

Early History

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History

Tuesday, April 14, 2009



Dr. Jack Ellis is a retired Morehead State University Library director and a retired minister.

Morehead Memories:

People & Places

Abe Lincoln's Kentucky heritage

By JACK ELLIS
Special to The Morehead News

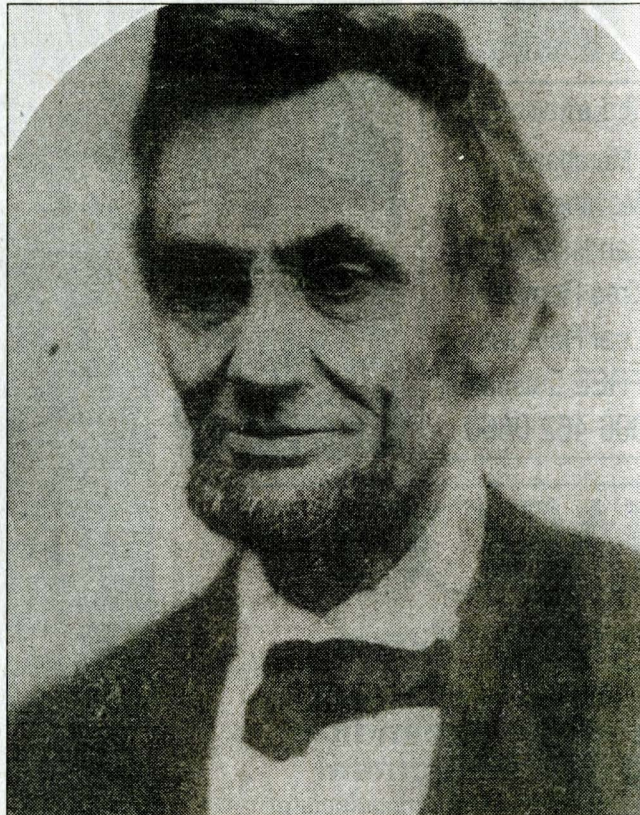
*"Whosoever shall humble himself...the same is greatest."
(Matthew 20:16)*

February 12, 2009 is the 200th birthday of Abraham Lincoln, Kentucky's most famous son, considered by many as the greatest of the 43 presidents of this nation. His birthday and year will be celebrated throughout 2009. Although he left Kentucky as a young child, he was always proud of his Kentucky heritage. More books have been written about Abraham Lincoln than anyone except Jesus Christ. This writer is sure that more will be written about both.

Lincoln's grandfather killed during Indian raid

The roots of Abraham Lincoln go deep in Kentucky's soil. The Lincoln family moved to the raw frontier of Kentucky at the end of the Revolutionary War. However, frequent Indian wars and raids on the pioneer families made survival difficult and hazardous. The Lincoln family moved from the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia across the mountains into Kentucky in 1783.

In May 1786, Abraham Lincoln's grandfather was killed in an In-



The picture above was made from a photograph taken of President Lincoln at Washington on April 10, 1865, the day before the surrender of General Lee. It was the last photograph made of the President, who was assassinated five days later.

it reached its final destiny. In 1811, Thomas Lincoln lost ownership of his farm because of a defective title and moved his family from the humble log cabin to a farm on Knob Creek about 10 miles to the northwest.

Family moves to Indiana, mother dies

In 1816 the Thomas Lincoln family moved again. This time they left Knob Creek. Ken-

Lincoln log cabin dismantled

The humble log cabin where President Abraham Lincoln was born and the one you see when you visit his birthplace has a long and storied history. Although there is some controversy by historians concerning the specific location of the original log cabin, most historians believe it was located at the top of the knoll where the



The original log cabin where Abraham Lincoln was born near Hodgens Mill, Ky. Feb. 12, 1809.



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In May 1786, Abraham Lincoln's grandfather was killed in an Indian raid on the small settlement. Abe's father Thomas was about 10 years old at that time. Around 1800, Thomas Lincoln moved to Elizabethtown, Kentucky. During the next few years, he was a hard working industrious young man who became a master carpenter.

Lincoln's father marries, moves into a log cabin

On June 10, 1806 Thomas Lincoln filed an "Intent to Many" Nancy Hanks. They were married June 12, 1806 by the Reverend Jesse Head. The newly married couple first made their home in Elizabethtown where their first child, Sarah, was born in 1807.

On December 12, 1808, Thomas Lincoln paid 200 dollars cash for the 300-acre Sinking Spring Farm located a few miles south of Hodgins Mill, Kentucky. There his wife and infant daughter moved into a one-room log cabin near a large limestone spring of cool water for which the farm was named. On February 12, 1809, son Abraham Lincoln (named for his grandfather) was born in that crude one-room log cabin. Little did Nancy and Thomas Lincoln realize that crude log cabin would become an icon in American history and cultures and become the symbol of a political party. Also little did they realize that their log cabin would have a long and circuitous journey before

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Family moves to Indiana, mother dies

In 1816 the Thomas Lincoln family moved again. This time they left Knob Creek, Kentucky and moved to the wilderness settlement of Little Pidgeon Creek about 16 miles north of the Ohio River in Indiana. About two years after the family moved to Indiana a fever epidemic (possibly typhoid) struck the settlement. Abe's beloved mother Nancy, while attending to the sick and suffering, contracted the fever and died October 5, 1818. Young Abe Lincoln was devastated and many historians believe that his life long melancholy mood was because of the untimely death of his mother. The mother of the 16th President of the U.S. was buried in an unmarked grave in a small clearing in the vast wilderness that was Indiana at that time.

The image of Nancy Hanks is blurred in history. One authority has said of her "she was dim as the dream of a shifting mirage, her face and figure waver through the mist of time and space." But all who remembered her recognized her marvelous mental and spiritual strength.

While those found difficulty remembering Lincoln's mother, the sixteenth president of the United States never forgot her. That was evident when he said after being elected president, "All that I am or all that I ever hope to be I owe to my angel mother." Although Abe Lincoln was only nine years old when his mother died, what greater tribute could a son give his mother?

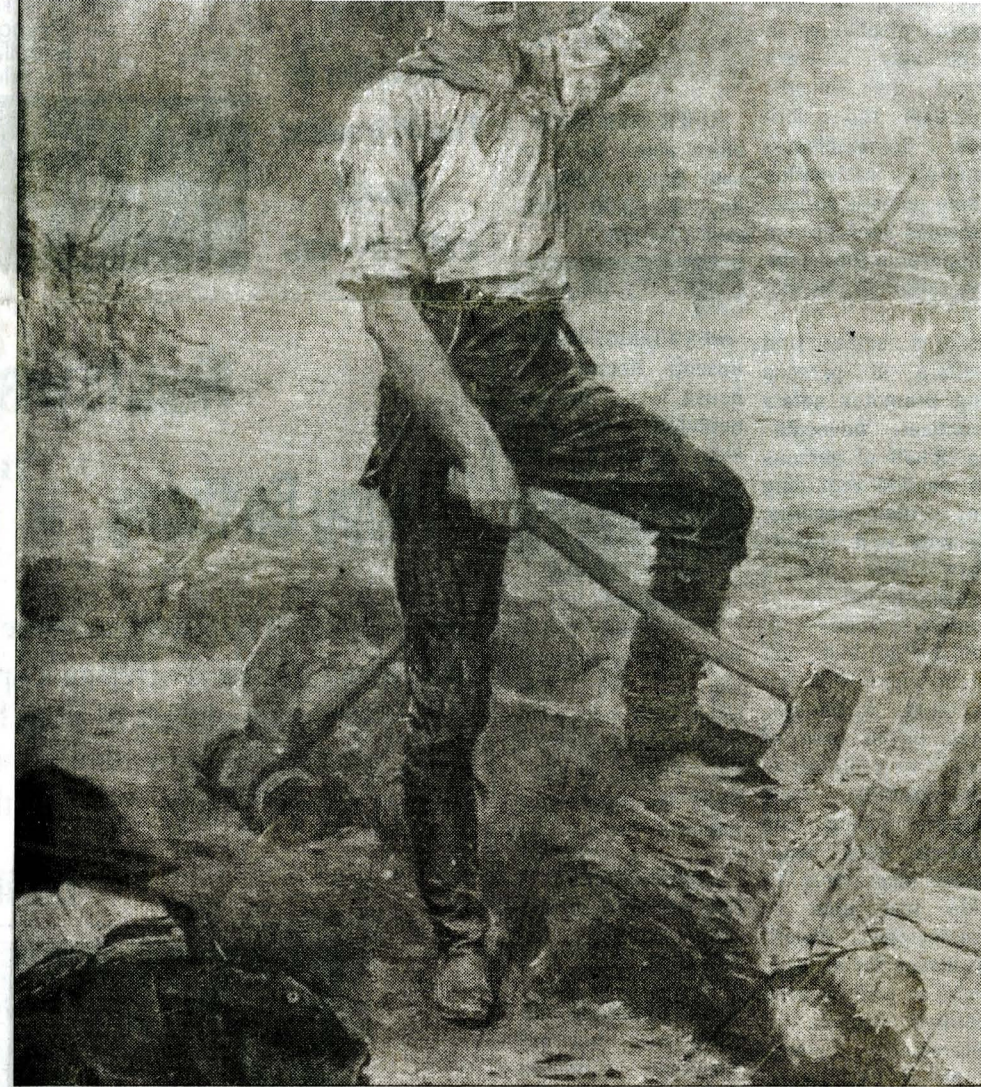
Lincoln log cabin dismantled

The humble log cabin where President Abraham Lincoln was born and the one you see when you visit his birthplace has a long and storied history. Although there is some controversy by historians concerning the specific location of the original log cabin, most historians believe it was located at the top of the knoll where the present memorial is located. For years the cabin was just one of many abandoned log cabins in the wilderness called Kentucky.

Dr. George Rodman, who owned a farm near the Lincoln farm, was the first person to become interested in preserving the cabin. In March 1861, he bought the log cabin and dismantled it and moved it to his 112-acre farm. There it remained until 1895, when it was purchased by a representative of A.W. Dennett of New York. Dennett had purchased the 110-acre former Lincoln farm that was the original site of the log cabin. He dismantled and moved the log cabin back to its original site.

Cabin moved often before returning to original site

In the next few years the cabin was dismantled again, and the logs were carefully marked and taken to various exhibitions throughout the country, where just a log from the birthplace of the nation's most revered president attracted a crowd. Later the cabin logs were stored in the basement of the old Poppenhusen Mansion at College Point, Long Island, New York. The logs remained in the basement until 1906, when they were purchased by the Lincoln Farm Association. They were then shipped to Louisville under full military escort, where they were re-erected as a



"Lincoln the Rail Splitter," by J.L.G. Ferris, original in the Smithsonian, Washington, D.C.

part of Louisville's Homecoming Celebration. On February 12, 1909, Abraham Lincoln's 100th birthday, the cabin was moved back to the Lincoln Birthplace Farm for a ceremony for laying the cornerstone to the present memorial building. In 1911, upon completion of the memorial building, the cabin completed the last of the journey and was restored and re-assembled inside the memorial building.

The memorial building was designed by John Russell Pope and built of Tennessee marble and Connecticut pink granite. Over 100,000 citizens, many of them school children, contributed to the building program for the memorial building. The Lincoln Bi-Centennial Celebration is to last for the next two years, and this now National Historic

Site where many say you are expecting up to two million catch the true essence of visitors over the next Lincoln's greatness is expected two years.

Give A Book About Local History & Heroes By Jack D. Ellis

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Patriots and Heroes: Eastern Ky. Soldiers of WWII.

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Alpha M. Hutchinson: The Biography of a Man and His Community.

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Morehead Memories:

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Lincoln's roots run deep in Kentucky

He knew Lincoln

"Whosoever shall humble himself, the same shall be greatest." (Matthew 18:4)

Abraham Lincoln, this nation's president during the Civil War and Kentucky's most famous native son, was born near Hodgenville, Kentucky, Feb. 12, 1809. It is a national historic site and a hallowed shrine where many say the true essence of Lincoln's character was formed.

Even now plans are under way to celebrate the old rail splitter's 200th birthday in 2009, and many articles are beginning to appear recognizing his heritage and contributions as president during the Civil War years.

Abraham Lincoln's roots reach deep in the Kentucky soil. His parents, Thomas Lincoln and Nancy Hanks, were married in Washington County June 3, 1806. No one could have foreseen that out of that union in Washington County (named for the father of our county, President George Washington) would come a lad who would supplant him as this nation's most beloved president.

This writer has heard more than once the question asked on various quiz shows: What state can claim the birthplace of President Abraham Lincoln? Most miss the question, saying "Illinois" because prominently displayed on its license plate is "Land of Lincoln." North Carolina puts on its license plate "First in Flight" when everyone knows the plane, the men and the motor came from Dayton, Ohio.

should begin immediately to proudly display "Birthplace of Lincoln" on every automobile license plate.

This writer recently was given several old scrapbooks from the Margaret Cornette Morris estate. Margaret was my wife's first cousin and her family wanted us to have them, and our community will be richer in heritage because of this collection. Those scrapbooks date to the 1800s and were started by Margaret's grandmother who was the wife of "Mighty E" Hogge, Judge Allie Young's law partner. (Judge Young is considered by many as the "father" of Morehead State College.) One of the most fascinating items is an interview written on yellow paper, falling apart but still legible.

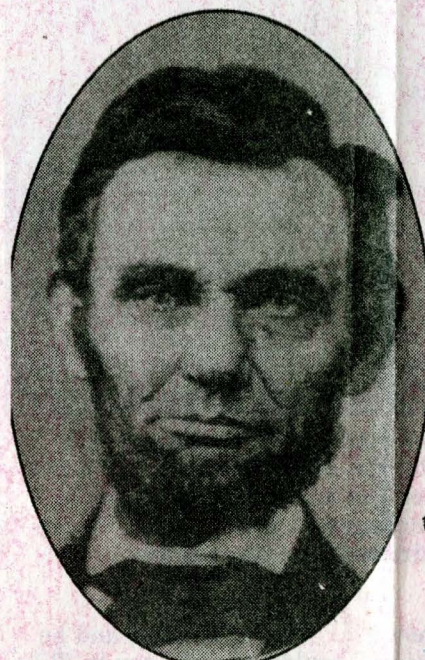
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This "interview" by one of his friends from Springfield, Ill., tells much about the trials and tribulations of President Lincoln and his compassion for people. It is self-explanatory and written in the spoken dialect of the time.

With deep appreciation to the author whoever he/she is:

He Knew Lincoln

"Did I know Lincoln? Well, I should say. See that chair there? Take it, set down. There that's right.



This photo of President Abraham Lincoln reflects a sad, melancholy, depressed President with the weight of a nation torn apart on his shoulders. This was a familiar photo in almost every classroom in America during the 20th century.

set in that chair hours at a time, him and 'little Doug.' There wasn't never no United States Senate that could beat just what I've heard right here in this room with Lincoln settin' in that very chair where you are this minute.

"Tell stories? Nobody ever could beat him at that and oh how he'd enjoy 'em, just slap his hands on his knees and jump up and down and turn around and then set down, laugh to kill.

Greatest man to get a new yarn that ever lived.

"You know I felt kind of sorry for Lincoln when they began to talk about him for President. It seemed almost as if somebody was makin' fun of him. He didn't look like a President. None of us around town took much stock in him bein' elected at first — that is none of the men, the women was differ-

See DEEP, Page D-2

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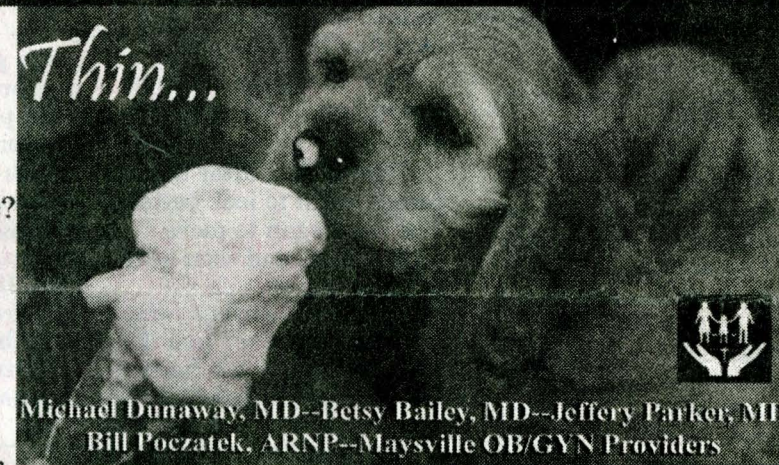
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Allie Young's law partner. (Judge Young is considered by many as the "father" of Morehead State College.) One of the most fascinating items is an interview written on yellow paper, falling apart but still legible.

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"Did I know Lincoln? Well, I should say. See that chair there? Take it, set down. There that's right. Comfortable, ain't it? Well, sir, Abraham Lincoln has

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DEEP

From Page D-1

ent. They always believed in him, and used to say 'You mark my words, Mr. Lincoln will be president.'

"Was there much talk about his bein' killed?" Well, there's an awful lot of fools in this world and when they don't get what they want they're always for killin' somebody. Mr. Lin-

"I'll never fergit that speech he made the night he went down to Washington. He'd been shakin' hands with the crowd in the depot, laughing and talking, just like himself. But when he got onto the train he seemed to be all changed. You never seen a face so sad in all the world. He just knowed that he was never comin' back to us alive."

— Excerpt from interview of a friend of Lincoln

coln never let on, but I reckon his mail was pretty lively readin' sometimes. "Of course he seemed pretty cheerful always. He wasn't no man to show out all he felt. I'll never fergit that speech he made the night he went down to Washington. He'd been shakin' hands with the crowd in the depot, laughing and talking, just like himself. But when he got onto the train he seemed to be all changed. You never seen a face so sad in all the world. He just knowed that he was never comin' back to us alive.

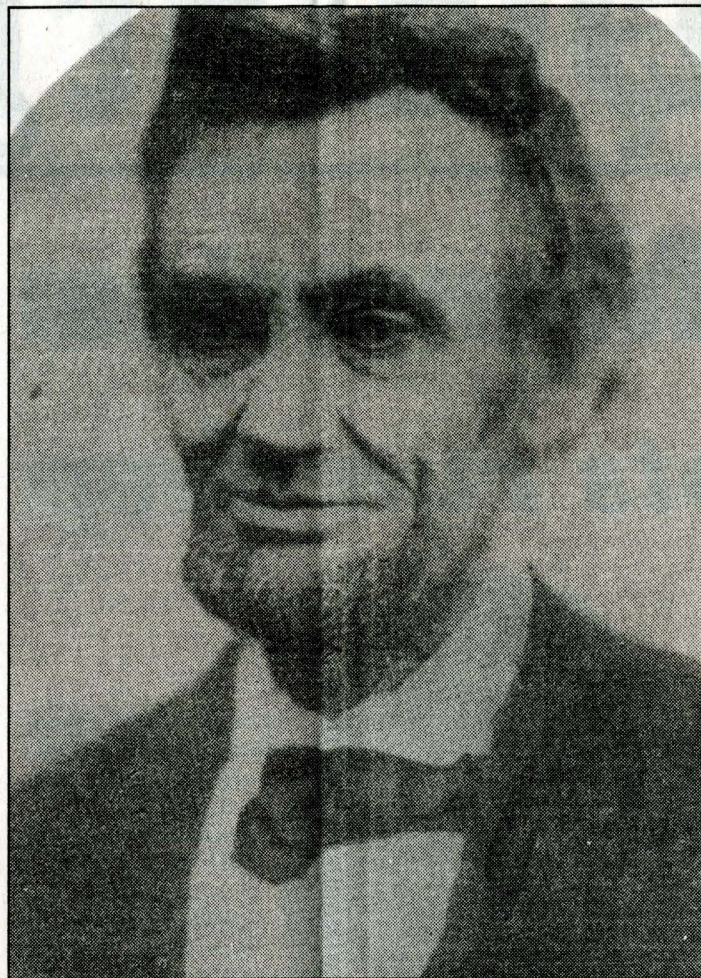
"Ever see him again?" Yes, once down in Washington, summer of '64. Things were looking purty blue that summer. I kept hearing about the trouble he was having with everybody,

"Well, sir, I never was so astonished in my life. Mr. Lincoln just took my hand and shook it nearly off, and he says: 'Billy, you'll never know what good you done me. I'm homesick, Billy, just plum homesick, and it seems as if the war never will be over. Many a night I can see the boys a-dyin' on the fields and I can hear their mothers cryin' for 'em at home, and I can't help 'em, Billy. I have to send them down there. We've got to save the Union, Billy, we've got to.'

"Course we have, Mr. Lincoln,' I says, cheerful as I could, 'course we have. Don't you worry. It's most over'—and I started out. But seems as if he couldn't let me go. 'Wait a minute, Billy,' he says, 'till I get my hat and I'll walk a piece with you.' By-and-by we came out of the trees to a sightly place where we could look all over Washington. There was a bench there and we set down and after a while Mr. Lincoln begun to talk. Well, sir, you or nobody ever heard anything like it. Tell you what he said? Nope, I can't. Can't talk about it somehow. He opened up his heart if I do say it. 'You're the first person I ever unloaded onto, and I hope you won't think I'm a baby,' and then we shook hands again, and I walked down to town and next day I came home.

"Yes, that's the last time I seen him — last time alive.

"Wasn't long after that things begin to look better. The war began to move right smart, and soon as it did, there warn't no use talking about anybody else for president. I tell you it was a great day out here when we heard Lee had



The picture above was made from a photograph taken of President Lincoln at Washington on April 10, 1865, the day before the surrender of General Lee. It was the last photograph made of the President, who was assassinated five days later.

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"We began right off to make plans about the reception we'd give him—brass band—parade—speeches—fireworks—everything. Seems as if I couldn't think about anything else. I was coming down to open the store one morning when I saw Hiram Jones comin' all bent over. I didn't know what had happened.

"Hiram,' I says, 'What's the matter? Be you sick?'

"Billy,' he says, and he couldn't hardly say it, 'Billy, they've killed Mr. Lincoln.'

"Well, I just turned cold all over, and then I flared up. 'Hiram Jones,' I says, 'you're lyin', you're crazy.' "Don't, Billy,' he says, 'don't go on so. I ain't lyin'. It's so. He'll never come back. Billy. He's dead!' And he fell to sobbin' out loud right there in the street, and somehow I knew it was true.

"For days and days 'twas awful here. Waitin' and

waitin'. Seemed as if that funeral never would end. I couldn't bear to think of him bein' dragged around the country and havin' all that fuss made over him. He hated fussin' so. Still, I s'pose I'd been mad if they hadn't done it.

"Of course they got here at last, and I must say it was pretty grand. All sorts of big bugs. Senators and Congressmen, and officers in grand uniforms spared no pains givin' him a funeral. Only we didn't want them to do it. We wanted

them to let us.

"Ma and me didn't go to the cemetery with 'em. I couldn't stand it. Didn't seem right to have such goin's on here at home where he belongs for a man like him. But we go up of-ten now, ma and me does, and talk about him.

"Yes, I knowed Abraham Lincoln; knowed him well; and I tell you there wasn't never a better man made. Leastwise, I don't want to know a better one. He just suited me — Abraham Lincoln did."

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"Ever see him again?" Yes, once down in Washington, summer of '64. Things were looking purty blue that summer. I kept hearing about the trouble he was having with everybody, and I just made up my mind I'd go down and see him and swap yarns and tell him how we was countin' on his gettin' home. So I just picked up and went right off.

"Well, when I got down there to Washington, I footed it right out to the Soldiers' Home where Mr. Lincoln was living then, right among the sick soldiers in their tents. He saw me almost at once, and his face lit up, and he laid hold of me and just shook my hands fit to kill. 'Billy,' he said, 'I am glad to see you. Come right in. You're goin' to stay to supper with Mary and me.'

"Didn't I know it? Think bein' president would change him? Not a mite. Soon as he had time we went out on the back stoop and sat down and talked and talked. He ask about pretty nigh everybody in Springfield.

"Well, we had supper and then talked some more, and about ten o'clock I started down town. He wanted me to stay all night, but I says to myself, 'Billy don't you overdo it. You've cheered him up, and you better light out and let him remember it when he's tired.' So I said, 'Nope, Mr. Lincoln, can't, goin' back to Springfield tomorrow.'

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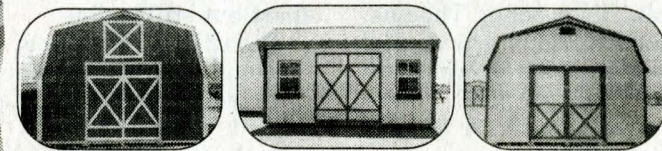


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From The Collection Of
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2/17

MOREHEAD MEMORIES: PEOPLE & PLACES
ABE LINCOLN'S KENTUCKY HERITAGE

BY
JACK D. ELLIS

Whoever shall humble himself... to same is greatest"
(MATTHEW 20:16)

February 12, 2009, ~~will be~~ ^{is} the 200th birthday of Abraham Lincoln, Kentucky's most famous son, and, ^{is considered by many as} ~~many say~~ was the greatest of the 43 presidents of this nation. *His birthday and year will be celebrated throughout 2009.* Although he left Kentucky as a young child, he was always proud of his Kentucky heritage. More books have been written about Abraham Lincoln than anyone else except Jesus Christ. This writer is sure that more will be written about both.

LINCOLN'S GRANDFATHER KILLED DURING INDIAN RAID

The roots of Abraham Lincoln, ~~this states most famous son,~~ go deep in Kentucky's soil. The Lincoln family moved to the raw frontier of Kentucky at the end of the Revolutionary War. However, frequent Indian wars and raids on the pioneer families made survival difficult and hazardous. The Lincoln family moved from the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia across the mountains into Kentucky in 1783.

In May, 1786, Abraham Lincoln's grandfather was killed in an Indian raid on the small settlement. Abe's father, Thomas, was about 10 years old at that time. Around 1800, Thomas Lincoln moved to Elizabethtown, Kentucky. During the next few years, he was a hard working industrious young man who became a master carpenter.

LINCOLN'S FATHER MARRIES - MOVES INTO A LOG-CABIN

On June 10, ~~1806~~¹⁸⁰⁶, Thomas Lincoln filed an "Intent to Marry" Nancy Hanks. They were married June 12, 1806, by the Reverend Jesse Head. The newly married couple first made their home in Elizabethtown where their first child, Sarah, was born in 1807.

On December 12, 1808, Thomas Lincoln paid 300 dollars cash for the 300 acre Sinking Spring Farm located a few miles south of Hodgins Mill, Kentucky. There his wife and infant daughter moved into a one-room log cabin near a large limestone spring of cool water for which the farm was named. On February 12, 1809, son Abraham Lincoln (named for his grandfather) was born in that crude one-room log cabin. Little did Nancy and Thomas Lincoln realize that crude log cabin would become an icon in American history and culture, ^{and become the symbol of a political party.} Also little did they realize that their log cabin would have a long and circuitous journey before it reached its final destiny.

In 1811, Thomas Lincoln lost ownership of his farm because of a defective title. ^{and} ~~In 1811, he~~ moved his family from the ~~first place~~ ^{the humble log} cabin to a farm on Knob Creek about 10 miles to the northwest.

FAMILY MOVES TO INDIANA - MOTHER DIES
In 1816, the Thomas Lincoln family moved again. This time they left Knob Creek, Kentucky and moved to ^{the} a wilderness settlement of Little Pidgeon Creek about 16 miles north of the Ohio River in Indiana. About two years after the family moved to Indiana a fever epidemic (possibly

typhoid) struck the settlement. Abe's beloved mother, Nancy, while attending to the sick and suffering contracted ~~the~~^{the} fever and died October 5, 1818. Young Abe Lincoln was devastated and many historians believe that his life long melancholy mood was because of the untimely death of his mother. The mother of the 16th President of the US_. was buried in an unmarked grave in a small clearing in the vast wilderness that was Indiana at that time.

The image of Nancy Hanks is blurred ~~to the~~ⁱⁿ history. One authority has said of her "she was dim as ~~a~~^{the} dream of a shifting mirage, ~~Her~~ face and figure waver through the mist of time and ~~times~~^{space}. But all who remember her recognize ~~her~~ marvelous mental and spiritual strength.

While those who found difficulty remembering Lincoln's mother, the sixteenth president of the United States never forgot her. That was evident when he said after being elected president, "All that I am or all that I ever hope to be I owe to my angel mother." Although Abe Lincoln was only nine years old when his mother died, what greater tribute could a son give his mother.

LINCOLN LOG CABIN DISMANTLED

The humble log cabin where President Abraham Lincoln was born and the one you see when you visit his birthplace, has a long and storied history. Although there is some controversy by historians concerning the

specific location of the original log cabin, most historians believe it was located at the top of the knoll where the present memorial is located. For years the cabin was just one of many abandoned log cabins in the wilderness called Kentucky.

Dr. George Rodman, who owned a farm near the Lincoln farm, was the first person to become interested in preserving the cabin. In March, 1861, he bought the log cabin and dismantled it and moved it to his 112 acre farm. There it remained until 1895, when it was purchased by a representative of A.W. Dennett of New York. Dennett had purchased the

110 acre former Lincoln farm that was the original site of the log cabin. He *dismantled* and moved the log cabin back to its original site.

CABIN MOVED OFTEN BEFORE RETURNING TO ORIGINAL SITE

In the next few years the cabin was dismantled again, and the logs

carefully marked and taken to various expositions throughout the country, *where just a log from the birthplace of the Nation's most revered president attracted a crowd.* Later the cabin logs were stored in the basement of the old Pappenhusen

Mansion at College Point, Long Island, New York. The logs remained in the basement until 1906, when ~~it was~~ *they were purchased* by the Lincoln Farm

Association. ~~It was~~ *They were* then shipped to Louisville under full military escort ~~here~~ *where*

they were re-erected it was re-erected as a part of Louisville's Homecoming Celebration. On

February 12, 1909, Abraham Lincoln's 100th birthday, the cabin was moved back to the Lincoln Birthplace Farm for a ceremony for laying the

cornerstone to the present memorial building. In 1911, upon completion of the memorial building, the cabin completed the last of the journey and was restored and re-assembled inside the memorial building.

The memorial building was designed by John Russell Pope and built of Tennessee marble and Connecticut pink granite. Over 100,000 citizens, many of them school children, contributed to the building program for the memorial building. The Lincoln Bi-Centennial Celebration is to last for ~~two~~ *two* ~~the next~~ *the next* years, and this now National Historic Site where many say you catch the true essence of Lincoln's greatness, are expecting up to two million visitors over the next two years.

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BY JACK DEWILL

"WHOSOEVER SHALL HUMBLE HIMSELF LIKE KNEW LINCOLN THE SAME SHALL BE GREAT" (MATT. 18:4)

most famous native son, was born near Hodgenville, Kentucky, February 12, 1809. It is a national historic site and a hallowed shrine where the true essence of Lincoln's

character was formed. Even now plans are underway to celebrate the old rail splitter's birthday in 2009, and many articles are beginning to appear recognizing his heritage and contributions as President during the Civil War years. His parents,

Thomas Lincoln and Nancy Hanks were married in Washington, county, June 3, 1806.

No one could have foreseen that out of that union in Washington County (named for the father of our country, President George Washington), would come a lad who would supplant him as this nation's most beloved president.

This writer has heard more than once the question asked on various quiz shows:

What state can claim the birth place of President Abraham Lincoln? Most miss the question saying Illinois because prominently displayed on their license plates "Land of Lincoln". North Carolina puts on their License plate, "First in Flight" when everyone knows the plane, the men and the motor came from Dayton, Ohio and all that state did was furnish a beach. Then, Kentucky should begin immediately to proudly display, "Birthplace of Lincoln" on every automobile license plate.

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This writer recently was given several old scrap books from the Margaret Morris estate. Margaret was my wife's first cousin and her family wanted us to have them, *and our community will be richer in heritage because of her collection.* Those scrap books date to the 1800s and were started by Margaret's grandmother who was the wife of "Mighty E" Hogge, Judge Allie Young's law partner. (Judge Young is considered by many as the "father" of Morehead State College.) One of the most fascinating items is an interview written on yellow paper falling apart but still legible. The title is, "He Knew Lincoln." I don't know where it came from or who wrote it but I want to share it with the readers of this column because the old rail splitter Abe Lincoln, considered by many as this nation's greatest president, was born in Kentucky. This "interview" by one of his friends from Springfield, Illinois, tells much about the trials and tribulations of President Lincoln and his compassion for people. *it is self* ~~With deep~~ *deep* *explanatory and written in the spoken dialect of the Kenia. With* appreciation to the author whoever he/she is:

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