

Historic Significance of the Stith Farm – It was the home of famous Missouri artist George Caleb Bingham, 1829-1834

About 1829 George Caleb Bingham, who would later become famous as "the Missouri artist," moved with his widowed mother from Franklin, Missouri, to a tobacco farm 1.7 miles west of Arrow Rock. He lived on this farm until 1834, when he moved into the town of Arrow Rock and began his career as a portrait painter. This farm, now owned by Bob and Mary Stith is shown by the attached abstracts of title to have belonged to the estate of Bingham's father, Henry V. Bingham; the property later passed to the ownership of Bingham's sister Amanda Bingham Barnes.

It was while living on this farm that Bingham made the acquaintance of many citizens of Arrow Rock and the surrounding area who would later be the subjects of his portraits and of the genre paintings for which he is best known. He first observed political life in Arrow Rock and Saline County (Arrow Rock was the county seat of Saline County in the 1830's) while living on this farm, and these observations formed the basis of his well-known political series of genre paintings. These historic facts made the Stith farm a very significant historic site. The Stith farm immediately borders the location of the proposed Gessling CAFO.