

Sandburg

1936

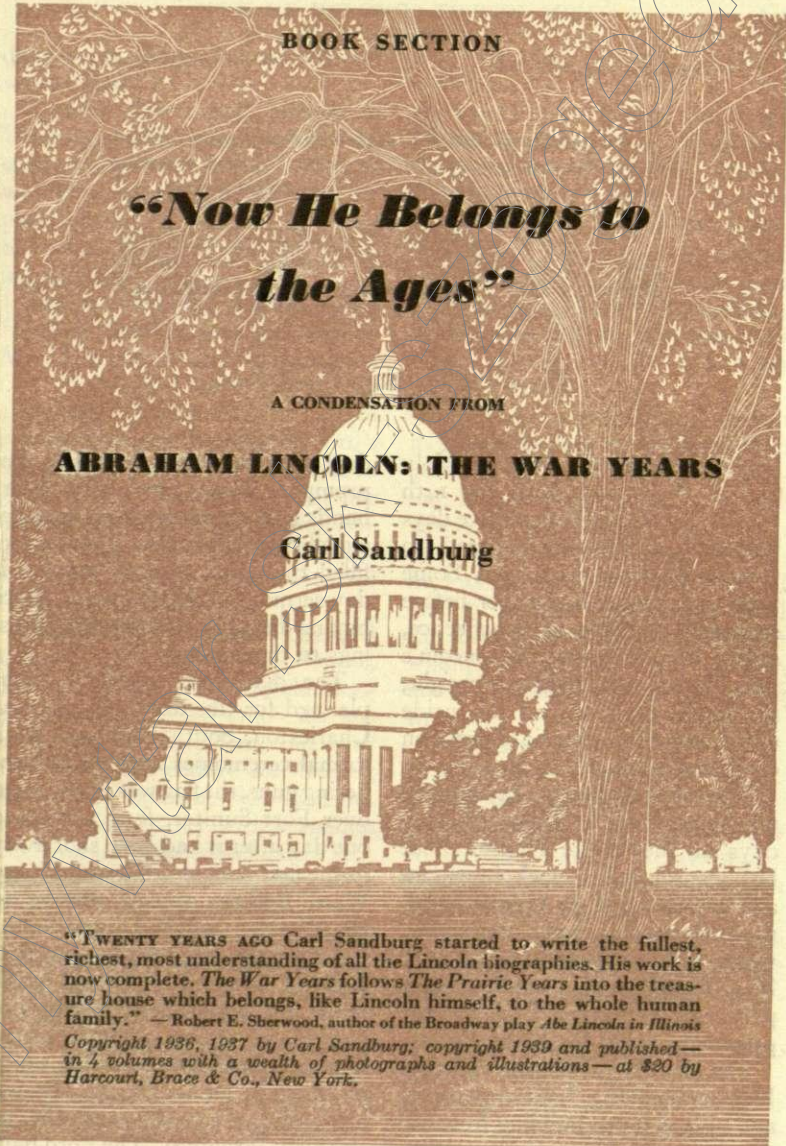
BOOK SECTION

***"Now He Belongs to
the Ages"***

A CONDENSATION FROM

ABRAHAM LINCOLN: THE WAR YEARS

Carl Sandburg



"TWENTY YEARS AGO Carl Sandburg started to write the fullest, richest, most understanding of all the Lincoln biographies. His work is now complete. *The War Years* follows *The Prairie Years* into the treasure house which belongs, like Lincoln himself, to the whole human family." — Robert E. Sherwood, author of the Broadway play *Abe Lincoln in Illinois*
Copyright 1936, 1937 by Carl Sandburg; copyright 1939 and published — in 4 volumes with a wealth of photographs and illustrations — at \$20 by Harcourt, Brace & Co., New York.

Carl Sandburg's life of Lincoln has been widely praised as the finest biography of recent years. "It is a narrative which for decades will be a hearten all believers in democracy," says Allan Nevins.

What follows is from the final episodes of Sandburg's great work. In words now swiftly dramatic, now poetically eloquent, it deals with the last tragic day in Lincoln's life.

The Calendar Says Good Friday

ON THE CALENDAR it was Holy Week and April the 14th was Good Friday. Five days before, Lee had surrendered to Grant. The war was over. Some were to say they had never before seen such a shine of beneficence, such a kindling glow, on Lincoln's face. He was 30 pounds underweight, his cheeks haggard, yet the inside of him moved to a music of peace on earth and good will to men.

The schedule for this day seemed much the same as scores of other days at the White House: office business till eight o'clock, breakfast and interviews till the Cabinet meeting at eleven; luncheon, more interviews, a late afternoon drive with Mrs. Lincoln and a small theater party in the evening. Such was the prepared docket for Good Friday.

The city of Washington was gay. Flags and bunting flew across streets and up and down building fronts in riots of red-white-and-blue. Win-

dow illuminations, fireworks, impromptu processions with brass bands and serenades, had kept going all the night before. Churchgoers filled the pews, hearing Good Friday sermons of the Prince of Peace having brought unutterable blessings to the country.

The distinctive national event planned for this day took place at Charleston, South Carolina. With formal ceremonies and amid thundering guns, the flag was again raised over Fort Sumter, four years and one day after it had been shot away in the first action of the war. Henry Ward Beecher spoke, offering to the President of the United States "our solemn congratulations that God has sustained his life and health under the unparalleled burdens of four bloody years, and permitted him to behold that national unity for which he has so labored." Psalms of thanksgiving were read, the assemblage intoning: "The Lord hath

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done great things for us; whereof we are glad."

General Grant had arrived in Washington from the front, heard shouts of welcome, and in trying to walk from his hotel to the War Department had to call on the police to make a path through the cheering throngs.

The Presidential theater party for that evening was planned by Mrs. Lincoln. A third-rate drama, *Our American Cousin*, which the star Laura Keane had carried to popularity, was showing at Ford's Theater. Lincoln was disinclined to go, but Mrs. Lincoln had set her heart on it. On his suggestion she invited General and Mrs. Grant to join their party — and General Grant accepted.

Later, however, Grant changed his mind about going. Mrs. Grant, in all probability, had told the General that she would enjoy accommodating the President, but that she could not endure an evening with Mrs. Lincoln, who had recently offended her with a sudden outburst of temper. So he declined, on the excuse of leaving to see his children in New Jersey.

Moreover, Secretary of War Stanton had urged both Lincoln and Grant not to go. He had heard, from his secret-service agents, of threats and conspiracies that would make it unsafe for the two eminent leaders to appear before a large crowd that might contain "evil-disposed persons."

An Ominous Dream

STANTON was taking the same course he had continuously held for more than three years. Against Lincoln's open wishes he had at times thrown cavalry, foot guards, and plain-clothes attendants around the President. He and Marshal Ward Hill Lamon, Lincoln's intimate friend, were the two men who most often warned Lincoln about his personal safety.

A few days previously, Lincoln had sent Lamon to Richmond on government business. Before leaving, Lamon urged Secretary of the Interior Usher to persuade Lincoln to go out as little as possible while he was away. They decided to call on Lincoln together. Lamon asked the President to promise that he would not go out after nightfall, and particularly not to go to the theater.

Lincoln turned and said, "Usher, this boy is a monomaniac on the subject of my safety."

Usher replied, "Mr. Lincoln, it is well to heed Lamon. He has opportunities to know more about such matters than we can."

"Well," said Lincoln, "I promise to do the best I can." Then, giving Lamon a warm handshake: "Good-bye, God bless you, Hill!"

Lamon, as he rode to Richmond, took no ease about this matter — even less than ever because of a dream Lincoln had told him. Lincoln, he knew, had felt earlier pre-

monitions. More than once the President had spoken to him of the double image he had seen in 1860, in a looking-glass. One face held glow of life and breath, the other shone ghostly white. "That the mystery had its meaning was clear enough to him: the lifelike image betokened a safe passage through his first term as President; the ghostly one, that death would overtake him before the close of the second."

Sternly practical and strictly logical man that Lincoln was, he nevertheless believed in dreams having validity. According to Lamont, Lincoln held that any dream had a meaning if you could follow it through the preposterous tricks and vagaries of the human mind. And what Lamont thought about Lincoln had value, for with no other man did Lincoln seem to speak himself more easily and naturally. No one else plucked a banjo for Lincoln or answered to the wish, "Sing me a sad little song," in a concert for those two alone. No one else came nearer being a "boon companion." And Lamont said: "He always believed that he would fall, at the height of his career, by the hand of an assassin."

The dream that came to Lincoln this second week of April 1865, Lamont wrote, was "the most startling incident" that had ever come to the man. One evening at the White House, with Mrs. Lincoln, Lamont, and one or two others present, he told of it.

"About ten days ago," said he, "I retired very late, and soon began to dream. There seemed to be a deathlike stillness about me. Then I heard subdued sobs, as if a number of people were weeping. I thought I left my bed and wandered downstairs. I went from room to room; no living person was in sight. It was light in all the rooms; every object was familiar to me; but where were all the people who were grieving as if their hearts would break? I kept on until I arrived at the East Room, which I entered. There I met with a sickening surprise. Before me was a catafalque, on which rested a corpse wrapped in funeral vestments. Around it were stationed soldiers; and there was a throng of people, some gazing mournfully upon the corpse, whose face was covered, others weeping pitifully. 'Who is dead in the White House?' I demanded of one of the soldiers. 'The President,' was his answer; 'he was killed by an assassin!' Then came a loud burst of grief from the crowd, which awoke me from my dream. I slept no more that night; and although it was only a dream, I have been strangely annoyed by it ever since."

ON TWO OCCASIONS since he had become President, Lincoln had been fired on by would-be assassins. The first of these occurred in the summer of '63. At that time, Lincoln had been daily riding the three miles between the White House and

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the Soldiers' Home, where the family lived through the hot-weather months. One morning, as Lincoln came riding up to the White House, he met Lamont. "I have something to tell you," he said. They went to the President's office, locked the doors, and sat down.

Lamont later wrote down the talk which followed. Lincoln began: "You know I have always thought you an idiot for your apprehensions of my personal danger. Well, just now I don't know what to think."

"Last night, about 11 o'clock, I went out to the Soldiers' Home alone, riding Old Abe. When I arrived at the entrance of the Home grounds, I was jogging along, immersed in thought, when suddenly I was aroused by the report of a rifle, seemingly not 50 yards away. My erratic namesake, with one bound, separated me from my eight-dollar plug hat, and at breakneck speed we arrived in a haven of safety. I tell you there is no time on record equal to that made by the two Old Abes on that occasion."

"Personally," he went on, "I can't believe that anyone would deliberately shoot to kill me; though I must acknowledge that this fellow's bullet whistled uncomfortably close to these headquarters of mine."

This was said with much seriousness. He then assumed a playful manner: "I can truthfully say that one of the Abes was frightened, but modesty forbids my mentioning which. No good can result from giv-

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ing this thing publicly. Moreover, I do not want it understood that I share your apprehensions. I never have."

The next affair was in mid-August of '64. John W. Nichols, a guard at the Soldiers' Home grounds, heard a rifle shot one night about 11 o'clock and presently a horse came dashing up, bearing the President, bare-headed. "Pretty near got away with me, didn't he?" said the President. "He got the bit in his teeth." To Nichols's query about his hat the President answered that somebody had fired a gun, his horse had become scared and had jerked his hat off.

Nichols found the hat, examined it, and discovered a bullet hole through the crown. When this was called to Lincoln's attention he "made some humorous remark, and added that he wished nothing said about the matter."

This made twice that Lincoln lost his hat while riding. Lamont's continuous warnings went unheeded. Finally, in exasperation, Lamont had sent Lincoln a letter, resigning his office as marshal. Lincoln would not accept it. In this Lamont wrote: "Tonight, as you have done on several previous occasions, you went unattended to the theater. When I say unattended, I mean you went alone with Charles Sumner and a foreign minister, neither of whom could defend himself against assault from any able-bodied woman in this city. And you know, or ought

to, that your life is sought after, and will be taken unless you and your friends are cautious."

Though warned that he was making himself too easy a target, to the theater Lincoln continued to go. Alone often, yet again with varied companions, perhaps a hundred times since coming to Washington. To an interviewer, Lincoln once said: "I go simply because I must have change. I laugh because I must not weep; that's all."

Walking over to the War Department late this afternoon of April 14, Lincoln mentioned the matter of possible harm to come to him. According to the White House guard, W. H. Crook, who accompanied him, Lincoln said, "Crook, do you know, I believe there are men who want to take my life?" And after a pause, half to himself, "And I have no doubt they will do it."

"I hope you are mistaken, Mr. President," offered Crook. And after a few paces in silence, Lincoln said: "I have perfect confidence in every one of you men. I know no one could do it and escape alive. But if it is to be done, it is impossible to prevent it."

Upon their return to the White House door, Lincoln said, "Good-bye, Crook."

Crook was puzzled. Until then it had always been "Good-night, Crook."

IN THE CARRIAGE into which the President and his wife stepped that evening were Major Henry R.

Rathbone and his fiancée, Miss Clara Harris. Rathbone was 28 years old, of a well-to-do Albany family, a major of volunteers and a trusted War Office attaché. His sweetheart was the daughter of Judge Ira Harris, a United States Senator from New York.

The bodyguard in whose line of duty it fell to be with the President this evening was John F. Parker. He was one of four officers detailed from the police force of the city to guard the President. He was 35 years old, had been a carpenter in Washington, enlisted in the army as a three-months man, in '61 joining the city police force. He had a wife and three children. In '62 the Police Board found he had been profane and insolent to a citizen and had used "disrespectful" language to a superior. In '63 he was tried on charges of being asleep on a street-car when he should have been patrolling his beat; and of conduct unbecoming an officer through five drunken weeks of residence in a house of prostitution. But the Board took no action.

How Parker found his way into the White House to begin with was not clear. However, when he was drafted for army service, Mrs. Lincoln had written to the Provost Marshal "that John F. Parker . . . has been detailed for duty at the Executive Mansion by order of Mrs. Lincoln."

This was the drab, muddle-headed wanderer who was to have a role

this evening of April 14, enacting the part of a strange cipher. For this night he would distinguish himself as the world's foremost vacant-minded Naught. He had eyes to see not, ears to hear not — and political pull.

Blood on the Moon

COLD, RAW WEATHER met those who stepped forth on the evening of this April 14. A ceiling of clouds hung low, mist and fog held the streets, and occasional showers had put a chill and a pervasive damp in the air. Away from the street-corner gas lamps, walking men became blurred humps.

The carriage left the White House with its four occupants, with the coachman Francis Burns holding the reins, and alongside him the footman Charles Forbes. Burns spoke to the horses. They moved off. No circumstance delayed or hindered. No telegram of commanding importance suddenly found itself in the President's hands. Nothing happened to cancel the theater date of the evening. Out of the gates they drove.

From the carriage window Lincoln had a final casual glance at the White House where he had lived four years and 41 days. Before they turned one corner, by leaning forward he could see the mystic Capitol dome in a haze of light, a floating midair symbol of the Union of States.

AT FORD'S THEATER, the play had already begun. The guard Parker was at hand. The party walked into the theater about nine o'clock. An usher led them to their box. The players interrupted their lines while the audience applauded, and the President nodded his acknowledgments. The play proceeds.

Major Rathbone and Miss Harris, seated toward the front of the box, are in full view of the audience. Mrs. Lincoln is seated farther back, and the President, slouched in a roomy haircloth rocking chair, is at the rear of the box, hidden from the audience by a curtain. Lincoln is in sight of only his chosen companions, the actors, and the few people who may be offstage to the left.

This privacy however is not so complete as it seems. The box has two doors, and one, a few feet behind the President, is unlocked. In this door is a small hole, bored by an Outsider that afternoon to serve as a peephole. This door opens on a narrow hallway that leads to another door opening on the balcony of the theater.

Through these two doors the Outsider must pass in order to enter the President's box. Close to the door connecting with the balcony, two inches of plaster have been cut from the wall. The intention of the Outsider is to place a bar in this niche and brace the door against intruders.

It is the assigned duty of John F.

Parker to guard these doors constantly. A careful man on this duty would probably have noticed the gimlet hole, the newly made wall niche, and been doubly watchful. If Lincoln believes what he told Crook that afternoon, that he trusted the men assigned to guard him, he believes that Parker, with his revolver, in steady fidelity is just outside the door.

IN SUCH A TRUST, Lincoln is mistaken. Whatever dim fog of thought or duty may move John F. Parker in his best moments is not operating tonight. His life habit of never letting trouble trouble him is on him this night. He has always got along somehow. He can always find good liquor and bad women. You take your fun as you find it. He can never be a somebody, so he will enjoy himself as a nobody — though he can't imagine how perfect a cipher one John F. Parker may appear as the result of one slack easygoing hour.

"The guard," wrote the faithful Crook later, "took his position at the rear of the box, close to an entrance. His orders were to stand there, fully armed, and to protect the President at all hazards. From the spot where he was thus stationed, he could not see the actors; but he could hear their words, and became so interested in them that he quietly deserted his post, and walking down the dimly lighted side aisle, took a seat."

Either between acts or at some time when the play was not lively enough to suit him, or because of an urge for a pony of whisky, John F. Parker leaves his seat in the balcony, goes outside and down the street for a little whiff of liquor, inviting the President's coachman and footman to come along.

Thus circumstance favors the lurking and vigilant Outsider.

BETWEEN 11 and 12 o'clock of Good Friday morning the handsome, erratic, fiery young actor, John Wilkes Booth, comes to Ford's Theater for his mail, hears that a messenger from the White House has engaged a box for the President that evening. For months Booth and his accomplices have been plotting against Lincoln's life. The time has come. He hopes not merely to remove a government head whom he believes in his crazed mind to be responsible for all the woes of his beloved South, but to realize the wild frenzy of killing a man he detests as a plebeian mongrel. He goes into action. At four o'clock in the afternoon he returns to the empty Ford's Theater, sees the rocking chair in the corner of the President's box. Booth inspects locks, bores a hole through the box door, digs a niche in the plastered brick wall for the insertion of a bar to hold against the hallway door.

At seven in the evening Booth leaves his room at the National Hotel for the last time. In passing

he asks the hotel clerk if he is going to Ford's Theater this evening. The clerk hadn't thought about it. "There will be some fine acting there tonight," says Booth, and he moves on — there is work to do. Booth hurries on to see his accomplice Paine. They arrange their timing: at the same hour and minute of the clock, Paine is to go to the house of Seward and kill the Secretary of State and Booth to kill the President. A third accomplice, Atzerodt, is to kill Vice-President Johnson. But Atzerodt begs off. He has not enlisted for killing. Booth storms at him and curses him for a coward and a traitor. Atzerodt finally drifts away, never to see Booth again — a muddled and woe-struck wanderer, one of the only three men in the world who could have told the police beforehand of Booth's intentions at Ford's Theater that night.

At a stable near Ford's and close to ten o'clock, Paine and Booth part, Booth to go to Ford's, Paine to ride to the Seward house.

The play is more than half over when Booth enters Ford's Theater. He walks past the doorkeeper with a pleasant smile and "You'll not want a ticket from me?" asks the time, and is pointed to a clock in the lobby. "Ten minutes past ten." Booth opens a door into the parquet, notes the presidential box. He has seen *Our American Cousin* played and has calculated to fine points the strategic moment for his deed. Soon to come is that moment when only

one actor will be on the stage. A laugh from the audience usually follows the exit of two ladies, a loud enough laugh perhaps to smother any unusual noises in a box.

Booth goes up the stairs leading to the dress circle, picks his way among chairs behind an outer row of seats, reaches the door of the passageway to the Presidential box.

AND the next scene? The next scene is to crash and blare and flare as one of the wildest, one of the most inconceivably fateful and chaotic, that ever stunned and shocked a world that heard the story.

The moment of high fate was not seen by the theater audience. Only one man saw that moment. He was the Outsider. He had come through the outer door into the little hallway, fastened the strong bar into the two-inch niche in the brick wall, and braced it against the door panel. He had moved softly to the box door and, through the little hole he had gimleted that afternoon, had studied the occupants and his Human Target seated in a rocking armchair. Softly he had opened the door and stepped toward his prey, in his right hand a little vest-pocket one-shot brass derringer pistol, in his left hand a steel dagger.

He was cool and precise and timed his every move. He raised the derringer, lengthened his right arm, ran his eye along the barrel in a line with the head of his victim less than

five feet away — and pulled the trigger.

A lead ball somewhat less than a half-inch in diameter crashed into the left side of the head of the Human Target, three inches behind the left ear. For Abraham Lincoln it was lights out, good-night, and a long farewell to the good earth and its trees, its enjoyable companions, and the Union of States and the world Family of Man he had loved. He was to linger in dying. But the living man could never again speak nor see nor hear nor awaken into conscious being.

OF THIS the audience knows nothing.

Major Rathbone leaps from his chair. Rushing at him with a knife is a strange human creature, terribly alive, a lithe wild animal, a tiger for speed, a wildcat of a man, bareheaded, raven-haired — a smooth sinister face with glaring eyeballs. He stabs straight at the heart of Rathbone, a fast and ugly lunge. Rathbone parries with his upper right arm, which gets a deep slash; he reels back. The tigerish stranger mounts the box railing.

The audience wonders whether something unusual is happening — or is it part of the play?

From the box railing the Strange Man leaps, a ten-foot fall. His leap is slightly interrupted. On this slight interruption the Strange Man in his fine calculations had not figured. A draped Union flag tangles itself

in a spur of one riding boot. He falls to the stage, breaking his left shin-bone. Of what he has done the audience as yet knows nothing. They see him rush across the stage and vanish. Some have heard Rathbone's cry "Stop that man!" Booth dashes to a door opening on an alley. There stands a fast bay horse, a slow-witted chore boy nicknamed John Peanuts holding the reins. He kicks the boy and mounts; hoofs on the cobblestones are heard. In all, it is maybe 60 or 70 seconds since he loosed the one shot of his brass derringer.

Whether the Strange Man paused a moment and shouted a dramatic line of speech, there was disagreement afterward. Some say he ran off at once. Others say he faced the audience a moment, and shouted the State motto of Virginia, the slogan of Brutus, as he stabbed Caesar: "*Sic semper tyrannis*" — "Thus be it ever to tyrants."

Others believed they heard him shriek: "The South is avenged!"

Some said the lights went out in the theater. Others a thousand miles from the theater said they saw the moon come out from behind clouds blood-red. It was a night of many eyewitnesses, shaken and moaning eyewitnesses.

THE AUDIENCE is up. Panic is in the air. "What is it? What has happened?" "For God's sake, what has happened?" A woman's scream pierces the air. Some say it was Mrs.

Lincoln. "He has shot the President!" Men are swarming up over the gas-jet footlights onto the stage. The aisles fill with people not sure where to go.

Mrs. Lincoln has turned from the railing where she saw the wild-eyed man vanish off the stage, sees her husband in the rocking chair, his head slumped forward. With little moaning cries she springs toward him. Major Rathbone has shouted for a surgeon, has run into the hallway, and with one arm bleeding and burning with pain he fumbles to unfasten the bar between wall and door panel. An usher from the outside tries to help him. They get the bar loose. Back of the usher is a jam of people. He holds them back, allowing only one man to enter the box.

This is 23-year-old Charles A. Leale, assistant surgeon, United States Volunteers.

Mrs. Lincoln cries piteously: "Oh, Doctor! Is he dead? Can he recover? Will you take charge of him? Oh, my dear husband, my dear husband!" He soothes her a little, telling her he will do all that can possibly be done.

The body in the chair seems to be that of a dead man, eyes closed, no certainty it is breathing. Dr. Leale with help from others lifts the body and places it on the floor. He holds the head and shoulders while doing this, his hand meeting a clot of blood near the left shoulder. Dr. Leale recalls seeing a dagger flashed

by the assassin on the stage and now supposes the President has a stab wound. He has the coat and shirt slit open, but finds no wounds. He lifts the eyelids and sees evidence of a brain injury. He rapidly passes his fingers through the blood-matted hair, finding a wound and removing a clot of blood, which relieves the pressure on the brain and brings shallow breathing and a weak pulse.

As Dr. Leale told it later: "I saw that instant death would not occur. I then pronounced my diagnosis and prognosis: 'His wound is mortal; it is impossible for him to recover.'"

DR. LEALE asks that the President be moved to the nearest house. Several ask if he cannot be taken to the White House. Dr. Leale replies, "The President would die before we reached there."

Four soldiers lift the body by the trunk and legs. Two more doctors have arrived. One carries the right shoulder, one the left, Dr. Leale the head. They come to the door of the box. The passageway is packed with people. A captain goes into action with troopers. They show muskets, bayonets, sabers. "Clear out!" rings the repeated order. "Clear out!" they cry to the curiosity-seekers.

Then the solemn little group with their precious freight carried head-first moves slowly through a space lined by protecting soldiers.

Overhead is night sky. Clouds of dark gray unroll and show a blazing white moon, and roll over it again.

On the street, humanity swirls and wonders and wants to know. "Is that the President they are carrying?" "Is it true that he was shot?" "Oh, God, it can't be true!"

Across the front of Ford's Theater a crowd is massed. Leale asks the captain to clear a passage to the nearest house opposite. A barrier of men forms to keep back the crowds. Now comes the report that this house is closed. At the next house, No. 453 Tenth Street, Dr. Leale sees a man standing at the door with a lighted candle, beckoning them to come in.

There they laid their stricken Friend of Man in the rented room of William Clark, a boarder in the house of William Peterson — on a plain wooden bed — at about 10:45 o'clock, less than a half-hour after the moment the trigger of the little vest-pocket derringer was pulled.

The bed is too short, and causes the knees to be elevated. Leale, troubled, orders the foot of the bed removed. This it seems cannot be done. Leale then has the body moved so it lies diagonally across the bed. Propped with extra pillows, the body is gently slanted with a rest for head and shoulders, finally in a position of repose.

NOW THERE IS waiting for the end to come. The end may be kept off a little by continuous re-

moval of the blood clot at the wound opening. Aside from this the surgeons count the pulse and respiration — and wait helpless before iron circumstance.

The room is 15 feet long by 9 wide. A Brussels carpet is on the floor. Around are a few chairs, a plain bureau, a small wood stove, a washstand with pitcher and bowl. Outdoors the vagrant white moon is lost behind a cold gray sky, an even monotone of sky.

Robert Lincoln arrives with John Hay, private secretary to the President. Robert is told there is no hope. The tears run down his face. After a time he recovers and does his best during the night at comforting his mother.

At intervals Mrs. Lincoln is notified she may visit her husband. Once she cried to him, "Live! You must live!" and again, "Bring Tad — he will speak to Tad — he loves him so." But it was not considered advisable to allow the little boy to see his stricken father.

One by one the Cabinet members arrived till all were in the house except Secretary of State Seward. As he lay in bed in his home that night, recovering from a carriage accident, Seward had been attacked by Booth's associate, Paine, and had been stabbed almost to death before the Secretary's two sons and a soldier-nurse could beat off his assailant. Vice-President Andrew Johnson came for a brief visit. He also had been picked by Booth for

assassination this night, but At-
tordt had faltered.

As daylight began to slant through the windows, it became evident the President was sinking. A little before seven Secretary of the Navy Welles went into the room where a Friend of Man was going to die, moving into the final chill that men at the last must know. His wife made her last visit to him. The death-struggle had been in. Robert, his son, stood with several others at the head of the bed. He bore himself well, but on no occasions gave way to overpowering grief.

The last heartbeat flickered at minutes and 10 seconds past 7 m. on Saturday, April 15, 1865.

The Pale Horse had come. To a deep river, to a far country, to a land-by whence no man returns, had gone the child of Nancy Hanks and Tom Lincoln, the wilderness boy who found far lights and tall unbows to live by, whose name even before he died had become a legend interwoven with men's struggle for freedom the world over.

The widow was told. She came and threw herself with uncontrollable moaning on the dead body. . . . When later she went away the cry broke from her, "O my God, and I have given my husband to die!" Over the drawn face Dr. Leale moved a smoothing hand, took two coins from his pocket, placed them over the eyelids, and drew a white sheet over the face.

Over the worn features had come, wrote John Hay, "a look of unspeakable peace."

Stanton, it was said afterward, pronounced the words, since become legendary: "Now he belongs to the ages."

THE ESCAPED J. Wilkes Booth in this flight south, where he hoped to find sanctuary with Confederate loyalists who would hail and exalt him, found that his deed was not appreciated as he had expected. He heard and read of a feeling deep over the South that he had wronged her. Instead of a tyrant-slayer, the assassin was the murderer of a good friend of the South.

On the morning of April 26, hunted like a wild beast and cornered like a rat, Booth met his end. Near Bowling Green, Virginia, in a burning barn set afire from the outside, a bullet drove through his neck bone, and he was dragged away from reaching flames and laid under a tree. Water was given him. He revived, to murmur from parched lips, "Tell my mother — I died — for my country." He was carried to a house veranda, there muttering, "I thought I did for the best." He lingered for a time. A doctor came. Wilkes Booth asked that his hands might be raised so that he could look at them. So it was told. And as he looked on his hands, he mumbled hoarsely, "Useless! Useless!" And those were his last words.

And the one man — John F.

Parker — whose sworn duty it was to have intercepted the assassin? There were charges brought against him for his laxity. But there was no trial on these charges, and it was not till three years later that Parker was to be dishonorably dismissed from the police force for sleeping on his beat.

How did Parker take the news of Lincoln's assassination? It awoke some lethargy in his bones. Probably all night long he wandered half-dazed over the streets of Washington, stopping in saloons, gathering the news, wondering, bothering his head about what explanations he could make. At six o'clock in the morning, he brought to headquarters a woman of the streets he had arrested, her name Lizzie Williams. Parker had decided he would make it a matter of record that early in the morning he was on the job. So he brings in a forlorn, bedraggled streetwalker — against whom he proved no case, and Lizzie Williams was promptly discharged.

Neither Stanton nor any member of Congress nor any newspaper, nor any accustomed guardian of public welfare, took any but momentary interest in this guard sworn to a sacred duty, a more curious derelict than any shot by a firing squad for desertion or cowardice.

The Shock—A Stricken People

THE NORTH, which had now established a Union of States, was

in grief. Everywhere the eye might turn hung signs of this grief.

The talk in the streets, houses, saloons, railroad cars and street cars, the black bunting and the crape — these were attempts to say something that could not be said.

Men tried to talk about it and words failed and they came back to silence. To say nothing was best.

Lincoln was dead.

Was there anything more to say?

Yes, they would go through the motions of grief and take their part in a national funeral and a ceremony of humiliation and abasement and tears. But words were no help.

Lincoln was dead.

Nothing more than that could be said.

He was gone.

He would never again speak to the American people.

A great friend of man had suddenly vanished.

Nothing could be done about it.

Silence, grief, and quiet resolve — these only were left for those who admired and loved and felt themselves close to a living presence that was one of them.

When they said "It is terrible" or "God help us" it was not as though they were talking to others, but rather as though they were moaning to themselves and knowing words were no use.

Thousands on thousands would remember as long as they lived the exact place where they had been standing or seated or lying when

the news came to them, recalling precisely in detail where they were and what they were doing when the sad news arrived.

"President Lincoln is dead" or "President Lincoln is assassinated" were the four words with which so often the news was given in cities, on crossroads, on farms — four limiting words.

Hundreds of thousands there were who had been the foundation and groundwork of what he had done.

They had given what he asked.

When he called for sons, fathers, husbands, brothers, these had been given — solemnly but willingly in a faith that joined his, some for the Union of States, some for the uprooting of slavery.

These people had no words, they had only grief — sorrow beyond words.

The national flag alone didn't seem right — it belonged for this hour with a black border, or a piece of crape festooning it.

Four years now since they had seen him take his oath of office, when they wondered what he would be like as national Chief Magistrate.

And time had gone by and he had proved himself. He had managed to keep hope alive while others were ready to quit.

They knew his heart groaned over that stream of boys and men moving south and ever south for four long years, that he lived with

a multitude of phantom youths who had called him by nicknames and pet words, that he walked with death and became its familiar, that he had no fear over joining "the bivouac of the dead," that in the shadowland to which he had now crossed had gone many comrades and brave men he had commissioned and even deserters he had pardoned.

They had not heard of his murmuring to the woman who wrote *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, "I shan't last long after it's over."

Amid slaughters too bloody and stupid to report to the country, amid babblings and a heavy sustained pressure of foolish counsels, he had gone on without one of the major mistakes that could have lost everything.

In a furnace and a huggermugger of blood and muck he had proved himself. He was one of them.

He was of the people, by the people, and for the people.

Week by week he had slowly become their neighbor, their close friend, the man of understanding who was worth following even when they could not be sure where he was leading.

Now Father Abraham was gone.

Old Abe — there would be no more stories about him, alive there in the White House in Washington.

President Lincoln — his announcements and proclamations, his letters and speeches — it was all finished and over.

Now there was a memory to keep.

That was left — the life he had lived — the meanings and the lights of that life.

This could not be taken away.

Neither a one-shot brass deringer nor the heaviest artillery on earth could shoot away and blot out into darkness the kept picture — the shape and tone of this tall prophet of the American dream and its hope of the Family of Man around the earth.

A Tree Is Best Measured When It's Down

ON THE SATURDAY following Good Friday thousands of sermons were laid away as of no use for Easter Sunday. A new sermon had to be written after the news arrived that the President was dead. In great stone cathedrals of the cities, in little cabin churches at country crossroads, in hospital chapels and navy ships and in outdoor army-camp services, Easter Sunday sermons memorialized the dead President.

The press from day to day gave its readers the facts as they developed. In language and feeling the news stories mourned with the readers. In black-border crape typography, in editorial comment and letters and poetical effusions, the newspapers went along with the grief of the public.

Beyond any doubt, said leading

men and journals, there never had been on earth a man whose death brought in all countries such quick, deep human interest, such genuine sorrow, such wide-flung discussion and commentary.

A paragraph in *Harper's Weekly*, captioned "Mourning in Richmond," told of sorrow even in what had so recently been enemy territory: "General Lee at first refused to hear the details of the murder. He said that when he relinquished command of the rebel forces he surrendered as much to Lincoln's goodness as to Grant's artillery. The General said he regretted Mr. Lincoln's death as much as any man in the North, and believed him to be the epitome of magnanimity and good faith."

Confederate Brigadier-General Louis Wigfall called it "the greatest misfortune that could have befallen the South." And the Confederate Major Charles F. Baker, at Cairo on his way to New Orleans for exchange, published a letter in which he wished "the vengeance of Heaven" on the assassin, and declared that, if the Confederate authorities were implicated, "I am as far on my way south as I wish to go."

Among the people of England, the masses, whose sentiment kept the Government from recognizing the Confederacy, the mourning was genuine. In Germany many workingmen's clubs, coöperative societies, labor journals, spoke their

loss. In Sweden and Norway flags were ordered at half-mast on the ships in harbor. To the four corners of the earth spread the Lincoln story and legend. He was wanted. What he seemed to mean was reached for. Travelers on any continent came to expect in humble homes the picture of Lincoln, readiness to talk about him.

Ralph Waldo Emerson spoke on April 19 in Concord, Massachusetts. In the deep, unimpeachable sincerity that ran through everything Emerson said and did, he gave his neighbors his meditations on the end of Lincoln's life. The gloom of the calamity had traveled over sea and land, from country to country, "like the shadow of an eclipse." Old as was history, Emerson doubted whether any one death had ever caused so much pain to mankind.

Emerson spoke of his "vast good nature, which made him tolerant and accessible to all; fair-minded, leaning to the claim of the petitioner." His "broad good humor" and "jocular talk" was a rich gift that "enabled him to meet every kind of man and every rank in society; to take off the edge of the severest decisions; and to catch with true instinct the temper of every company."

He mentioned how Lincoln's off-hand jests "by the very acceptance they find in the mouths of millions, turn out to be the wisdom of the hour." Emerson was certain "if

this man had ruled in a period of less facility of printing, he would have become mythological, like Aesop, by his fables and proverbs."

Lincoln, in Emerson's analysis, grew according to need. As problems grew, so did the President's comprehension of them. "It cannot be said there is any exaggeration of his worth. If ever a man was fairly tested, he was." In four years of battle days his endurance, resource, magnanimity, sore tried, were never found wanting. "By his courage, his justice, his even temper, his humanity, he stood a heroic figure in the center of a heroic epoch. He is the true history of the American people in his time."

The suave diplomat John Bigelow, out of his wide familiarity with statesmen and men of affairs, wrote of Lincoln: "I do not know that history has made a record of any other man who so habitually, so constitutionally, did to others as he would have them do to him."

The people were sorrowing now not because of the crime but because they had lost a friend they loved simply as a man.

In thousands of commentaries that were to pile higher and higher, Lincoln stood as the incarnation of two practical results — Emancipation and Union. Tragedy was to go on and human misery to be seen widespread. Yet it was agreed two causes directed by Lincoln had won the war. Gone was the old property status of the Negro. Gone was the

doctrine of Secession and States' Rights. These two.

Decreed beyond any imagining of its going asunder was Lincoln's dream of the Union of States achieved. The decision was absolute, hammered on terrible anvils. The Union stood — an amalgamated and almost an awful fact.

The delicately shaded passages of Lincoln's second inaugural wept over the cost of doing by violence what might have been done by reason. Yet out of the smoke and stench of war, Lincoln stood taller than any other of the many great heroes. None threw a longer shadow than he. And to him the great hero was the People. He could not say too often that he was merely their instrument.

These were meditations and impressions of the American people in days following April 14 of 1865.

Vast Pageant, Then Great Quiet

THERE WAS a funeral.

It took long to pass its many given points.

Many millions of people saw it and personally moved in it and were part of its procession.

It was garish, vulgar, massive, bewildering, chaotic.

Also it was simple, final, majestic.

In spite of some of its mawkish excess of show, it gave solemn unforgettable moments to millions of people who had counted him great, warm and lovable.

Yes, there was a funeral.

From his White House in Washington — where it began — they carried his coffin and followed it nights and days for 12 days.

By night, bonfires and torches lighted the right of way for a slow-going railroad train.

By day, troops with reversed arms, muffled drums, multitudinous feet seeking the pivotal box with the silver handles.

By day, bells tolling, bells sobbing the requiem, the salute guns, cannon rumbling their inarticulate thunder.

To Baltimore, Harrisburg, Philadelphia, New York, they journeyed with the draped casket to meet overly ornate catafalques.

To Albany, Utica, Syracuse, moved the funeral cortege always met by marchers and throngs.

To Cleveland, Columbus, Indianapolis, Chicago, they took the mute oblong box, met by a hearse for convoy to where tens of thousands should have their last look.

Then to Springfield, Illinois, the old home town, the Sangamon near by, the New Salem hilltop near by, for the final rest of cherished dust.

At last to Springfield came the coffin that had traveled 1700 miles, that had been seen by more than 7,000,000 people — and the rigid face on which more than 1,500,000 people had gazed.

In the State capitol, in the lower house of which he had been a member and where he had spoken his

prophet warnings of the House Divided, stood the casket.

Now passed those who had known him long. They were part of the 75,000 who passed. They were awed, subdued, shaken.

There were clients for whom he had won or lost, lawyers who had tried cases with him and against, neighbors who had seen him milk a cow and curry his horse, friends who had heard his stories around a hot stove and listened to his surmises on politics and religion.

All day long and through the night the unbroken line moved, the home town having its farewell.

On May 4 of this year 1865 a procession moved with its hearse

from the State capitol to Oak Ridge Cemetery. There on green banks and hillsides flowing away from a burial vault, the crowded thousands of listeners and watchers heard prayers and hymns, heard the second inaugural read aloud.

Evergreen carpeted the stone floor of the vault. On the coffin set in a receptacle of black walnut they arranged flowers carefully and precisely, they poured flowers as symbols, they lavished heaps of fresh flowers as though there could never be enough to tell either their hearts or his.

And the night came with a great quiet.

And there was rest.

Toward a More Picturesque Speech

AN OLD mirror, blind with age (Leslie Ford)

SHE KNEW all the words, but none of the music of love (Elizabeth Block)

AS NERVOUS as a candle-flame (H. M. Tomlinson) . . . As mutual as a pair of shears (Frank D. Aucott) . . . Restless as a rumor (Walter Winchell) . . . As stay-at-home as a turtle (Louise Gooch)

THE SINISTER weapon of tact (Marquis James)

SHE WOULD rather be looked around at than up to (Phil Robinson)

How Else
Would
You
Say It?

WEARING his hair departed in the middle (Jimmie Fidler) . . . Too much Vitamin I in his system (Roe Fulkerson) . . . Along the highways, enjoying the signery (Henry Rich) . . . Two taxicabs drows-

ing at the curb (Dorothy Aldis)

A SLEEPY FIRE nodded and dozed over a few chunks of hard wood (Julia Peterkin) . . . The full moon pushed the clouds aside as if they were double doors (Erich Kastner) . . . The wind told its own ghost stories (Rudyard Kipling)

Among Those Present

Dorothy Dunbar Bromley (p. 7), columnist on the New York *Post*, graduated from Northwestern University, and served during the World War in the French-speaking unit of the Signal Corps. She has written books and numerous magazine articles on social, medical, legal and political subjects.

Dorothy Canfield (p. 1) established a home for children in France during the World War and opened her own house in the Basque country to refugees. Knowing the tragic needs of children throughout the warring world today, the distinguished Vermont writer has dedicated her energy and her skillful pen to their cause.

P. H. Erbes, Jr. (p. 59), still in his 30's, has been on the staff of *Printers' Ink* since 1929. The author of a serious history of advertising and marketing, Mr. Erbes also frequently wields a satirical pen against advertising's silly phases.

André Maurois (p. 95) was born in Normandy, his real name Emile Herzog. During the World War he was attached to

the British GHQ, and wrote *The Silence of Colonel Bramble*, his first novel. Now at 54 the French author of many books about England and the English is again serving as liaison between British and French military forces.

Carl Sandburg (p. 125), born in Illinois in 1878, was until the age of 36 totally unknown to the literary world. He worked as milk-wagon driver, barber-shop porter, scene-shifter in a cheap theater, dishwasher, harvest hand, soldier, salesman, newspaperman. Lecture audiences know him, not only for his poetry, but for his inimitable banjo-playing and ballad-singing. *The War Years*, concluding his great biography of Lincoln, was the literary event of 1939.

Otto D. Tolischus (p. 61) is a native of Germany. He was graduated from the Pulitzer School of Journalism, Columbia University, in 1916 and served with the *Cleveland Press* and the International News Service before joining *The New York Times* as its Berlin correspondent.

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