

GENERAL - SYRACUSE, N.Y.

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# The Assassination of Abraham Lincoln

Funeral Train Route  
Syracuse, New York  
April 26, 1865

Excerpts from newspapers and other  
sources

From the files of the  
Lincoln Financial Foundation Collection

Rome, April 26, 9:10 p. m. It was raining heavily when the train arrived at this place, but there was an immense crowd assembled at the depot, which was richly draped in mourning. A band of music on the platform was playing a dead march.

Green's Corners and Verona were next passed, at both of which large numbers of people were standing around bonfires.

Oneida, 9:50 p. m. An arch draped in mourning, bore the inscription: "We mourn with the nation." The depot was decorated with flags all draped in mourning. A crowd of people were at the depot, the men with heads uncovered. A company of firemen bearing lighted torches were in line.

At Canastota, Canaseraga, Chittenango, Kirkville and Manlius, the people stood around bonfires and carried lighted torches to see the funeral cortege on its westward course.

→ Syracuse, April 26, 11:05 p. m. The depot and adjoining buildings were almost covered with the insignia of sorrow. Many dwellings were illuminated and mourning drapery suspended around the windows. Tears coursed down the cheeks of both men and women. Minute guns were firing and bands playing solemn dirges. The scene was grand and imposing.

Memphis, N. Y., midnight. At this place, and Warners, just passed, people stood in groups, with uncovered heads and lighted torches, to see the funeral cortege glide past.

At Weedsport, Jordan, Port Byron, Savannah, Clyde, Lyons and Newark, the depots were draped in mourning, bonfires and torchlights revealed groups of men and women with bare heads standing for hours in the middle of the night to catch a passing view of the great funeral.

Palmyra, N. Y., April 27, 2:15 a. m. The depot is nicely decorated, and men, women and children flock about the hearse car.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

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HIS

LIFE, PUBLIC SERVICES, DEATH

AND GREAT FUNERAL CORTEGE,

WITH A HISTORY AND DESCRIPTION OF THE

NATIONAL LINCOLN MONUMENT,

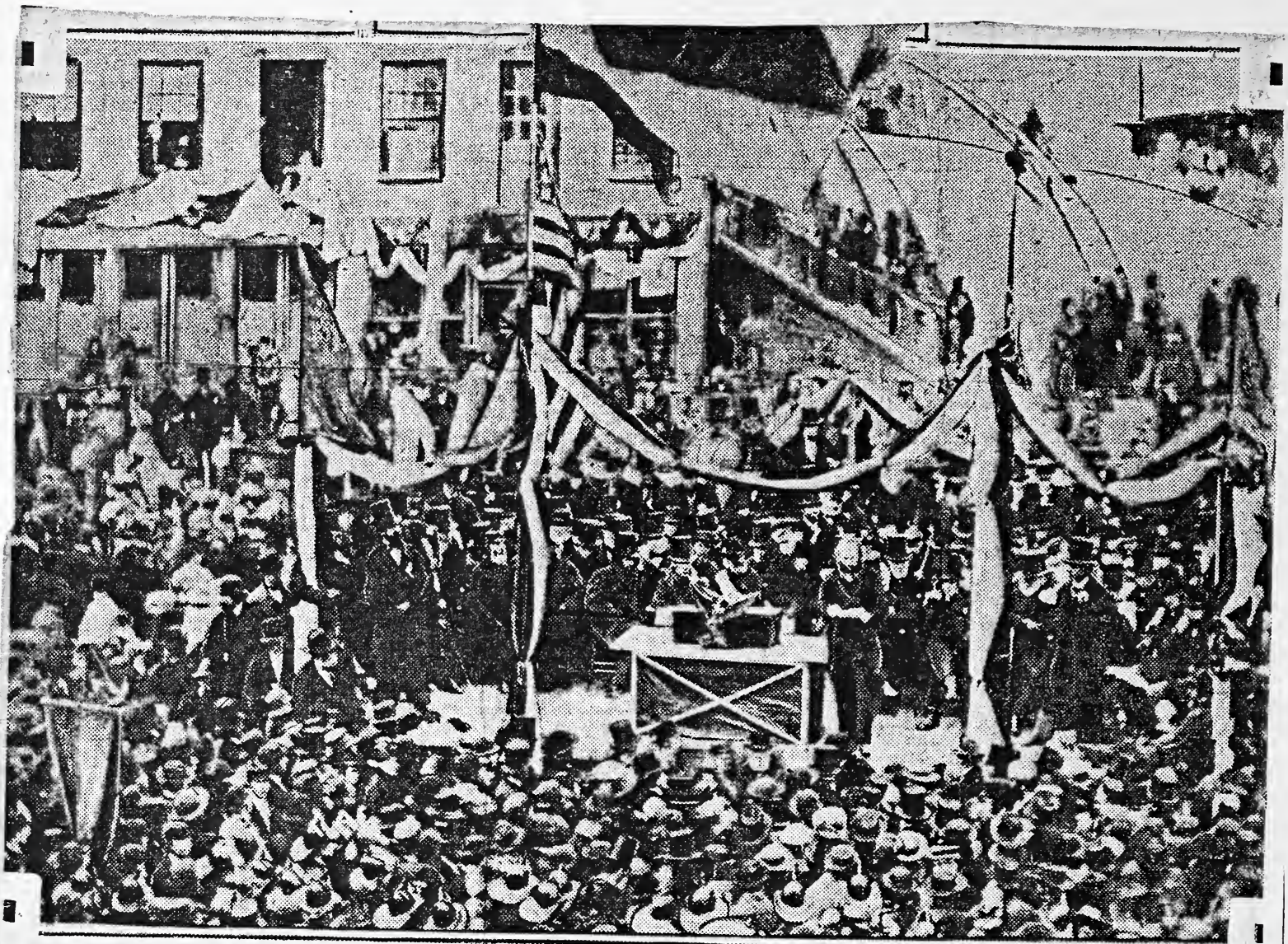
By JOHN CARROLL POWER.

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MONUMENTAL EDITION.

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SPRINGFIELD, ILL. :  
EDWIN A. WILSON & CO.  
1875.



A grieving city bowed its head in tribute to the assassinated president of the United States, Abraham Lincoln, when this picture was made at the memorial services following his death in Hanover sq. in 1865. Landmarks of old Syracuse are visible in the black-

draped background. The service was held on the day Lincoln's body passed through the city en route to Springfield, Ill. The grief on that day 66 years ago was no less poignant Thursday as Syracuse celebrated the anniversary of the Great Emancipator's birth.



# The Night Lincoln Passed by

By RICHARD PALMER

A stillness prevailed in downtown Syracuse on that Wednesday evening, April 26, 1865.

The unusual somberness of the evening was broken only by the muffled conversation of people congregating at the old New York Central Railroad depot in Vanderbilt Square.

All day, the telegraph sounder had been relaying the progress of the funeral cortage making its way westward from Albany bearing the remains of President Abraham Lincoln.

The aged depot in Washington Street between Salina and Clinton Streets appeared old beyond its years as it stood in the shadows of four or five flickering lamps.

From its smoke-stained rafters hung flags draped in mourning, their lower ends looped up to the beams supporting the roof. Drooping festoons of black and white had been crossed and twined the entire length of the old structure.

Along the side walls, beneath the flags and festoons, evergreens were fastened here and there, their brilliant green harmonizing well with the scarlet and black and white of the other adornments.

Private residences along Washington (then Railroad) Street, with very few exceptions, were draped in mourning and illuminated.

It was raining, and long before the funeral train was expected, the depot and the streets were

crowded with people walking back and forth and admiring the displays.

A few minutes before the appointed time of arrival, a headlight appeared at the east end of Washington Street. It was the pilot engine, signaling the funeral train was not far behind.

The pilot train, consisting of the locomotive and one passenger car, passed through the depot without stopping, although it slowed as the crowd surged to the depot, already jammed to capacity.

Soon the funeral train itself appeared. Slowly, quietly, amid the booming of guns, the tolling of bells, and the strains of the dead march, the train came gliding through the crowd into the depot.

One after another, the black-draped cars glided by, each one being scrutinized by the crowd to see if it contained the object upon which all thoughts were centered. The train consisted of nine cars, seven of which were furnished by the New York Central.

The locomotive, "Edward H. Jones," and the baggage car, were decorated with symbols of mourning. On the exterior, the panels between each window were draped with the finest black cloth, with three stars to each panel, arranged at intervals.

Soon, the hearse car was recognized as the one carrying the President's body. The coach, with two extra sets of trucks to improve riding quality, carried an honor guard riding on the platforms.

The car was divided into three compartments. In the center was the state room, with two luxurious velvet-lined berths and fine furniture. A compartment at one end contained President Lincoln's remains.

The coffin was covered with black cloth, upon which wreaths of flowers were lying. The car windows were heavily draped in mourning, and covered with black cloth.

(Continued on next page)

# LINCOLN

(From page 9)

Contemporary newspaper accounts state the unsurpassed richness of the car's furnishings. The coffin itself cost \$2,000 and was constructed of mahogany. Several ladies were permitted to pass through, and a wreath on behalf of the City of Syracuse was placed upon the coffin.

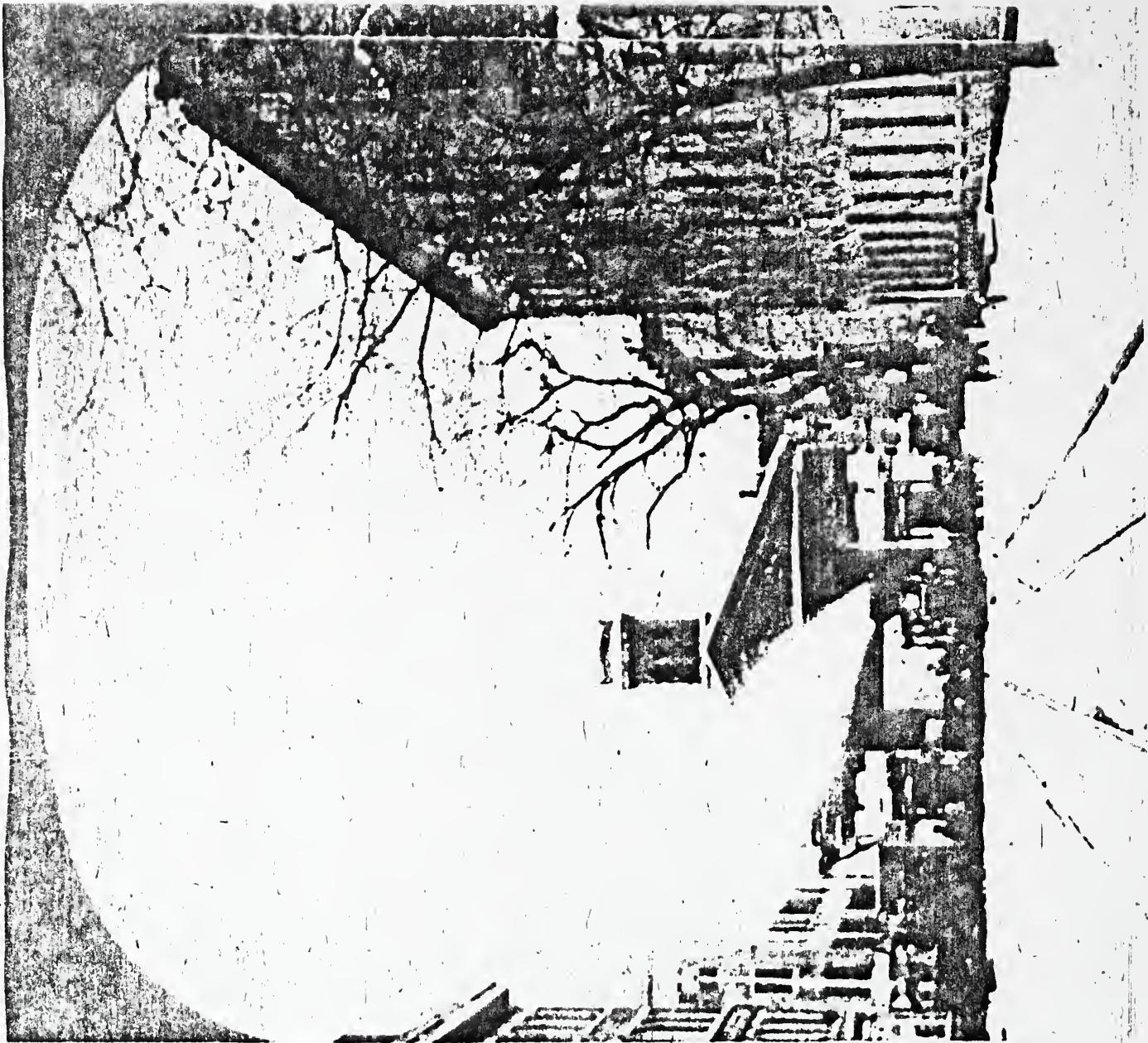
A group of choristers sang the national anthem, which was followed by a band playing the funeral dirge. One of the strangest happenings inside the depot took place when a white dove was sighted hovering in the air above the American flag, which was suspended from the nearby Sherman House. The dove finally alighted upon the blue field of the Stars and Stripes, and clung to it with great exertion, for several minutes.

At 11:20 p.m. the pilot train started westward, followed 10 minutes later by the funeral train. Piloting Locomotive 248 was Engineer John H. Brown. Conductor Samuel Hildreth gave the traditional "all aboard" signal, and the train slowly pulled westward out of the station.

A reporter for the Syracuse Daily Journal noted: "As the train passed out of the depot, many a head was uncovered, and with one long, lingering look at the departing cars, the crowd dispersed."

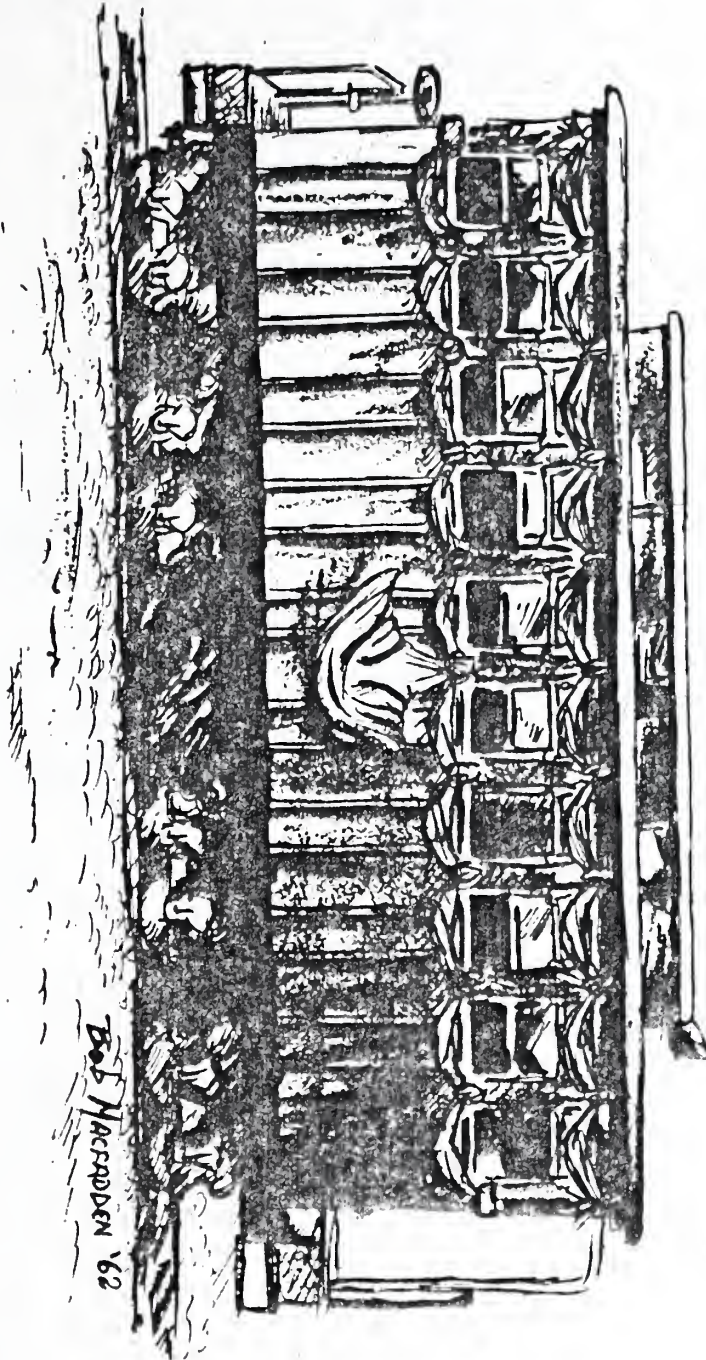
All along the tracks people gathered with flaming torches to pay their respects. As the funeral train went by, all saw distinctly the coffin with the flowers upon it, and many tears were shed, it was said. It was a night not soon forgotten for those whose lives were touched as the last memorial of a beloved President vanished in the night towards its destination: Springfield, Ill.

There are few mementos left today of that fateful evening. But in the history museum at Jordan is a cannonball which lodged in a tree. It was fired in a salute as the train passed by on the mainline.



President Lincoln's funeral train passed through the old New York Central Station in Syracuse's Vanderbilt Square. The station was demolished in 1869.





Historical data and  
artwork courtesy of  
Onondaga Historical  
Association

*At left is a rendering of the car  
which carried the remains of the  
Great Emancipator.*



