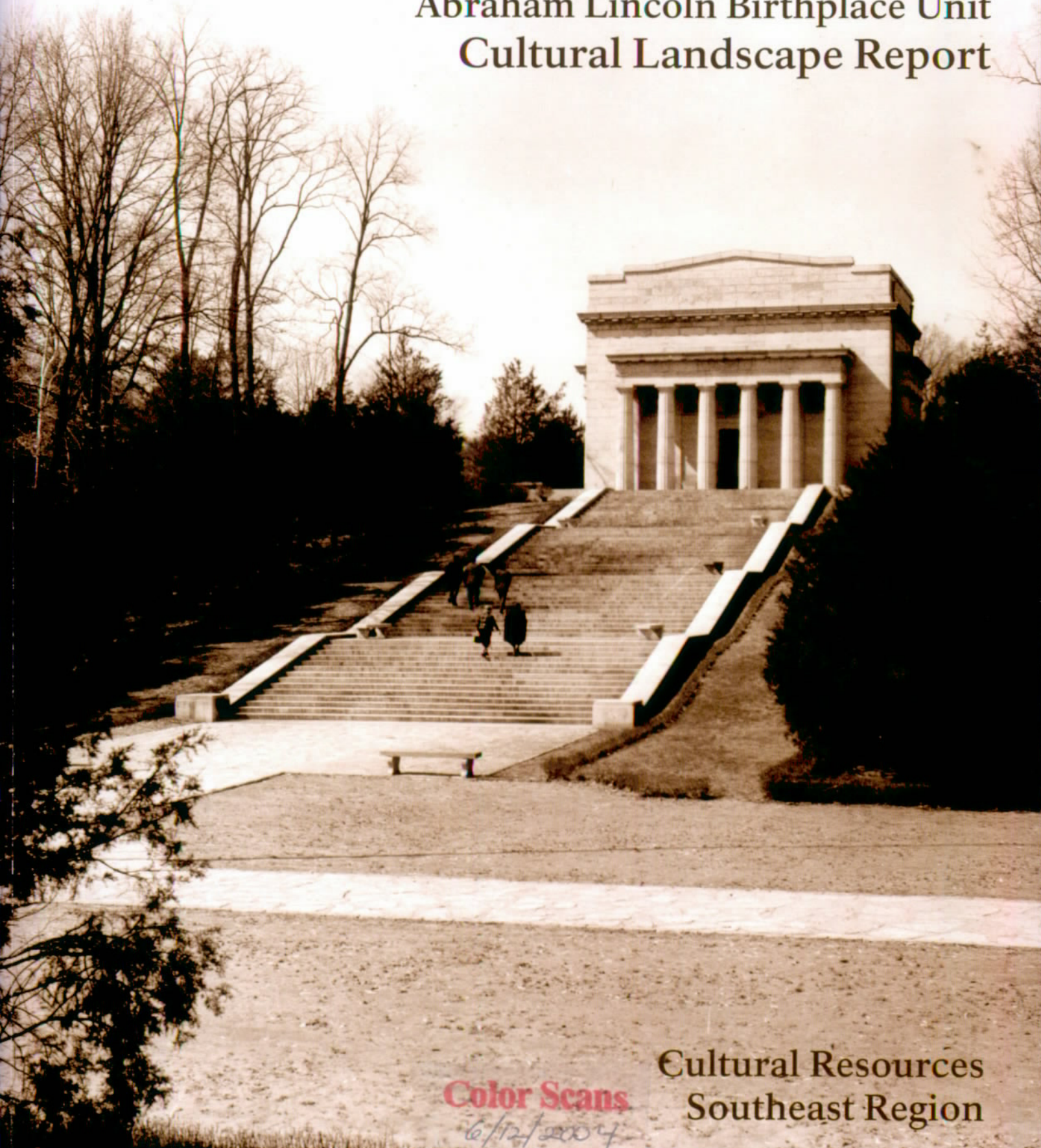


338/D29



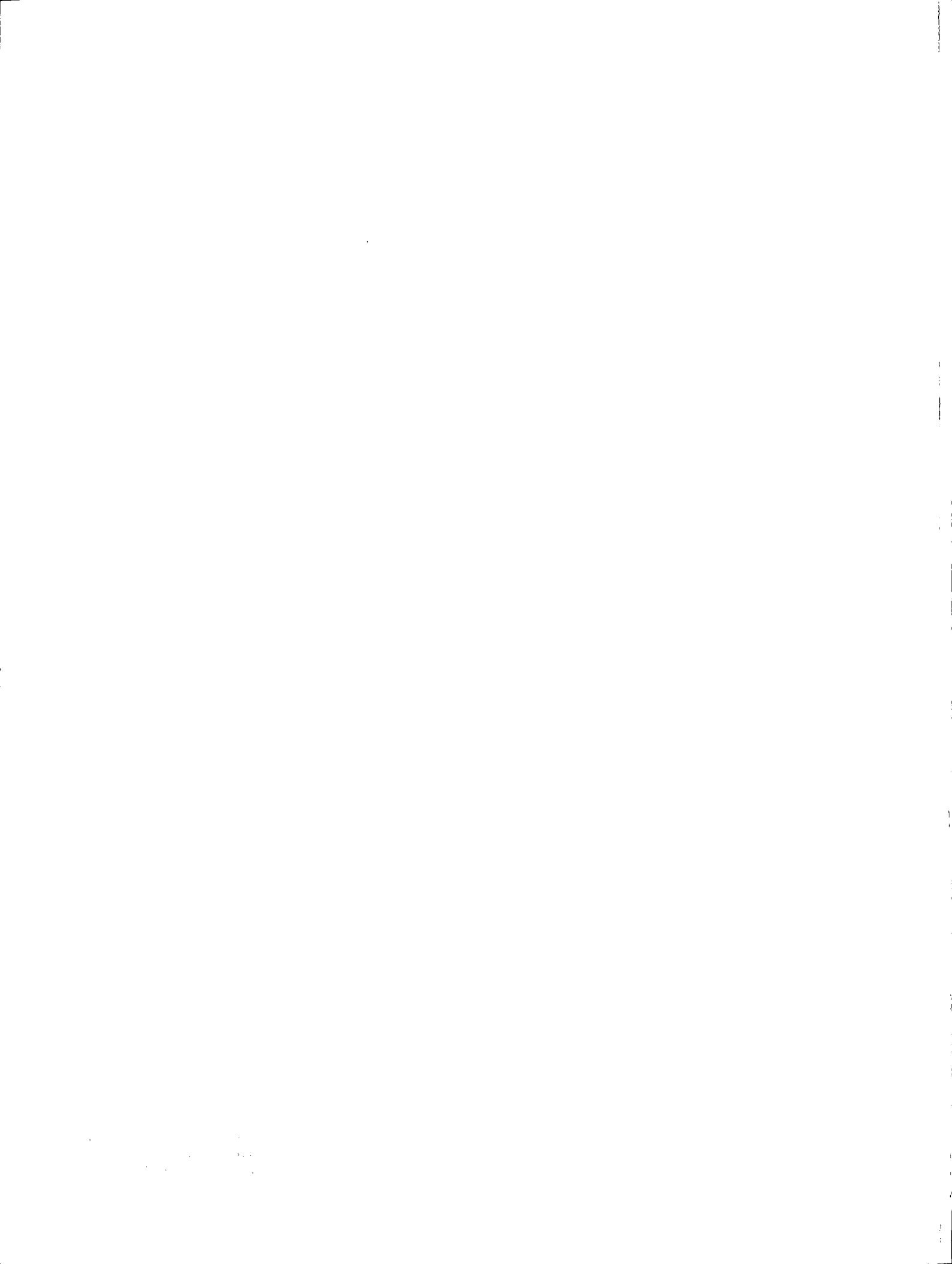
# Abraham Lincoln Birthplace Unit Cultural Landscape Report



Color Scans

6/12/2004

Cultural Resources  
Southeast Region



**Abraham Lincoln Birthplace Unit,  
Abraham Lincoln Birthplace  
National Historic Site**

**Cultural Landscape Report**

Prepared by Lucy Lawliss and Susan Hitchcock

National Park Service  
Southeast Regional Office  
Cultural Resources Division

2004

PLEASE RETURN TO:

TECHNICAL INFORMATION CENTER  
DENVER SERVICE CENTER  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE



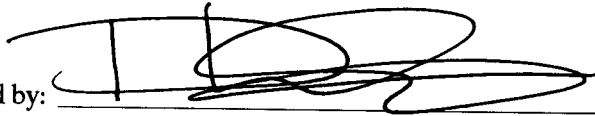
The cultural landscape report presented here exists in two formats. A printed version is available for study at the park, the Southeastern Regional Office of the National Park Service, and at a variety of other repositories. For more widespread access, this cultural landscape report also exists in a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

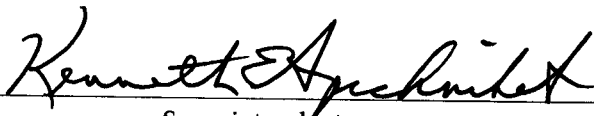
**Cultural Resources  
Southeast Region  
National Park Service  
100 Alabama St. SW  
Atlanta, GA 30303  
(404) 562-3117**


2004  
Cultural Landscape Report  
Abraham Lincoln Birthplace Unit,  
Abraham Lincoln Birthplace  
National Historic Site  
Hodgenville, Kentucky

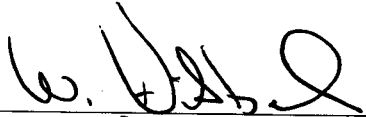
Abraham Lincoln Birthplace Unit,  
Abraham Lincoln Birthplace  
National Historic Site

## Cultural Landscape Report

Recommended by:  3-17-04  
Chief, Cultural Resources  
Southeast Region Date

Approved by:  3/4/04  
Superintendent  
Abraham Lincoln Birthplace  
National Historic Site Date

Concurred by:  3-17-04  
Associate Regional Director,  
Cultural Resource Stewardship  
Southeast Region Date

Concurred by:  3-18-04  
for Regional Director  
Southeast Region Date



# Contents

Figures	vii
Figure Credits	ix
Foreword	xi
Acknowledgments	xiii
<b>Introduction</b>	
Management Summary	1
Historical Summary	2
Study Boundary	2
Scope of Work and Methodology	3
Summary	4
<b>Site History</b>	
Thomas Lincoln-Sinking Spring Farm, 1808-1816	5
Continued Agricultural Use, 1816-1894	6
Private Commemoration of the Lincoln Birthplace, 1894-1916	7
Abraham Lincoln National Park, 1916-Present	19
<b>Existing Conditions</b>	
Location	45
Topography	45
Spatial Organization	45
Circulation	46
Views and Vistas	46
Vegetation	47
Memorial Building and Landscape	48
Plaza and Flagstaff	48
The Sinking Spring	48
The Boundary Oak	49
Visitor Center	49
Picnic and Recreation Area	49
Maintenance Complex / Park Housing	49
Small-scale Features	50
Summary	50
<b>Analysis</b>	
Period of Significance	55
Evaluation of Integrity	55
Summary	59
<b>Treatment Recommendations</b>	
Memorial Landscape	61
<b>Preparing a Record of Treatment</b>	
Purpose	73
Contents and Format	73
Reference Materials	73
<b>Selected Bibliography</b>	75
<b>Appendix</b>	77





# Figures

1	View of the Sinking Spring Farm, 1895	9
2	Railroad flatcar loaded with the logs from the dismantled cabin, 1906.	11
3	Pope's plan for a Lincoln Birthplace Memorial, 1908.	12
4	Lincoln cabin re-erected on site for the centennial celebration, 1909	12
5	Centennial celebration, 1909.	13
6	Construction of the Memorial Building Stairway, c. 1910.	14
7	Construction shot showing agricultural setting of the site, c. 1910.	15
8	Memorial Building and Stairway, 1924.	15
9	Memorial Building Foundation with view of crops planted near the Creal house, c. 1910.	16
10	Granite entry markers, undated.	16
11	View back to Memorial Building from Jackson Highway, 1928.	16
12	Dedication photo showing mature plant material along Memorial Stairway, 1911.	17
13	Dedication photo showing Memorial Plaza, 1911.	17
14	Memorial Building Landscape with benches, c. 1920.	17
15	View of the Sinking Spring, 1890s.	18
16	The Boundary Oak, 1919.	18
17	The entrance road and park landscape beyond, 1928.	18
18	Memorial Building Landscape, 1913.	19
19	Memorial Plaza under water, 1935.	20
20	View of Memorial Plaza with cultivated fields in the background, 1928.	22
21	Picturesque nature of the Sinking Spring, 1928.	23
22	View of Memorial Plaza, 1928.	24
23	Lincoln Farm National Monument - Reservation Map, 1932.	25
24	View of parking ellipse, 1930s.	26
25	View of entrance, 1934.	26
26	Aerial photo showing proximity of Nancy Lincoln Inn, 1938.	27
27	Lincoln Memorial Building Landscape after War Department improvements, 1932.	29
28	Closeup of Memorial Plaza, 1928.	29
29	New entrance features, 1930s.	29
30	The Sinking Spring, 1938.	29
31	The Boundary Oak, 1938.	30
32	The Creal house, 1928.	30
33	Rustic picnic pavilion and restroom facility, 1938.	30
34	Planting Plan Approach Area [detail of larger plan], 1935.	32
35	Screening of Nancy Lincoln Inn from parking ellipse, 1935.	33
36	Memorial Building Landscape after planting of red cedars, 1935.	33
37	Red cedar allée framing the approach to the Memorial Building, 1935.	33
38	Deciduous trees planted outside the formal landscape, 1935.	34
39	The Creal house, 1938.	34
40	Superintendent's residence, 1996.	35
41	Visitor Center Floor Plan and Elevation, 1958.	37
42	Aerial photograph, 1959 (note change in vegetation from Figure 26).	38

43	The Boundary Oak, 1959.	38
44	The Visitor Center, 1959.	39
45	The Boundary Oak, undated.	40
46	Historic Base Map - West.	41
47	Historic Base Map - East.	43
48	Location map, 1999.	45
49	Parking ellipse, 2003.	46
50	Boardwalk through wooded area, 1996.	46
51	Lack of screening for the Nancy Lincoln Inn, 2001.	46
52	Red cedar allée, 2003.	47
53	The Memorial Building, 1984.	48
54	Memorial Plaza, 1994.	48
55	The Sinking Spring, 1994.	48
56	Historic location of the Boundary Oak, 1994.	49
57	Picnic area, 2003.	49
58	Maintenance complex, 1996.	50
59	Park housing, 2001.	50
60	Existing Conditions Map - West.	51
61	Existing Conditions Map - East.	53
62	Memorial Building Landscape, 1938.	55
63	Memorial Building Landscape under construction, c. 1910.	56
64	Memorial Building Landscape after planting of red cedars, 1935.	57
65	View down Memorial Stairway, 2003.	57
66	Steps leading down from parking ellipse, 2001	58
67	Hedges along Memorial Building Stairway, undated.	58
68	Aerial photograph showing increased vegetation, 1990s.	59
69	Memorial Building Landscape, c. 1920.	60
70	Memorial Building Landscape, 2001.	60
71	Asphalt walk at the rear of the Visitor Center, 2003.	62
72	Walkway to the Nancy Lincoln Inn, 2003.	62
73	Stone edgings near the Sinking Spring, 2003.	62
74	Steps on the west side of the Visitor Center, 2003.	63
75	Loss of lower growth on red cedars, 2003.	63
76	Memorial Building Landscape showing original hedge configuration, 1928.	64
77	Plantings used to restrict views, 1938.	65
78	Cast concrete drinking fountain, 2003.	66
79	Portion of sixteen acres currently being mowed weekly, 2003.	67
80	Redbuds planted along U.S. 31E, 2003.	67
81	Treatment Map - West.	69
82	Treatment Map - East.	71

## Figure Credits

Figures 1-2: adapted from Peterson pl. I, IV; Figure 3: adapted from Collier's Weekly 40 (February 15, 1908); Figures 4-7: Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historic Site (ABLI) archives; Figure 8: adapted from Ida Tarbell, *In the Footsteps of the Lincolns*; Figures 9-10: ABLI archives; Figure 11: adapted from "Report of the Lincoln Farm and Memorial"; Figures 12-16: ABLI archives; Figure 17: adapted from "Report of the Lincoln Farm and Memorial"; Figure 18: The Filson Historical Society, Louisville, KY; Figures 19-20: ABLI archives; Figure 21: The Filson Historical Society, Louisville, KY; Figure 22: adapted from "Report of the Lincoln Farm and Memorial"; Figure 23: Denver Service Center (DSC) Technical Information Center (TIC) 338/9009; Figure 24: ABLI archives; Figure 25: adapted from Peterson pl. XII; Figure 26: ABLI archives; Figure 27: The Filson Historical Society, Louisville, KY; Figure 28: adapted from Peterson pl. XIII; Figures 29-31: ABLI archives; Figure 32: adapted from "Report of the Lincoln Farm and Memorial"; Figure 33: ABLI archives; Figure 34: DSC TIC 228/1050A; Figures 35-40: ABLI archives; Figure 41: DSC TIC 338/3009; Figures 42-45: ABLI archives; Figures 46-47: David Hasty, Southeast Regional Office (SERO); Figure 48: National Park Service (NPS); Figures 49-52: SERO; Figure 53: Historic American Building Survey (HABS); Figures 54-59: SERO; Figures 60-61: David Hasty, SERO; Figures 62-64: ABLI archives; Figures 65-66: SERO; Figures 67-69: ABLI archives; Figures 70-75: SERO; Figure 76: The Filson Historical Society, Louisville, KY; Figure 77: ABLI archives; Figures 78-80: SERO; Figures 81-82: David Hasty, SERO.



# Foreword

We are pleased to make available this cultural landscape report as part of our ongoing effort to provide comprehensive documentation for the historic structures and landscapes of National Park Service units in the Southeast Region. Many individuals and institutions contributed to the successful completion of this project. We would especially like to thank Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historic Site Superintendent Kenneth E. Apschnikat and Chief of Operations Gary Talley. In 2002, landscape historian Susan Hitchcock updated a draft written by NPS Park Cultural Landscapes Program Lead Lucy Lawliss several years earlier. We hope that the study will be a useful tool for park management and for others interested in the history and significance of the cultural landscape of the Abraham Lincoln Birthplace Unit.

Dan Scheidt  
Chief, Cultural Resources Division  
Southeast Regional Office



# Acknowledgments

The authors wish to acknowledge several individuals for their assistance in the preparation of this report:

The staff of Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historic Site for their active cooperation and support of the research, especially Ken Apschnikat, Superintendent, Gary Tally, Chief of Operations, Rebecca Thomas, Administrative Officer, and Patti Reynolds, Park Ranger.

The Cultural Resources Division staff of the NPS Southeast Regional Office for technical assistance and support, especially David Hasty, Historical Landscape Architect, for his help in preparing maps for the report; and Tracy Stakely and Jay Womack for preparing the document for publication.





---

# Introduction

## Management Summary

The Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historic Site (the Park) is forever dedicated to the preservation, commemoration, and interpretation of the cultural and natural resources associated with the birth and early years of the sixteenth president of the United States and the efforts of the Lincoln Farm Association in establishing a lasting tribute to Abraham Lincoln.

This cultural landscape report (CLR) for the Birthplace Unit (the park) has evolved over a number of years but always with the same purpose driving its production: to provide Park management with an evaluation of the landscape's significance and to provide treatment recommendations for the preservation of its significant features. The CLR documents the history of the Birthplace Unit's landscape change, from its earliest agricultural use to its full-blown development as a much-visited historical park. An evaluation and analysis of these landscape changes, based on the extant resources, is used to determine a period of significance for the landscape features, which in turn helps to shape treatment recommendations developed to preserve and enhance this commemorative site.

During the years of the CLR's production, a key piece of property was added to the Park. In 2001 the Park acquired the Abraham Lincoln Boyhood Home at Knob Creek, located seven miles northeast of Hodgenville, which protects the first homeplace that Lincoln remembered. Although the CLR does not address this property, the treatment recommendations for the Birthplace Unit are affected by the Boyhood Home Unit's ability to tell a part of the Lincoln story that is not being interpreted in the landscape of the Lincoln birthplace.

Prior to this CLR, the designed Memorial Landscape has not been adequately addressed in Park planning documents. The Memorial Building that houses the Birthplace Cabin and its associated monumental stairway were described in a National Register nomination written in 1977, but at the time no effort was made to nominate a landscape of significance. The Park's historic resource study, which was begun in association with the CLR and published in 2001, does include a discussion of the historic landscape based on the research for the CLR. That information is expanded in this document.

The CLR begins with an historical overview of the Birthplace Unit, documenting the evolution of the landscape, from Sinking Spring Farm to its ownership and management by the National Park Service. Existing site conditions are described and the landscape's integrity is evaluated and analyzed using National Register criteria. A period of significance is determined and landscape treatment decisions are proposed that support the preservation and interpretation of the historic setting as well as the management goals of the Park. The CLR concludes with guidance on preparing a Record of Treatment for the landscape, identifying the steps necessary to document landscape improvements as the Park moves into the implementation phase of the project.

Because of specific management needs associated with the Memorial Building's historic vegetation, the expertise of the Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation was solicited. Members of the center's staff consulted on the CLR in the summer of 1998. The team helped to complete a Memorial Landscape vegetation inventory and offered recommendations to preserve and rehabilitate the historic landscape. Their contributions are incorporated into the CLR.

