks from Lexington, Kentucky, a marker commemorating his first Inaugural address, and a stone from the Old Capitol in Springfield, Illinois. Additional relics include a rock from Gettysburg and stones from the White House, the Anderson Cottage Soldiers Home, and the Petersen House where Lincoln died. The introduction of this Trail of Twelve Stones marks a change in the interpretation of the site, as the park’s mission evolved from acting as a shrine to motherhood to a memorial to Lincoln himself. Nevertheless, the underlying religious tones that had characterized the park also continued to be expressed. A 1934 newspaper article entitled “Stones Taken from Scenes Vitally Linked with Life of Lincoln Made into Shrines at Nancy Hanks Park” described the stones as “shrines” where “pilgrims” could rest.

The introduction of an element such as the Trail of Twelve Stones was in keeping with early twentieth century preservation practices, which often involved creating a monument for the sake of the monument, instead of focusing on actual historic events at a site. The trend continued with the development of the cabin site. In 1931, the site had no landscaping and was located in a clearing. It featured only the exposed hearthstones and the simple plaque placed at the site in 1917 by the Spencer County Commissioners. In 1931, the plaque was moved to the Trail of Twelve Stones. The Indiana Lincoln Union had previously decided that reconstruction of the cabin was not an option since there were no records of the cabin’s actual appearance. Instead, architect Thomas Hibben and ILU president Colonel Richard Lieber developed a variety of models for creation of a memorial from the existing elements. The model selected was described by Hibben as follows:

42 McEnaney, A Noble Avenue, 37; O’Bright, “There I Grew Up. . .”, 40-41.
The log sill is chosen as appropriate to mark the outline of the cabin; the hearth and fireplace are chosen because they have been, since time immemorial, the altar of the home, the center around which all life moved. The entire conception is cased in bronze in order that it may be durable and that it may not in any way seem a reconstruction of the original cabin.\textsuperscript{43}

Although the final design was accepted in 1931, the bronze-cast sill logs were not placed in situ until 1935. Paul V. Brown, who served as the Executive Secretary for the ILU, began soliciting bids for the construction work in early 1933. Edwin Pearson’s New York City firm submitted a winning bid to manufacture a fireplace, hearth, and five logs for $5,400. They were manufactured in Munich by Pressmann Bauer & Company using the French sand method.\textsuperscript{44}

To further memorialize the site, a 42' x 42' limestone wall and plaza with benches were added. The wall measures 1 foot, six inches thick by 4 feet, six inches in height and is constructed to enclose the cabin site. The wall and plaza were meant to enhance the cabin site. Another element was a large bronze sign that explained the memorial in Hibben’s words. It read:

This symbol of the sills and hearthstone of a pioneer cabin is placed here to mark and set aside this bit of Indiana soil as more hallowed than the rest. Here lived for a time, Abraham Lincoln, and here died his mother, Nancy Hanks Lincoln. For countless generations mankind has held the hearthstone as the altar of his home, a place of joy in the times of his prosperity, as a refuge in adversity; a spot made sacred by the lives of those spent around it. This is the hearth set here to mark the place where Lincoln at his mother’s knee learned that integrity and strength, that kindliness and love of all beauty, which have made the memory of his life and work a priceless heritage to all the world.\textsuperscript{45}

Such a display technique was common at many early twentieth century historic sites. The introduction of a wall, tower, or building to house an artifact, however, often overwhelms the artifact and distracts from its setting. Sites where this phenomenon can be seen include Lincoln’s Birthplace


\textsuperscript{44} National Park Service file, “Park History Cabin Site – Correspondence on Bronze Logs and Hearthstone Memorial,” on file at the Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial.

\textsuperscript{45} Bartelt, “The Cabin Site Memorial and Its Architect,” 8.
in Hodgenville, Kentucky, where a small log cabin is located within a massive limestone, Greek Revival temple, or at Plymouth Rock, where the rock is located in a stone box approximately 5 feet below the viewing platform. While the cabin memorial’s limestone walls, plaza, and plaque are not as obtrusive as some examples, the wall serves to encapsulate a remnant of a single structure without reference to its surroundings. Prior to its removal, the Hibben plaque interpreted the site as a shrine to both Lincoln and the virtues he learned from his mother. A different interpretive approach was undertaken with the construction of the Memorial Building and Court.

The ILU members proposed the Memorial Building and Court as an anchor for visitor activities. In 1931, Thomas Hibben offered an elaborate design consisting of a 150-foot tower and a pipe organ, but by May 1939, his scheme was deemed to be inappropriate. Initial plans also considered locating the Memorial Building close to Nancy Lincoln’s grave, but this idea, too, was discarded. Therefore, Colonel Richard Lieber, president of ILU, sought the advice of Olmsted for both the building’s design and its location on the completed landscape. Olmsted responded to the ILU in 1939 with five options that revolved around placing the building at various locations. The plan that was selected involved placement of two small buildings joined by a semi-circular cloister on the south side of the plaza, where a landscaped exedra was situated.

In 1940, the ILU hired National Park Service architect Richard Bishop to finalize the plans for the Memorial Building and to supervise the on-site work. Bishop reviewed the many suggestions taken from ILU members and Olmsted and combined these with his own thoughts. Bishop’s plan evolved out of the design ethic that proliferated during the New Deal era. The design’s emphasis on native Indiana materials, use of local craftsmen, and simplified and stylistic Classical architecture are characteristic of Federal public works projects from the 1930s. The final design and construction included two buildings, the Nancy Hanks Lincoln Hall and Abraham Lincoln Hall, which were connected by a semi-circular cloister with five, life-sized, demi-relief sculptured panels depicting the life of Abraham Lincoln. The Nancy Lincoln Hall measured thirty feet by forty-five feet, and the Abraham Lincoln Hall measured thirty feet by sixty feet. Ground was broken in 1940, the cornerstone was laid in 1941, and construction was completed in 1943. The building was set back with a hierarchy of steps, and landscape designs emphasized its place within the landscape. Edson Nott, a landscape architect with the Indiana Department of Conservation, contributed to the final landscape designs and Indiana sculptor E.H. Daniels designed the five panels. As part of this project,
the 1931 flagpole was relocated from the plaza to a terrace at the north end of the allee, and stone benches that originally were relocated at the cabin site memorial were moved to the corners of the plaza. Nott also prepared several plans for plantings and landscaping at the memorial, but these were implemented on an ad hoc basis. For example, a circular walk he planned for the north end of the allee was never constructed, and the present rectilinear configuration was in place by 1936.48

The sculptural panels and halls changed the symbolic character and interpretation of the site. Although the building was designated as the “Nancy Hanks Lincoln Memorial Building,” published descriptions of the site begin to change following its construction. Earlier newspaper articles described the site as “sacred soil” and the memorial as the grave of the “sainted mother.” The introduction of the Memorial Building and Court was seen as a memorial to the lives of Nancy Hanks and Abraham Lincoln, as well as the time they spent in Indiana. During Governor Henry F. Schricker’s commemoration of the site he described it as follows:

Surely we may feel that we are on sacred ground. It contains the mortal remains of Nancy Hanks Lincoln and it was pressed for fourteen years by the bare feet of Abraham Lincoln. From it grew the bread that formed his bones as a growing boy. Surely we may feel that we are in spirit associating here with Nancy Hanks and Abraham Lincoln. We are erecting here a shrine to Motherhood and to the family hearthstone. We are memorializing democracy and religion. Here we pledge ourselves anew to freedom and union, to the cause of popular government and the American way of life and refresh ourselves anew with the principles of life that formed our pioneers.49

Governor Schricker’s comments indicate that the shrine was increasingly being viewed as a patriotic memorial. It was common in the post-World War I and Great Depression years for both the Federal government and private organizations to commemorate the spirit of America.

48 O’Bright, “There I Grew Up. . .”, 59-61, 63, 66-68, 79-80; “Sculptural Panels on Lincoln’s Life Completed—Part of Hoosier Memorial,” Outdoor Indiana (n.d.), 16; York, Friendly Trees, Hallowed Ground, 31, 33. The five panels depict periods in Lincoln’s life, beginning with the Lincoln family in Kentucky, listening to tales of the attractions of Indiana from a traveler; a vignette of the fourteen years spent in Indiana, featuring Lincoln’s participation in the construction of a log cabin; an illustration of Lincoln’s years in Illinois and his election to Congress; a depiction of his years in Washington as President and his visits with Ulysses Grant on a battlefield; and an apotheosis representing the spirit of Lincoln and his influence on future generations.
At the Lincoln memorial, this was manifested in part by the Federal government’s increasing role in the site’s preservation, which ultimately led to the initiation of a study in 1959 to determine if the park merited inclusion in the National Park system. Among the sites photographed for the 1959 report were the railroad tracks that passed through the park, Lake Lincoln, State Route 162, which accessed the park entry, the allee, and the Memorial Building. Both the railroad tracks and the road were felt to detract from the park’s setting, even though both elements actually predated the park’s existence. The railroad tracks were laid during the 1870s, while the state highway followed an alignment that dated to the early nineteenth century.

The 1959 study concluded that the park should remain under state ownership and control. The State of Indiana, however, recognized the status assigned to parks controlled by the National Park Service and spent the next two years lobbying for its designation as a national memorial. Congressman Winfield K. Denton was especially instrumental to persuading the National Park Service to reconsider its position. In 1962, these efforts were rewarded with the passage of P.L. 87-407, 46 Stat. 9 (P.L. 87-407), authorizing the establishment of the Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial.  

In June 1963, the State of Indiana transferred ownership of 114.49 acres to the Federal government. An additional fourteen acres were acquired the following year. Only twenty-five acres of this tract, however, were part of the original Lincoln farmstead. Once the boundaries of the memorial were established and transferred to the Federal government, the National Park Service considered several changes, many of which were never completed. Among the proposed alterations actually implemented were construction of a larger parking lot, paving of the walks that paralleled the allee as well as trails through the woods, and relocation of state highway 162, which extended between the allee and the Memorial Building. The Memorial Building was adapted for use as a visitor’s center, which required enclosing the cloister and adding a wing to the south side of the structure. A maintenance area and employee housing were constructed to the west of the allee and an exhibit shelter was placed to the north.

In 1968, a Living History Farm also was introduced to the interpretation program. This feature was representative of a nationwide effort undertaken by museum professionals who were dissatisfied with the static displays and dioramas that were found in most museums. Using “living history,” museums sought ways to create a dynamic picture of a historic period. They trained

50 McEnaney, A Noble Avenue, 34.
51 McEnaney, A Noble Avenue, 4; O’Brien, “There I Grew Up...”, 139, 143, 146.
interpreters in period customs, provided period dress and tools, and developed structures that were as historically accurate as was feasible.\textsuperscript{52}

The Living History Farm at the Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial was developed by the National Park Service under the direction of the agency’s director, George B. Hartzog, Jr., who wanted to develop a series of farms in national parks. This effort was separate from the 1960s-era joint venture involving the National Park Service, Department of Agriculture, and Smithsonian Institution to establish a nationwide system of living history farms. The addition of this feature to the park was not without controversy, as some officials felt that the living history farm would distract from the visitor’s experience of the rest of the memorial. In its original conception, the farm also would have had a deleterious effect on other aspects; the 1970 Interpretive Prospectus proposed removing the cabin site entirely and relocating the Trail of Twelve Stones. Neither of these measures, however, was implemented.\textsuperscript{53}

The Living History farm was constructed using historic agricultural buildings from throughout Indiana. Each building was disassembled and moved to the park for reconstruction. Once in place, the buildings functioned as an outdoor museum with guides dressed in period costumes and performing typical chores of a nineteenth century farm. The farm continues to uphold its educational mission to the present day.

\textsuperscript{52} Wallace, “Visiting the Past,” 155.  
\textsuperscript{53} McEnaney, \textit{A Noble Avenue}, 35; Bartelt, “The Cabin Site Memorial and Its Architect,” 9. The 1970 Interpretive Prospectus stated that the Cabin Site Memorial surrounded by a retaining wall was a definite intrusion on the Living Historical Farm as the park’s development moved from the formal memorial to a more educational use. This report recommended that the retaining wall be removed to minimize the cabin site’s “intrusion.” This aspect of the 1970 plan was never implemented and, in fact, the plan no longer is endorsed by current park management.
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Comprehensive Cultural Resources Base Map of Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial (Adapted from McEnaney, 2001: 49)
View of all new, flagpole terrace, and reforested area. Facing north.
View of flagpole terrace. Facing north.
View of Nancy Hanks Lincoln grave and pioneer cemetery. Facing east.
View of allee and Memorial Building from flagpole terrace. Facing south.
View of allee, parking plaza, and Memorial Building. Facing south.
View of parking plaza. Facing southeast.
View of north facade of Memorial Building. Facing south.
View of sculptural panels on north facade of Memorial Building. Facing south.
View of Nancy Hanks Lincoln Hall, east end of Memorial Building. Facing southwest.
View of south (rear) side of Memorial Building. Facing north.
View of south (rear) side of mid-1960s addition to Memorial Building. Facing northeast.
View of south and west sides of Abraham Lincoln Hall, west end of Memorial Building. Facing northeast.
View of cabin site memorial. Facing southeast.
View toward living history farm. Facing west.
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