



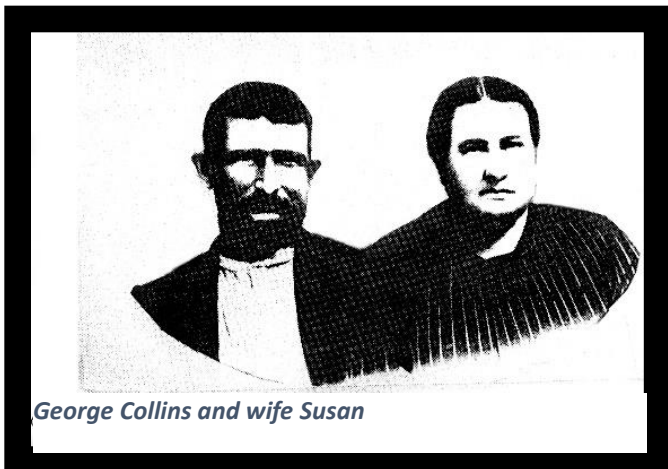
Early History of Lincoln Arkansas

Northwest Arkansas was once the home of the Osage tribe known in their native language as Ni-U-Kon-Ska or People of the Middle Waters. The tribes' land once stretched from Indian Knoll near the mouth of the Green River in Kentucky through much of Oklahoma; their land consisted of the junction of the Missouri, Mississippi, Ohio, Tennessee, Wabash, Arkansas, and Illinois drainage systems, thus the name of The People of the Middle Waters. By early 1900 the tribe was mostly located in the Northwest region of Arkansas and oil-rich Oklahoma, however, they were forced to share the land with the displaced Cherokee known in their language as Anigiduwagi meaning principal People. In 1828 a treaty with the United States government was signed which granted land in Oklahoma to the Cherokee people. With the indigenous people leaving the area new settlers came in to till the land and make a life for their families just as the first people had done for thousands of years.



Osage Camp

Lincoln Arkansas has always been a bountiful land filled with astonishing natural beauty and diverse plant and animal life. After the 1828 treaty between the U.S. government and the indigenous tribes that called this place home many new faces came to Northwest Arkansas looking to partake in the wonderfully rich soil to build a happy and prosperous life. Jack Holt,



George Collins and wife Susan

whose name can still be found in Lincoln namely Holt Rd, was an early settler of an area once called Beaty Mountain named for his son-in-law Alexander Beaty. The Beaty Mountain settlement was located on Mt. Hayes and was a forerunner to the town we know as Lincoln. As the settlement expanded and merged with other settlers the area underwent a few name changes, first being known as the settlement of Beaty Mountain, then as Starr Hill. Others say it was known as Blackjack, named for the type of oak used to construct the first schoolhouse for the growing population; whatever it was called the people remained hard-working, steadfast, and loyal to their

community. After the Civil War, the town underwent one final name change. After the name Georgetown was denied due to concerns of the town being confused with other Georgetown's in Arkansas the name Lincoln was chosen in honor of the late Abraham Lincoln. At the time members of the community didn't approve of their town being named after the Union President, especially after such a tragic and bloody war that took the lives of loved ones from both sides. In 1884 the name was approved by the state, and Lincoln Arkansas was born.

In 1850 Earl Holt, son of Jack Holt an early settler of the area, owned the first commercial nursery in the Lincoln area. His brother De-Kalab Holt originated the famous Arkansas Black Apple. Known for its hard and dark exterior, this mysterious apple is the pride and joy of many in Northwest Arkansas who know the secrets to using the fruit. Lincoln was known for its diverse apple species, including Collins Red, originated by George Collins, August Beauty, Summer Queen, and Champion apples, created by Wellington (Wirt) Waller who later sold these apples to Stark bros. The Black Ben Davis also known once known as "Regans Red" has a unique beginning, it was found growing in essentially a garbage pile on the Parson Black Farm when John Reagan purchased the land in 1883. The first tree was only four years old when it began bearing fruit. The fruit was propagated and primarily grown on George Guthrie's farm which was later bought by John Bain who continued to grow The Black Ben Davis apples. John Bain sent samples of Black Ben Davis to the Arkansas State Fair in Little Rock (year unknown) it was then sent to the World Exposition in Paris France. The Shannon's another pioneering orchardist grew many different types of apples on their land. One shipment of seedlings they purchased had an unlabeled box filled with seedlings that grew into what is known as The Shannon Apples. In 1904 the family brought samples of these apples to the St. Louis World Fair and were awarded a medal. Most of these apple varieties are considered extinct and it is very difficult to find much information online about these fruits some even share names with other varieties grown in other parts of the country making tracking down saplings or descriptions difficult. De Kalb Holt's Arkansas Black apples are still being used today in ciders and local dishes and the seedlings can still be found for sale online. In today's world, we have then the luxury of simply opening our phones and typing the name of any product we want to purchase within a few days they almost magically show up at our front door, but the life of the apple orchardist revolved around harvest and the long trek to peddle the fruits of their labor.



Fruit Drying in Lincoln

Apples must be properly stored either dried in a fruit dryer and stored in large barrels or sold fresh by the head of the house or other able-bodied family member, usually a young man. Some farmers would travel to the Native American territory to sell or trade their apples and other goods to anyone willing to buy; they would be gone for months at a time peddling their products. Some farms chose to load up the families' covered wagons and journey to Fayetteville or Westville in hopes of selling enough apples to continue their family's



Hosman Family

livelihood. Those wagons must have been filled with barrels upon barrels boxes on top of boxes of fresh and dried apples, anything the family could make and spare to sell along with excited young children sitting between the crates peeking out the canvas at a chance to see the wild lands we call home as they traveled passing through the Boston mountains going to the city you can imagine a similar feeling if you've ever taken a road trip as a child everything seems so new and magical. It would have been a once-a-year experience with their parents up front paving the way not just to sell apples

but paving the way for a better life for their children. Most of us make that same journey today. We travel Highway 62 through the hills, around bends, and over rivers, what has become second nature to us must have been a much-anticipated adventure for these pioneering children. Many of the orchardists would also ship their apples by train across the state and country, which became exponentially easier when the Frisco Railway came to Lincoln and the surrounding areas. In those days Lincoln was known as the Apple capital of Arkansas. Sadly, the days of expansive orchards rolling over the hills and cascading across the flat fields of Lincoln are long gone and many only know of its history from the Arkansas Apple Festival or a story told by an elder. The orchards were destroyed to make room for cattle pastures which now are being developed for the ever-growing towns and cities of Northwest Arkansas. It is important to go into the future with hope and joy, but it is even more important we do not lose the history that brought us here. The Lincoln Public Library wants to preserve our community's history for future generations so that they will know the pride we have for those who came before us.

If you or a loved one has a story, article, photo, or any piece of history of Lincoln or the surrounding areas no matter how small please feel free to contact us.

Call us at 479-824-3294

Or you can find us at 107 W. Bean Street, Lincoln, Arkansas 72744.

Bibliography

- “Arkansas Black Apple.” *Trees of Antiquity*,
www.treesofantiquity.com/collections/apple-trees/products/arkansas-black-apple-tree.
- Hilton, Burlene. *A History of Lincoln*. 4th ed., Lincoln Leader, 2007.
- Jmadmin. “Arkansas'S First and Only Cidery - (479) 751-0337 | Black Apple Hard Cider.” *Black Apple Hard Cider*, 5 Feb. 2024, blackapplehardcider.com.
- “Lincoln (Washington County) - Encyclopedia of Arkansas.” *Encyclopedia of Arkansas*, 3 Oct. 2023, encyclopediaofarkansas.net/entries/lincoln-washington-county-1008.
- “Osage (Tribe).” *Oklahoma Historical Society | OHS*,
www.okhistory.org/publications/enc/entry.php?entry=OS001.
- *Treaty With the Western Cherokee, 1828*. treaties.okstate.edu/treaties/treaty-with-the-western-chokeee-1828-0288.
- Wikipedia contributors. “Cherokee.” *Wikipedia*, 20 Jan. 2024,
en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cherokee.

- ---. "Lincoln, Arkansas." *Wikipedia*, 28 Sept. 2023, en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lincoln,_Arkansas.