

0. MULTIPLE FUNERALS - Story Preface

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Mourning their fallen President, Americans held funerals for Abraham Lincoln in numerous cities. Roger Norton, who maintains a significant web site on the President's assassination, tells us [more about it](#): "Throughout the long journey, entire populations of rural America were waiting alongside the tracks as the nine car funeral train slowly passed by (the funeral car was the 8th car). For example, officials of Richmond, Indiana, estimated its mourners at 15,000 - a number greater than the city's population - at 3:15 A.M. in the morning! Depending on conditions, the train usually traveled between 5 and 20 m.p.h. Everywhere there were arches draped in black stretched over the tracks. The grandest funeral spectacle in the history of the world ended with the closing of the tomb in Springfield." This image depicts the hearse which carried the President's body in Springfield.

The U.S. Capitol, newly constructed in 1860, was [draped](#) in black after Lincoln's shocking death. So was the place of the murder, [Ford's Theater](#). Following a custom of the time, "[mourning cards](#)" were printed commemorating the life of the slain leader.

Grieving crowds [thronged](#) Washington's streets for the [first](#) of many funerals for the man who had been [born on](#) a corn-husk-covered bed in a [nearly windowless, one-room Kentucky log cabin](#) on "Sinking Spring Farm." (The link takes you to a nearly exact replica located at his [birthplace](#).)

His much-loved step-mother, [Sarah Bush Johnston Lincoln](#), reportedly said:

*I knowed they'd kill him. I bin awaitin' fer it.*

To allow people around the country to participate in funeral services, a [train](#) took the President's body to many different cities before he was laid to rest in [Springfield, Illinois](#):

- In [New York](#), someone took a picture of the President in his [open coffin](#). After his New York funeral, the President's coffin was transferred from City Hall [to the funeral car](#).
- Lincoln's coffin was open during times of "viewing," so the people could see their slain President. A Buffalo, New York newspaper published a [drawing of the open-coffin](#).
- The people of Cleveland built a [special structure](#), with gas lamps attached, "so that the remains could be easily seen at night, and to good advantage" (as reported by *Harper's Weekly* on page 308 of its May 20, 1865 issue).
- In [Chicago](#), more than 125,000 people [viewed](#) his body as they passed by a [special catafalque](#) at City Hall. In 1865, [Walt Whitman](#) (whose poetry, among others Lincoln [read](#)) wrote "[O Captain! My Captain!](#)" to

commemorate the President's death. Even in his lifetime, the poem became Whitman's most famous. It has been included in anthologies - one, the *Riverside Literature Series No. 32*, incorporated an earlier version which Whitman himself corrected - and referred to in movies (like *Dead Poets Society* starring Robin Williams and Ethan Hawke).

Despite the nation's overwhelming grief at the loss of its first assassinated President - who had delivered his second inaugural address a mere six weeks before his death - the military and civilian law enforcement officials directed their attention to capturing the escaped, still-at-large killer.

See [Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:](#)

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/MULTIPLE-FUNERALS-Assassination-of-Abraham-Lincoln>

See [Learning Tasks for this story online at:](#)

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/MULTIPLE-FUNERALS-Assassination-of-Abraham-Lincoln>

## Questions 2 Ponder

### How Did Americans Pay Their Respects to President Lincoln?

In the days before television, when people everywhere could not simultaneously view important events, President Lincoln had several different funerals in various American cities. Why do you think this happened?

What would cause 15,000 people to wait for the President's train to go by at 3:15 in the morning?

What does this tell us about how people in the North viewed their President (and the impact he had on their lives and on the condition of their country)?

## Media Stream

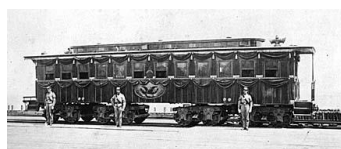


### Sarah Bush Johnston

Image online, courtesy U.S. National Archives.

PD

View this asset at: <http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Sarah-Bush-Johnston>



### Lincoln's Funeral Train

Image online, courtesy the Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C.

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### Grieving Over Lincoln

Image online, courtesy the U.S. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C.

PD

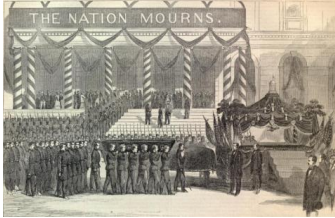
View this asset at: <http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Grieving-Over-Lincoln>



### Lincoln's Open Coffin in New York

Image online, courtesy the [abrahamlincoln.com](http://abrahamlincoln.com) blog.

View this asset at: <http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Lincoln-s-Open-Coffin-in-New-York>



### Lincoln Funeral in New York - Coffin Transfer

Illustration published in the May 13, 1865 issue of *Harper's Weekly*, at page 300. Online, courtesy Library of Congress.

PD

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### Abraham Lincoln - Funeral in Cleveland

Image described above, online courtesy Library of Congress.

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### Lincoln Funeral - Crowds Gather in Chicago

Image online, courtesy the Library of Congress.

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### Abraham Lincoln Funeral in Chicago - Special Catafalque

Image, described above, online courtesy Library of Congress.

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### Lincoln Funeral - Viewing in Chicago

Image online, courtesy the U.S. Library of Congress.

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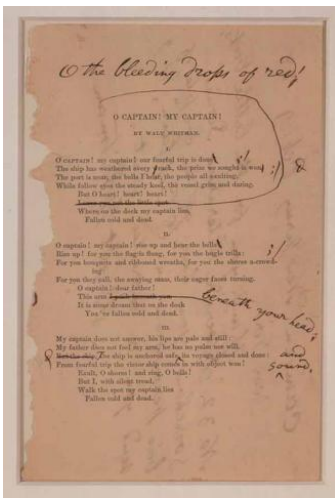
### Walt Whitman in 1865

Image online, courtesy the U.S. National Archives.

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### O Captain! My Captain!

Image online, courtesy Library of Congress.

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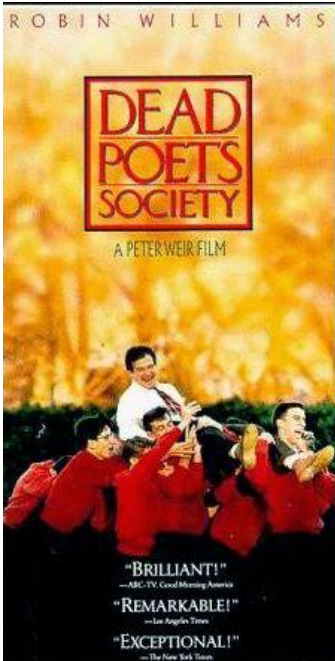


### Map Detailing Booth's Escape Route

Image online, courtesy U.S.National Park Service.

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### O Captain! My Captain! - Dead Poet's Society

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