Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historic Site

Boyhood Home Unit

Lincoln Cabin

Historic Structure Report

2005

Historical Architecture, Cultural Resources Division

Southeast Regional Office

National Park Service

The historic structure report presented here exists in two formats. A traditional, printed version is available for study at the park, the Southeastern Regional Office of the NPS (SERO), and at a variety of other repositories. For more widespread access, the historic structure report also exists in a web- based format through ParkNet, the website of the National Park Service. Please visit www.nps.gov for more information.

Cultural Resources
Southeast Region
National Park Service
100 Alabama St. SW
Atlanta, GA 30303
(404) 562-3117

2005
Historic Structure Report
Lincoln Cabin
Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historic Site
Hodgenville, KY
LCS#: 473358

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Boyhood Home Unit
Lincoln Cabin
Historic Structure Report
2006

Approved by: 06/09/06
Superintendent, Abraham Lincoln NHS — Date

Recommended by: 6-19-06
Chief, Cultural Resource Division — Date
Southeast Region

Recommended by: 6-19-06
Associate Regional Director, Cultural Resource — Date
Stewardship and Partnership, Southeast Region

Approved by: Acting 6/22/06
Regional Director, Southeast Region — Date

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PROJECT TEAM

Project Manager	**Tommy H. Jones**, Architectural Historian National Park Service Southeast Regional Office Atlanta, GA
Program Review Coordination	**Sandy Brue,** Chief of I & RM Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historic Site Hodgenville, KY
	Tommy H. Jones, Architectural Historian Southeast Regional Office
Building Investigation/ *Building Condition Assessment*	**Joseph K. Oppermann, FAIA** Joseph K. Oppermann – Architect, P.A. Winston-Salem, NC
Research	**Joseph K. Oppermann, FAIA,** Historical Architect Joseph K. Oppermann – Architect, P.A. Winston-Salem, NC
Building Recordation	**Joseph K. Oppermann, FAIA,** Historical Architect **Jennifer Plocher Wilkins, Assoc. AIA** Joseph K. Oppermann – Architect, P.A. Winston-Salem, NC
Document Layout	**Jennifer Plocher Wilkins, Assoc. AIA** **Amanda R. Lynn** Joseph K. Oppermann – Architect, P.A. Winston-Salem, NC
Report Editor	**Jane Kelly** Message Makers Winston-Salem, NC

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 1911, a grand Memorial Building was constructed near Hodgenville, Kentucky, at the site of Sinking Spring Farm, the birthplace of Abraham Lincoln. The building and 110 acres were donated to the Federal Government in 1916, forming Abraham Lincoln National Park; in 1939 the National Park Service became steward of the park. The park was renamed Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historic Site in 1959.

This site honoring one of the nation's best-loved presidents, coupled with improved road and highway systems, greatly increased tourism to the area in the 1920s and 30s. Hattie and Chester Howard were one of several families that tried to capitalize on the booming tourist trade and honor the local hero. The Howards purchased Knob Creek Farm in 1931 with the intention of creating another memorial to Lincoln. This land was the Lincoln family's home from 1811 to 1816, and by Lincoln's own admission was the site of some of his earliest memories. Here, the Howards used the logs of a cabin belonging to the family of Lincoln's childhood friend Austin Gollaher to re-build a hewn-log cabin said to resemble Lincoln's boyhood home. Then in 1933, they followed in the established theme of Lincoln's rustic log structure and built the adjacent Lincoln Tavern. This second structure, made of exposed round logs purportedly cut from trees felled on the site, was a popular dance hall and nightclub for travelers. After the sale of alcohol became illegal, the tavern was converted to restaurant and gift shop in the 1950s. In recognition of their significant role in Larue County tourism the site containing the cabin and tavern was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1988 as the Lincoln Boyhood Home. The National Park Service acquired the site from members of the Howard family in 2001 for inclusion in the Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historic Site (ABLI) and named it the Boyhood Home Unit.

The bicentennial of Lincoln's birth falls on February 12, 2009; a two-year celebration of this event will kick off at ABLI on that date in 2008. In anticipation of the commencement of this celebration, the National Park Service contracted with Joseph K. Oppermann – Architect, P.A. (JKOA) in November 2005, for the purpose of preparing an historic structure report with Class C cost estimate for repairs for the Tavern and another for the Cabin. The study team included Joseph K. Oppermann, FAIA, historical architect, and Jennifer Plocher Wilkins, intern architect, of JKOA; Langdon Edmunds Oppermann, architectural historian; Ronald W. Brown, P.E., mechanical/electrical/plumbing engineer of Ronald W. Brown Consulting Engineers; and David C. Fischetti, P.E., structural engineer of DCF Engineering, Inc.

In the preparation of these historic structure reports, Sandy Brue, Chief of Interpretation & Resource Management of ABLI, provided from that office's files copies of earlier reports, the draft General Management Plan (GMP) for the park and other relevant documents. Tommy Jones, architectural historian of the National Park Service's Southeast Regional Office (SERO), provided technical data and leads for additional sources of information regarding some early twentieth century building materials. Mary Brooks Howard graciously submitted digital copies of early family photographs and offered her recollections of the property. Milburn Howard likewise

generously gave of his time to be interviewed regarding his involvement with the site. Wilkins reviewed the historic documents, located other secondary sources, retrieved maps and other iconographic images. She also took measurements and produced measured drawings of floor plans and architectural details. J. Oppermann and Wilkins prepared the digital photo-documentation of the building and site. L. Oppermann prepared the architectural description of the building. J. Oppermann, Fischetti and Brown investigated the building fabric and building equipment to determine the building's evolutionary history and assess its condition. Besides several small samples of wood taken from the perimeter walls, no other historic fabric was removed. No other invasive method of investigation was employed. No equipment was tested. Dr. Joseph Loferski of the Brooks Forest Products Center at the Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University analyzed the species from the wood samples. J. Oppermann, Fischetti and Brown prepared the cost estimates.

The investigating team found that the cabin retains much of its original 1931 building fabric but that there also have been numerous replacements of material, primarily associated with the chimney and fireplace but also involving the perimeter hewn-log walls. Recent stabilization efforts by NPS included interior and exterior bracing of the cabin, removing the wood flooring system in the process, and exterior bracing of the chimney. Further, the memorial cabin that was created in 1931 was clearly different in important design characteristics from the cabin whose parts were used; the salvaged parts were not dismantled and reconstructed in a systematic fashion but rather treated as raw building material. Nonetheless, the resultant memorial cabin is a valuable window onto a 1930s approach to historic site interpretation.

The team also found the cabin to have serious structural problems. A number of logs in both the perimeter cabin walls and in the chimney have severe deterioration from rot. Complete dismantling will likely be necessary in order to implement the essential whole-unit replacement of some logs and Dutchman repairs to others.

The one-room interior of the cabin has no heating, cooling systems or plumbing systems. It does have electrical wiring to accommodate 1950s era tear drop lighting fixtures. Family photographs from the early days of operation indicate the fireplace and mantel have been redesigned and rebuilt.

The General Management Plan (GMP) for ALBI, now in draft form, calls for the exterior and interior restoration of the cabin to its original 1931 appearance.

This Historic Structure Report (HSR) is in agreement with the preferred treatment identified in the park's GMP. The period of significance for this property according to the approved National Register Nomination Form is 1933-38. A large percent of the original building fabric, both interior and exterior, remains intact. For features that have been removed or modified, such as the flooring, there is documentation and physical evidence to permit accurate restoration. Much is to be gained by interpreting tourism of the early twentieth century as it relates to historic persons, as is the case with this property. It is a dimension of tourism not commonly emphasized.

To restore the cabin to the recommended treatment, replacement logs should be installed at damaged areas of the cabin and chimney to match original 1930s construction. Modern Portland cement-based chinking at the chimney should be removed and replaced with mud-based chinking to match original construction. These repairs likely would require extensive

shoring or even dismantling; in the later case, each building part should be assigned a unique number, marked, and noted on measured drawings and/or photographs. New wood shingle roofing, appropriate to the original 1930s construction, should be installed.

Inside, the presumably original 1931 wood floor that was removed in 2003 should be reinstalled. Where damaged, Dutchmen repairs should be made. Where mismatching replacement boards have been installed, they should be replaced with boards matching the original 1931 construction. The limestone firebox surround should be preserved until further study determines whether it was installed during the period of significance.

ADMINISTRATIVE DATA

Locational Data

Building Name: Lincoln Cabin

Building Address: 7120 Bardstown Road, Hodgenville, KY 42748

NPS Orgcode: 5540

Location: Abraham Lincoln Birthplace NHS

County: LaRue

State: Kentucky

Related Studies

Brown, Kent Masterson. *Report on the Title of Thomas Lincoln to, and the History of, the Lincoln Boyhood Home Along Knob Creek in LaRue County, Kentucky*. Atlanta: National Park Service, Southeast Regional Office, 1998.

Hudson, Karen E. *Architectural Evaluation: Lincoln Boyhood Home, Knob Creek Farm, LaRue County, Kentucky*. National Park Service, Southeast Regional Office, 1997.

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form: Lincoln Boyhood Home. Athertonville, KY: United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1988.

Nickel, Robert K. *A Ground-Penetrating Radar Survey at the Knob Creek Farm Unit: Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historic Site, Kentucky.* Tallahassee, Florida: Southeast Archeological Center, National Park Service, 2005.

Sculle, Keith A. "The Howard Family Legacy at the Knob Creek Farm." *Journal of the Abraham Lincoln Association*, Vol. 26, No. 2 (2005): 23-48.

Real Property Information

Acquisition Date: November 6, 2001

Numbering Information

LCS #: 07238

Structure Number: HS-1A

Size Information

Total Floor Area:	279 sq. ft.
First Floor Area:	279 sq. ft.
Additional Floor Area:	(loft)
Crawl Space Area:	n/a
Basement Area:	n/a
Roof Area:	5 sq.
Perimeter Length:	77'-2"
Number of Stories:	1
Number of Rooms:	1
Number of Bathrooms:	0

Cultural Resource Data

National Register Status:	Listed
National Register Date:	1988
Period of Significance:	1933 - c.1938

Proposed Treatment Exterior and interior restoration to original 1930s appearance.

PART I. DEVELOPMENTAL HISTORY

A. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The sixteenth president of the United States, born into simple surroundings, grew to lead this country through its most divisive time. The stories of Abraham Lincoln's birth in a log cabin in Kentucky, youth largely without formal education, and early political defeats are well known. His leadership through the Civil War and issuance of the Emancipation Proclamation were turning points in the history of this country. Lincoln's untimely death further contributed to his status as an American icon.

Kentucky

The area that is now Kentucky was largely opened by land companies through surveying beginning in the 1750s, and later by explorers such as Daniel Boone, who helped to blaze the Wilderness Road in 1775. There were few settlements but Native Americans used the lands for hunting; broad expanses of forest supported such game as deer, buffalo, bears, turkeys, and other wild fowl. Salt licks, natural salt deposits, drew buffalo in great numbers, their traffic creating natural roadlike traces. A vast area south of the Ohio River called the "Pennyrile" was clear of trees and covered with grass, where Native Americans supposedly had cut the trees to entice buffalos to graze.[1] The name was taken from the pennyroyal, a plant in the mint family. Geologically, the Pennyrile is a karst region, where soluble limestone bedrock creates frequent caves and sinkholes.

Virginia claimed the land as part of that state in 1776, and called it Kentucky County. As settlement increased, Kentucky County was subdivided in 1780, creating Jefferson, Fayette, and Lincoln counties. Individual statehood was first addressed at a convention in Danville in 1784. Virginia passed a law for Kentucky's independence in January 1786, and on June 1, 1792, the Commonwealth of Kentucky officially became the fifteenth state in the Union.

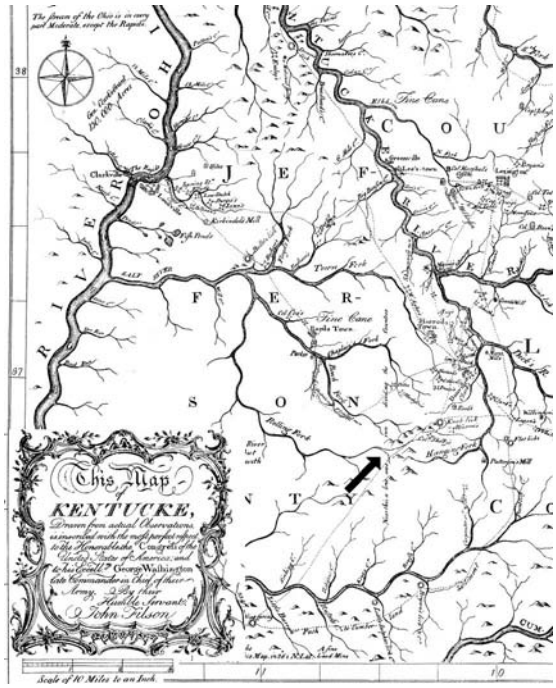

Figure A-1 *Map of Kentucky with Knob Creek site indicated, 1784 (Filson)*

The Lincoln Family

The Lincoln family traces its roots back to Samuel Lincoln, who immigrated to Salem, Massachusetts, from England in 1637. Samuel's descendant Captain Abraham Lincoln served in the Virginia Militia during the Revolution, that service providing him treasury warrants for land in Kentucky.

[1] R.S. Cotterill, *History of Pioneer Kentucky* (Cincinnati: Johnson & Hardin, 1917), 3.

Abraham's first wife died in 1776, leaving him with four young children. With his new wife Bersheba, son Thomas was born on January 6, 1778. The opportunities of the picturesque Kentucky frontier drew Lincoln and his family to relocate there in 1782.

The family eventually settled in what is now Jefferson County, Kentucky. Thomas and his father were tending fields in 1785 when raiding Indians killed Abraham. Thomas then moved with his mother to what is now Washington County, where they lived on a small farm provided by his half-brothers. Thomas moved to Elizabethtown as early as 1796, where he trained as a carpenter and later is listed on tax records as a farmer.[2]

Thomas Lincoln married Nancy Hanks on June 12, 1806, in Washington County. Hanks is said to have been born in 1784 in Virginia; evidence suggests that she was the daughter of Lucy Shipley Hanks Sparrow and James Hanks. Neither Thomas nor Nancy had a formal education; it is said that they were nearly illiterate. Nancy was very religious. The new family returned to Elizabethtown where Thomas continued his carpentry trade. Their first child Sarah was born February 10, 1807.

In December 1808, Thomas purchased 300 acres called Sinking Spring Farm,[3] which was named for a sinkhole and natural spring located on the property. The farm was about two miles from Hodgen's Mill (now called Hodgenville), established on the Nolin River in 1788 by Robert Hodgen. Hodgen's Mill initially was in Nelson County, carved out of Jefferson County in 1785. By the time the Lincolns arrived, the land was in Hardin County, which was created out of Nelson County in 1793; Elizabethtown was the county seat. Thomas cleared and worked the land at Sinking Spring Farm, a common occupation in that area. Their second child Abraham was born in the family's log cabin on the farm on February 12, 1809.

In 1811 a legal dispute over the title for the farm caused the Lincoln family to move to a new farm on Knob Creek when young Abraham was just two years old. Legal proceedings regarding the rightful ownership of Sinking Spring farm continued in Hardin County Circuit Court.

Figure A-2 *Sinking Spring Farm, 1895 (National Park Service)*

Knob Creek Farm

The Knob Creek Farm was a 228-acre tract owned by George Lindsey, located about seven miles north of Hodgen's Mill. Thomas Lincoln was one of several leaseholders and held thirty acres in his parcel.[4] The Bardstown and Green River Turnpike ran along the east side of the farm, connecting Nashville, Tennessee, to Louisville, Kentucky. The family's log cabin most likely faced the turnpike.

Many of Lincoln's neighbors were also small farmers and leaseholders rather than land owners. Tax records show that only one neighbor, tanner William Brownfield, had a specific profession listed. As one of more prosperous men in the area,

[2] Kent Brown, *Report on the Title of Thomas Lincoln to, and the History of, the Lincoln Boyhood Home Along Knob Creek in LaRue County, Kentucky (*Atlanta: National Park Service, Southeast Regional Office, 1998), 5.
[3] Ibid, 20.
[4] Ibid, 31.

Brownfield owned several horses and reported the custody of one slave in 1805, though he also leased land as opposed to owning it.[5] Only one neighbor, George Redmon, was shown in tax records as owning a wagon.[6] Other neighbors such as John Dye and William Ash held slaves, one in 1806 and four in 1808, respectively.[7] In much of Kentucky, slave labor was not as prevalent as in the Deep South owing to the smaller size of most farms.

Located on Knob Creek, a tributary of the Rolling Fork River, the bottomland in Thomas Lincoln's parcel provided fertile soil for farming. Muldraugh's Hill, a limestone cliff and ridge extending across the state, surrounded the farm on the north, east, and west sides. This hill and the other "knobs" in the area caused the creek to swell quickly with rain. In a later conversation at the White House, Abraham Lincoln recounted his memories of farming at Knob Creek:

> I remember that old home very well! Our farm was composed of three fields. It lay in the valley surrounded by high hills and deep gorges. Sometimes when there came a big rain in the hills the water would come down through the gorges and spread all over the farm. The last thing that I remember doing there was one Saturday afternoon. The other boys planted the corn in what we called the big field - it contained seven acres - and I dropped the pumpkin seeds. I dropped two seeds every other hill and every other row. The next Sunday morning there came a big rain in the hills. It did not rain a drop in the valley, but the water coming down through the gorges washed ground, corn, pumpkin seed and all clear off the field.[8]

Figure A-3 *View of the Knob Creek farm, December 2005*

Another traditional story of Abe's youth at the Knob Creek farm has him playing near the rain-swollen creek with Austin Gollaher, a neighbor, when the future president fell in. Gollaher helped Abraham out of the water with a branch, saving him from drowning.[9] This event was said to have occurred around 1812.

Though the setting of the farm was rural, the proximity to the turnpike, a primary travel artery, would have exposed the family to a variety of people. Tradition holds that Abe witnessed slaves being driven to market down the road, which affected his later views on slavery. Thomas Lincoln was appointed surveyor for part of the road near the cabin in 1816, demonstrating his standing within the area.

Abraham and his sister Sarah attended ABC schools in Kentucky, one of them in a log building about two miles down the turnpike from Knob Creek. Lincoln called this the "blab school" because of the recitation required of the students. Though life on the frontier required manual labor, Abraham was said to have preferred intellectual

[5] Ibid, 53.
[6] Ibid, 56.
[7] Ibid, 54-55.
[8] Ibid; also Ida Tarbell, *The Life of Abraham Lincoln* (New York: Lincoln History Society, 1900), 17.

[9] William H. Herndon, *Herndon's Lincoln* (Springfield, Illinois: The Herndon's Lincoln Publishing Company, 1888), vol. 1, p. 18.

pursuits, even though he probably had in all only one year of formal schooling.

Abraham's younger brother Thomas was born in the Knob Creek cabin, presumably two or three years after Abe's birth. Thomas died in infancy and was buried in the nearby Redmon Cemetery, because the Lincoln family did not own the Knob Creek land.

Thomas Lincoln had tried to buy the Knob Creek farm from Lindsey in 1815 but was unsuccessful.[10] That same year landowner George Lindsey, Lincoln, and nine neighbors were served with a notice of ejectment from the Knob Creek land by a group asserting a prior claim. The subsequent lawsuit, settled in 1818, found in favor of Lindsey and his tenants. Meanwhile, Lincoln was still involved in legal proceedings regarding the Sinking Spring farm. Lincoln tried unsuccessfully to repurchase the land at Sinking Spring while living at Knob Creek. When it was finally settled in 1816 that Lincoln had no rightful claim to the land, the family moved to Indiana.[11] Abraham Lincoln later wrote in a biographical sketch for John Scripps:

> From this place he removed to what is now Spencer county Indiana, in the Autumn of 1816. This removal was partly on account of slavery; but chiefly on account of the difficulty in land titles in Ky.[12]

Life in Indiana

Spencer County was the site of the first Indiana home of the Lincoln family. This location was chosen because the state had just been surveyed, and land titles were more secure. The family built a cabin, and Abraham helped to clear fields and tend crops at the new farm. Abraham's mother Nancy died in October of 1818. Thomas Lincoln later married Sarah Bush Johnston from Elizabethtown in December of the following year. Abraham and his new stepmother got along very well; she is said to have encouraged his taste in reading. Neighbors remembered that he would go to great lengths in order to borrow a book.

Figure A-4 Boyhood of Lincoln, *1868 (painting by Eastman Johnson)*

In 1830, the family moved again, this time to Illinois. Abraham drove the team of oxen during the trip. He arrived in New Salem, Illinois, in 1831, and held a variety of jobs including rail splitter, storekeeper, postmaster, and surveyor. On a trip to New Orleans as a flatboatman on the Mississippi, he again remembered seeing slaves mistreated. In 1832 he enlisted as a volunteer for the Black Hawk War and was named captain of his company.

Political Aspirations

Abraham first ran for the state legislature in 1832 and was defeated. He ran again in 1834 and was elected at the age of twenty-

[10] Keith Sculle, "The Howard Family Legacy at the Knob Creek Farm," *Journal of the Abraham Lincoln Association* (Vol. 26, No. 2, 2005), 22.
[11] Brown, 48.
[12] Zall, 9.

five. After personal study of law and being admitted to the bar in 1836, he began to practice as a lawyer and became known for his skill in the courtroom. He campaigned successfully to have Springfield succeed Vandalia as the Illinois state capitol, and he moved there in 1837. He was re-elected to the Illinois state legislature in 1838 and 1840, eventually becoming minority leader of the Whig party in the legislature.

Lincoln married Mary Todd in 1842. Born in Lexington, Kentucky, Todd had moved to Springfield to live with relatives in 1839 and had become active in social circles. Lincoln focused on his law practice, and served as counsel for railroads, banks, insurance companies, and the like. Though very successful, Lincoln was known for his common sense and honesty. He and his wife eventually had four sons.

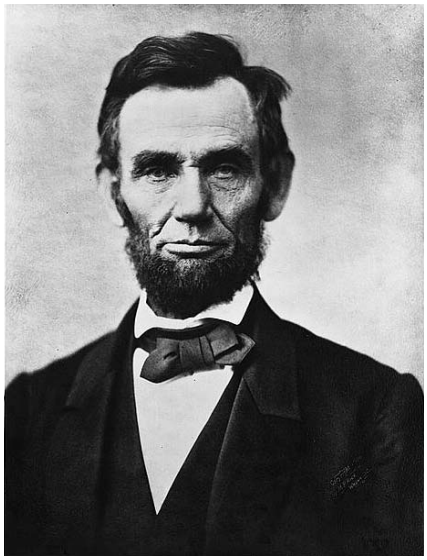

Figure A-5 *Lincoln, November 8, 1863 (Library of Congress)*

Lincoln was elected to the U.S. House in 1847 and served a single term. His votes recorded in those two years show him to be against the spread of slavery. In 1856 he joined the newly formed Republican Party, established to prevent the extension of slavery; he became that party's senatorial candidate two years later. His 1858 debates with Democrat Stephen A. Douglas, who had called for slavery to be permitted in territories of the Louisiana Purchase, were legendary, even though Douglas won the election. The presidential election of 1860 again pitted these two men against each other, with Lincoln on the Republican ticket.

Lincoln frequently wrote biographical sketches for campaign use. In these short documents he often fondly recalled his Kentucky upbringing. In one biography, Lincoln wrote, "I was born and have ever remained in the most humble walks of life."[13] In a letter to Samuel Haycraft, he continued:

> At this time his father resided on Knob-creek, on the road from Bardstown Ky. To Nashville Tenn. At a point three, or three and a half miles South or South-West of Atherton's ferry on the Rolling Fork. (I was born on Nolin, very much nearer Hodgin's-Mill than the Knob Creek place is. My earliest recollection, however, is of the Knob Creek place.)[14]

His image as a self-made man with a modest background stayed with him throughout his political campaigns.

Civil War

Lincoln was victorious in the presidential election, but even before his inauguration, seven southern states had moved to secede from the Union. The generally accepted start of the Civil War, the bombardment of Ft. Sumter in Charleston Harbor, began just after Lincoln's inauguration March 4, 1861.

Lincoln's primary goal was to preserve the Union. Though he did not want war, he felt the goal was worthy of the risk. He even said that preservation of the Union was the higher priority over the issue of slavery. With antislavery sentiment rising, he issued the Emancipation Proclamation on January

[13] Paul M. Zall, ed., *Lincoln on Lincoln* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1999), 25.
[14] Ibid, 9.

1, 1863. The Thirteenth Amendment was later passed to ensure slavery would never again be permitted.

It is in parts of Lincoln's eloquent Gettysburg Address, delivered at that battlefield on November 19, 1863, that one can see the conviction with which Lincoln approached the issues of slavery and the Union:

> Fourscore and seven years ago our fathers brought forth, upon this continent, a new nation, conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure… we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain, that this nation shall have a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people, by the people, and for the people shall not perish from the earth.

Lincoln managed to lead the Union in spite of massive war losses and won reelection in 1864 based on the perception that victory was at hand. Indeed, Robert E. Lee surrendered at Appomattox Courthouse on April 9, 1865. It was only five days later, on Good Friday, April 14, that Lincoln was shot at the Ford Theater in Washington by John Wilkes Booth, an actor and staunch Confederate sympathizer. Lincoln died the next morning. It was the first presidential assassination.

A National Hero

Lincoln's determination to preserve the Union, and his respect for basic human rights in freeing the slaves, earned him high esteem among the American people. His untimely death elevated his stature even more. The legends of his rural boyhood coincided with a general idealization of the past, brought about by technological advances of the late nineteenth century, the country's centennial, and urban growth. Curious travelers began to seek out the supposed site of Lincoln's birth, and local residents would lead them to a chimney where the cabin once stood at Sinking Spring Farm.

Figure A-6 *One of many published songs commemorating Lincoln, c. 1865 (Library of Congress)*

Local tradition states that the cabin of Lincoln's birth was dismantled before 1860, and the logs were re-used in a nearby house. These logs, now known through further study to be later than the period of Lincoln's birth, were sold in the 1890s and re-configured into a cabin for exhibition at various sites. The Tennessee Centennial Exposition featured the reconstructed replica cabin in 1897; later the cabin was shown at the 1901 Pan-American Exposition in Buffalo, New York.[15]

Birthplace Memorial

Robert J. Collier, publisher of New York's *Collier's* magazine, raised funds for the

[15] Dwight T. Pitcaithley, "Abraham Lincoln's Birthplace Cabin: The Making of an American Icon" in *Myth, Memory, and the Making of the American Landscape*, ed. Paul A. Shackel, 244 (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2001).

purchase of the supposed cabin logs and the farm of Lincoln's birth in order to construct a memorial there. He established the nonprofit Lincoln Farm Association to oversee the purchase and solicit designs for the memorial.

Collier planned a grand memorial building and landscape. A granite and marble building, designed by John Russell Pope, consisted of one large interior room to house the birth cabin, although the logs actually had to be cut down in order to fit inside. President Theodore Roosevelt laid the cornerstone of the memorial building on the centennial of Lincoln's birth, February 12, 1909. The completed building was dedicated by President Taft on November 9, 1911.

Figure A-7 *Memorial building at birthplace site, undated (Rinehart, National Park Service)*

The Lincoln Farm Association donated the site to the United States government in 1916, along with an endowment of $50,000, to form Abraham Lincoln National Park. The War Department managed the site until 1933, when it was acquired by the National Park Service. It was designated a National Historical Park on August 11, 1939, and later renamed Abraham Lincoln National Historic Site on September 8, 1959. The site was listed on the National Register of Historic Places on October 15, 1966. Today the Birthplace National Historic Site contains 116.5 acres, one third of the original Sinking Spring farm tract.

Other Memorials

As early as 1867, Congress authorized the formation of the Lincoln Memorial Association to raise private funds for a monument in Washington, but it would not be completed until 1922.

Formal efforts to memorialize Lincoln in Kentucky began in 1904, when the legislature established the Lincoln Monument Commission. The efforts of this group produced a statue of the seated Lincoln by sculptor Adolph Weinmen, dedicated in Hodgenville on May 31, 1909.

Knob Creek after the Lincolns

The rural nature of Knob Creek continued after Thomas Lincoln moved his family to Indiana in 1816. Lincoln's landlord, George Lindsey, was forced by the court to sell 230 acres of his tract to William Bush in June of 1831. One month later, a deed is recorded transferring the land from Bush to Charles Boon.

The heirs of Charles Boon sold two tracts of land at auction, containing 328 acres and 163 acres, respectively. Purchaser Nicholas A. Rapier was given title to the land on April 20, 1850. Rapier expanded his holdings when the heirs of Charles Boon transferred an adjacent fifty acre tract to him on April 17, 1858.

The heirs of Nicholas A. Rapier represent the next series of changes, though the land remained in the family. Charles H. Rapier purchased five-sixth interest in roughly 352 acres on February 5, 1891, from five heirs of N.A. Rapier. That same day, Frank X. Rapier acquired five-sixth interest in an adjacent 158 acre tract, from five heirs of N.A. Rapier. Sylvester Rapier & Co. received one-sixth interest in 380 acres on September 20, 1910, from F. Boone Rapier, who had inherited it from N.A. Rapier.

John W. Crady acquired full rights to the 380 acres in 1911 by way of a four-sixth interest from the heirs of N.A. Rapier on March 23; one-sixth interest from Sylvester Rapier & Co. on April 18; and one-sixth interest from Joseph C. Rapier on April 24.

In May 1918, Crady purchased an adjacent 62.5 acres from Robert and Blanche Enlow and G.W. and Lourena Baird. This adjacent tract was originally held by John J. Larue, and was sold after his death to James W. Larue on March 6, 1866. Larue sold a portion known as the "James Cap farm" to John O'Brian on July 11, 1877. O'Brian sold 125.86 acres to John Lavey on January 28, 1880. Lavey passed away in May 1913, and his son Charles purchased a four-sixth interest in the land from other heirs on August 14, 1915, along with the one-sixth interest he inherited. Lavey conveyed the title to his five-sixth interest to Nick Greenwell on April 15, 1916. Greenwell transferred his interest on the 125.86 acres to Robert Enlow and G.W. Baird on January 28, 1918. It is not known how Enlow and Baird received the remaining one-sixth interest on the 62.5 acre portion deeded to John W. Crady. [16]

LaRue County was created from Hardin County in 1843, with Hodgenville named as the county seat. The Knob Creek land was included in the new LaRue County. The land was apparently always dedicated to farming.

Growing Tourism

Federal Aid Road acts were passed in 1916 and 1921 to accommodate a growing number of automobiles. The turnpike adjacent to the farm, now Highway 31E, was paved in 1926, along with Highway 31W. These easily-traveled roads brought increasing numbers of tourists to LaRue County and the birthplace memorial. With increased traffic and the reverence for Lincoln as strong as ever, more county residents began to capitalize on the Lincoln tourist trade. The Lincoln Trail was established in the 1930s as a way for travelers to follow the same route that the Lincoln family took through Kentucky, Indiana, and Illinois; part of the trail ran along Highway 31E and the Knob Creek farm.

Hattie Howell Howard was one of the many in the area seeking to both memorialize Lincoln and create a career in tourism. Hattie already had a family connection to Lincoln tourism. Her brother James R. Howell owned a successful restaurant and gift shop next to the birthplace memorial called the Nancy Lincoln Inn, which he operated until his death in 1957.

Hattie and her husband Chester bought 380 acres containing the original Knob Creek farm on August 26, 1931 from John W. Crady, along with Crady's adjacent 62.5 acre tract. Chester Howard came from an established family that had founded Howardstown in 1833 and started a successful distillery supply store, the income from which provided the funds for the Knob Creek farm purchase.

The Lincoln Boyhood Home

At Knob Creek, the Howards planned a site that would serve both as a memorial to Lincoln and a business profiting from the growing tourist trade. They enlisted the help of Louis A. Warren, a historian and former editor for the *LaRue County Herald* in Hodgenville. Warren became an expert in all things Lincoln and searched local courthouse records for information with which to separate factual occurrences from traditional stories. The result of his efforts, *Lincoln's Parentage and Childhood*, was published as a book in 1926. He argued that not only had the fertile bottomland of the

[16] All deed information from Brown's *Report on the Title of Thomas Lincoln.*

Knob Creek farm increased the prosperity of the Lincoln family, but that the landscape had had an impact on Lincoln's personality.[17] Warren and Howard both argued that the Knob Creek site was tremendously significant, even more so than the birthplace site, because of Lincoln's personal remembrances of the farm. Warren wrote in *Lincoln's Parentage and Childhood*:

> The Knob Creek home on the highway from Louisville to Nashville was the first home that Abraham remembered and the home which exerted the greatest influence on his young life. This site was the most picturesque of the three home-sites that Thomas and Nancy had occupied, situated as it was between the forks of Knob Creek, the fertile bottoms extending from the home in three different directions. The knobs of mountainous proportions, with their steep inclines to the creek-bed below, offered all that nature could provide to challenge the adventurous spirit of a growing boy.

The original Lincoln cabin at Knob Creek supposedly had been dismantled in the 1870s, reportedly by Steve Thompson and his son Robert. In 1895 a newspaper writer said that the logs from the original Knob Creek cabin were used by Charles Rapier to build a stable at his farm, later washed away by a flood. Thus, the Howards had to start anew. In 1931 they dismantled a single-pen log cabin thought to date from the early 1800s from the Gollaher farm, which was included in the land purchase. With the logs they constructed a cabin said to resemble Lincoln's. Their neighbor Robert Thompson, who said that he remembered the Lincoln family's cabin, assisted the Howards in the construction. The result was a one-room cabin situated near Highway 31E, with one door and window on the east wall, a fireplace on the north wall, and a small loft accessed via a peg ladder.

Figure A-8 *Postcard of replica cabin, undated (KyGenWeb Special Collections)*

The Tavern

Construction on an adjacent building was begun soon after the cabin was completed. Meant to accommodate visitors' requests for refreshments at the site, this tavern, reportedly built with logs taken from the farm's forests, cost $4,200 to build and also had gas pumps to serve the tourist trade.

Figure A-9 *Tavern, undated but presumed c. 1933 (photo courtesy of Mary Brooks Howard)*

The tavern consisted of a large room on the first floor, with public restrooms and a

[17] Sculle, 27.

kitchen. Upstairs were three rooms and a private bathroom, which served as the residence of the site manager. The site was operated as Abraham Lincoln's Boyhood Home.

In 1934 a nightclub was established in the tavern. Open from late April to late October, live entertainment and dancing were events enjoyed by tourists and locals alike. This use provided additional revenue to the site, until LaRue County prohibited liquor sales in November 1942, at which time the nightclub closed. Under the management of Fred Howard, the tavern was converted to a museum and gift shop in the early 1950s. Howard purchased local historical artifacts for display in the cabin and tavern, including a slave trap, arrowhead collection, guns, tools, household artifacts from Lincoln's era, and other Americana.[18] Kentucky crafts were sold in the gift shop, along with souvenirs. Hattie and C.F. Howard officially sold the site with 200 acres to Fred Howard on October 20, 1964.

Figure A-10 *Photo of tavern bar, undated (photo courtesy of Mary Brooks Howard)*

[18] Ibid, 40.

Site Managers

The Howard family administered the site for seventy years, usually with the manager living in the quarters above the tavern. Hattie and Chester's son Paul Howard managed the site starting in 1932, when he graduated from the University of Kentucky; he was the only manager not to live on-site. Helen Howard Peake, the eldest daughter of Hattie and Chester, managed the site in two separate periods between 1935 and 1949; Millburn Howard, the next son, also managed for a time. Nell and Earl W. Everly, the only non-family managers, came in 1940. Fred Howard, the youngest son of Hattie and Chester, began managing the site in 1950; his wife Mary Brooks Howard assumed management duties upon his death in 1980.

Growing Significance

The Boyhood Home became a successful tourist site and began to garner recognition for its significance in Lincoln's life. Beginning in 1942, the Boy Scouts used the site as a stopping point on their Lincoln Heritage Trail from Elizabethtown to Hodgenville. Stanley Kubrick's film, *Mr. Lincoln*, was shot in part at the picturesque Knob Creek farm in 1952; the site also served to represent the Indiana frontier in the film. In 1958 the Boyhood Home was included in a re-enacted trip of the Lincoln family's journey from Hodgenville to Indiana.

Changing Hands

Mary Brooks Howard, daughter-in-law of Hattie and Chester Howard, tried to sell the site in 1981 and 1985 for an asking price of $1 million. The highest offer received was $250,000. Low visitation was part of the reason for the attempted sale. In 1985 only 16,283 paid visitors were recorded at the Boyhood Home, while 300,000 visited the Birthplace National Historic Site in Hodgenville.

When no better offers were made, the site and its contents were put up for auction. On January 11, 1986, a group of Howard family members submitted the top bid for the site and contents together at $120,500, after no bids were submitted for the property or contents separately. The family members established Lincoln Boyhood Home, Inc., with fifteen members. They officially re-opened the site on April 1 of that year, after some cleaning and painting work. Fabian Howard, the son of Fred and Brooks, took over management duties. The group also built an open picnic pavilion and log restrooms. It was then estimated that 30,000 to 40,000 people visited the Boyhood Home site annually.

National Register Nomination

Under the management of the Lincoln Boyhood Home, Inc., a new nomination of the site to the National Register of Historic Places was submitted in 1988. The first nomination attempt in 1981 had been unsuccessful. In that nomination, the period of significance had been listed as Lincoln's boyhood, though the site did not actually contain any structures from that period. When the nomination was reworked to highlight the site's prominent role in LaRue County tourism and its stature as a monument to Lincoln, the nomination was successful. The Boyhood Home site was officially listed on the National Register of Historic Places as a district on October 4, 1988. The cabin and tavern are the two contributing buildings, while a modern pavilion (c. 1988) and shed (c. 1950s) are listed as non-contributing.

A Secure Future

Though the Howard family had reacquired the property, they were concerned about the long-term future of the Boyhood Home site. Offers to buy the site had come from philanthropist Philip R. Jonsson and author Judy Potts, but the family had refused, favoring a more stable preservation of the site, preferably with the National Park Service. A group called the Friends of Abe Lincoln formed to lobby for legislation to allow the Park Service to accept the property if it were donated. Congress authorized the acquisition of the site on November 6, 1998, with the stipulation that it be accepted by donation only. Various state and local organizations contributed funds to the cause, including a $500,000 appropriation in the Commonwealth of Kentucky's 2001-02 budget authorized by Governor Patton. The land was purchased by a group called Preservation of Lincoln's Kentucky Heritage, Inc., for $1 million. The site was then donated the National Park Service as stipulated in the authorization. The NPS officially assumed management duties on November 6, 2001, when it became a unit of Abraham Lincoln National Historic Site (ABLI). The dedication ceremony took place on February 12, 2002.

ABLI Boyhood Home Unit

The earliest letters of report written by NPS staff after the 2002 transfer indicated moisture problems in the tavern and cabin, and suggested stabilization work. This work was accomplished in September 2003. In October 2004, a ground-penetrating radar survey was undertaken in an attempt to locate features from the Lincoln period, such as privy pits, wells, trash dumps, or the original cabin site. Thirteen grids were studied by a crew from NPS SEAC, covering 10,017 square meters. Unfortunately, no significant features were located.

Figure A-11 *Boyhood Home site, December 2005*

In 2003 work was begun on a new General Management Plan for ABLI. Public meetings were held in November of that year, and the majority felt that the natural and historic landscape was the primary value at the Boyhood Home unit. Alternatives were published in a newsletter in fall 2004, with a draft GMP and environmental impact statement due in 2006. Alternative A is referred to as the "no action alternative." Alternative B considers rehabilitation of the tavern for visitor services and park operations, restoration of the cabin, and marking of the original cabin site if it is located. Alternative C builds on Alternative B, but opens the cabin to the public, and adds more trails, restrooms, signs, and picnic tables. Alternative D considers removal of the tavern and replacement with a modern visitor information building, and construction of an "outdoor pioneer lifestyle exhibit."

A small office was placed at the site between the cabin and tavern, and is staffed from April through the last weekend of October. Though the tavern and cabin are both currently closed to the public, visitors are welcome at the site. Like Louis Warren and the Howard family, the NPS brochure for the Knob Creek site places significance in the landscape and location, stating that young Abe would have experienced a diversity of both nature and ideals at the Knob Creek Farm.

Other Studies

Karen Hudson conducted an architectural evaluation of the cabin and produced a report in July 1997. She concluded that it was largely re-configured when it was rebuilt in the 1930s from the Gollaher cabin. The replica cabin has a ridgepole and purlin roof, a wooden chimney, and horizontal logs in the gable ends. A photograph of the Gollaher cabin shows that it had the more common vertical studs in the gable ends resting on a log top plate. The reconstructed cabin walls are seven logs high, while the more typical height in the area is eight or nine logs. Further, the logs were not numbered when taken from the Gollaher cabin to permit an accurate reconstruction. Finally, there was no archaeological or photographic evidence of the Lincoln cabin and its precise site. Instead, Robert Thompson had guided the rebuilding of the cabin for the Howard family based on his memory of the Lincoln cabin.

Figure A-12 *Photograph of the Gollaher cabin, at right, with frame addition to left; undated (Karen Hudson's Architectural Evaluation, Lincoln Boyhood Home)*

Two additional studies provide a wealth of information about the Boyhood Home site. Keith Sculle's 2005 article "The Howard Family Legacy at the Knob Creek Farm" provides insight into the daily operations of the site under the Howard family

management. In 1998 Kent Brown completed a study on the land titles of Thomas Lincoln, including information from tax records and court records, which confirm the Lincoln family's ties to the site. Brown states in his opinion that the original cabin was on the west side of the road close to where the reconstruction is sited. He also states that the area on the opposite side of the road does not seem able to have accommodated a thirty acre farm. However, there are some locals that remembered the cabin was near a spring, and a spring is located near the east side of the road.

B. CHRONOLOGY OF DEVELOPMENT AND USE

Initial Construction and Early Operation

Hattie and Chester Howard purchased the Knob Creek farm in 1928 with plans for a memorial to Lincoln's boyhood on the property. Acting on advice from Robert Thompson, a local man who claimed to remember the original Lincoln cabin, the Howards dismantled a circa 1800 cabin elsewhere on the land to reuse its logs. This cabin was the original home of the Gollaher family, neighbors and friends of the Lincolns. The new cabin, erected with the old logs and said by Thompson to approximate the original Lincoln cabin in size and design, was completed in 1931. It was situated closer to the road in what was thought to be near its original location, and also to be more easily seen by travelers on Highway 31E.

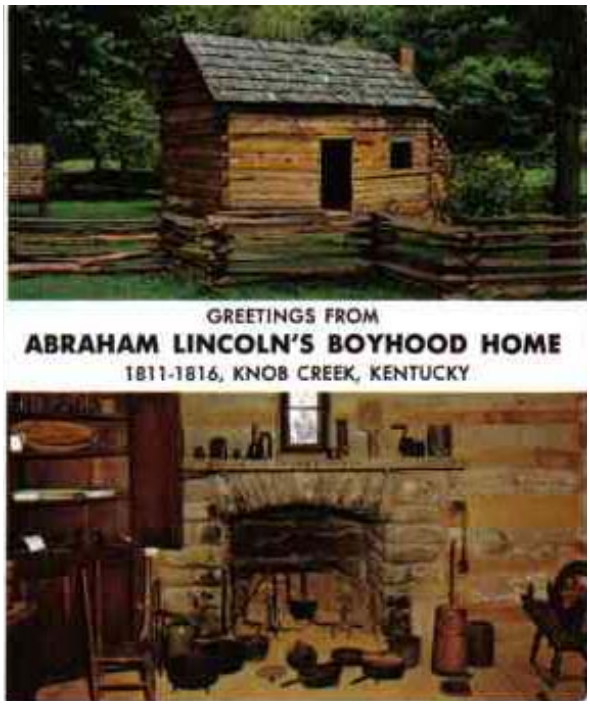

Figure B-1 *Detail of Boyhood Home postcard, undated (KyGenWeb Special Collections)*

The rebuilt cabin walls were seven logs high, with a central door on the east wall and small window opening on the same wall, near the north corner. A log chimney was on the exterior of the north wall. Bits of stone and chinking filled the spaces between the logs in the traditional manner. The gable roof was constructed in a ridgepole and purlin manner, with logs forming the gable ends. Wood shingles covered the roof.

Inside, the replica cabin consisted of one room with a small wood-plank loft at the north end. The logs and chinking were exposed on the interior walls, as was the roof framing. The floor was wood. The firebox and surround were constructed of rough stone, with a limestone hearth; the mantel was wood. (See Figure B-3) Round pegs embedded in the east wall between the window and door served as a ladder for access to the loft. The cabin was furnished with local period furniture and accessories to approximate an interior from Lincoln's era. Overall, the cabin was interpreted as a close replica of the original Lincoln cabin.

Karen Hudson's architectural evaluation of the cabin, completed in July 1997 (Appendix D), notes the differences between the replica cabin and the Gollaher cabin. Included in the report is a ca. 1920s photo of the single-pen Gollaher cabin in its original form, though then forming a rear ell to a later frame house. The photograph indicates the original cabin had an exterior chimney of stone and a stone pier foundation. Also, there was a door in the center of the long façade, but no windows. Further, the photo seems to indicate that the upper gable ends were frame rather than log. These features were not retained when the logs were reused for the replica cabin by the Howard family.

Though the Howard family sought to create a replica of the Lincoln cabin, not all

Figure B-2 *Postcard of cabin with tavern in background, undated (KyGenWeb Special Collections)*

materials and methods used in their construction were authentic to the period of Lincoln's boyhood. The cabin is clearly a 1930s construction, an attempt to convey the basic idea of Lincoln's boyhood cabin, rather than an authentic reconstruction to 1811-16. For example, boards cut by a circular saw were used in the door and in the window shutter, and probably the flooring as well; however, the circular saw did not arrive in rural Kentucky until the 1830s, well after the period of Lincoln's boyhood. Also, modern cut steel nails were used in the 1930s work. In addition, door and window hardware was cut from modern milled steel, not forged iron.

In addition to these technological differences, some features, such as the floor, reflect a 1930s interpretation of what the cabin may have been like. The family's original cabin could have had a wood floor or simple earthen floor. In early Kentucky cabins puncheon floors were also used, with thick hewn planks as floorboards resting either on joists or directly on the ground. A Kentucky letter of 1791 states that "puncheon floors are all right as long as it is cold enough to let them be covered with furs."[1]

Figure B-3 *Howard Family photo of cabin interior, undated but presumed c. 1933 (courtesy of Mary Brooks Howard)*

Shortly after the cabin was completed, the Howards began construction on a log tavern building located adjacent to and south of the cabin. The tavern first served food and drinks to visitors to the site. A gas station at the tavern also served tourists traveling on the highway. The site was operated as

[1] Carl R. Lounsbury, *An Illustrated Glossary of Early Southern Architecture & Landscape* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 297; quoting Jillson's *Tales of the Dark and Bloody Ground.*

Abraham Lincoln's Boyhood Home, and the manager lived in the second floor of the tavern. A nightclub opened in the tavern, and the site became known as a place for local entertainment in addition to interpretation of Lincoln's boyhood. When the county became dry, the tavern served as a museum and gift shop.

At some time prior to 1950, when Fred and Brooks Howard began managing the site, the firebox and surround were rebuilt in limestone. (See Figure B-1)

Figure B-4 *Howard Family photo of cabin interior, undated but presumed c. 1933 (courtesy of Mary Brooks Howard)*

Maintenance

In the mid-1950s, site manager Fred Howard and his wife Brooks installed a wood shingle roof on the cabin. Just prior to Fred's death in 1980, new wood shingle roofing was again installed; Clorox was reportedly used to kill moss on the roof. Brooks Howard managed the site after her husband's death, and sold the site at auction to a group of other Howard family members in 1986.

The new generation of Howard family members formed the Lincoln Boyhood Home, Inc. During their operation from 1986 to 2001, the chimney logs were replaced twice, using square oak logs taken from other local log cabins. The bottom log at the east elevation was also replaced. Around 1990, another log in the cabin was replaced with a new oak log. On a yearly basis the family would take mud from the creek and apply a new layer of chinking to the cabin.

Part of the floor inside was taken up for termite treatment and shoring. The family placed a glass jar from the gift shop under the floor, with a note inside suggesting that more work was done to the cabin than had actually taken place. This was done as a prank, with the family thinking it would be found long in the future.[2]

2001: National Park Service

Stabilization of the cabin was a priority of the National Park Service after their acquisition of the property in late 2001. In September 2003, temporary shoring was installed. Posts were placed along the cabin exterior. Inside a new wood framework was erected to support the walls. In order to install this supplemental framing, the original hand-hewn wood floor and floor joists were removed.

The flooring and floor joists are presently in storage inside the tavern's storage room. They are numbered, in accordance with the compliance document, but no drawing has been located in park files, according to ABLI Park Ranger Jenny Jones. The floor was reportedly in poor condition before removal.

Figure B-5 *View of added bracing inside cabin*

[2] Milburn Howard, in interview with Joseph K. Oppermann, February 28, 2006.

Chronology

1778		Thomas Lincoln, Abraham's father, is born in Virginia to Abraham and Bersheba Lincoln.
1782		Thomas Lincoln moves to Jefferson County, Kentucky, with his parents.
c. 1796		Thomas Lincoln moves to Elizabethtown, Kentucky.
1801		Thomas Lincoln purchases and settles on land in Cumberland County, Kentucky.
1806		Thomas Lincoln marries Nancy Hanks.
1807	February 10	Sarah Lincoln is born to Thomas and Nancy Lincoln.
1808	December	Thomas Lincoln purchases and relocates to the Sinking Spring farm in LaRue County, Kentucky.
1809	February 12	Abraham Lincoln is born at Sinking Spring farm to Thomas and Nancy Lincoln.
1811		A dispute over the Sinking Spring land title forces the Lincoln family to move to Knob Creek farm when Abraham is two years old. Thomas Lincoln did not buy this land; rather, he leased 30 acres from the owner, George Lindsey.
c. 1811		A son, Thomas, is born to Thomas and Nancy Lincoln; he dies in infancy.
1815		Thomas Lincoln unsuccessfully tries to buy Knob Creek farm. Litigation regarding the title to Sinking Spring continues.
		George Lindsey, Thomas Lincoln, and other leaseholders are served with a notice of ejection from the Knob Creek land by people in Pennsylvania with a prior claim. The matter goes to court and Lindsey prevails. The Lincolns are allowed to stay as the "tenant in possession."
1816		Lincoln family leaves Knob Creek farm after the court finds that Thomas has no claim to the Sinking Spring land. The Lincolns and their two children move to Spencer County, Indiana, where recent surveying has made land titles more stable.
1818	October 5	Nancy Lincoln dies.
1819	December	Thomas Lincoln marries Sarah Bush Johnston.
1830		The Lincoln family moves to Illinois.

1831		Abraham makes his home in New Salem, Illinois, where he reads law and keeps a store.
1832		Lincoln is defeated in his first bid for the state legislature.
1833		The Howard family founds Howardstown, Kentucky, where they own a store for distillery supplies.
1834		Lincoln is elected to the Illinois state legislature.
1836		Abraham Lincoln is admitted to the bar, having been completely self-taught.
1837		Lincoln moves to Springfield, Illinois.
1847		Lincoln begins a single term in the United States House of Representatives.
1854		The Missouri Compromise is repealed, heightening the growing tension regarding slavery.
1856		Lincoln joins the newly formed Republican Party.
1858		Lincoln is nominated as Republican candidate for the Senate from Illinois. He debates Democratic opponent Stephen Douglas over the slavery issue.
1860		Lincoln is nominated as the Republican presidential candidate.
	December 20	South Carolina is the first state to secede from the Union.
1861	January-March 4	Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas secede from the Union.
	March 4	Abraham Lincoln assumes office as President.
	March 4-November	Arkansas, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia secede from the Union.
1863	January 1	The Emancipation Proclamation is issued.
c. 1865		Tradition states that Abraham Lincoln's birthplace cabin at Sinking Spring farm is dismantled, and the logs are used in a nearby house.
1865	April 9	Confederate General Robert E. Lee surrenders to Union General Ulysses S. Grant at the Appomattox courthouse in Virginia.
	April 14	President Lincoln is shot by John Wilkes Booth on Good Friday at Ford's Theater in Washington, D.C.

	April 15	Abraham Lincoln dies in a house across the street from the theater.
1867		Congress authorizes Lincoln Memorial Association to raise funds for a monument in Washington, D.C.
c. 1870		Tradition states that Lincoln's Knob Creek cabin is torn down.
1874		The first Lincoln monument—a tomb marker—is dedicated in Springfield, Illinois.
1889-1890		Several books on the life and legacy of Abraham Lincoln are published.
1896		A cabin reputed to be the original Sinking Spring cabin is exhibited at Tennessee Centennial Exposition and New York's Central Park.
1904		The Lincoln Monument Commission is established by the Kentucky legislature.
1905		Robert Collier purchases the Sinking Spring farm at a public sale and establishes a nonprofit Lincoln Farm Association to construct a memorial there.
1909	February 12	President Theodore Roosevelt lays the cornerstone of the memorial building designed by John Russell Pope at Lincoln's birthplace site.
	May 31	A statue of Lincoln by sculptor Adolph Weinmen is dedicated in Hodgenville, Kentucky.
1911	November 9	The completed Memorial Building is dedicated by President William Howard Taft.
1920		James R. Howell builds Nancy Lincoln Inn next to the birthplace site and memorial building.
1922		The Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C., is dedicated.
1926		Highway 31E opens and increases tourism in Kentucky.
		Historian Louis A. Warren publishes a book on the life of Abraham Lincoln.
1928		Hattie Howell Howard and her husband Chester purchase 380 acres including the Knob Creek farm.
1930		The Howards move to a farmhouse across from Knob Creek site.

1931		The Howard family constructs a replica of Abraham Lincoln's boyhood home cabin using logs from the Gollaher cabin under the guidance of Robert Thompson, who remembers the original cabin. They begin to operate the Knob Creek site as a tourist destination known as Abraham Lincoln's Boyhood Home.
		Because visitors to the cabin frequently request refreshments, the Howards begin construction on a tavern.
1932		Son Paul Howard begins to manage the Boyhood Home property.
1933		The birthplace Memorial Building at Sinking Spring Farm is acquired by the National Park Service.
		The tavern, including a restaurant and gas station, opens to the public.
1934		A nightclub with live entertainment and dancing opens in the tavern.
1935		Helen Howard Peake takes over management of the Boyhood Home site.
1939	August 11	Abraham Lincoln's birthplace is named a National Historical Park.
1940		The Boyhood Home is managed by Nell and Earl W. Everly.
1942		Boy Scouts begin to use the site as a halfway stop on the Lincoln Heritage Trail from Elizabethtown to Hodgenville, Kentucky.
1942		The nightclub is closed when liquor sales are prohibited in LaRue County.
prior to 1950		Firebox is redesigned.
1950		Fred Howard takes over management. The tavern is converted to a museum and gift shop.
		Wood shingle roofing is installed on the cabin.
1952		Stanley Kubrick films part of *Mr. Lincoln*, a biographical movie, at the Boyhood Home site.
1958		The Boyhood Home is included in reenacted trip of the Lincoln's journey from Hodgenville, Kentucky, to Indiana.
1959	September 8	Lincoln's birthplace is named Abraham Lincoln National Historic Site.
1966	October 11	Abraham Lincoln National Historic Site is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

1980		Fred Howard's wife, Brooks, begins management of the Boyhood Home after his death.
		Split-oak shingle roof is installed on the cabin.
1981		Knob Creek's nomination to National Register fails because the site contains no original buildings from declared period of significance, Lincoln's Boyhood.
		Brooks Howard unsuccessfully tries to sell the site, asking $1 million.
1985		16,283 paid visitors come to the Boyhood Home, while 300,000 visit the nearby birthplace.
1986	January 11	The Boyhood Home site and contents are put up for auction; a group of Howard family members submits the highest bid of $120,500 for both.
	April 1	The Boyhood Home reopens. Julian Howard, Fred and Brooks' son, manages the site.
		Part of the floor is taken up for termite treatment.
		Several chimney logs are replaced with oak logs salvaged from other local log cabins.
		The chinking is touched-up with mud from the creek on a yearly basis.
1988		Lincoln's Boyhood Home is listed on the National Register of Historic Places for its significance to LaRue County tourism.
		A picnic pavilion and log restrooms are built on site.
1990		A log is replaced at the cabin with a salvaged oak log.
2001		Preservation of Lincoln's Kentucky Heritage, Inc. acquires the Boyhood Home.
	November 6	The National Park Service takes over management of the site, now the Boyhood Home unit of Abraham Lincoln Birthplace NHS.
2002	February 12	The formal ceremony of transfer to the NPS is held at the Boyhood Home.
2003	September	The cabin and tavern are stabilized. The wood floor is removed in the cabin for installation of supplemental framing.
		The log pavilion is torn down.

2004	October	A ground-penetrating radar survey of the site is unsuccessful in locating Lincoln-era features.
2006		A new General Management Plan draft is discussed at its final public hearing in May prior to publication.

C. PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

General Description

The Lincoln Boyhood Home was erected to resemble the side-gabled, single-pen log dwelling that Abraham Lincoln is believed to have lived in as a young boy. The replica cabin was constructed in 1931-32 using materials from a ca. 1800 log cabin that was part of a nearby farm when the Lincoln family lived at Knob Creek. The cabin was built on what was believed to be the approximate location of the site of the log cabin in which Lincoln lived until he was seven.

Figure C-1 *Cabin east elevation*

The building is constructed of hewn logs with the half-dovetail (also known as chamfer-and-notch) method of joinery and mud chinking; it is set on a stone foundation measuring approximately 14′-10″ by 18′-8″. On the main (east) façade is a central entrance with a vertical board door and one window opening with a hinged vertical-board shutter. The side-gabled, wood-shingle roof is framed with round log purlins set parallel to the ridge. A prominent log and mud chimney extends from the north gable end.

Figure C-2 *Half dovetail (chamfer-and-notch) corner*

Members of the Howard Family annually removed clay-rich mud from the creek to chink the logs. Twice between 1986 and 2001 they replaced logs in the cabin and chimney, using logs scavenged from other log buildings in the area. The larger logs at the base of the chimney were especially prone to deterioration and replacement; the smaller logs of the upper sections are cedar and are less susceptible to insects and decay.

Figure C-3 *Cabin northeast oblique*

Vertical bracing was added in 2003 to stabilize the building and chimney. Inside is an unpartitioned room with exposed logs and roof framing, a dirt floor, and rough-cut stone fireplace with stone hearth.

Figure C-4 *Cabin southeast oblique, added vertical bracing noted*

Figure C-5 *Detail of logs and chinking*

Construction Characteristics

Structural Systems

Foundation: Blocks of limestone extend a few inches above grade forming a foundation for the logs to rest on out of contact with the damp earth.

Exterior Walls: The logs are hewn and assembled in the half-dovetail (also called chamfer-and-notch) method of construction. Samples from several logs identified both white oak (Quercus alba) and American beech (Fagus grandifolia) wood.

Small sections of wood are set in a diagonal pattern as filler between the logs. A mud rich in clay is used for chinking.

Floor Framing: There is currently no framing at floor level. The floor framing was removed in 2003 to install interior supplemental framing.

Roof Framing: An unhewn log approximately 5″ to 6″ in diameter serves as the ridge pole. Unhewn logs ranging from approximately 4″ to 8″ in diameter are set parallel to the ridge pole and act as roof purlins. This roof framing supports a split-oak, shingle roof installed in 1980. The shingles are about 2′-0″ in length and vary in width.

Supplemental Framing: In 2003, because of the deteriorated condition of the structure, NPS added a supplemental framing of 6″ by 6″ members to both the interior and exterior of the cabin, as well as the chimney base. This temporary support system remains in place.

Exterior Features

Roof and Rainwater Collection/Dispersal: The roofing material is described above as part of the roof framing. There are no gutters or downspouts.

Chimney: The chimney is made of logs and large amounts of mud chinking. The base of the chimney is rectilinear, measuring 5′-0″ by 7′-6″. Hewn logs form the base. As the chimney rises in height, it gradually narrows to about 1′-6″ by 1′-6″ in section. The logs change from hewn to unhewn and become shorter in length and smaller in girth. Small areas of modern Portland cement mortar are used as chinking at the chimney.

Figure C-6 *Chimney base detail*

Walls: The exposed hewn logs and mud chinking constitute the exterior appearance of the walls.

Doorways: There is one doorway. It is centered on the east elevation. The board-and-batten door is assembled of salvaged boards, circular sawn, of varying widths and joined by wire nails. The battens measure 1 ¾″ by 2″. The door measures 3′-0″ wide by 5′-6″ tall by 1″ thick. Plank boards measuring 1″ by 4 ½″ form the interior side casing; there is no head casing.

Figure C-7 *Door on east elevation*

Windows: There is a single window opening. It is on the east elevation north of the doorway. There are no glazed lights. The wooden shutter, measuring 2′-2″ wide by 2′-4″ high, is made of salvaged boards. The shutter is mounted on two interior, wooden pivot hinges.

Figure C-8 *Window on east elevation*

Interior Features

Room 101: The cabin consists of a single room. It measures approximately 13′-3″ by 17′- 8″.

Figure C-9 *Room 101, looking north*

• *Flooring:* The ground inside the cabin currently serves as the floor. The tavern's storage room holds the parts of the wood flooring system that was removed.

• *Walls:* The hewn logs and chinking of the walls are exposed. No finishes are applied.

• *Doors:* The one exterior door is described above. There are no interior doorways.

• *Windows:* The one window is described above.

Figure C-10 *Room 101, interior view of door and window on east wall*

• *Ceiling:* The exposed roof purlins and ridgepole and the underside of the split shingle roof that they support constitute the ceiling of this room. The distance from top of floor (ground) to top of wall plate is 8′-11″. The distance from top of wall plate to bottom of ridgepole is another 4′-7″.

• *Baseboards:* There are no baseboards in this room.

• *Finishes:* There are no applied decorative or protective finishes.

• *Mechanical Systems:* There are no mechanical systems present.

• *Electrical Systems:* Three tear-drop design lights are mounted on the east wall, above the door.

• *Plumbing Systems:* There is no plumbing system.

• *Other Features:* A large stone fireplace and hearth are at the center of the north wall. The hearth is 7′-3″ wide by 3′-0″ deep. The mantle measures 7′-3″ across and 5′-0″ tall; the top 2 ¾″ in height are the thickness of a 11″ inch deep wood mantel shelf. The mantel is made of coursed rubble of roughly squared limestone blocks. The arched firebox opening is 3′-9″ deep and 3′-10″ tall, a steel strap providing reinforcement for the arch.

Several salvaged boards are positioned between the top and second log down on the east and west walls. The boards are grouped together at the north end of the room near the fireplace. The purpose of this grouping is to represent a sleeping loft.

Near the sleeping loft on the east wall are three round pegs inserted in the logs. Each peg measures about 1 ⅝″ in diameter and extends about 1′-1 ½″. Grouped vertically,

they represent a ladder to access the sleeping loft.

Physical Condition

The structural stability of the cabin and its chimney are very poor. The added reinforcement of 2003 is essential to keeping both from collapsing. A number of logs are severely deteriorated, especially those near ground level. Proper repair and treatment will likely require either complete dismantling or extensive shoring to replace damaged lower logs.

Figure C-11 *Room 101, looking south*

PART II: TREATMENT & USE

A. INTRODUCTION

The rural countryside where Abraham Lincoln spent part of his youth appears in the early twenty-first century much the same as it did when young Lincoln was there two centuries earlier. It is a rolling landscape of thick woods punctuated with the open meadows of small farms.

Since his assassination in 1865, Lincoln has held a special place of fascination in the American psyche. He was born of modest means and largely self-educated. He had had a moderately successful career in law and politics. He joined in 1856 the newly formed Republican Party established to oppose the spread of slavery. He became that party's senatorial candidate two years later. He lost, but his debates with Stephen Douglas became legendary. Then, improbably, in 1860 the awkwardly tall attorney from Illinois became president at an important crossroads in his country's history. The country soon fell, perhaps inevitably, into a terrible civil war. Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation and prevailed upon the Union troops to fight until the Union was secure. His oratory was simple, direct, and morally powerful, in retrospect some of the finest prose ever written by any American. Lincoln was and is still considered to have been one of the country's most important leaders.

By the second quarter of the twentieth century, the automobile had become the preferred means of travel in America. Its widespread popularity made possible frequent movement of large numbers of people for purely recreational purposes over much longer distances than ever imagined. Automobile tourism became a major economic activity.

People were arriving from all over the country to visit the birthplace of Abraham Lincoln near Hodgenville, Kentucky. Robert J. Collier, publisher of *Collier's* magazine, had raised the money to purchase farm of Lincoln's birth, along with what were thought at the time to be the original cabin logs. He had established a nonprofit group to acquire the property and solicit designs for a memorial. An impressive design of John Russell Pope, one of the nation's most prominent architects, had been erected. The new memorial complex had then been given to the federal government in 1916.

It was in this atmosphere of adulation and economic opportunity that the Howard family purchased the site of Lincoln's boyhood home in 1931. The Lincoln cabin had long since disappeared but an elderly neighbor felt certain he remembered it. And the site hadn't seen much development since young Lincoln lived there. In addition, the property adjoined a major highway.

The Howard family took the logs from another cabin on their new property, one that was believed to date to the same period as the Lincoln occupancy, and guided by the memory of the neighbor, recreated a representation of the Lincoln boyhood cabin for all to see. Soon, they added the tavern to serve refreshments to visitors. The site manager lived in an apartment upstairs over the tavern. Year after year, the family members made repairs to the cabin. As

people came to see the cabin memorial, they stopped for refreshments and souvenirs that economically sustained the Howard family. This almost symbiotic relationship of cabin and tavern was critical to their mutual survival from the beginning and continued until the property was deeded to the federal government in 2001. The significance of this cultural phenomenon of tourism was formally recognized when the property was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1988.

B. ULTIMATE TREATMENT AND USE

The undeveloped farmland at Knob Creek, much as it was when the Lincoln family lived on the land, attracted tourists and was a critical factor in the decision to promote the property for tourism.

Figure B-1 *View to fields west of tavern*

The "Lincoln cabin" is a representation of the one Abraham Lincoln would have known, assembled from the parts, sometimes modified, from another cabin and repaired over time with parts salvaged from still other cabins. The methods of salvage have been driven by utilitarian purpose without the documentation commonly associated with such disassembly by today's standards. The choice of location and the design for the reconstructed memorial cabin was likewise based on a casual understanding of the original, without benefit of professional investigations. Furthermore, the resultant construction incorporated the salvaged pieces using 1930s building techniques and materials.

The original purpose of the tavern was economical: to tap into the occasion of the tourist visit by providing additional reasons to linger. The tavern offered refreshments and curios for purchase, and historical "artifacts" of farm living for viewing. A secondary use was living quarters, the upstairs being a residence for site personnel. Because this was a family owned and operated business, the residents were typically members of the family. Common 1930s materials and techniques were utilized here also, including fiberboard panels and logs in the round.

The two buildings are tangible artifacts of the popular 1930s interpretation of Lincoln's life as a young boy and the development of tourism focused on this important historical figure.

Both buildings retain a large amount of building material from the initial 1930s construction. Both buildings and the site have a considerable amount of documentation concerning the appearance of the complex at that time. Opportunities remain for additional investigation and testing of the building fabric of both buildings in order to gain an even better understanding of this period. Considering these circumstances, the following recommendation is made.

The Recommended Ultimate Treatment includes the exterior and interior restoration of the cabin to its original 1930s appearance; the exterior restoration of the tavern to its original 1930s appearance; the interior restoration of the tavern's principal public room, the hall, to its original 1930s appearance, to use as a visitors reception center; and the rehabilitation of the tavern's other interior spaces for ancillary support areas and staff offices.

This approach would have the following advantages:

- Interprets the buildings and site as tangible cultural resources in a manner that is consistent with the property's nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. The cabin is representative of early, twentieth-century Americans' understanding of what life must have been like for a young Abraham Lincoln. The complex is representative of burgeoning, early twentieth-century tourism based on the fascination with a nationally important historical personage;

- The large size of the hall allows the tavern building to reflect its 1930s characteristics while incorporating other functions within the space, including current-day interpretations of young Lincoln's life as well as the country's evolving fascination with historical personages, and the advent of automobile tourism;

- The hall also lends itself well to the inclusion of a visitors' information desk, gift shop, and other important functions of a modern park;

- The abundantly large restrooms lend themselves well for rehabilitation as modern ADA-accessible restrooms;

- The abundantly large original kitchen can accommodate rehabilitation for modern staffing and ancillary functions, such as a handicapped accessible workstation, staff break room, and a food-preparation area for the occasional hosting of catered public events in the hall;

- The large second-floor area lends itself well for rehabilitation for staff offices, staff restroom, and ancillary spaces;

- The open, undeveloped space in front of and around the tavern and cabin is available for interpretation more consistent with the 1930s characteristics of the complex.

Figure B-2 *Postcard of Boyhood Home site, undated*

There would be disadvantages to this approach as well:

- Presents a less than pristine appearance of the Lincoln farm site.

C. REQUIREMENTS FOR TREATMENT

The Tavern and Lincoln Boyhood Cabin are addressed as a single complex in the park's Draft General Management Plan.

The National Park Service Cultural Resources Management Guideline (DO – 28) requires planning for the protection of cultural resources on park property.

In addition, Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) mandates that federal agencies, including the National Park Service, take into account the effects of their actions on properties listed or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places and give the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation a reasonable opportunity to comment.

Treatment of the building and site are to be guided by *The Secretary of Interior's Standards for Historic Preservation Projects*, the Americans with Disability Act, and the International Building Code. Threats to public life, safety and welfare are to be addressed; however, because this is an historic building, alternatives to full legislative and code compliance are recommended where compliance would needlessly compromise the integrity of the historic building.

D. ALTERNATIVES FOR TREATMENT

In addition to the Ultimate Treatment discussed in Section II.B above, two other alternatives are discussed below.

Each alternative corresponds to an alternative presented in the Draft GMP.

Alternative #1: Restore the exterior of the cabin to its original 1930s appearance, without public access to the interior.

This approach would have the following advantages:

- Interprets the building at a slightly lower financial cost.

This approach would have the following disadvantages as well:

- Minimizes the opportunity to spotlight those 1930s social trends of tourism and interest in historical personages, trends which are not now well-interpreted at many historic sites.

Alternative #2: Move the cabin into a new outdoor pioneer lifestyle exhibit at the Boyhood Home site.

This approach has no clear advantages.

There would be significant disadvantages to this approach:

- Adversely affects cultural resources which contribute to the property's listing in the National Register of Historic Places;
- Minimizes the opportunity to interpret the 1930s social trends which produced the cabin and tavern;
- Disrupts the traditional functional relationship between the cabin and the tavern.

E. RECOMMENDATIONS

General

It is important to think of the cabin, tavern, and site as an inseparable complex, developed in the 1930s to operate as a single unit. These characteristics are inherent in the property's listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

Figure E-1 *Current setting of tavern and cabin, 2005*

Whatever the chosen treatment(s) for the site and the buildings, it is recommended that prior to the commencement of work, the complex be fully documented in accordance with Historic American Building Survey (HABS) and Historic American Landscape Survey (HALS) standards.

Also, dendrochronology studies should be conducted for the log walls of both buildings. Oral histories hold that the logs of the tavern were harvested on site at the time of construction; the logs of the replica cabin taken from the Gollaher family's cabin date to the early nineteenth century; and later repairs used salvaged cabin logs of unknown dates. Documentation of both log ages and wood species would be most valuable to compare with extant information and to prepare for future repairs and interpretation.

It is further recommended that a Historic Paint and Finish Analysis be completed for each building, both to document the finishes before they incur any additional damage during repairs and to guide the further restoration and interpretive efforts.

Finally, oral histories should be collected soon. There are quite a few family members who can shed light on the operation of the cabin and tavern. However, several are advanced in age and others are in poor health.

Site

As it is adapted for use as a national park facility, it would be desirable to promote an immediate setting for the cabin and tavern that resembles the original one of the 1930s. This would be the setting most compatible with the interpretive period of the buildings.

Figure E-2 *Cabin and tavern looking west, September 23, 1933 (photo by Beuer)*

Cabin

To achieve the recommended Ultimate Treatment the following actions should be taken:

- If dismantling is necessary for repair, prior to dismantling for repairs, prepare

measured drawings, assign a unique number to each building part and mark;

- Install replacement logs of same specie, cut, and joinery as the original 1930s construction;

- As part of the repairs to the chimney, install replacement logs and smaller limbs of the same species, respectively, method of cuts, and joinery as the original 1930s construction. Remove Portland cement-based chinking and replace with mud-based chinking to match the original of the 1930s;

- Preserve existing limestone firebox surround until further study can determine whether it was installed during the period of significance;

Figure E-3 *Cabin northeast oblique, 2005*

- Remove existing wood shingle roofing and install new historically appropriate wood shingle roofing;

- Remove 1950s era tear-drop lighting from the interior and install visually unobtrusive lighting;

- Reinstall wood floor joists and flooring removed in 2003 to install temporary shoring. Repair damaged areas with Dutchmen and replace any missing areas in kind;

- Apply finishes as determined by the Historic Paint and Finishes Analysis.

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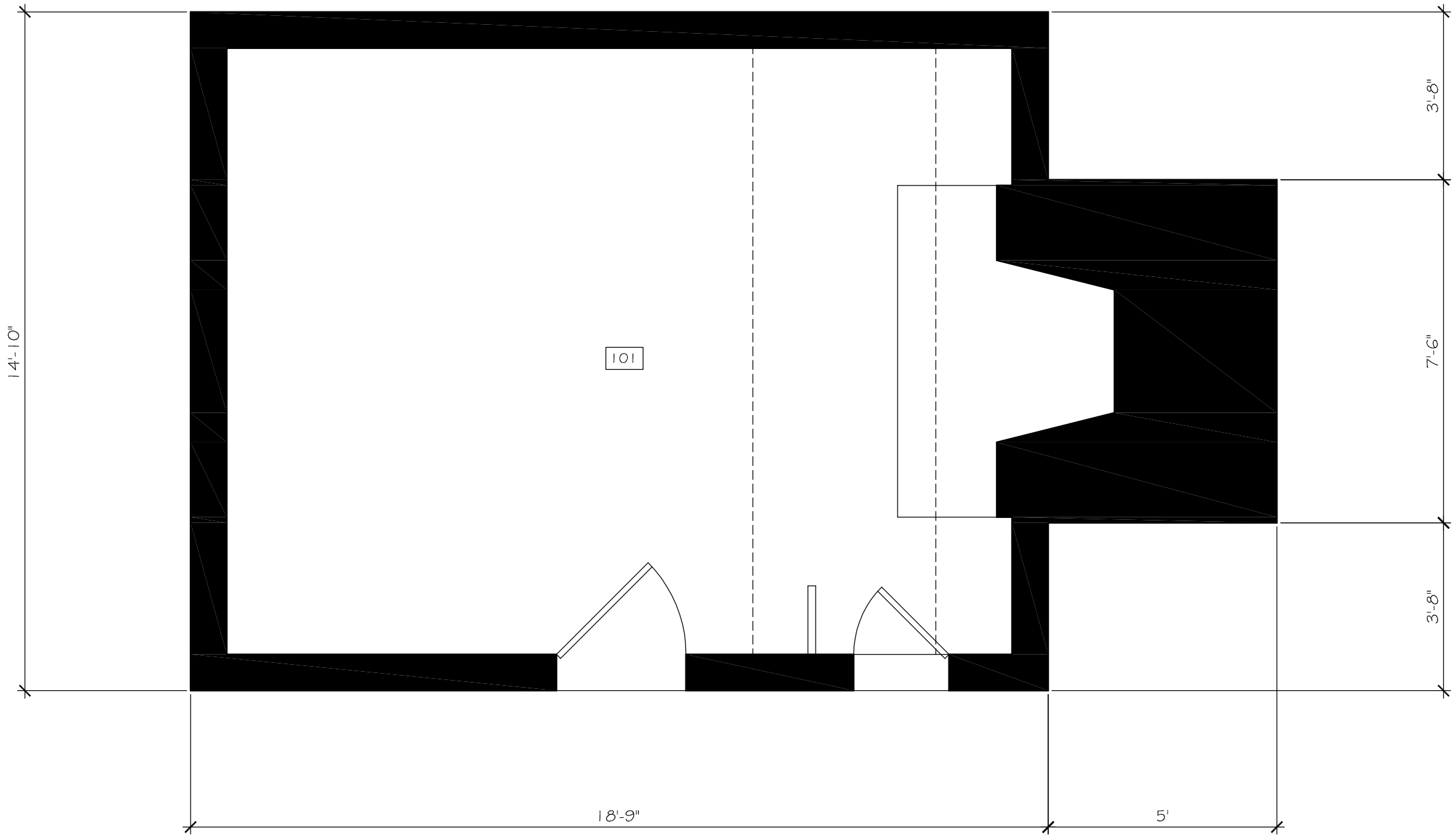
APPENDIX A

As-Found Floor Plan



FIRST FLOOR PLAN

2006

SCALE: 3/8" = 1'-0"

0 1 2 4

JOSEPH K. OPPERMANN-ARCHITECT, P.A.
WINSTON-SALEM, NORTH CAROLINA

LINCOLN CABIN

ABRAHAM LINCOLN BIRTHPLACE
KNOB CREEK, KENTUCKY

JOB #:	0506
DATE:	04-01-2006
DRAWN BY:	JLPW
REVISIONS:	
SHEET #:	1

APPENDIX B

Interview Transcripts

1. February 28, 2006 – Mary Brooks Howard
2. March 2, 2006 – Milburn Howard
3. March 10, 2006 – Milburn Howard

TELEPHONE INTERVIEW

Date: February 28, 2006

Subject: Lincoln Boyhood Home
Cabin & Tavern

Interviewee: Mrs. Fred (Mary "Brooks") Howard
Previous Owner

Interview by: Joseph K. Oppermann, FAIA
Historical Architect

JO: Mrs. Howard, in calling for you I am afraid that I asked for Mary Howard but I now understand that you go by Brooks, not Mary.

BH: Yes, everyone calls me Brooks.

JO: And you were married to Fred Howard and lived above the Tavern, I understand.

BH: Yes, we married in June, 1950 and lived in the apartment upstairs until October, 1953 when our son was born. We never moved back to the apartment. Our house that we were building was ready by then and we moved to it. But Fred lived in the apartment for a while before we got married.

JO: Could you describe the Tavern when you first lived there and the changes you and Fred made as well as changes by others?

BH: I used to go there a lot before we got married. Everyone did. It's really very much the same.

The screened-in porch is different now. It was enclosed as a storage room after I sold it in 1986. But as long as I can remember it was a screened-in porch. It was like that when the Tavern was first built, I believe.

Fred put in the shower upstairs in the apartment bathroom in about 1950, just before we got married and moved in.

He built that pine board wall in the hall about then too. It created an office off in that side area near the fireplace. It's still there.

He must have put the cabinets with sink in the back of the kitchen along the west wall by the back door about the same time. Also the peninsula on the north wall. I can't remember cooking in there without them. The wall cabinet on the east wall was always there. The flooring I can't remember.

The two ceiling heaters were installed in the hall in early 1954. I remember because the big furnace in the basement burned out in 1953 about the time our son was born. We never replaced the furnace. Just left it there and those vents that were in the floors. Put the heaters in the hall instead of installing a new furnace.

Fred took the mirror off the bar in the early 1950s. The family story is that the bar came out of a Louisville hotel.

In the mid-1950s we put down a new floor on top of the existing floor in the hall.

Those globe lights were always there in the hall. After 1986 the fluorescent lights were added.

Outside, those lights that are on the front to the sides were there as long as I can remember.

Fred died in 1980. I added the wheelchair ramp about 1982. It doesn't meet codes today but it was an improvement when put in. I don't remember about the concrete porch. Seems like it has always been there.

Family members did install the composition shingle roof. I am not sure when. Don't remember wood shingles being on there before.

One story I remember hearing about the construction of the Tavern is that the mason was convicted of murder before he could complete the work. The family had to find someone else to finish.

JO: What about the Cabin?

MH: I remember that we put on a wood shingle roof in the mid-1950s.

JO: There was a mason jar with a message inside found in 2003 by the contractor working for the National Park Service. The message says that the cabin was rebuilt.

MH: That's fictitious. They were doing repairs and did that as a prank. They certainly didn't rebuild the cabin.

TELEPHONE INTERVIEW

Date: March 2, 2006

Subject: Lincoln Boyhood Home
Cabin & Tavern

Interviewee: Milburn Howard
Previous Owner

Interview by: Joseph K. Oppermann, FAIA
Historical Architect

JO: Mr. Howard, I understand that you were part of the group that bought the property at auction from your aunt, Brooks Howard, in 1986.

MH: Yes, there was a group of us that got together to try to buy it.

JO: Could you describe what changes the group made to the Tavern and when?

MH: We did most of the work in the first few years and then the enthusiasm just sort of dropped off.

About 1988 we enclosed the screened-in porch. Just reused the concrete floor and enclosed the walls. Our plan was to have a counter with a sink and cabinets. Something for people to use without having to come inside if they rented the pavilion and grounds for a party. We built the pavilion then too. And the outside public restrooms. It never quite worked that way, though. People still wanted to come inside to use the kitchen.

About the same time we took out the tile floors in the two in public restrooms inside the Tavern. A bunch of the tiles were cracked or had missing pieces. We put sheet vinyl down as a replacement. The tiles matched the flooring tiles in the kitchen but those were in better condition and we left them in place.

We installed the fluorescent lights in the hall and kitchen. The globe lights had always been in the hall, as far as I know. My Uncle Fred installed the tear-drop lights in the hall to spotlight his exhibits of artifacts.

In 1998 we had a roofer replace the composition roof with a new composition roof.

Two years ago the National Park Service called and told us we had to remove the rest of our things. That they couldn't be responsible for them. The artifacts that my Uncle Fred collected were just two weeks ago turned over to an antique dealer for selling. Some of the things that were originally on display in the Cabin may be donated to a museum. The bar is in my barn.

JO: How about at the Cabin?

MH: Every year we would go down to the creek to get mud for chinking the logs. It was an annual event.

At least twice we replaced logs in the chimney stack. Once we replaced the bottom log at the door to the Cabin. We would find other cabins in the area where we could salvage the logs we needed.

Never did anything to the wood shingle roof except put bleach on it to kill the moss. Uncle Fred put that shingle roof just before he died in 1980.

TELEPHONE INTERVIEW

Date: March 10, 2006
(Continuation of the Conversation of March 2.)

Subject: Lincoln Boyhood Home
Cabin & Tavern

Interviewee: Milburn Howard
Previous Owner

Interview by: Joseph K. Oppermann, FAIA
Historical Architect

JO: *Mr. Howard, could you continue with your recollections of the Tavern and the Cabin? Any information you may have about the construction, use or changes over time would be helpful.*

MH: My family told me that the bar my grandfather installed in the Tavern had come out of the Seelbach Hotel in Louisville. After the sale of alcohol became illegal, he removed the mirror atop the bar and sold it to "Scorchy' Greenwell who wanted it for his tavern in New Haven, KY. His place later burned and the mirror was lost in that fire.

The wood type of the flooring installed in the hall on top of the original is beech. It was not varnished or shellacked but oiled. Every year my cousins and I had to mop on "red oil."

There never was any heat in the upstairs apartment until my cousin "Fabe" Howard (nickname for Fabian) lived there after we bought the place. He lived in the north room for about 15 years and used the other two rooms for storage. He used a kerosene heater. In about 1990 our cousin Julian Howard, who worked for the Louisville & Nashville Railroad, salvaged a new natural gas furnace from one of the company's buildings that was about to be torn down. Fabe hung it in the basement from the first-floor floor joists and hooked it up to the propane gas. He never switched out the natural gas valve for one designed for propane gas and the furnace clogged. Never worked after that. He just left it. That is the furnace in the basement now. Got pretty cold in the Tavern. Sometimes you would go in and Fabe's dishes would be in the kitchen sink and the water would be frozen solid. But he never seemed to mind too much.

Julian also got for us sinks out of a 1905 railroad building that was being demolished. We put them in the outdoor restrooms that we built but the Park Service removed them.

In the basement is a propane gas water heater next to the brick flue. And next to it is the pump for the well water. Both work fine.

There is a sump pump there, too, in the southwest corner of the room near the bottom of the stairs. For as long as I can remember there was a bull frog that lived in the sump. He would be sitting on the edge when you came down the stairs and would jump into the water and disappear. Next time you went down the stairs, he would be sitting there again.

I'm pretty sure that there never was natural gas on the site. My father went to Columbia Military School in Tennessee and everything had to be just so-so. He always said that he was afraid of natural gas. I am pretty certain that the first furnace was coal burning. Next came propane with Uncle Fred and the heaters on the hall ceiling.

Something else about the site. My cousins and I built the log pavilion on a piece of flat ground. The Park Service tore it down. But some older family members said that the reason it was flat was because it used to be a clay tennis court back when the Tavern was first starting out.

JO: What about the Cabin? What about that Mason jar with a message in it saying the cabin was rebuilt?

MH: It was in the summer of 1986. We had just acquired the property in January and we were anxious to get going. The cabin was in bad shape. We replaced part of the wood floor. Treated for termites. Replaced the bottom logs of the chimney. Got square logs from another cabin. When we had the floor up we thought we would leave a message. Someone got a mason jar out of the gift shop. We made up this story and put it under the flooring. Didn't know it would be found so soon.

The next time we worked on the Cabin was about 1990. Using a log from another cabin we replaced the bottom log on the east side, where the door is. It needs replacing again. Replaced some of the smaller logs in the chimney, too.

JO: What kind of wood is in the Cabin, do you think?

MH: The logs are oak, I think. In the chimney it's a combination of oak and cedar. The cedar holds up pretty well. The cedar is mostly in the smaller branches higher in chimney stack.

I don't know if you have seen the picture of the Cabin in National Geographic Magazine. About 1963, I think it was. But if you look at the chimney, it doesn't look like it does now. The logs of the chimney were much smaller than the ones in there now.

JO: What about in the Tavern? Do you know what kind of wood is used there?

MH: Mostly white oak, I believe. Except for some of those real long logs. They're poplar.

APPENDIX C

Structural Report

DCF Engineering, Inc.

December 8, 2005 05017.C

Joseph K. Oppermann
Joseph K. Oppermann – Architect
Salem Station
PO Box 10417
Winston-Salem, NC 27108

Re: Lincoln Boyhood Home
Knob Creek Farm
White City, Kentucky

Dear Joe:

The purpose of this report is to provide a concise structural description of the Lincoln Boyhood Home for the Historic Structures Report. The report is based on our December 6, 2005 inspection.

DESCRIPTION

The log structure which is the Lincoln Boyhood Home is a small one room log structure, approximately 14'-10" by 18'-8" in plan. The Boyhood Home structure is constructed using the chamfer and notch method of log home construction. The chinking is a traditional material of red mud and other ingredients. The cabin contains a stone fireplace with a stone hearth extension. The fire place is constructed of coursed rubble of roughly squared stones containing an iron or steel bar below the arch. The fireplace appears to be of more recent construction. The original fireplace would have been constructed of a rough rubble using a low grade lime or a clay mortar. The roof is framed with round timbers running parallel to the ridge.

CONDITION

The condition of the Boyhood Home is poor. Many of the logs are severely deteriorated. The timber framed chimney has partially collapsed. The building would not be standing without the added bracing.

DISCUSSION

The major advantages to an early settler family for constructing a log structure was that it was cheap, fast, and utilized local materials. As the pioneer cleared his land for planting, the raw materials for construction were readily available. Constructing a log structure of green timbers was a fast operation only requiring a few cuts at each end of each log. As the green logs dried to their equilibrium moisture content, the door and window jambs would have to be adjusted due to shrinkage. Chinking had to be re-worked to keep the building weather tight.

The traditional way of weatherproofing a log wall structure was to add siding such as horizontal shiplap boards on vertical nailers or vertical board and batten siding to the outside of the building. Inside, finishes ranged from wood siding to plaster on lath attached to vertical nailers. Many humble logs structures are hidden beneath larger, more imposing buildings.

PO Box 879 ▪ Cary, NC 27512-0879 ▪ (919)467-3853 ▪ FAX (919)469-4901
EMAIL office@dcfengineeringinc.com

Epoxy materials, such as consolidants and fillers can be problematic when used in log structures, especially ones that are unheated. Moisture may condense on the colder surface or boundary of an epoxy filler or consolidant inside a timber element, leading to more decay.

As permanent heritage structure the reconstructed Boyhood Home will require periodic maintenance. It is important to note that maintaining a fire in the fireplace during inclement weather would help to drive moisture out of the building. The impractically of this, as well as maintenance to the level originally provided, requires that other levels of intervention be instituted to ensure a more permanent facility. Metal flashing, unavailable to Mr. Lincoln, should be included to ensure a longer service life for the restored structure.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Boyhood Home cabin should be dismantled after documentation and rebuilt. The original timbers can be reused where deterioration is superficial or slight. The logs for the Boyhood Home should be numbered and carefully marked with metal tags prior to disassembly. Larger timbers which are partially destroyed can be cut down and used elsewhere in the building.

Care should be taken in reconstructing the Boyhood Home with newly cut replacement logs. The moisture content of the logs at the time of reconstruction would depend on their handling during de-construction, storage, and re-construction. The replacement logs, if purchased newly cut, and installed in a short time would have been most green which equates to a moisture content of almost 30%.

The inter-mixing of newly cut logs with the existing, can lead to serious problems in the re-built building. The distortion of the sidewalls may be a result of shrinkage in the new logs as they attain an equilibrium moisture content consistent with their environment. Eventually, this shrinkage across the grain will stabilize. The equilibrium moisture content of wood is a function of temperature and humidity.

Moisture Content of Wood

Condition	Moisture Content (by weight)
Green	30%
Large Timbers, Installed	26%
70◦F, 55% Relative Humidity	10.1%
70◦F, 30% Relative Humidity	6.2%

Note that wood in equilibrium with a typical dry bulb temperature and relative humidity has much less moisture than material furnished green or partially dried when installed.

The predicted shrinkage or swelling in a timber from one moisture content to another can be calculated. For a 40 inch deep portion consisting of four logs, the predicted amount of shrinkage across the timber is 1.6 inches for a moisture content change from 29% to 10%. This assumes an average radial and tangential shrinkage of 6.3%. This shrinkage across the grain caused the wall to distort because the tightly fitted jamb pieces will not shrink in the longitudinal direction of the grain. For this reason, efforts should be taken to ensure that new and original

timbers are similar in moisture content to each other and close to the equilibrium moisture content for logs in that particular location in the building.

Resistance drilling is one way to quantify the amount of deterioration in a log structure. Documentation can include a condition assessment of each log based on this method of probing.

The existing timbers which are sound should be immersed in a preservative so that adequate penetration is achieved. A temporary trough can be constructed with plywood and standard lumber and lined with heavy plastic or a roofing membrane. A clear wood preservative containing 2% metallic salts of zinc would be the most appropriate preservative. Preservative systems using borate compounds are somewhat problematic in that the preservative is water soluble and will leach out, requiring considerable maintenance.

The roof can be reconstructed in the same manner by resetting the same logs parallel to the ridge and covering with long shingles.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This report has been prepared for the exclusive use of the Joseph K. Opperman – Architect, and your assignees for specific application to the referenced property in accordance with generally accepted engineering practice.

Our inspection consisted of visual observation only, made solely to determine the structural integrity of the described building. Neither the inspection nor the report covers plumbing, mechanical, electrical, hydrological or geotechnical features.

No other warranty, expressed or implied, is made. These conclusions and recommendations may not reflect variations in conditions which could exist intermediate of the observed locations or in unexplored areas of the building. Should such variations become apparent during construction, it may be necessary to re-evaluate our conclusions and recommendations based upon an on-site observation of the conditions.

We very much appreciate this opportunity to be of service. If you have comments or questions regarding this report, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,
DCF Engineering, Inc.

David C. Fischetti, PE
President

STATE OF KENTUCKY
D. C. FISCHETTI
11.621
REGISTERED PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER

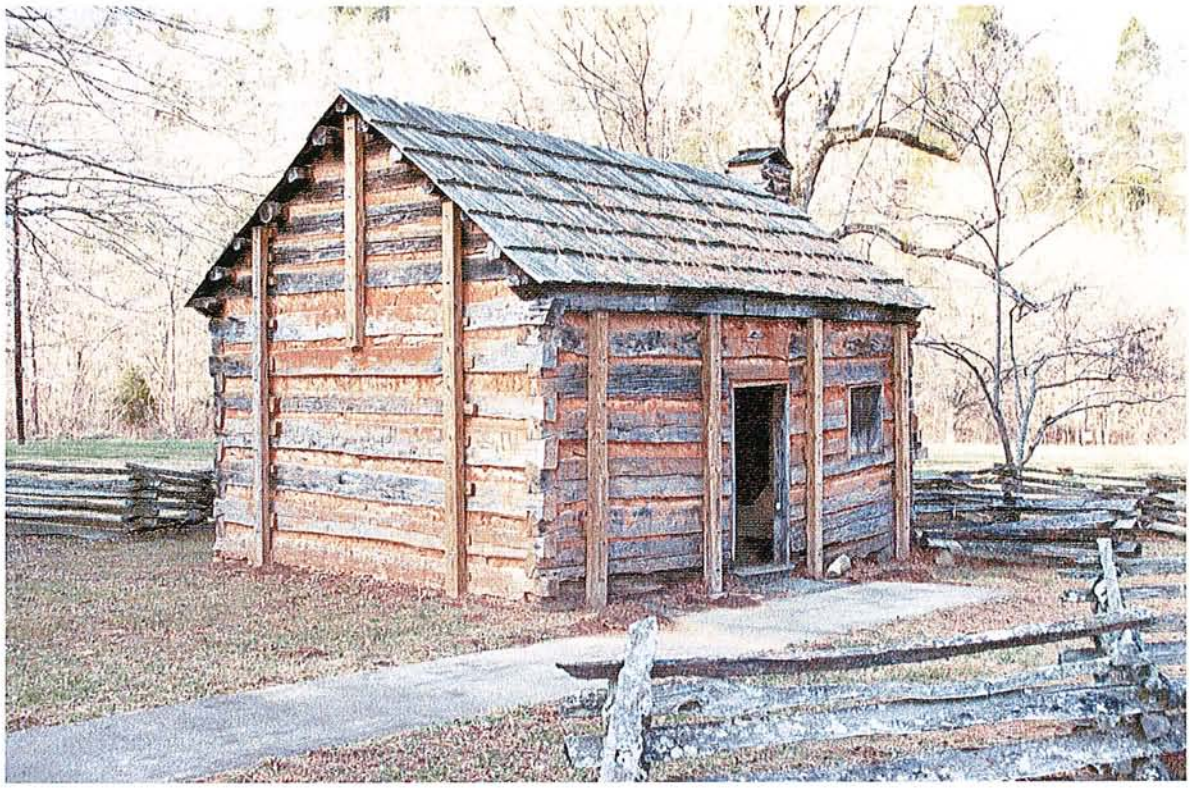


Figure 1 The Boyhood Home has been braced to prevent collapse.

Figure 2 The cabin is constructed using chamfer and notch method.

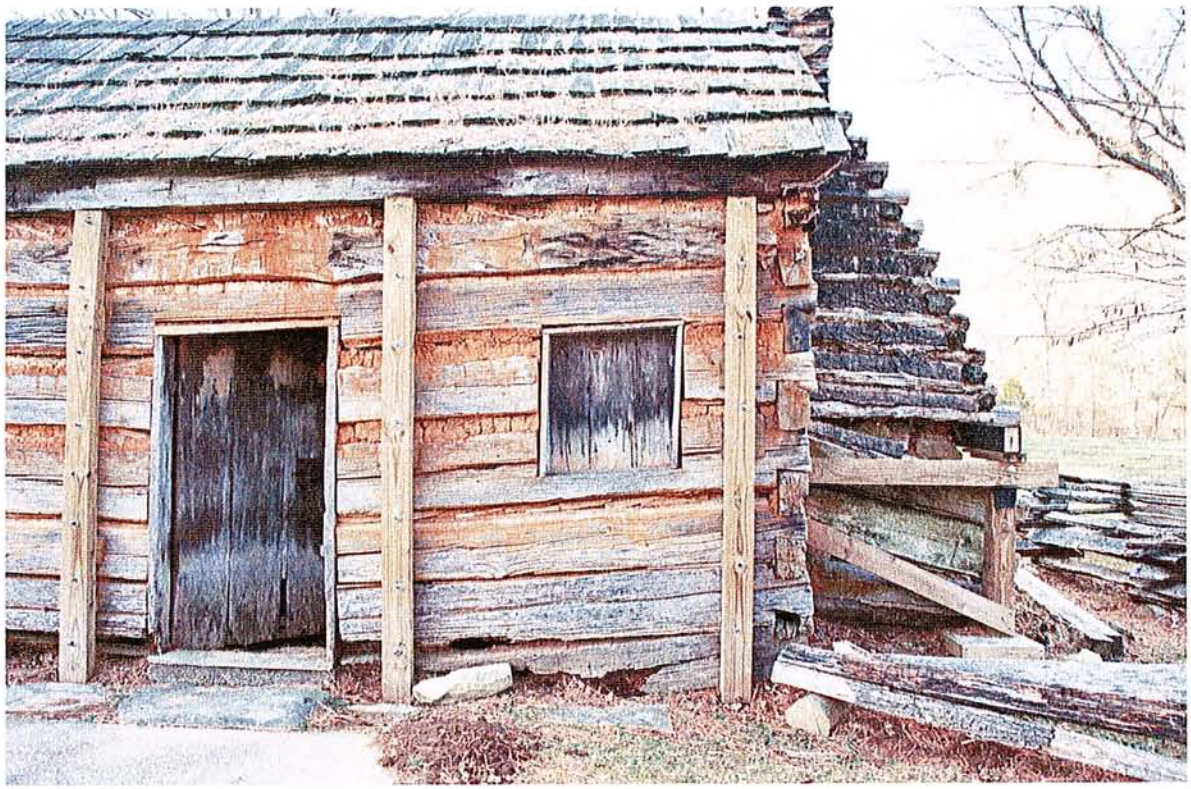


Figure 3 Many of the logs are badly deteriorated.

Figure 4 The fireplace enclosure has partially collapsed.

Figure 5 The roof framing consists of log purlins set parallel to the ridge.

Figure 6 The stone fireplace appears to have been constructed at a later time.

APPENDIX D

Architectural Evaluation
Lincoln Boyhood Home
Knob Creek Farm
LaRue County, Kentucky

By Karen E. Hudson, Ph.D.

ARCHITECTURAL EVALUATION
LINCOLN BOYHOOD HOME
KNOB CREEK FARM
LARUE COUNTY, KENTUCKY

Prepared For:
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
Atlanta Federal Center
1924 Building
100 Alabama St., SW
Atlanta, GA 30303

Prepared By:
Karen E. Hudson, Ph.D.
Historic Resource Management Consulting
876 Lynn Drive
Lexington, Kentucky 40504
(606) 278-3919

1997

ABSTRACT

The Thomas Lincoln Knob Creek Farm is a 228-acre tract of land on U.S. Highway 31E, two miles south of Athertonville and seven miles east of Hodgenville, the county seat of Larue County, Kentucky. A portion of this tract was the homeplace of the Lincoln family from 1811 to 1816, when Abraham was between the ages of 2 and 7.

The National Park Trust is negotiating the purchase of the Knob Creek Farm. If successful, the Trust will donate the property for addition to the Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historic Site, located 10 miles southwest of the Knob Creek site. The Birthplace includes 100 acres of the Sinking Spring Farm, where Abraham Lincoln was born on February 12, 1809. In 1811, his father, Thomas Lincoln, moved his family to Knob Creek where they lived until 1816, at which time they left Kentucky for Indiana.

The Lincolns' Knob Creek home was razed in the early 1870s. In 1933 a cabin representing the Lincolns' cabin was built. The new cabin was constructed from logs taken from the Gollaher cabin, a home located on Knob Creek, believed to have been extant during the Lincolns' tenure. In July 1997, an architectural evaluation of the 1933 Lincoln Boyhood home cabin was conducted by Karen Hudson, historic resource management consultant. The purpose of the study was to describe the cabin and its condition and to determine whether materials used in its construction could have come from the Gollaher cabin and thus potentially date to the time of the Lincolns' tenure at Knob Creek. Finally, a recommendation concerning the feasibility of using dendrochronology to date the logs was requested. This report summarizes the study's findings.

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CHAPTER 1:
Project Background

The Thomas Lincoln Knob Creek Farm is a 228-acre tract of land on U.S. Highway 31E, two miles south of Athertonville and seven miles east of Hodgenville, the county seat of Larue County, Kentucky. A portion of this tract was the homeplace of the Lincoln family from 1811 to 1816, when Abraham was between the ages of 2 and 7.

In 1931, Hattie and Chester Howard purchased the Knob Creek farm. While the Lincoln home had been razed in the 19th century, there was an extant single-pen log cabin on the property. It appears that at the time of the Lincolns' tenure at Knob Creek, the surviving cabin was the home of the Gollaher family. One of the Gollaher children, Austin, had been Abraham Lincoln's childhood playmate. During his presidency, Lincoln fondly remembered his old friend and inquired about him when being interviewed by a reporter.

The Howards decided to dismantle the Gollaher cabin and use the logs to construct a representation of the original Lincoln Knob Creek cabin. They used the Gollaher logs to build a one-story single-pen structure with a ridgepole and purlin roof and a wooden chimney. They placed the new cabin on what was believed to have been the site of the original Lincoln home. The cabin was based on the memory of 92-year-old Robert Thompson. Thompson was born in 1841 on Knob Creek just two hundred yards from the Lincoln home. As a child, he played in the Lincoln cabin on numerous occasions. He knew Austin Gollaher and the two men frequently spoke about Lincoln's tenure at Knob Creek (Appendix A).

In addition to the single-pen cabin representing the Lincoln home, the Howards built a large log tavern and restaurant. The complex was to serve as a memorial to Lincoln as well as take advantage of the growing tourism trade in the county. The cabin representing the Lincoln home as well as the tavern were completed and opened for business in September 1933. Known together as the Lincoln Boyhood Home complex (LU-46), both structures were listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1988. The complex was determined significant for its commemoration of the life and heritage of Abraham Lincoln and its association with tourism (Thomason 1988).

The National Park Trust is negotiating the purchase of the Knob Creek Farm. If successful, the Trust will donate the property for addition to the Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historic Site, located 10 miles southwest of the Knob Creek site. The Birthplace includes 100 acres of the Sinking Spring Farm, where Abraham Lincoln was born on February 12, 1809. In 1811, his father, Thomas Lincoln, moved his family to Knob Creek where they lived until 1816, at which time they left Kentucky for Indiana.

In July 1997, an architectural evaluation of the Lincoln Boyhood home reconstruction was conducted by Karen Hudson, historic resource management consultant. The purpose of the study was to describe the cabin and its condition and to try to determine whether materials used in its construction could have come from the Gollaher cabin and thus potentially date to the time of the Lincolns' tenure at Knob Creek. Finally, a recommendation concerning the

feasibility of using dendrochronology to date the logs was requested.

This report summarizes the study's findings. It begins with an historic overview. This introduction is followed by an architectural analysis based on three on-site inspections of the cabin in July 1997. Throughout the architectural analysis, reference is made to information concerning log house construction in the region during the period. Finally, the report concludes with a recommendation concerning the feasibility of using dendrochronology to determine the approximate date the logs were originally worked and the kind of information dendrochronology is likely to provide.

CHAPTER 2:
Historic Overview

The Lincolns' Knob Creek cabin was razed in the early 1870s. In 1933, when the Howards began their reconstruction project, they had no photographs of the home nor were they privy to any archaeological data. Thus, they turned to 92-year-old Robert Thompson for help. Thompson was born on Knob Creek, 25 years after the Lincolns left Kentucky, just two hundred yards from the Lincoln home and, as a child, played in the old structure on numerous occasions. According to Thompson the home was a single-room structure with a fireplace. The home stood until Thompson was about thirty years old or until around 1871 (Appendix A).

Thompson's recollections are supported by J.M. Atherton, another Knob Creek resident, who recalled that "I've been at the cabin in my boyhood.... Judging by the ruin of the Knob Creek Lincoln cabin, it was about the size of the one he (Abraham) was born in" (McMurty n.d.:7). The symbolic birth cabin, to which Atherton refers, is a single-pen log structure.

In 1895 a newspaper correspondent wrote the following concerning the Lincolns' cabin at Knob Creek: "A number of the logs that made up the poor home have been used by Charles Rapier, the present owner of the farm, in building a stable" (Lincoln Lore No.216:1). Lois Wimsett, the Howards' granddaughter and a current co-owner of the Knob Creek farm, recalls that her grandmother told her that the Rapier stable, which was located on the opposite side of Route 31E near the creek, was washed away by a spring flood.

Armed with little more than Thompson's memories, the Howards began constructing a representation of the Lincoln home by dismantling the Gollaher cabin. A photograph of the Gollaher cabin (Figure 1) appeared in The Boyhood of Abraham Lincoln, a work based on "the spoken narratives of Austin Gollaher" (Gore 1935). By the time the photograph was taken, the single-pen log cabin, traditionally held to be the home that the Gollahers lived in when the Lincoln family occupied the Knob Creek farm, had been incorporated, as a rear ell, into a newer saddlebag plan home. The original log section of the home had a stone pier foundation, a large exterior-end field-stone chimney, and a wood shingle roof. While the notching technique employed on the logs cannot be determined from the photograph, it appears that the gable, from the top log to the apex, was frame and there were no windows on the facade.

The Gollaher cabin was dismantled and the logs hauled to the presumed Lincoln cabin site. A photograph, in the possession of the current owners, shows the logs stacked on the ground in no apparent order. No numbering system was observed on the logs during the on-site investigation in July 1997. This suggests that the Howards had no intentions of reconstructing the Gollaher cabin. Their goal was to employ the Gollaher logs to construct a representation of the Lincoln cabin based on Thompson's memory. This observation is further strengthened by archival data. On October 3, 1934, the Howards took Robert Thompson to the Bank of New Haven where Ekro Rapier typed a statement concerning the Knob Creek farm for Mr. Thompson's signature (Appendix A). In

The Gollaher home with a modern addition. The back part of the house is just as it was when the Lincolns lived in the Knob Creek Hills

Figure 1. Photograph of the Gollaher home.
From Gore 1935 (first published in 1929).

the letter of authentication, Thompson declared that: "On the site of where it stood now stands a replica, reconstructed with logs taken from the cabin of Austin Gollaher, the boyhood friend who saved Abe from drowning.... I have heard Austin Gollaher tell about it many times.... The Gollaher home stood up the "hollow" just back of the Lincoln home" (Appendix A).

The on-site architectural investigation confirms that the Gollaher home was not simply moved or reconstructed at the Lincoln site. Instead, the logs were recycled in the 1933 Lincoln cabin. For example, unlike the Gollaher home, the representation of the Lincoln home has a ridge-pole-and-purlin roof, a wooden chimney, and a single window on the facade (Figure 2).

Because there are no photographs of the original Lincoln cabin, nor is there any archaeological data, the Howards were dependent on the memory of 92-year-old Robert Thompson when deciding how to build the Lincoln cabin. Mrs. Howard told Lois Wimsett, her granddaughter, that Thompson was very demanding about the accuracy of the representation. For example, the Howards built a loft and hearth without Thompson being present. The next time he visited, he demanded they rebuild both features. While they had built a full loft in the cabin, according to Thompson, there had only been a small, 4'3" loft in the Lincoln home. Thompson clearly remembered climbing up wooden pegs, located next to the window, in order to reach the loft (Figure 3). The hearth, he insisted, extended further into the floor than the one the Howards had built. Mrs. Howard told her granddaughter that she hoped the old man's memory was good because they went to great effort to rebuild the loft and hearth according to his specifications.

There is no way to verify Thompson's memory. There is some evidence that seemingly conflicts with his recollections, however. For example, in May 1933, the Lincoln Lore, a weekly publication of the Lincoln National Life Foundation, reported that in 1895 a correspondent to a newspaper wrote the following about the Knob Creek cabin: "Nothing is left of the old cabin but part of the great stone fireplace..." (No. 216:1). There are several ways to explain the apparent conflict between the wooden chimney built on the representation and the stone chimney described by the reporter in 1933. First, there was some confusion as to the exact location of the Lincoln house site. The reporter may simply have been at the wrong location. Second, wooden chimneys deteriorated quickly and were often replaced by stone. The Lincoln chimney may have originally been wood only to have been reconstructed in stone after the Lincolns' tenure. Finally, wooden chimneys are romantically associated with pioneer times. The Lincoln symbolic birth cabin, located just ten miles away, has a wooden chimney. Although the Howards appear to have gone to great lengths to adhere to Thompson's instructions, they may have chosen to construct a wooden chimney, assuming it would better catch the imagination of the passing tourist.

While there is little evidence to suggest the original appearance of the Lincolns' Knob Creek cabin, we can compare the extant cabin to other homes built in the region during the period. This contextual information is provided in the following chapter along with the architectural analysis.

Figure 2. A 1981 photograph of the cabin built in 1933 to represent the Lincoln Knob Creek home.

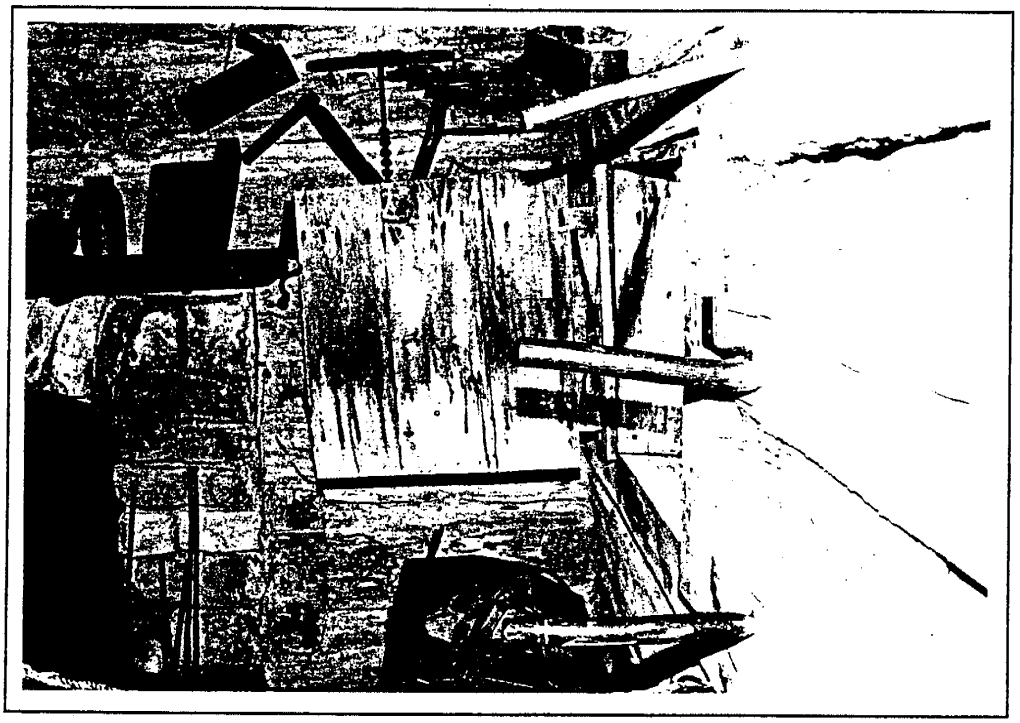


Figure 3. Wooden pegs used to climb into the 4'3" loft.

CHAPTER 3:
Architectural Analysis

General Description

The Knob Creek cabin is a 14' x 18' single-pen log structure with a ridgepole and purlin roof and a wooden chimney. One door and one window are located on the facade (Figure 4). The structure rests on a low stone foundation. The horizontal logs are tied together with half-dovetail notching. The interstices between the logs are filled with wood chinking and red mud daubing. The ridgepole and purlin roof is covered with wood shingles. On the interior there is a 4'3" loft, a wood floor, and a stone fireplace and hearth. The walls and ceiling are not covered. No original hardware is extant.

Foundation, Sills and Floor Joists

The Knob Creek cabin rests on a low, intermitted fieldstone foundation. In several areas the square-hewn sills rest directly on the ground. This has resulted in deterioration in both sills. The southwest corner appears to have suffered the most damage (Figure 5).

The doors of log houses typically rest on top of the sill. When the opening for the door was cut in the Knob Creek cabin, however, the sill was sawed in half. The gap between the sill, and under the door, was filled in with concrete. As a result, the two halves of the sill sag in towards the door; this has contributed to the further deterioration of the sills (Figure 6 & 7).

The joists or sleepers onto which the floorboards are nailed usually lay on top of the sills. Because of the manner in which the door opening was cut, however, in this case the floor lays below the level of the sill. As a result, the joists rest directly on the ground. This made the investigation of the joists difficult. They appear, however, to be circular sawn. Because of their position on the ground, one would suspect deterioration. The floor appears to be in sound condition, however, suggesting that the joists have not deteriorated.

Wall Logs

The sills are square notched to receive the first log of the side walls. The wall logs are hewn on the interior and exterior faces producing an approximately five inch thick log. The top and bottom of each log is left in its natural round shape. The walls are only seven logs high, while the norm in the area is eight or nine logs high. They are tied together with half-dovetail notching (Figure 8). The interstices between logs are filled with wood chinking and red mud daubing. Some of the mud has washed onto the logs, staining them red (Figure 9).

There is no visible sign of a numbering system that might have been employed to reconstruct the logs as they were ordered in the Gollaher cabin. There is other evidence that the logs were reworked. For example, the Gollaher cabin was nine logs high, but the cabin built in 1933 is just seven logs high. The photo of the Gollaher home shows a frame addition on the gable end opposite the chimney (Figure 1). If this wall was reconstructed, as it appeared at the Gollaher home, there should be evidence of the addition--scar marks, auger holes, nails. While there are auger holes and nails throughout the extant cabin, there is no apparent pattern to their placement, suggesting that the logs are not in their original order (Figure 10 & 11).

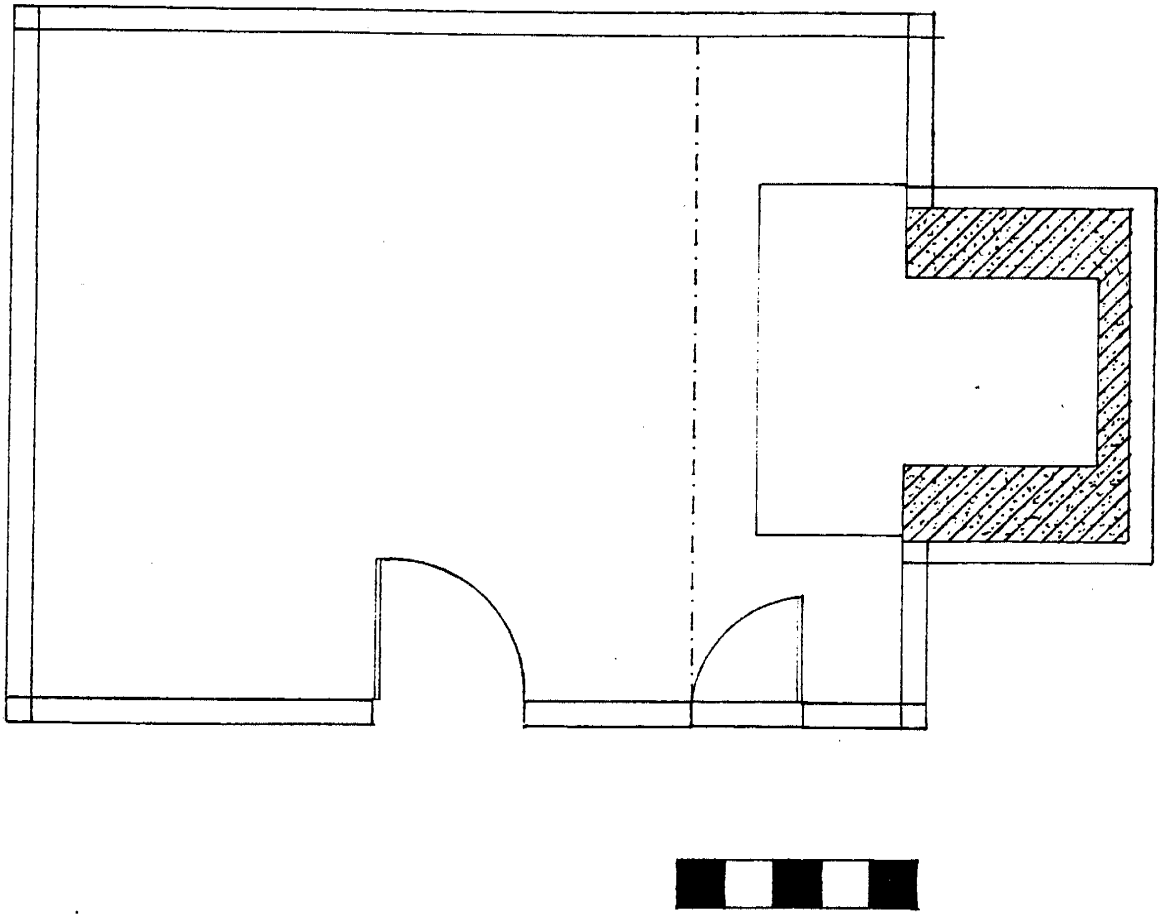


Figure 4. Floor Plan

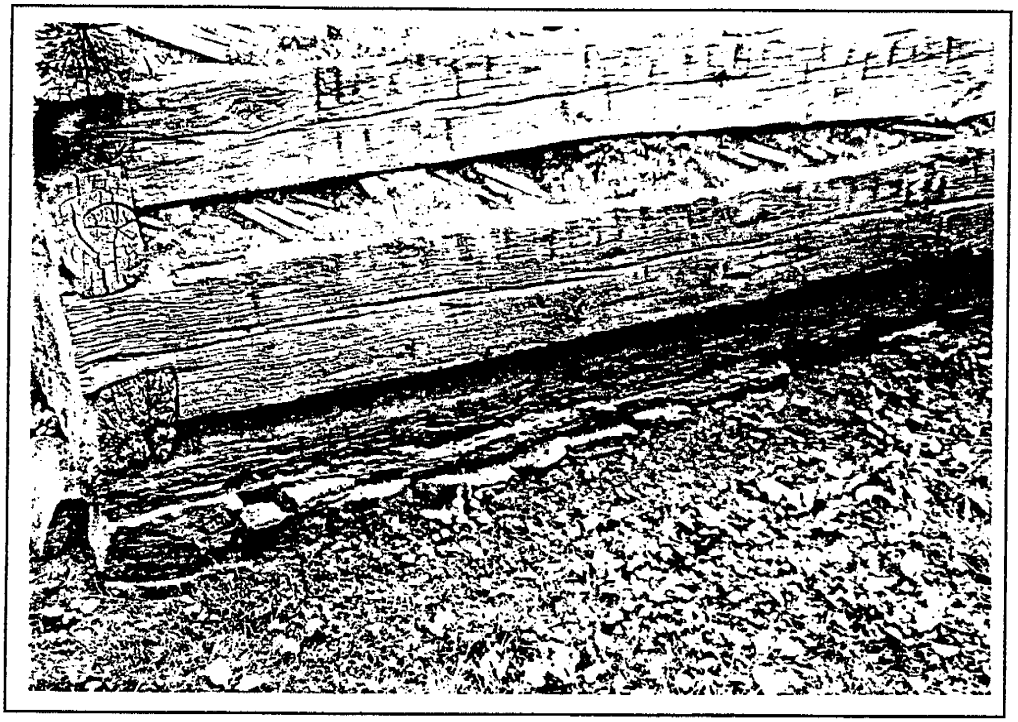


Figure 5. Southwest corner showing deterioration of sill.

Figure 6. View showing cut in sill.

Figure 7. Detail of deterioration of sill at doorway.

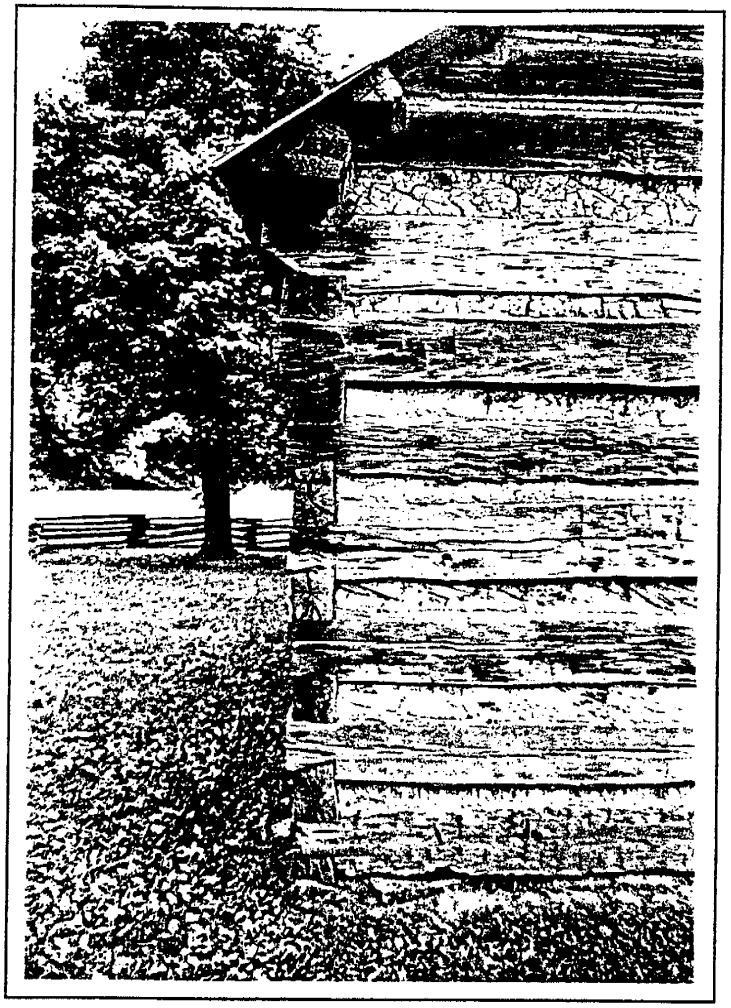


Figure 8. Detail of half-dovetail notching.

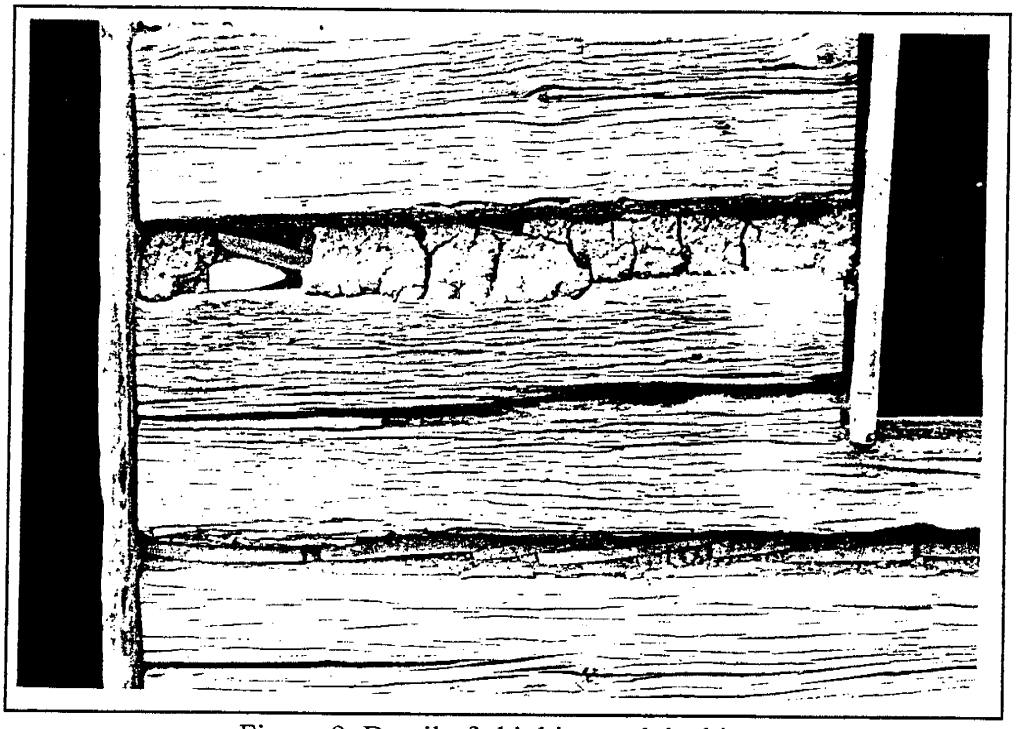


Figure 9. Detail of chinking and daubing.

Figure 10. Auger holes located in the west gable.

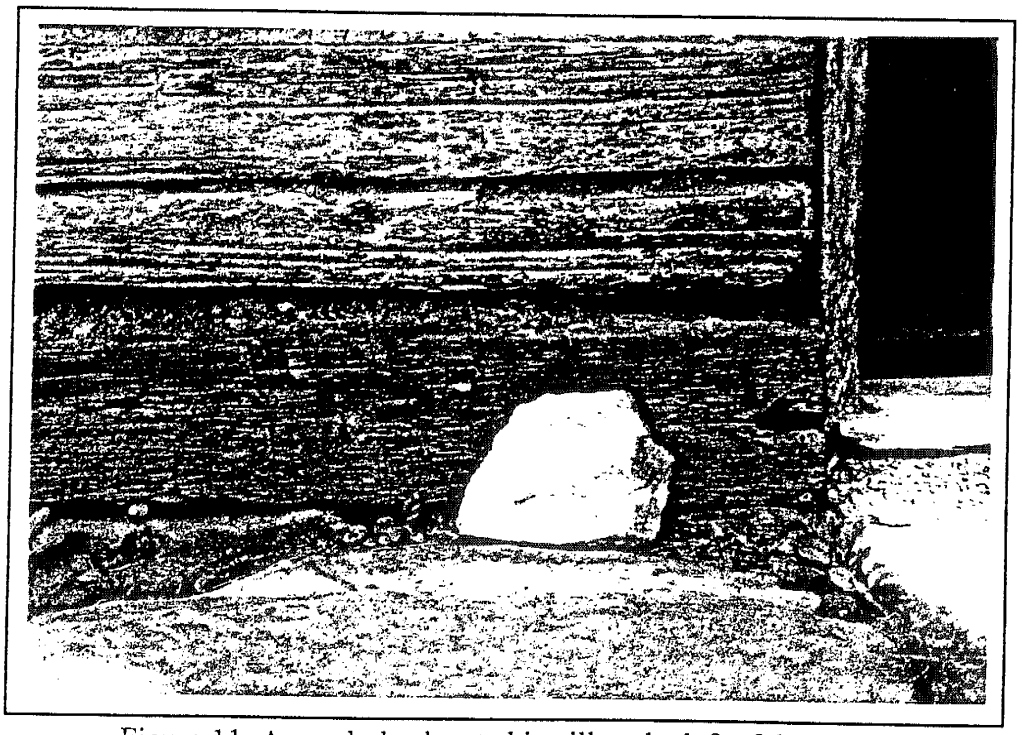


Figure 11. Auger holes located in sill to the left of doorway.

Finally, there is a small burned area on the rear elevation, centered on the fourth log from the ground (Figure 12 & 13). While it is not known what caused this scar, it is inconceivable that the burning could have been limited to such a confined area if the log had been in its current position. All evidence suggests that the logs are not in the order in which they appeared in the Gollaher home.

Plates and Eave Beams

The plates are hewn square and are placed slightly forward on the extending eave beams. The plates also extend beyond the wall on the gable ends. The ends of both the plates and the eave beams are chamfered (Figure 14).

Photographs taken in 1981 show that the eave beam on the chimney elevation was in poor condition. Since 1981, a new section has been spliced onto the log. The dimension and notching of the new section do not match the original material (Figure 15).

Roof

In most extant log homes, the gables above the line of the plate are framed with vertical studs and covered with weatherboards or vertical boards as in the case of the Gollaher home (Figure 1). The Lincoln reconstruction, however, has a ridgepole and purlin roof (Figure 16). The gable ends above the line of the plate are built up of logs by making each log shorter than the one below and cutting them at an angle. Purlins rest between each of the gable logs, one on each side of the roof, and bear the weight of the roofing material. Wood shingles are nailed directly to the purlins (figure 17). The shingles are very thin and several have loosened.

Originally, the covering of most ridgepole and purlin roofs consisted of rived boards held in place by weight poles and a cantilevered "butting pole" at the eave (Figure 18). Short slats of wood called "knees" covered the cracks between the boards and acted as spacers for weight poles (Jordan 1985:22-23).

Log homes with ridgepole and purlin roofs covered with boards could be constructed without the use of nails. Thus they are often associated with frontier conditions. They apparently did exist in the Knob Creek area during the early 19th century for in 1869, when describing frontier homes in and around Elizabethtown, Kentucky, Haycraft spoke about a "clapboard roof, confined to the house by weight pole, with an eave-bearer, against which the boards rested" (Haycraft 1960: 70-71).

It is unclear how common the ridgepole and purlin roof was in Kentucky. Today, all known extant examples are confined to reconstructions. In 1913, however, when Rothert wrote his history of Muhlenburg County, Kentucky, he included a photograph of a two-story log home built in 1810 that had a ridgepole and purlin roof or what he called a "rib-roofed wall" (Figure 19).

It does not appear that the Gollaher home had a ridgepole and purlin roof. Instead, the gable of the Gollaher home appears to have been framed. Thus, the logs used to construct the gables of the Lincoln reconstruction would have had to have come from elsewhere. Perhaps this explains the difference in the heights of the two cabins. Several of the wall logs from the Gollaher cabin may have been used to construct the gable ends of the Lincoln cabin representation.

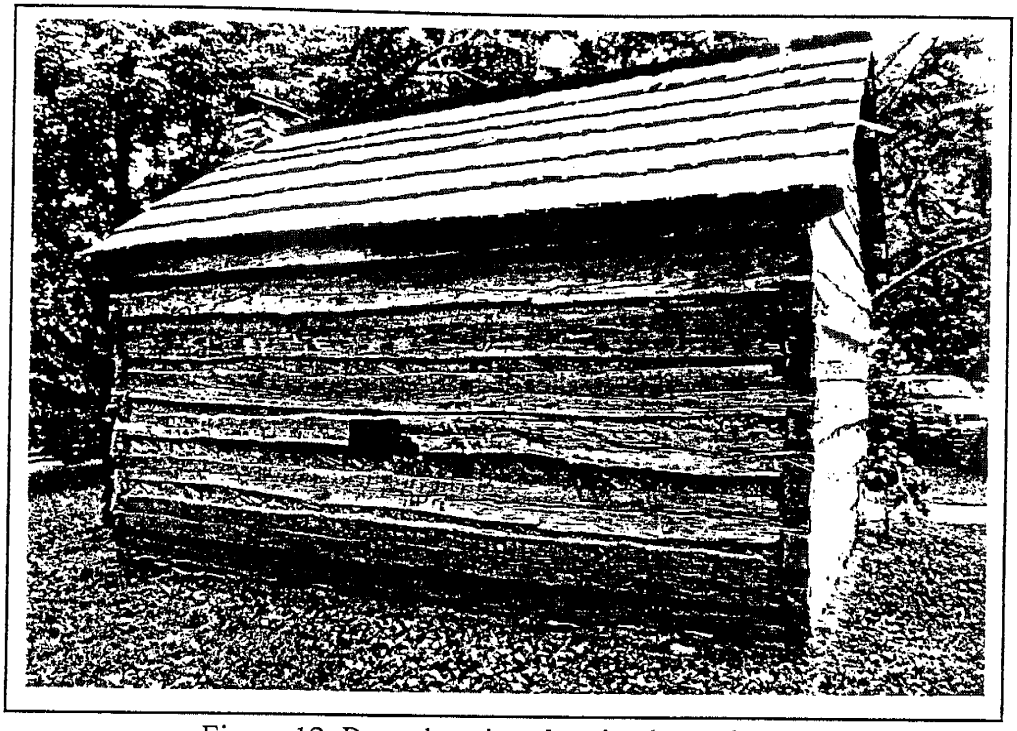


Figure 12. Rear elevation showing burned area.

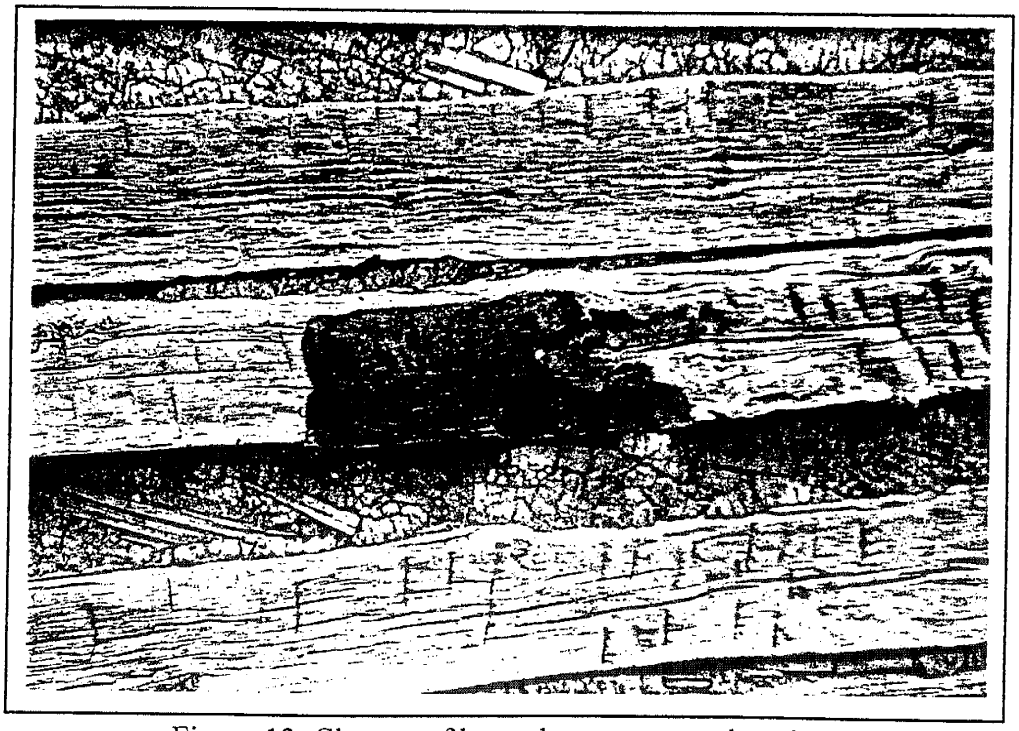


Figure 13. Closeup of burned area on rear elevation.

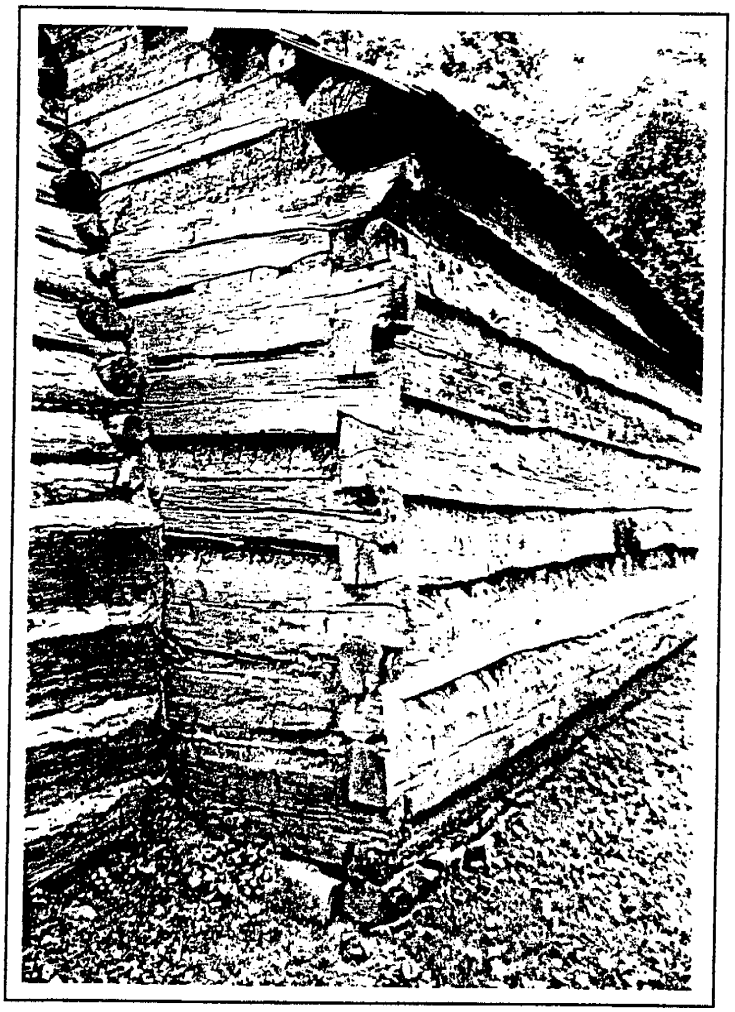


Figure 14. Chamfered plate and eave beam.

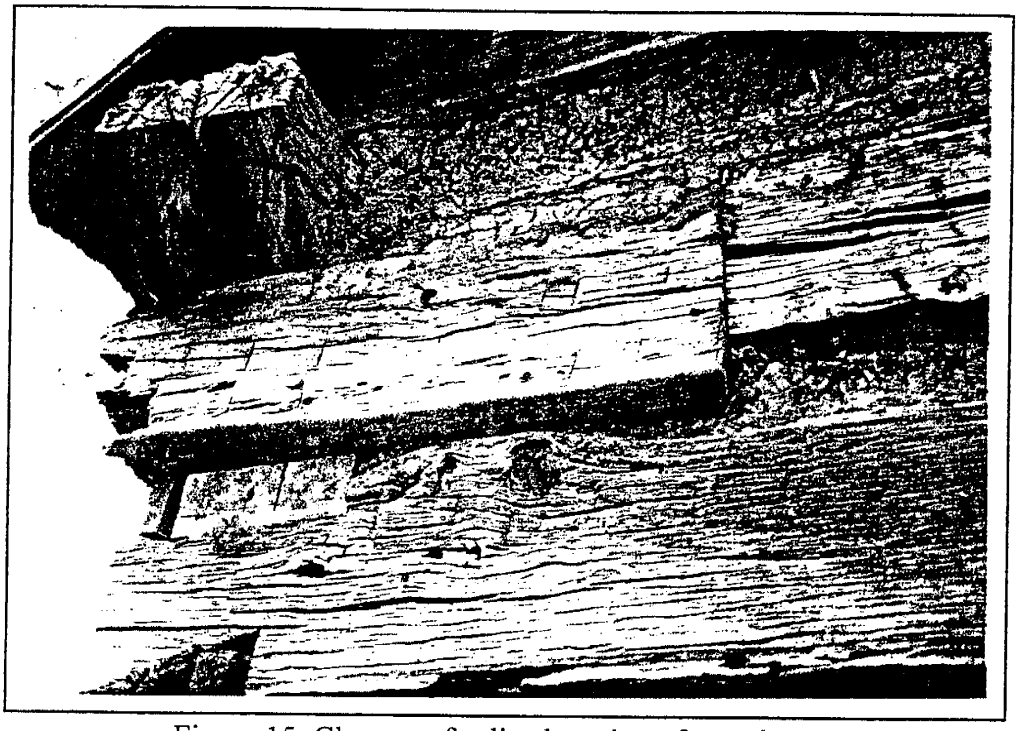


Figure 15. Closeup of spliced section of eave beam.

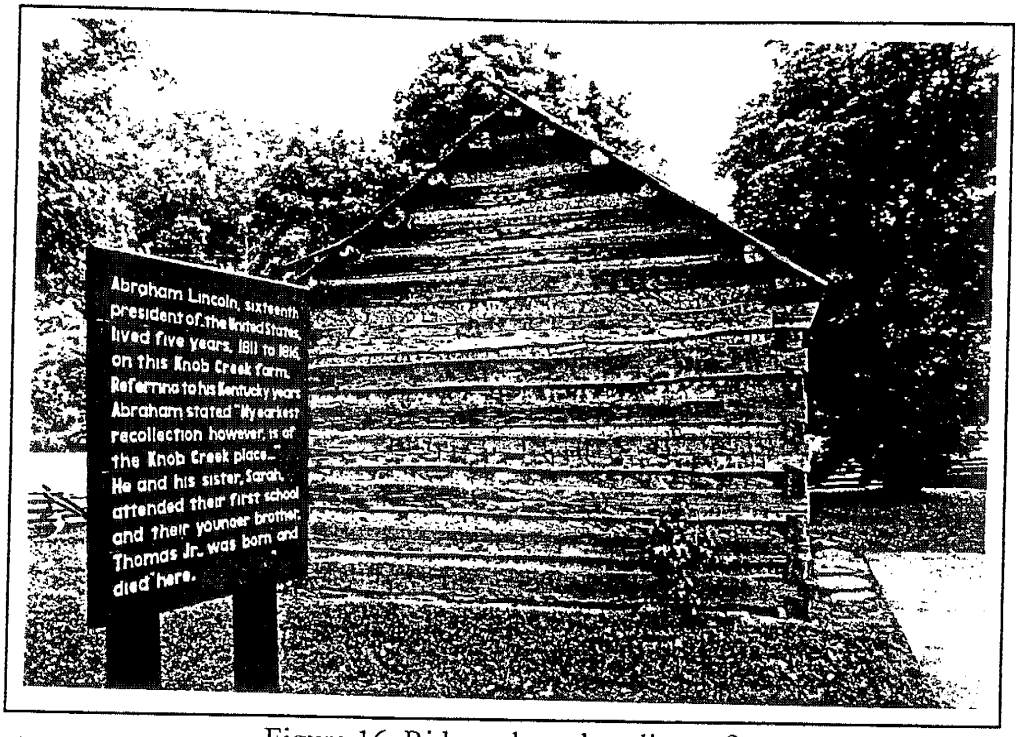


Figure 16. Ridgepole and purlin roof.

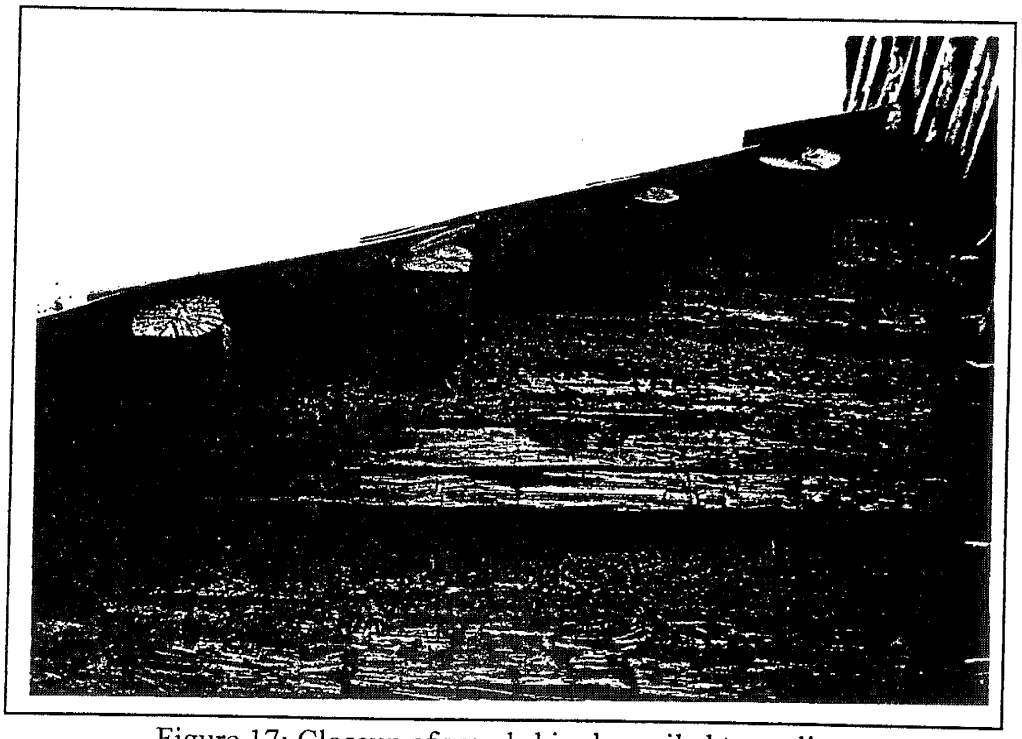
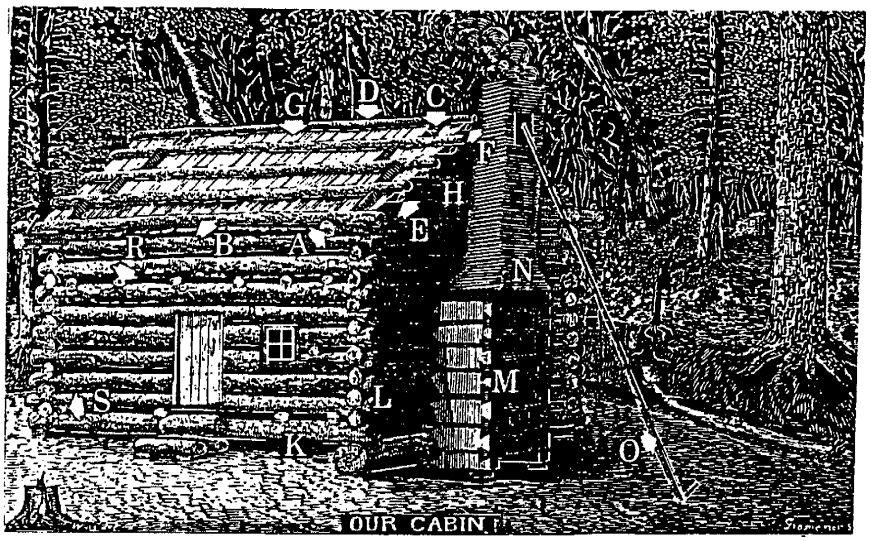


Figure 17: Closeup of wood shingles nailed to purlins.



27. Parts of a log cabin. This illustration was used for the article "Our Cabin; or, Life in the Woods," by John S. Williams, *American Pioneer*, October, 1843 (Appendix B). The cabin was built during the winter of 1800–01 in Colerain Township, Belmont County.

A) Eave beam	F) Ridgepole	M) Full-dovetailed firebox
B) Butting Pole	G) Clapboards	N) Cat and daub chimney
C) Knee	H) Trapping	O) Chimney prop
D) Weight pole	K) Sill	R) Ceiling joist
E) Rib	L) Saddle-notched corner	S) Floor joist

Figure 18. Illustration of a log cabin with ridgepole and purlin roof and wood chimney built in Ohio in 1800 (from Hutslar 1992:101).

SOME OLD CHIMNEYS

1. Chimney in David Whitmer house, near Bremen, built 1832.
2. Rough rock chimney in John Wright house, near Carter's Creek Church, built 1810. Erected against a rib-roofed wall.
3. Stick and dirt chimney in Starling Duke house, near Weir, built 1865.
4. One of Alfred Johnson's dressed rock chimneys, in "The Stack House." Most of the old chimneys are of this type.
5. Brick chimney in old James Weir house, Greenville, built 1816.

Figure 19. Photographs of chimneys from Rothert's history of Muhlenburg County, Kentucky (1913:121). A ridgepole and purlin roof is illustrated in plate #2 and a wooden chimney is pictured in plate #3.

Chimney

The chimney consists of a four-foot-high rectangular base made of hewn logs about four feet in length, tied together at the corners with V-notching and placed between the logs in the cabin wall (Figure 20, 21). Above this log firebox, the flue is built of small sticks laid horizontally, but not notched. The sticks gradually diminish in length and width toward the top. The spaces between the wood members are chinked with concrete.

The log base of the chimney is in very poor condition. According to one of the current owners, Lois Wimsett, the chimney was originally daubed with mud. The serious deterioration did not begin until after the mud was replaced with concrete (Figure 22).

An analysis of a series of photographs taken from 1933 until 1981 revealed that this is not the chimney constructed in 1933. The log base of the original chimney had half-dovetail notching and the smaller sticks used in the flue resembled tobacco sticks rather than the round members employed in the current chimney flue. The spaces between all of the wood members were originally daubed with mud (Figure 23).

Wooden chimneys were not uncommon in Kentucky during the early 19th century (Figure 19). For example, in 1869 when Samuel Haycraft described the earliest homes built in and around Elizabethtown, Kentucky, an area that included Knob Creek, he described in detail the construction of a wood chimney: "The chimney was built of wood, with fireplace nearly across the house, never less than seven feet wide in the clear. The first section of the chimney ran up a little higher than the mantlepiece which was a stick of oak timber about one foot square and about six feet high. It was walled inside up to that with stone and clay, then the chimney narrowed abruptly to about three feet square. and was constructed with what was then called cat-and-clay.... First a stiff clay was made, intermixed with straw or grass cut into nibs, then some oak timber was split up into a kind of lath, similar to tobacco sticks; the balance of the chimney was built up of first a layer of clay, then a round of sticks inside and out about three inches thick, the sticks showing the ends about four inches; then a lubber pole was set in across the chimney inside, on which were hung pottrambles, on which to suspend pots..." (Haycraft 1960:70-71).

Reporting on a trip with his father from Cincinnati to their home in Georgetown in the early 1820s, a Bluegrass Kentucky boy wrote the following about a home he observed about 40 miles from Georgetown: "Soon we Saw a little Cabbin, on the Side of a hill, one of those primitive Log Cabbins that you have Read about. Mud & Sticks Composed the Chimby. The Fire place occupied nearly All the End of the house. The Space Between the logs were Stopped with Blocks of wood & yellow Clay. In fact, the Cabbin was not much Larger than your old Smoke house at home" (Dugan 1959: 54-44).

Wood chimneys deteriorated rapidly and many were quickly replaced with stone. Stedman's statement that the "primitive" log cabin was like those "you have Read about" suggests that, at least in the Bluegrass, the single-pen log cabin with a "Mud & Stick" chimney was, as early as the 1820s, associated with the pioneer past.

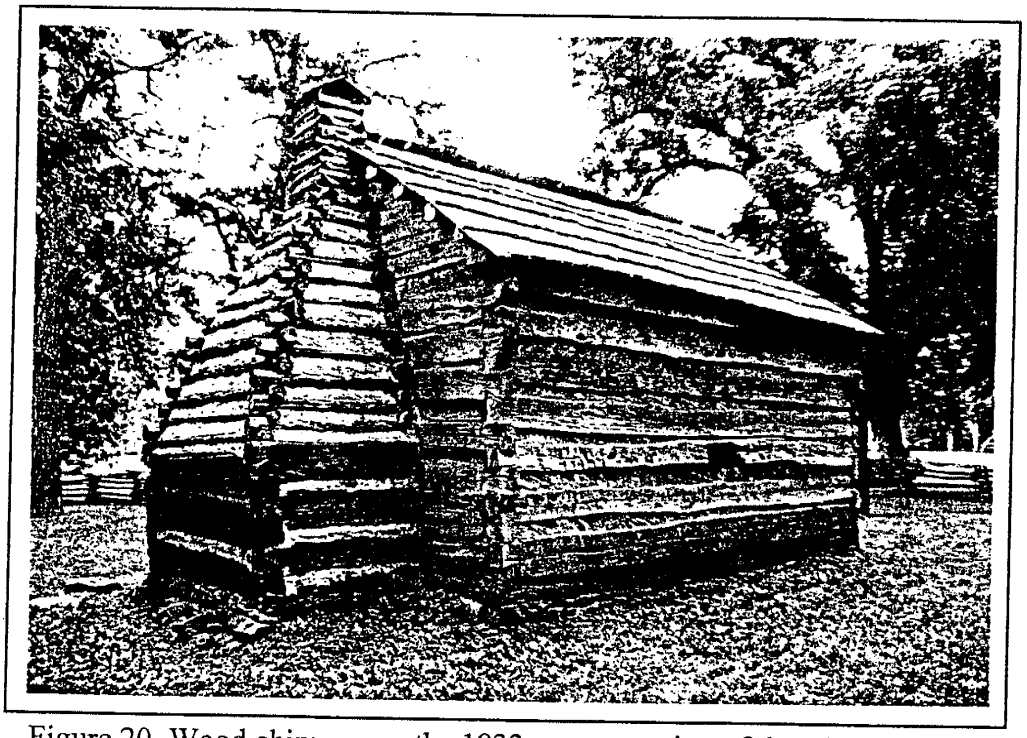


Figure 20. Wood chimney on the 1933 representation of the Lincoln Knob Creek cabin.

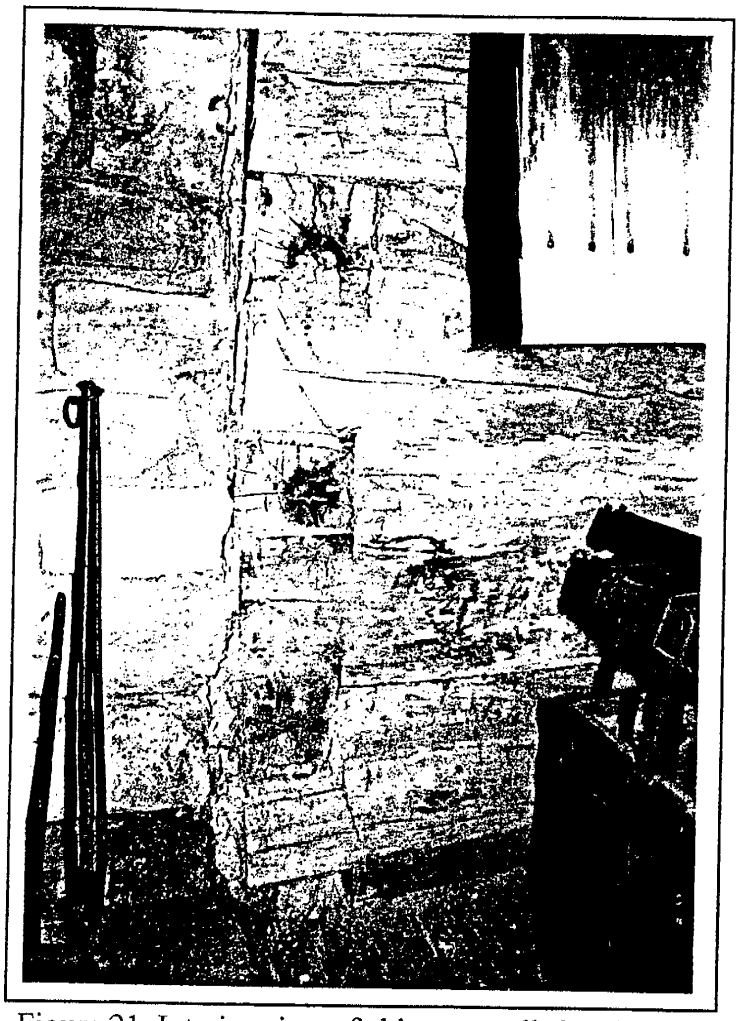


Figure 21. Interior view of chimney wall showing the ends of the chimney base logs mortised between the wall logs.

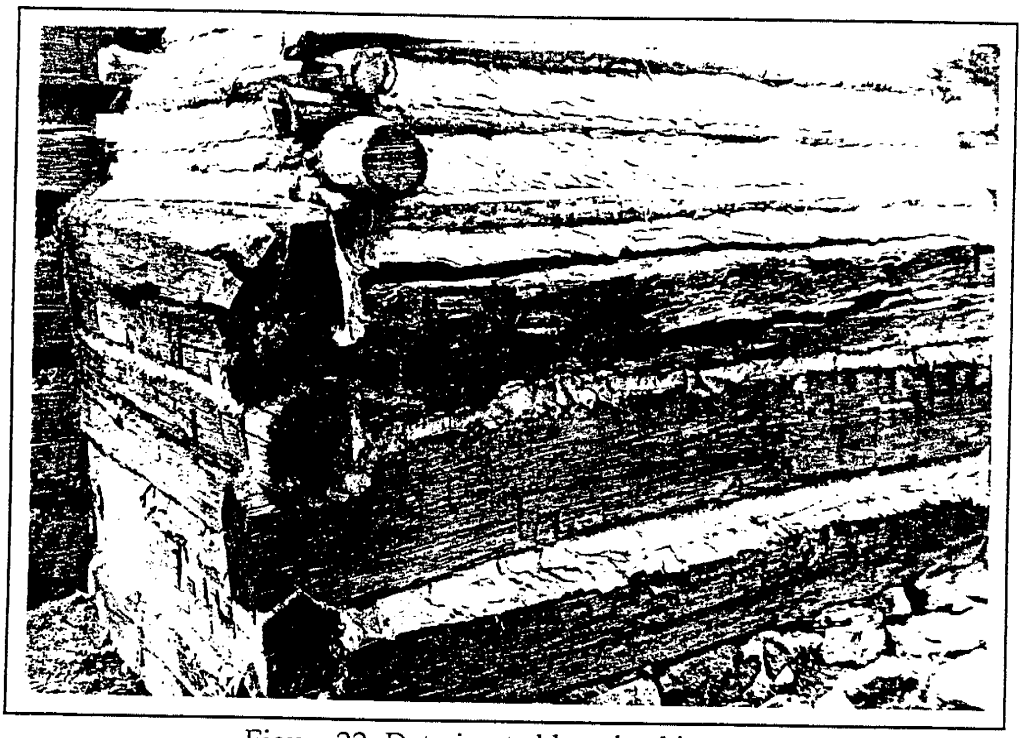


Figure 22. Deteriorated logs in chimney.

Figure 23. Photograph taken in 1981 showing half-dovetail notching in chimney base.

Window and Door

Openings for the windows and doors of log homes were cut in after the walls were completed. Board frames were then pegged or nailed to the ends of the logs to keep them in place (Figure 24). When pegged, a hole was drilled through the board into the log and a wooden pin then driven through. The framing on the window and door of the Lincoln cabin is circular sawn and attached with wire nails. There are no signs of earlier nail or peg holes, confirming that the framing did not come from the Gollaher home.

The 2.5' X 2.5' window is covered by a wooden shutter. The shutter is made from two recycled boards supported by a modern iron frame. The frame is attached to the inside of the shutter with modern hardware. The shutter swings on reproduction wooden strap hinges that are also attached by modern hardware (Figure 25).

The 3' 2" X 5' 8" door is constructed of three recycled boards. A hole in the area where a latch may have been located suggests that the boards may have been salvaged from an earlier door (Figure 26). Like the shutter, however, the boards are supported by a modern iron frame and the door swings on reproduction wooden strap hinges attached with wire nails (Figure 27).

Floor

The floor is composed primarily of hand planed planks; a few circular sawn boards have been randomly used however (Figure 28). Both cut and wire nails are used in the flooring. A barrier used to keep visitors from artifacts displayed in the cabin has been attached directly to the floor. A modern metal plate has also been added at the doors threshold (Figure 29).

In contrast to the extant cabin, archival research seems to indicate that frontier log homes with clapboard roofs and wood chimneys typically had puncheon floors, which did not require nails (Haycraft 1960:70-71).

Fireplace

To shield the chimney logs from fires, the interior of the firebox is lined with large, smooth stones (Figure 30). The fireplace opening measures 4' X 3'11". The lintel is supported by a slightly arched iron plate. The mantel is a 7'3" X 3" hand-planed wooden plank supported by two wood pegs (Figure 31). An iron crane is located on the left side of the fireplace opening (Figure 32). The stone hearth extends 3' into the room.

Loft

The 4'3" loft is reached by three wooden pegs driven into the wall near the window (Figure 3 and 30). The hand-planed boards of the loft rest between wall logs. A partial loft, as built in the extant cabin, is very rare. Typically, lofts extend the full-length of cabins. Henry Glassie reported, however, that a loft over only half of the cabin, usually on the end opposite the chimney, was called a "cock loft" in the Appalachian region of the country. He suggested that the cock loft was the result of Celtic influence, for the half loft is common in Ireland and Wales (Glassie 1965: 146).

Ceiling and Walls

The ceiling and walls are not covered (Figure 33).

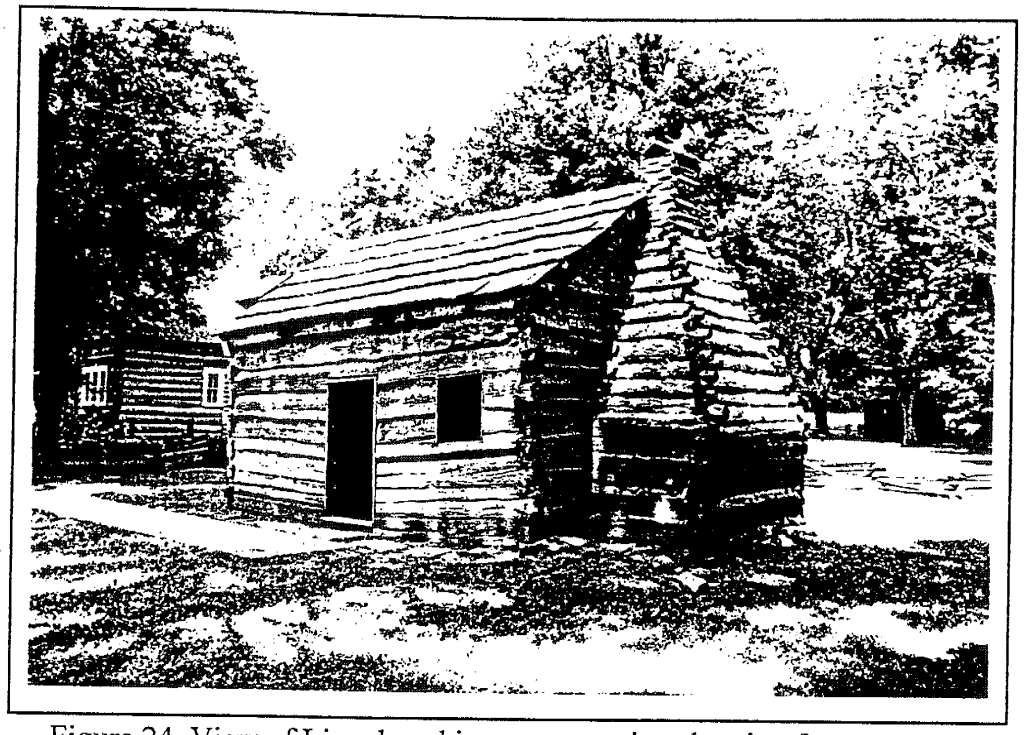


Figure 24. View of Lincoln cabin reconstruction showing frame around window and door.

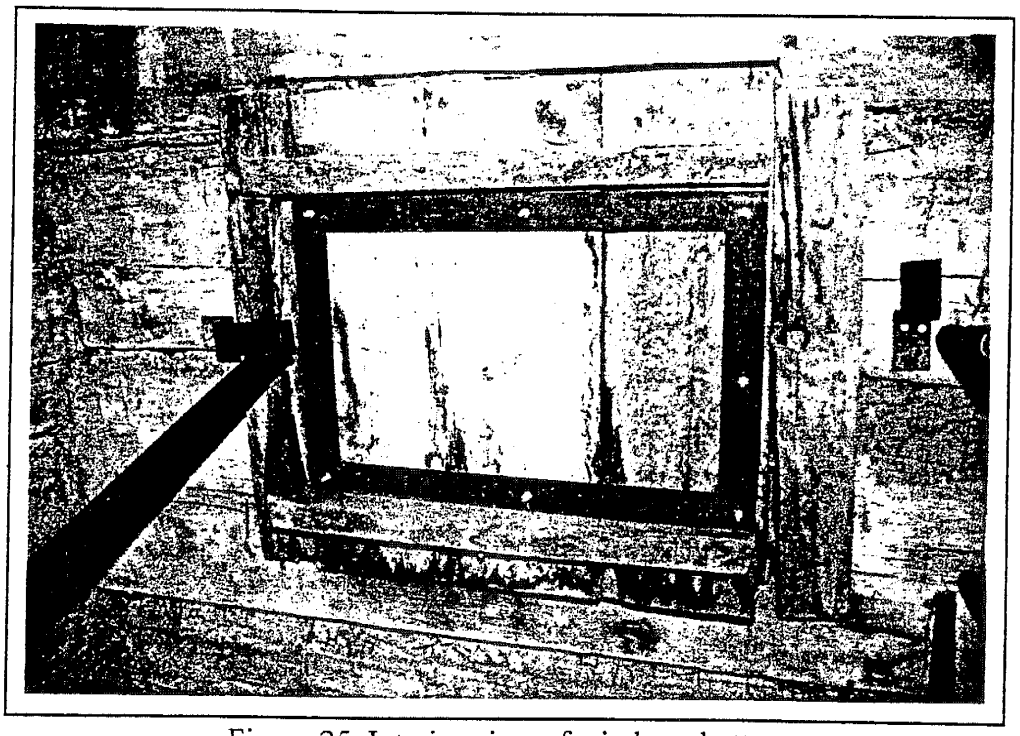


Figure 25. Interior view of window shutter.

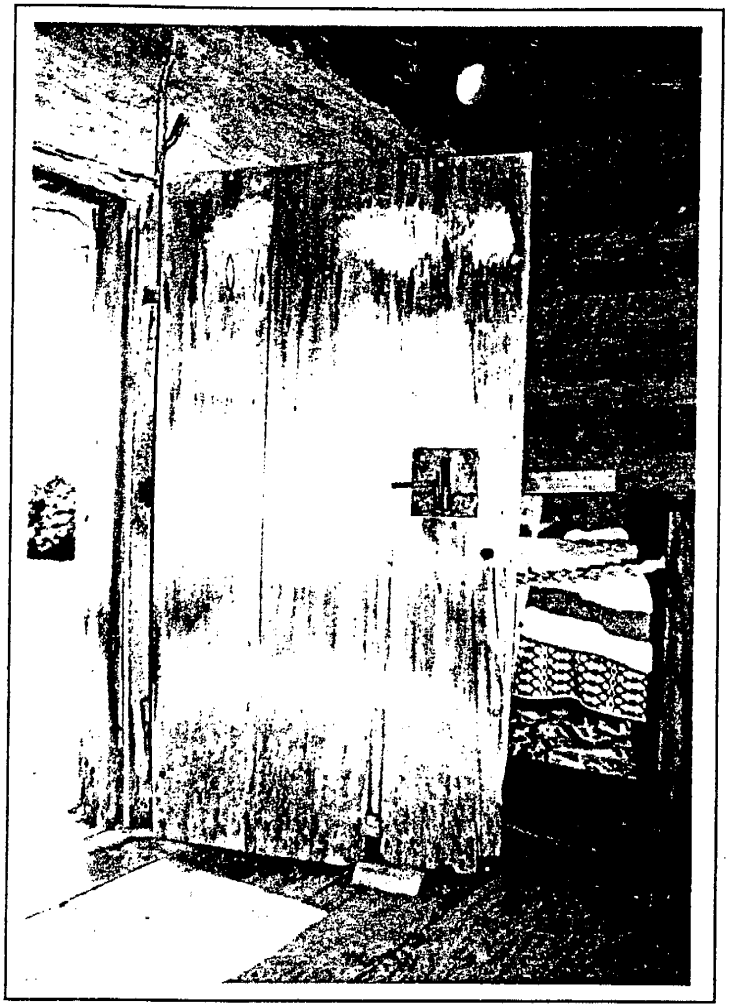


Figure 26. Exterior view of door.

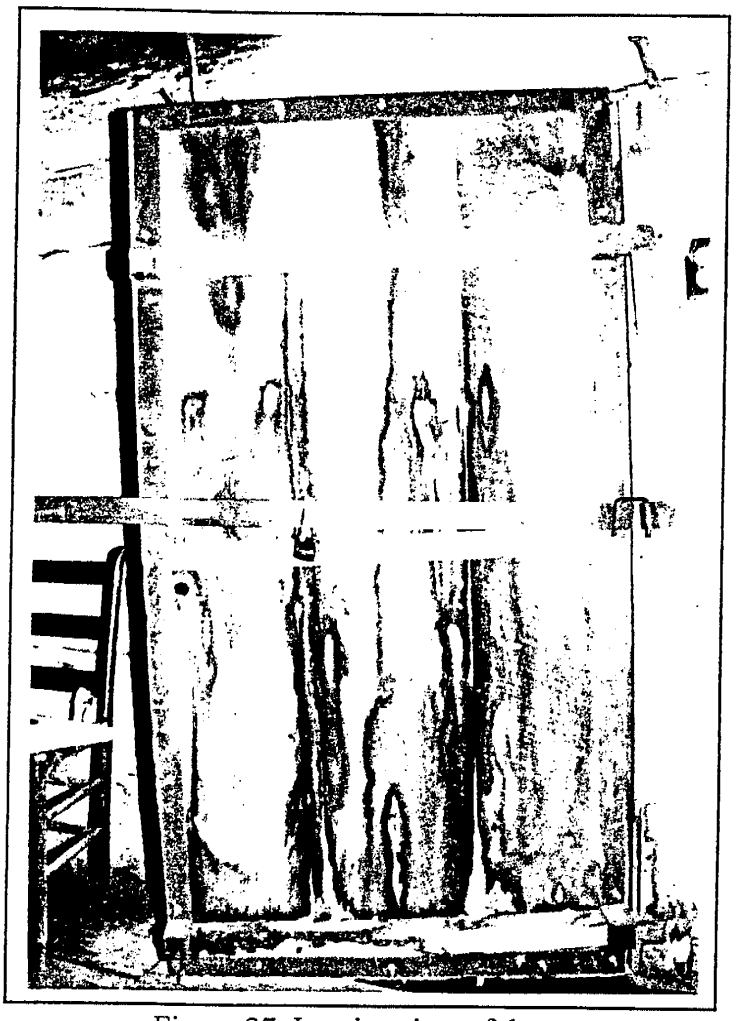


Figure 27. Interior view of door.

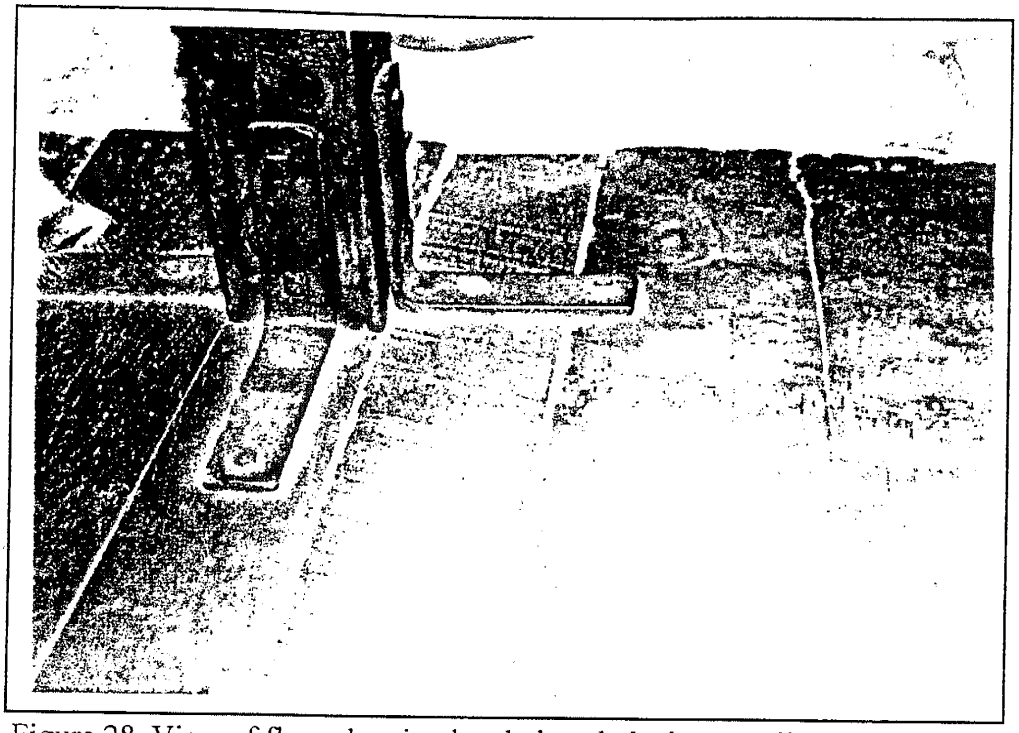


Figure 28. View of floor showing hand planed planks as well as sawn boards and base of barrier attached to floor.

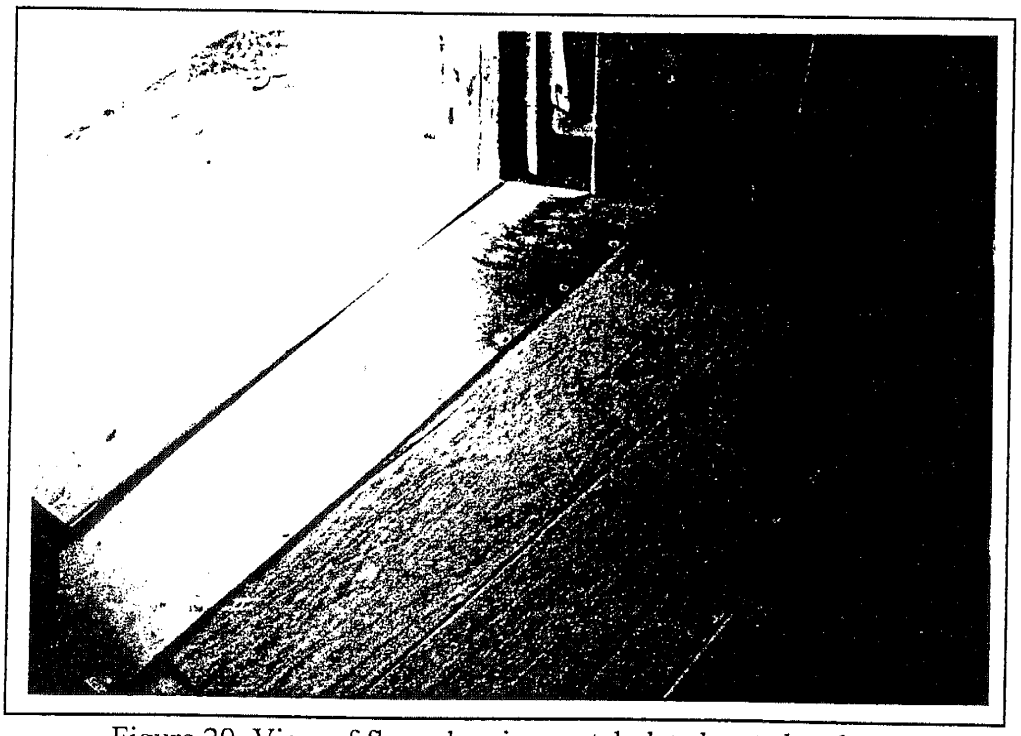


Figure 29. View of floor showing metal plate located at door.

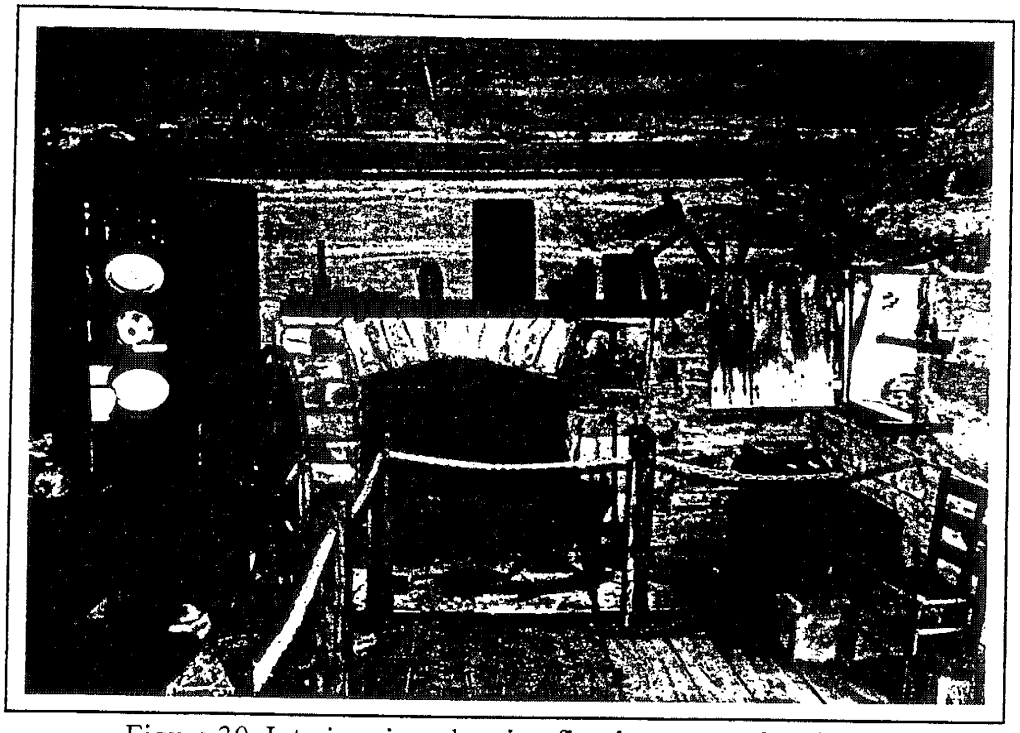


Figure 30. Interior view showing fireplace, mantel and loft.

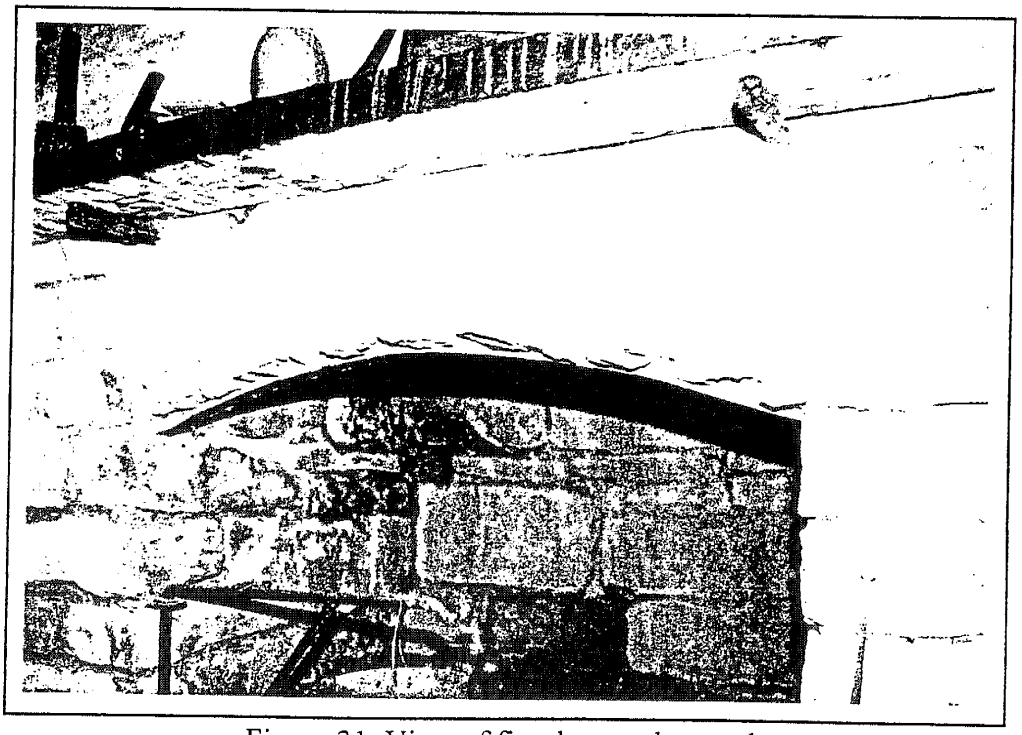


Figure 31. View of fireplace and mantel.

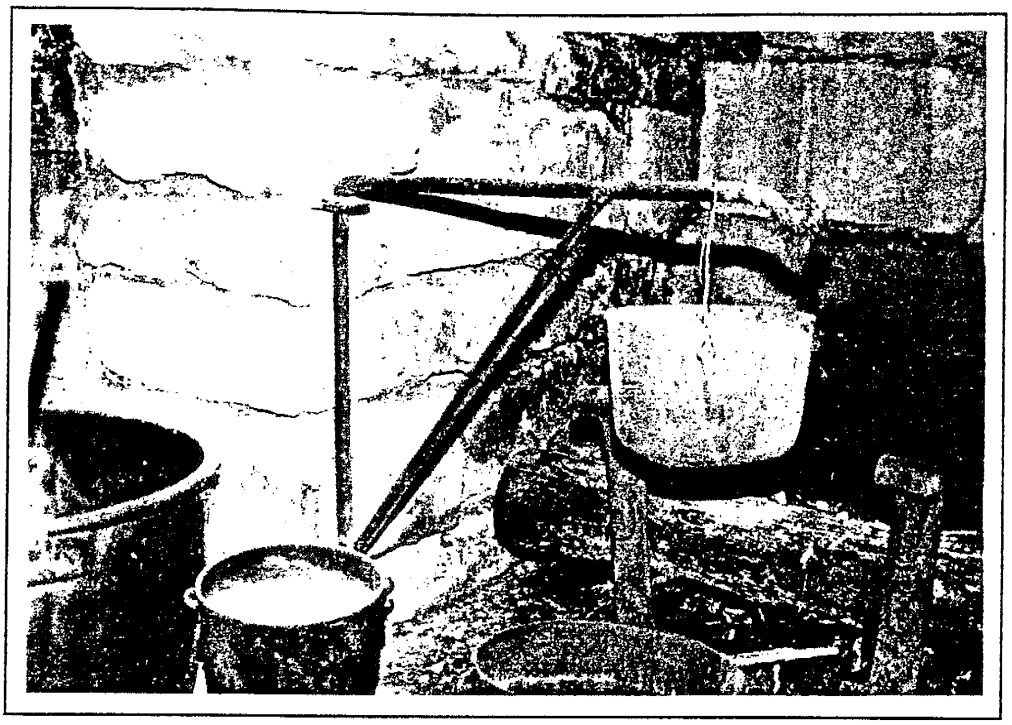


Figure 32. Iron crane at left side of fireplace.

Figure 33. Interior view of walls and ceiling.

Dendrochronology

Dendrochronology, the study of the chronological sequence of annual growth rings in trees, is a scientific method occasionally employed by architectural historians to establish when a building was erected and modified over time. It has been suggested that the technique might be applied to the extant Knob Creek cabin.

There are a number of conditions to be met before tree-ring dates can be used in chronological interpretations. First, and foremost, the exact provenience of each sample must be mapped and recorded to allow a dated sample to be directly related to specific construction events. In the case of the extant Knob Creek cabin, we know that the logs are not in their original position. Thus, it would be impossible to determine provenience. Second, it is crucial to identify the presence of bark or indications of the outer surface of the tree in order to adequately date historic wood. Specimens which have bark or the outermost rings under the bark produce cutting dates. There must be a high percentage of cutting dates to provide valid time period indicators. Unfortunately, because most of the logs have been reworked, few of the Knob Creek cabin logs appear to provide cutting dates. Finally, the fundamental technique of dendrochronology involves "cross dating", comparing ring width patterns within a single tree, between trees, between species, within age classes of a single species , and between sites and major geographical areas. It does not appear that such base line data is available for Kentucky.

Because of the lack of context, the most that dendrochronolgy could tell us is whether any of the logs in the extant cabin pre-date 1816 and thus were located in some structure at the time of the Lincolns' tenure at Knob Creek. It can not tell us which structure they came from nor how they were placed in the original building. Thus, it does not appear that dendrochronology would provide substantial information concerning the construction and modification of the extant Knob Creek cabin.

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New Haven, Ky., October 3, 1934.

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

I was born December 18, 1841, on Knob Creek in LaRue County, Kentucky, about two hundred yards from Abraham Lincoln's cabin home.

My father, Steve Thompson, was born in 1809, the same year of Abraham Lincoln. My grandfather was one of the first settlers on Knob Creek, (at that time Kentucky was a county of Virginia.)

In those days Knob Creek was a large stream of clear water. There was very little cleared land, only small fields. The hills that rise on all sides were the most picturesque of the famous Muldraugh ridge, and the valleys were very fertile. The hills were full of all kinds of game and wild hogs. I have helped my father trap wild hogs for our meat many times, and he took loads of pork down the river to New Orleans.

My father and mother both went to school with Sarah and Abe Lincoln, on Knob Creek. I have heard them tell about it many times. The school house was located about two miles North of the Knob Creek farm, at a point which is now Athertonville. Some other boys who lived close and went to school with the Lincoln's were Hawkins, Woods, Robert Cecil, John Roberts, Joe Cap, Austin Gollaher, Charles Boone, Turner Wilson and Pete Atherton.

I well remember the Lincoln cabin. It was a one room cabin with a fire place in it. I have played in it many times when I was a child, and I was about thirty years old before it was torn down. I last remember it was used for a corn crib, and hogs were fed around it.

On the site of where it stood now stands a replica, reconstructed with logs taken from the cabin of Austin Gollaher, the boyhood friend who saved young Abe from drowning when he fell into Knob Creek. I have heard Austin Gollaher tell about it many times, and he pointed out the spot to me. It was just about fifty yards North of the cabin. The Gollaher home stood up the "hollow" just back of the Lincoln home.

The seven acre field which Lincoln spoke of as being the "Big Field," and the one that he planted the pumpkin seeds in, was evidently just back of the cabin.

I fought in the Civel War and was wounded in the battle of Perryville, October 8, 1862.

Robert Thompson

Robert Thompson

As the nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has responsibility for most of our nationally owned public lands and natural resources. This includes fostering sound use of our land and water resources; protecting our fish, wildlife, and biological diversity; preserving the environmental and cultural values of our national parks and historical places; and providing for the enjoyment of life through outdoor recreation. The department assesses our energy and mineral resources and works to ensure that their development is in the best interests of all our people by encouraging stewardship and citizen participation in their care. The department also has a major responsibility for American Indian reservation communities and for people who live in island territories under U.S. administration.

NPS D- 35 November 2005