

# The Knob Creek Home

## Life Along The Cumberland Trail

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. He held thirty acres in his parcel. It lay to the east side of the turnpike connecting Nashville, Tennessee, to Louisville, Kentucky.



Hardin County History Museum Photo Collection  
Early photo of the Cumberland Trail, also referred to as the portion of road known as the Bardstown and Green River Turnpike, that ran near the Lincoln Cabin at Knob Creek.

This proximity to the turnpike, a primary traveled artery, exposed Abraham Lincoln to a variety of people including slaves being driven to market. Knob Creek neighbors William Brownfield, John Dye and William Ash also held a small number of slaves.

THOMAS LINCOLN WAS APPOINTED "ROAD SURVEYOR" BY HARDIN CIRCUIT COURT ON MAY 13, 1816 WHILE LIVING AT KNOB CREEK. HE WAS CHARGED WITH THE KEEPING IN REPAIR OF A PORTION OF ROAD NEAR HIS HOME KNOWN AS "THE BIG HILL." THIS MULdraugh HILL ROAD IS SAID TO HAVE RECEIVED ONE OF THE EARLIEST GRANTS OF GOVERNMENT AID FOR ROAD BUILDING IN THE NATION.

## Land Ownership Troubles

In 1811 a legal dispute over the title for the Sinking Spring Farm caused the Lincoln family to move to a new farm on Knob Creek while legal proceedings regarding that rightful ownership continued in Hardin Circuit Court.

Thomas Lincoln tried to buy the Knob Creek Farm from George Lindsey in 1815 but was unsuccessful. That same year 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 law suit that followed was settled in 1818, it found in the favor of Lindsey and his tenants.

Thomas Lincoln moved his family to Indiana in 1816 when he learned the court's decision that he had no rightful claim to the Sinking Spring Farm.

1784 Map of Kentucky with Knob Creek site indicated with arrow.



Courtesy of the Filson Club, Louisville, Kentucky

## Lincoln Remembers Kentucky Home

Abraham Lincoln in a conversation at the White House 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.*

## New Arrival to the Lincoln Family

Abraham Lincoln's only brother, **Tommy Lincoln**, was born while the family lived at Knob Creek when Abraham was two or three years old. It is told that the baby only lived three days and that Thomas Lincoln fashioned a small coffin for the remains and carried them for burial to a cemetery located about 75 yards from neighboring George Redmon's cabin. The grave was marked with a triangular-shaped limestone marker bearing "T.L." inscribed in peculiar pioneer fashion showing a striking resemblance of individualistic style lettering used by Thomas Lincoln.



Courtesy of Carl Howell, Hodgenville, Kentucky



LINCOLN - FAMILY and FRIENDS

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