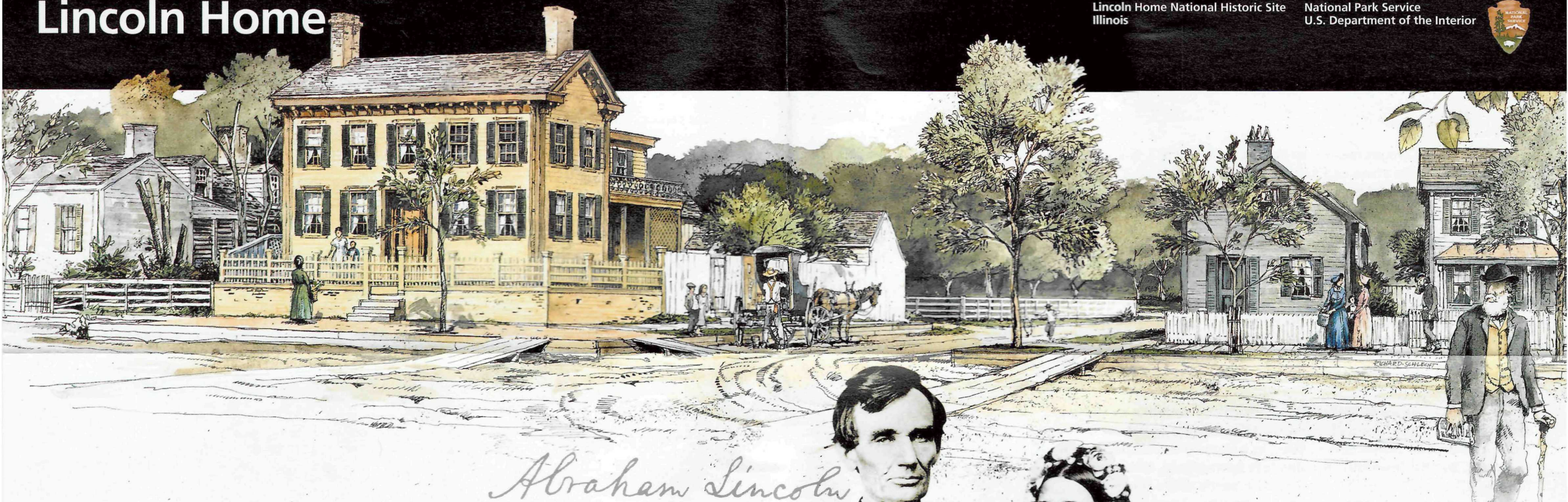


Lincoln Home

Lincoln Home National Historic Site
Illinois

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



Abraham Lincoln

A self-taught lawyer with only one year of frontier schooling, Abraham Lincoln rode his horse into Springfield, Ill., in 1837 with all his belongings in two saddlebags. Mary Todd, who arrived two years later, was well educated and from a prominent Kentucky family. Despite contrasting backgrounds, they were married on November 4, 1842. In 1844 the couple bought a small cottage at the corner of Eighth and Jackson streets. Here, three of their four children were born, and one died. While living in this house Lincoln enjoyed great success as a lawyer and was considered one of the state's best courtroom attorneys. His legal practice regularly took Lincoln away from

Springfield up to three months at a time. Their children certainly made the house a lively place, but Mary often felt alone without her husband present.

Lincoln began his political career by serving eight years in the Illinois House of Representatives between 1834 and 1842. He was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1846, where he served one term. He was nominated in June 1858 to run for the U.S. Senate, a race he lost to Stephen Douglas. But this campaign, with its Lincoln-Douglas debates, set the stage for his ultimate achievement—election as 16th president of the United States.



Before leaving for Washington, D.C., the Lincolns rented out the house and sold most of their household furnishings, storing a few in anticipation of their return to Springfield. On February 11, 1861, the Lincolns left Springfield by train. Lincoln summed up his life in Springfield to the crowd gathered at the station with these simple words:

"... To this place, and the kindness of these people, I owe everything. ..."

ILLUSTRATION: MARY SCHLECHT
ABRAHAM LINCOLN: LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
MARY TODD LINCOLN: ILLINOIS STATE HISTORICAL LIBRARY

At Home With the Lincolns



Parlor

The Lincolns entertained guests in the parlor, the most formal and public room. This was the setting for an important event in the future president's political life. The 1860 Republican Party Convention, held in Chicago, chose Lincoln as its candidate for president. The next day a committee traveled to Springfield and, in this room, formally notified him of his nomination.



Kitchen

Mary largely devoted herself to managing the household and raising their children. Much of this domestic and private side of the home centered on the kitchen. Here Mary oversaw the activities that made this a well-run and inviting home, allowing Lincoln to devote his time and energy to the practice of law and politics.



Parents' bedroom suite

Lincoln frequently worked at home on both his legal and political careers. Although the parents' bedroom suite was in the private part of the house and seen by few outside the family, Mary chose the furnishings with care to reflect the tastes of a prosperous family.



Robert Todd (1843–1926) Born at the Globe Tavern hotel, Robert was named for Mary's father. He was the only Lincoln son who grew to adulthood and had children of his own.

ILLINOIS STATE HISTORICAL LIBRARY

Edward Baker (1846–1850) Nicknamed Eddie, he died at home five weeks short of his fourth birthday. No photograph of Eddie is known to exist.

William Wallace (1850–1862) Loved by the Lincolns for his bright, inquisitive nature, Willie died in the White House, plunging the Lincolns into profound grief.

THE LINCOLN MUSEUM

Thomas (1853–1871) Mary's "troublesome little sunshine" was called Tad by his father, who said he looked like a tadpole. Tad's death left his widowed mother desolate.

OSTENDORF COLLECTION



Boys' bedroom

By 1860 the oldest son Robert was away at school. The two younger, mischievous boys, Willie and Tad, shared this bedroom. Law partner William Herndon said that Lincoln "worshipped his children and what they worshipped; he loved what they loved and hated what they hated."



Fido The family dog was left with friends when the Lincolns moved to Washington, D.C.

ILLINOIS STATE HISTORICAL LIBRARY

Lincoln Home Through the Years

By May 1844 Abraham and Mary Lincoln needed more living space for their growing family and decided to buy a house. They selected a Greek Revival-style cottage (drawing at right) at the corner of Eighth and Jackson streets owned by Reverend Charles Dresser, who had married the Lincolns in 1842. Lincoln paid \$1,500 for the home that the family would occupy for the next 17 years.



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



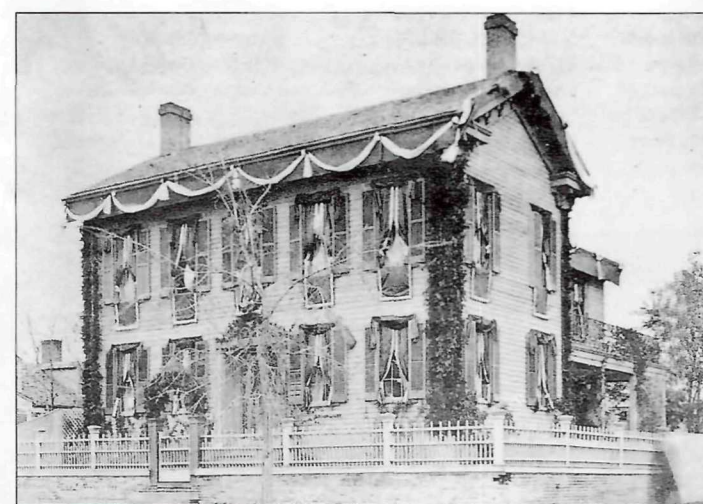
LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

Over the years the Lincolns enlarged the house to accommodate their growing family. In 1846 they added a downstairs bedroom. Most dramatic were improvements in 1855–56, when the Lincolns expanded the story-and-a-half cottage to a full two-story house. This substantial home became the center of national attention during Lincoln's 1860 presidential campaign.

Only a simple nameplate on the front door reading "A. Lincoln" told visitors that they had arrived at the home of the future president. After the election the Lincolns gave away or sold most of their furnishings and arranged to rent the house to Lucian Tilton, president of the Great Western Railroad. The Tiltons regularly indulged curious visitors with tours of President Lincoln's home.

Following Lincoln's assassination in 1865, thousands of grieving citizens descended on Springfield. The house became a focus of mourning for a stunned nation.

The Lincolns sat for these photographs in 1846, their earliest known portraits.



ILLINOIS STATE HISTORICAL LIBRARY

The Lincoln home (left) was draped in mourning as President Lincoln's body was returned to Springfield for burial in Oak Ridge Cemetery after he was assassinated in April 1865. Below is the nameplate that identified the Lincoln home during the family's residency.



On May 4, 1865, Lincoln's somber yet grand funeral procession passed in front of the Lincoln home on its way to Oak Ridge Cemetery. Eventually Lincoln's only surviving son Robert became sole owner of the Lincoln family home and maintained it as rental property. In 1887 he donated the home to the people of Illinois, who preserved it as a memorial to the martyred president for 85 years. The State of Illinois donated the home to the United States of America in 1972.

Today the home continues to draw visitors from around the world who are eager to learn about Abraham Lincoln—an international symbol of freedom and democracy.

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The Springfield Lincoln Knew

Abraham Lincoln moved to Springfield in 1837, the year it became the state capital. A promising town of 2,500 people, Springfield became the focal point of law, politics, and state government, yet livestock freely roamed its muddy streets. When Lincoln was elected to the presidency in 1860, the hogs were gone from its streets, and its population was just under 10,000. In a new neighborhood at the edge of this bustling capital city, the Lincoln home was only a few blocks from Lincoln's law office at the town square, near the Old State Capitol, courts, stores, and businesses. His neighbors represented a cross-section of society, from laborers to elected officials. All in all, this was an excellent location for a promising young Springfield attorney and his growing family.

While no one knows exactly what Springfield was like in 1860; this carefully researched illustration suggests its appearance then. The Lincoln home was nestled in a heavily developed neighborhood. By the time the Lincolns left Springfield, there were houses all along Eighth Street, and the yards were filled with barns, sheds, privies, and gardens. Today the remaining houses and outbuildings offer only a glimpse of what this lively neighborhood was like when the Lincolns lived here.

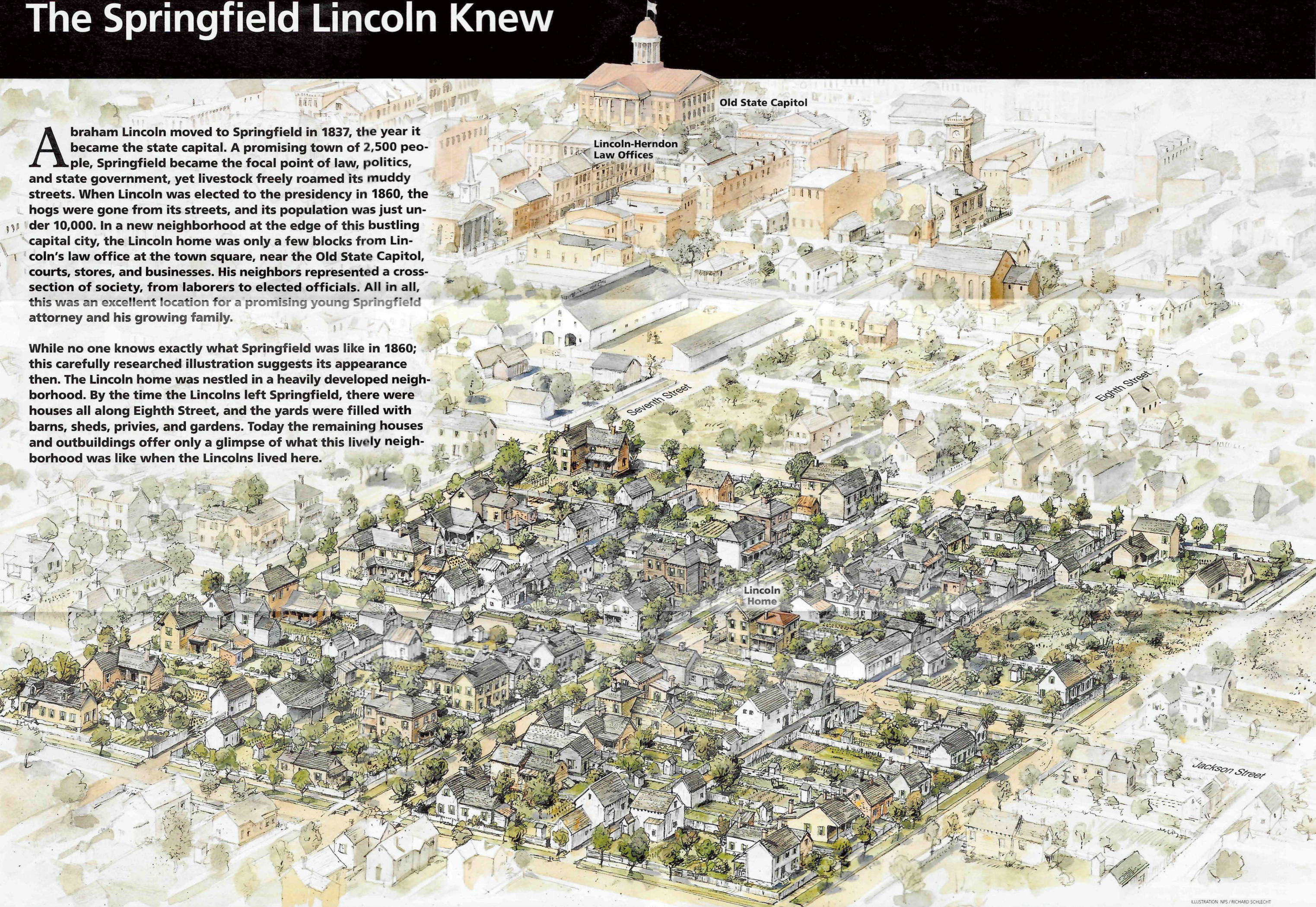


ILLUSTRATION: NPS / RICHARD SCHLECHT

Information, Tours, and Tickets

Visiting the Site The site is open 8:30 am to 5 pm year-round. It is closed on Thanksgiving day, December 25, and January 1.

Touring and Ticket Information To tour the Lincoln Home begin at the visitor center at 426 South Seventh Street. Parking is available for a fee in a parking lot at Seventh Street south of the visitor center. Free tickets for a specific tour time are provided first-come, first-served. Arrive early to avoid long waits for tours. No pets are permitted in the Lincoln Home.

Group Tours For information about group tours of the Lincoln Home and other

Springfield sites, call the Springfield Convention and Visitors Bureau, 1-800-545-7300.

Visitor Center Here you will find information, exhibits, orientation films, restrooms, and a museum shop. You may also walk through the historic neighborhood and view exhibits in some of the houses.

Accessibility The visitor center, exhibits, and first floor of the Lincoln Home are accessible for visitors in wheelchairs. Call 217-492-4241 before your visit for more accessibility information or a sign-language interpreter. Service animals are welcome.

Safety You will encounter conditions that were part of everyday life in the 1800s. Irregular boardwalks, surfaces with loose stones, and narrow and steep staircases are part of the historic scene. Please be careful. For firearms laws and policies see the park website.

More Information Lincoln Home National Historic Site
413 S. Eighth Street
Springfield, IL 62701
217-492-4241
www.nps.gov/liho

Lincoln Home National Historic Site is one of over 390 parks in the National Park

System. To learn more about national parks, visit www.nps.gov.

Related Sites The Great Western Depot where Lincoln gave his farewell address and several state historic sites are within walking distance or a short drive from the Lin-

coln Home: Lincoln's New Salem, Lincoln-Herndon Law Offices, Old State Capitol, and Lincoln's Tomb. You might also want to visit the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum.

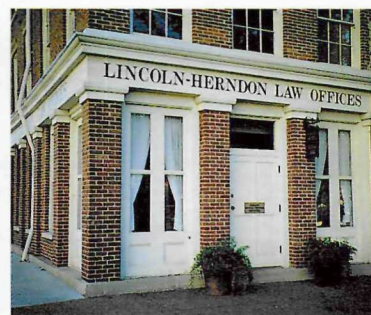
For information on these and other attractions contact: Springfield Convention and Visitors Bureau, 1-800-545-7300, www.visit-springfieldillinois.com.

"Here I have lived a quarter of a century, and have passed from a young to an old man. Here my children have been born, and one is buried. I now leave, not knowing when, or whether ever, I may return. . . ."

—A. Lincoln, Farewell Address, 1861



Lincoln's New Salem



Lincoln-Herndon Law Offices



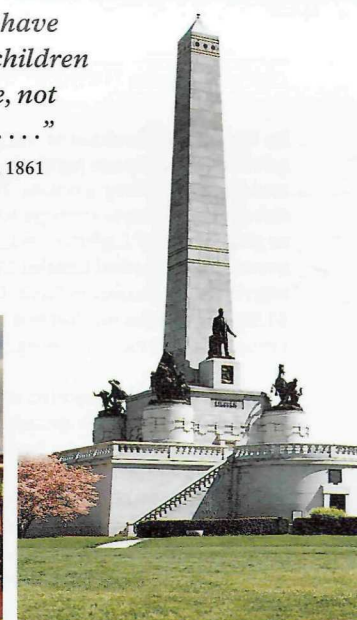
Great Western Depot



Old State Capitol



Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum



Lincoln's Tomb