

# Lincoln's Earliest Home

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Utah Boy's Visit to Abraham Lincoln's Birthplace,  
On the Old Kentucky Farm

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Carry Off Relics—A Lesson From the Martyred President's  
Life for American Boys

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A FEW miles from the pretty little incorporated village of Hodgenville, in what is now known as Larue county, Kentucky, the noble statesman, Abraham Lincoln, was born.

On April 4, 1896, Elder S. A. Smith and I, who were missionaries for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Kentucky, arrived at Hodgenville, stopped at the hotel overnight, and in the morning started for Lincoln's birthplace, walking. It was a lovely spring Sunday morning and the walk was about three miles, along a good road over hills and down hollows, and by frame houses and log cabins, and big ponds where the cattle drink—it was along a country lane through country characteristic of "Old Kaintuck." The frogs were singing in the ponds and whoever has heard their song, after winter, has heard a good song, for they proclaim the approach of spring. The birds, the pigs (I must not leave out the pigs, for they are one of the mainstays of Kentucky and of the people) and the chickens all seemed to be having a good time.

We passed Georgetown about half a mile from Hodgenville where there were nearly one hundred families of darkies living in log cabins. We came to an old darky named Albert Handley, who had lived by the side of the Lincoln road longer than any other darky, so he told us. He was talking to another old darky as we came up.

"How far is it to Lincoln's farm?" we asked.

"Two and a half miles," he replied.

"How far did you tell de gen'lemen, Albert?" his wife called to him from a doorway about fifty feet away, wanting to receive half the credit of imparting the information.

Albert said, "I told dem two and a half miles."

His wife replied, "Yessah, and it's a right smart two and a half miles, too."

We asked the old darkies if they didn't feel grateful to

Abraham Lincoln for what he had done for them. Albert said, "Yessah, we do; and I often go down and drink out de spring on de Lincoln farm, and I believe de water tastes better den my spring water, 'cause Lincoln drank out of it."

We bade them good-bye and went on. Soon we passed two little darky boys coming down the road, and they were singing at the top of their voices. Some of the darkies were standing at their doors and others were sitting in the sun, and some were singing, "O Lord, save de sinners! O do! O do!"

The birds were singing songs of glee, and even the sad note of the mourning dove sounded less mournful that lovely spring morning. It seemed as if everything was singing a song of gladness and happiness, all nature had the semblance of joyousness and thankfulness; and it almost appeared as if everything was singing the song of praise the sweet singer of the Bible sang:

"Praise the Lord from the earth, ye dragons, and all deeps;  
"Fire, and hail; snow, and vapors; stormy wind fulfilling  
his word;  
"Mountains, and all hills; fruitful trees and all cedars;  
"Beasts, and all cattle, creeping things and flying fowl:  
"Kings of the earth, and all people; princes and all judges  
of the earth:  
"Both young men and maidens; old men and children:  
"Let them praise the name of the Lord; for his name alone  
is excellent; his glory is above the earth and heaven."  
(Psalm 148.)

When we came near Lincoln's farm we saw a frame house upon it, and we went to it to ask for a little information about the place. A nice young man by the name of Brown was living in the house. He and his wife were sitting on the doorstep, and he was quite willing to give us any information we desired.

"How large a farm is this, and who owns it now?" I asked.

"The farm comprises 110 acres," he replied, "and a Mr. Dennett of New York now owns it, and has had the nice fence that you see placed around it."

Noticing that the lard was broken up I asked him what they were doing with it.

He replied: "We will probably sow red top and blue grass over most of the farm."

"Do you have many visitors in the summer?" I asked.

"Yes, from now on till fall they come, and everyone wants to take away a rock or something to remember their visit here. Last fall a party of people came here from the east and when they went up on the hill where Lincoln's cabin is, they all picked up some piece of glass dishes which were near the cabin, thinking they were getting parts of dishes that Abraham Lin-

coln ate off; but instead they were only carrying off remnants of dishes that people before them had thrown away, after eating their lunch."

Mr. Brown then pointed out the cabin which is on the spot where Lincoln was born. He said the cabin was pulled down and put up in another place, but his uncle, John Davenport, bought the logs, and then it was afterwards replaced on the spot where it was when Lincoln was born.

We went over to the cabin, which had but one room with a fireplace for burning logs. On the side of the cabin which was highest I counted 14 logs, and on the lower side 11 logs.

We then went down to the fine spring where I suppose Lincoln oftentimes, when he was a boy, could quench his thirst on a warm summer day. Little did he think when a boy, that he would become so distinguished.

We sat down by the spring, where everything was so peaceful, and by which a few sheep were feeding, and looked up at the little cabin on the hill trying to realize that it was there the noble statesman, who has now become almost as great in history as George Washington—that it was in that log cabin that the great emancipator was born. Yes, such was the case. On that farm in Kentucky, on Feb. 12, 1809, Abraham Lincoln first saw the light. His father was not able to read or write and was poor, so, hoping to better his condition he moved to Indiana, all the family floating down the Ohio river on a raft. When Lincoln was 19 years old he hired out as a hand on a flat-boat at \$10 per month, and made a trip to New Orleans. When he returned he accompanied his family to Illinois, driving the cattle on the trip. When they reached their destination he helped build a cabin, and split rails to inclose the farm. He became from now on clerk, captain in the Black Hawk war, country storekeeper, postmaster and surveyor; yet he was able to get a knowledge of law by borrowing books at an office before it closed at night, and returning them at its opening in the morning. He trained his mind by carefully thinking to a conclusion every subject that puzzled him. After being admitted to the bar he rapidly rose to distinction. He was tall, and rather ungainly, but was gifted with good common sense and was known everywhere as "Honest Abe." He was kind, earnest and sympathetic, and his great desire after he became president of the United States was only to be of service to his country.

There is now a fine memorial building, in which the old log cabin we saw is now placed, standing on the old Lincoln farm.

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LINCOLN'S EARLIEST HOME

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SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH