

## Summer Reading 8th Grade 2020-2021

### Part I: "Lincoln is Shot" by Jim Bishop

**Instructions:** Read Jim Bishop's historical fiction account of the night President Abraham Lincoln was shot. Then, travel back in your imagination to the night that John Wilkes Booth assassinated Abraham Lincoln. You are to write your own version of what happened that night, assuming the identity of someone mentioned in the story or creating your own identity. The narrative account must be from that person's perspective, and it must include sensory details and facts from the story. While you have somewhat free reign over the creativity of your story, you must keep it time-period appropriate. In your reflection of that fateful night, include a beginning (who are you and how you came to be at the theatre that night), a middle (events you witnessed), and an ending (what happened after that night). Transport the reader back to the scene. Use vivid words to describe and language appropriate to the time and occasion. No need to add quotations from the story.

#### The Details:

- ❖ You may be any character in the story except Lincoln or Booth (you must be a human), or you may create a character of your own who could have been there that night
- ❖ Please keep your story to 1-3 pages typed using any legible font (MLA format not required)
- ❖ Booth's identity as the killer was not officially known the night of the assassination
- ❖ Content takes priority over the formal "stuff"
- ❖ Do your best to paint a vivid picture
- ❖ Feel free to add facts, but don't disregard the time period

#### The Grading:

- ❖ Vivid, accurate picture of events
- ❖ Creativity
- ❖ Appropriate language and details for the time period
- ❖ Required details included in your "Eyewitness Account"
  - April 14, 1865
  - Ford's Theatre
  - *Our American Cousin* starring Harry Hawk and Laura Keene
  - John Wilkes Booth
- ❖ Mechanics and such

**Total: 20 points**

\*You may do a little research to find out about Booth, Lincoln, or the theatre, but it isn't necessary or required to complete this assignment. The goal of this assignment is to get a general idea of what the night was like when Lincoln was shot, and to use that information to create your own narrative of that night. On our Washington, D.C. trip, we will actually get to visit Ford's Theatre and the Peterson House.

**Part II:** In addition to reading the short story “Lincoln is Shot” by Jim Bishop, you will also read one of the Holocaust stories listed below. **Choose any ONE of the following Holocaust Memoirs:**

<https://www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/video/step-step-phases-holocaust> background video

***Night* by Elie Wiesel**

***The Boy on the Wooden Box* by Leon Leyson**

***The Diary of Anne Frank* by Anne Frank**

***The Hiding Place* by Corrie ten Boom**

*Night*- the tragic account of Wiesel’s experience at Auschwitz and Buchenwald concentration camps during World War II. This book is typically read in 9th grade.

*The Boy on the Wooden Box* - Leyson’s story of being the youngest child on Schindler’s list and his heart wrenching but inspiring story of survival.

*The Diary of Anne Frank*-details Frank’s life while she was hiding from the Germans during World War II.

*The Hiding Place*- ten Boom’s story of sacrificing her own comforts and part of her own personal room to give constant safety to the Jews.

**Task:** Create 4 dialectical journal entries, choosing at least 2 different types of responses. Create a grid and fill it in with text evidence and your response to it. You may copy as many sentences from the text as you’d like, just be sure to copy directly, word for word. Use proper MLA citation, including spacing and punctuation. Type using Times 12 pt. Font.

**Procedure:**

1. Type passages that stand out to you and record them in the left-hand column of the t-chart (*ALWAYS include the page number using MLA style*).
2. In the right column, type your response to the text (*ideas, insights, questions, reflections, and comments on each passage*). Responses should be thorough and thoughtful. Quality is valued over quantity.
3. Label your response with one of the following codes:
  - (C) Connect- make a connection to your life, the world, or another text. Be specific.
  - (R) Reflect- think deeply about what the passage means in a broad sense- not just to the characters in the story. What conclusions can you draw about the world, human nature, or just the way things work?
  - (E) Evaluate- make a judgment about the characters, their actions, or what the author is trying to say. What is the impact, influence, or motive?

**Sample Dialectical Journal Entry: *Night* by Elie Wiesel**

Passages from the Text	Response
“Some of the men spoke of God: His mysterious ways, the sins of the Jewish people, the redemption to come. As for me, I had ceased to pray. I concurred with Job! I was not denying His existence, but I doubted His absolute justice” (45).	(R) Elie struggles to see God’s presence in his life as he endures such brutality. The things he has seen cause him to rethink his faith in a God of mercy. Sadly, going through difficulties often causes people to doubt God because they wonder how He could allow bad things to happen to good people. In Elie’s situation, he’s battling internally and feels a great sense of despair.

20 points

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# LINCOLN IS SHOT

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Jim Bishop

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On the fateful evening of April 14, 1865, President Abraham Lincoln sits in a box in Ford's Theatre in Washington, D.C. He is watching a comedy called *Our American Cousin*. In this excerpt from *The Day Lincoln Was Shot*, Jim Bishop reports the evening's events moment by moment. To help you feel like an eyewitness, Bishop includes material from the play being performed. (The play's hero is Asa Trenchard, played by

Harry Hawk. Asa pretends to be rich so he can marry Mrs. Augusta Mountchessington, played by the star, Laura Keene.) As you "hear" the play, Bishop describes what's happening in the President's box. John Wilkes Booth, an actor, is about to enter that box.

This might be the most dramatic event in all of American history. Even though you know the ending, do you still feel suspense?

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**J**ohn Wilkes Booth, slightly ahead of schedule, came down the dress circle steps slowly. He heard the lines onstage and he knew that he had about two minutes. . . .

Booth looked down at the little white door and saw the empty chair. Confused, he looked at patrons sitting in dress circle seats as though wondering which one was the President's guard. He saw the two army officers and he moved by them. For the first time, he realized that he was going to get into that box with no trouble; no challenge; no palaver; no argument, no fight; no stabbing. He was going to be able to walk in as though Lincoln had been expecting him.

He walked down to the white door, and stood with his back to it. He studied the faces nearby, men and women, and he saw some of them glance

briefly at him. A real wave of laughter swept the theater and attention reverted to the stage.

Mrs. Mountchessington had just learned that Asa Trenchard was not a millionaire.

"No heir to the fortune, Mr. Trenchard?"

"Oh, no," he said.

"What!" young Augusta shrieked. "No fortune!"

"Nary a red," said Asa brightly. "It all comes from their barking up the wrong tree about the old man's property."

Now was the time. Booth knew that, in a few seconds, Asa would be alone on the stage. He turned the knob, pushed the door, and walked into the darkness. The door closed behind him. He found the pine board, held it against the inside of the door, and tapped the other end down the wall opposite until it settled in the niche he had carved for it. Pursuit could not come from that direction. Nor interference.

He moved toward the door of Box 7 in the darkness. A tiny beam of yellow light squeezed through the gimlet<sup>1</sup> hole in the door and made a dot on the opposite wall. Wilkes Booth could still hear the actors faintly. . . .

**General and Precise Words.** What's the difference between a *chair* and a *rocker*, a *pistol* and a *derringer*? Every language contains general words (like *chair* and *pistol*) and precise words (like *rocker* and *derringer*). Precise nouns and adjectives help a writer create a specific setting. Precise verbs and adverbs can make the action more vivid. As you read, look for examples of words that help make this setting and action come alive.

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1. **gimlet** (jim'lit): small hand tool for drilling holes. Booth had drilled a hole in the door of the President's box earlier that evening.

The conspirator crouched and pressed his eye against the gimlet hole. What he saw was clear. The high back of the horsehair rocker was in plain view and the silhouette of a head above it. He waited. Three persons were on the stage. In a matter of seconds, Augusta would be offstage, followed by her irate mother. That would leave Harry Hawk (as Trenchard) alone and he would begin to draw: "Don't know the manners of good society, eh? . . ."

Booth kept his eye to the gimlet hole. The head in front of him barely moved. The universe seemed to pause for breath. Then Trenchard said: "Don't know the manners of good society, eh?" Booth did not wait to hear the rest of the line. The derringer was now in his hand. He turned the knob. The door swung inward. Lincoln, facing diagonally away toward the left, was four feet from him. Booth moved along the wall closest to the dress circle. The President had dropped Mrs. Lincoln's hand and there was a little space between their chairs. The major and his Clara<sup>2</sup> were listening to the humorous soliloquy of the actor onstage. . . .

The derringer was behind the President's head between the left ear and the spine. Booth squeezed the trigger and there was a sound as though someone had blown up and broken a heavy paper bag. It came in the midst of laughter, so that some people heard it, and some did not. The President did not move. His head inclined toward his chest and he stopped rocking.

Mrs. Lincoln turned at the noise, her round face creased with laughter. So did Major Rathbone and Miss Harris. A chrysanthemum of blue smoke hung in Box 7. Booth, with no maniacal gleam, no frenzy, looked at the people who looked at him and said, "*Sic semper tyrannis!*"<sup>3</sup> It was said in such an ordinary tone that theatergoers only fourteen feet below did not hear the words.

The conspirator forced his way between the President and his wife. Mrs. Lincoln's laughter dissolved in confusion. She saw the young man towering above her, but she did not know who he was or what he wanted. The major saw the cloud

2. Major Rathbone and his fiancée Clara Harris sat in the box with the Lincolns.

3. "*Sic semper tyrannis!*": (Latin) "Thus always to tyrants!"



of smoke and, without understanding, jumped up and tried to grapple with the intruder. Booth dropped the derringer and pulled out his knife. The major laid a hand on his arm and the assassin's arm went high in the air and slashed down. Rathbone lifted his left arm to counter the blow, and the knife sliced through his suit and flesh down to the bone.

The assassin moved to the ledge of the box and the major reached for him with his right arm. Booth shoved him and said loudly: "Revenge for the South!" Mrs. Lincoln began to rub her cheek nervously. She glanced at her husband, but he seemed to be dozing.

Harry Hawk faltered in his lines. He looked up at the State Box indecisively. In the wings, W. J. Ferguson, an actor, heard the explosion and looked up at the box in time to see a dark man come out of the smoke toward the ledge. In the dress circle, James Ferguson . . . saw Booth climb over the ledge of the box, at a point near where Boxes 7 and 8 met at the picture of George Washington, and watched him turn his back to the audience and, by holding on with his arms, let himself down over the side.

As he dropped, he pushed his body away from the box with his right hand. This turned him a little and the spur of his right foot caught in the Treasury regiment flag. As the banner ripped, and followed him to the stage in tatters, the actor, by reflex, held his left foot rigid to take the shock of the fall, plus two outstretched hands. He landed on the left leg, and it snapped just above the instep. He fell on his hands, got up, and started to run across the stage to the left. He passed Harry Hawk and headed for the wings.

The audience did not understand. They watched the running actor, and he fell again. He stood and, as he got offstage, he was limping on the outside of his left foot; in effect, walking on his ankle.

Hawk, stupefied, did not move. His arms were still raised in half gesture toward the wings through which the women had departed. Laura Keene, in the Green Room,<sup>4</sup> noticed that the on-

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4. **Green Room:** Laura Keene, the star of the play, was in a waiting room used by actors when offstage.

stage action had stopped and she came out in time almost to bump into Booth. She brushed by him, wondering what had happened to Harry Hawk. An actor stood in Booth's way and he saw a knife flash by his face.

A piercing scream came from the State Box. This was Mrs. Lincoln. Clara Harris stood and looked out at the people below and said "Water!" Major Joseph B. Stewart, sitting in the front row of the orchestra with his wife and his sister, got up from his seat and climbed over the rim of the stage. He was a big man, looking bigger in a pale fawn suit, and he got to his feet, rushed by Harry Hawk, and yelled "Stop that man!"

The conspirator hobbled to the back door, opened it, and shut it behind him. Johnny Peanut was lying on the stone step with the mare's bridle in his hand. Booth's face was snowy and grim as he pulled his foot back and kicked the boy in the chest.

He took the bridle and limped toward the animal. She began to swing in a swift circle as he tried to get his good foot up in the stirrup. When he made it, Booth pulled himself across the saddle, threw his left leg over, and was just settling in the saddle when Major Stewart came out the back door yelling "Stop! Stop!" He reached for the rein as Booth spurred the horse and turned out of the alley.

The course he chose was not up to F Street, where the gate would have to be unlatched. He swung toward the side of the T,<sup>5</sup> out through Ninth Street, then right toward Pennsylvania Avenue. His job was to put that first mile between him and his pursuers; he must be ahead of the news he had created. So he spurred the little mare hard, and she laid her ears back and ran. The conspirator was in little pain. He knew that his leg had been hurt, but the pain was not great now. He leaned his weight on the right stirrup and sat with the left thigh half up on the saddle. The mare turned into Pennsylvania Avenue and headed toward the Capitol. To the right of the House wing, a moon two days shy of being full was showing.

At Capitol South, he passed another horseman,

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5. **T:** Behind Ford's Theatre was a T-shaped alley; the part of the alley leading to Ninth Street had no gate.

trotting in the opposite direction. The speed of the mare attracted the lone rider's attention. As Booth turned into New Jersey Avenue, he slowed the mare. This was a shanty section, so dark that, unless the United States Government knew his escape route, no one would look for him here. At Virginia Avenue, he turned left and was now close to the bridge.<sup>6</sup>

When Booth swung away from the rear of Ford's Theatre, Johnny Peanut rolled in the alley, moaning: "He kicked me. He kicked me." Major Stewart turned to go back into the theater and was met by a rush of theater people coming out. . . .

The audience began to buzz. Some of the men stood and began to ask others what did this mean. The people sensed now that this was not a part of the play and they felt vaguely alarmed. Major Rathbone pointed dramatically toward the dead wings and roared: "Stop that man!" Out of the State Box came a second scream, a shriek that chilled the audience and brought a large part of it to its feet. This again was Mrs. Lincoln. It had penetrated her mind that Mr. Lincoln could not be aroused. To the west, many farmers testified that, at this time, the moon emerged from behind clouds blood red.

In the orchestra, one man stood and brought to mouth the question everyone was asking: "For heaven's sake, what is it? What happened?" . . . Miss Harris was leaning over the ledge of the box wringing her hands and pleading for water. Someone in the box, a man, yelled:

"He has shot the President!"

All over the theater, hoarse voices shouted, "No! No!" "It can't be true!" In a trice, Ford's resembled a hive immediately after the queen bee has died. The aisles were jammed with people moving willy-nilly. The stairs were crowded, some trying to get up to the dress circle, others trying to get down. Some were up on the stage. Harry Hawk stood in stage center and wept. A group of men tried to force their way through the white door, but, the harder they pushed, the more firmly

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6. **bridge:** the Navy Yard Bridge spanning the Potomac River. Across the bridge was southern Maryland and the way to Virginia.

it held. . . . Actors in makeup ran on the stage begging to know what had happened.

"Water!" Miss Harris begged from the box. "Water!"

Some of the patrons got out on the street and spread the word that Lincoln had been shot. The President, they said, is lying dead in the box inside. Tempers flared. A crowd collected. From E and F Streets, people came running. Many tried to get into the theater as others were trying to get out. Inside, a few women fainted and the cry for water could be heard from different parts of the theater.

Rathbone, soaked with blood, went back into the corridor and tried to open the door. He found the wooden bar and yelled for the men on the other side to stop leaning against the door. After several entreaties, he was able to lift the bar and it fell to the floor, stained with his blood. The major pleaded that only doctors be admitted. A short, handsome man in sideburns and mustache yelled from the rear of the mob that he was a doctor. Men pushed him forward until he got inside the corridor. He was Dr. Charles Leale, Assistant Surgeon of United States Volunteers, twenty-three years of age.

Someone, below the stage, turned the gas valve up<sup>7</sup> and hundreds of faces were revealed to be in varying stages of fright and anger. On the street, a man shouted, "I'm glad it happened!" In a moment, he was scuffed underfoot, most of his clothes ripped from his body, and he was carried toward a lamppost. Three policemen drew revolvers to save his life.

In the State Box, President Lincoln's knees began to relax and his head began to come forward. Mrs. Lincoln saw it, moaned, and pressed her head against his chest. Rathbone asked Dr. Leale for immediate attention. "I'm bleeding to death!" he said. The blood had soaked his sleeve and made a pool on the floor. The doctor lifted Rathbone's chin, looked into his eyes, and walked on into the box.

Miss Harris was hysterical. She was begging

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7. **turned the gas valve up:** The theater was lighted by gas lamps, which were turned down while the play was in progress.

**FORD'S THEATRE**  
 TENTH STREET, ABOVE E.  
 SEASON II..... WEEK XXXI..... NIGHT 191  
 WHOLE NUMBER OF NIGHTS, 495.

JOHN T. FORD..... PROPRIETOR AND MANAGER  
 (Also of Holiday's St. Theatre, Baltimore, and Academy of Music, Phila  
 Stage Manager..... J. B. WRIGHT  
 Treasurer..... H. OLAY FORD

Friday Evening April 14th, 1865.

**THIS EVENING.**  
 The Performance will be honored by the presence of  
**PRESIDENT LINCOLN.**

**BENEFIT**  
 -AND-  
**LAST NIGHT**  
 OF MISS  
**LAURA KEENE**

THE DISTINGUISHED MANAGERESS, AUTHORESS, AND ACTRESS,  
 Supported by  
**MR. JOHN DYOTT**  
 AND  
**MR. HARRY HAWK**

TOM TAYLOR'S CELEBRATED ECCENTRIC COMEDY  
 As originally produced in America by Miss Keene, and performed by her upwards of

Playbill of the Ford's Theatre performance  
 Lincoln attended (detail).

everyone to please help the President. The doctor looked at her, then lifted Mrs. Lincoln's head off her husband's chest. The First Lady grabbed the hand of medicine and moaned piteously.

"Oh, Doctor! Is he dead? Can he recover? Will you take charge of him? Oh, my dear husband! My dear husband!"

"I will do what I can," the doctor said, and motioned to the men who crowded into the box behind him to remove her. She was taken to the broad sofa in Box 8, and Miss Harris sat beside her, patting Mrs. Lincoln's hand.

At first, Leale thought that the President was dead. He pushed the shoulders back in the rocker so that the trunk no longer had a tendency to fall forward. Then he stood in front of the President and studied him from head to foot. With the atti-

tude of one who knows that he will be obeyed, he said to the gawking men: "Get a lamp. Lock that door back there and admit no one except doctors. Someone hold matches until the lamp gets here."

These things were done, as Dr. Leale knew that they would be. He was the first person to bring order around the dying President. The eyes of the patient were closed. There was no sound of breathing. There was no sign of a wound. Men held matches and looked openmouthed as Leale placed the palm of his hand under the whiskered chin of the President, lifted it, and then permitted it to drop.

In the crowd peering in from the corridor, he saw a few soldiers. "Come here," he said to them. "Get him out of the chair and put him on the floor." Half afraid, they did as he told them to. The body was relaxed. They placed it on the floor and stepped away. Leale was going to look for the wound. He was sure that it was a stab wound because, as he was passing the theater on his way back to the army hospital, he heard a man yell something about the President and a man with a knife. Further, he had seen that Major Rathbone sustained a knife wound.

Dr. Leale crouched behind Lincoln's head and lifted it. His hands came away wet. He placed the head back on the floor and men in a circle held matches at waist level as the doctor unbuttoned the black coat, the vest, unfastened the gold watch chain, and, while trying to unbutton the collar, he became impatient and asked for a pocket knife. William F. Rent had a sharp one, and Doctor Leale took it and slit the shirt and collar down the front.

He tore the undershirt between his hands and the chest was laid bare. He saw no wound. The doctor bent low, and put his ear to the chest. Then he lifted the eyelid and saw evidence of a brain injury. He separated his fingers and ran them through the patient's hair. At the back, he found matted blood and his fingers loosened a clot and the patient responded with shallow breathing and a weak pulse.

Onstage, men lifted another doctor into the box. This one was Dr. Charles Taft. He was senior to Leale, but he placed himself at Leale's disposal at once as an assistant. Leale lifted the body into

a slumped sitting position and asked Dr. Taft to hold him. In the saffron flicker of the matches, he found what he was looking for. His fingers probed the edges of the wound and he pulled the matted black hair away from it. It was not a knife wound. The President had been shot behind the left ear and, if the probe of a pinky meant anything, the lead ball moved diagonally forward and slightly upward through the brain toward the right eye. Dr. Leale felt around the eye to see if the ball had emerged. It had not. It was in the brain.

Gently, he lowered the great head to the floor. He knew that Lincoln had to die. Leale acquainted Dr. Taft with his findings, and his feeling. He straddled the hips and started artificial respiration. His business was to prolong life—not to try to read the future—and so he raised the long arms up high and lowered them to the floor—up and back—forward and down—up and back—forward and down. For a moment, he paused. Rudely, he pushed the mouth open and got two fingers inside and pushed the tongue down to free the larynx of secretions.

Dr. Albert F. A. King was admitted to the box. Leale asked each doctor to take an arm and manipulate it while he pressed upward on the belly to stimulate the heart action.

A few soldiers started to clear the box of people. From onstage, questions flew up to the box. Mostly, they were unanswered. "How is he?" "What happened?" "Was he stabbed?" "Who did it?" "Is he breathing?" "Did anyone see who did it?"

For the first time, someone uttered the name of John Wilkes Booth. The name moved from the stage down into the orchestra, was shouted across the dress circle and out of the half-empty theater into the lobby and cascaded into Tenth Street. "Booth!" "Booth did it!" "An actor named Booth!" "The management must have been in on the plot!" "Burn the . . . theater!" "Burn it now!" "Yes, burn it!" "Burn!"

Grief spirals to insanity.

Dr. Leale sat astride the President's hips and leaned down and pressed until these strangers met, thorax to thorax. Leale turned his head and pressed his mouth against the President's lips, and breathed for him in a kiss of desperation. Then he

listened to the heart again and, when he sat up, he noticed that the breathing was stronger. It sounded like a snore.

"His wound is mortal," he said to the other doctors. "It is impossible for him to recover."

One of the soldiers began to get sick. Two others removed their uniform caps. A lamp arrived. Dr. Leale saw a hand in front of him with brandy. He dripped a small amount between the bluish lips. Leale watched the Adam's apple. It bobbed. The liquid had been swallowed and was now retained.

He paused in his labors to wipe his face with a kerchief.

"Can he be removed to somewhere nearby?" Leale said.

"Wouldn't it be possible to carry him to the White House?" Dr. King said.

"No," Dr. Leale said. "His wound is mortal. It is impossible for him to recover."

On the couch, Mrs. Lincoln sat quietly, rocking slightly. Miss Laura Keene had come into the box and was now sitting with her and with Miss Harris. All three heard Dr. Leale's words, but only Mrs. Lincoln seemed not to comprehend. She sat between them, rocking a little and looking across the theater at the other boxes.

Miss Keene came over, and asked the doctor if she could hold the President's head for a moment. He looked at her coldly, and nodded. She sat on the floor and placed his head on her lap.

"If it is attempted," said Leale, still thinking about the White House, "he will be dead before we reach there."

Dr. Taft asked an officer to run out and find a place nearby—a suitable place—for President Lincoln. He called four soldiers to carry the body—at first it was decided to try seating the body in the rocker and carrying it that way—but Leale said that there were too many narrow turns and besides, it would not hurt him to be carried as long as the open wound was downward.

Four men from Thompson's Battery C, Pennsylvania Light Artillery, drew the assignment. Two formed a sling under the upper trunk; the other two held the thin thighs. Dr. King held the left shoulder. Dr. Leale followed behind and held the head in cupped hands. Miss Keene sat, obliv-

ious to the dark stain on her dress, watching. At the last moment, Leale decided that headfirst would be better and he walked backward with Lincoln's head in his hands, his own head twisted to see ahead.

"Guards!" he yelled. "Guards! Clear the passage!"

From somewhere, a group of troopers came to life and preceded the dismal party, shoving the curious to one side. "Clear out!" they yelled at one and all. "Clear out!"

At the head of the stairs, Leale shouted orders as the party began the slow descent. Ahead, they could hear the cries of the crowd in Tenth Street. Downstairs in the lobby, a big man looked at the great placid face, and he blessed himself. Tenth Street was massed with humanity as far as the eye could see.

A short paunchy captain of infantry impressed<sup>8</sup> more soldiers to duty and ordered them double-ranked to precede the body. He drew his sword and said: "Surgeon, give me your commands and I will see that they are obeyed." Leale looked at the houses across the street, private homes and boardinghouses, and asked the captain to get them across.

For the first time, the crowd saw the shaggy head and the big swinging feet. A roar of rage went up. Someone in the crowd yelled "God almighty! Get him to the White House!" Leale shook his head no. "He would die on the way," Leale said. Men in the crowd began to weep openly. The little party pressed through, inch by inch, the faces of the mob forming a canopy of frightened eyes over the body. The crowd pressed in ahead, and closed in behind. . . .

The night, now, was clear. The mist gone. The wind cool and gusty. The moon threw the shadow of Ford's Theatre across the street.

Every few steps, Leale stopped the party and pulled a clot loose. The procession seemed to be interminable.<sup>9</sup> When they got across the street, the steady roar of the crowd made it impossible to hear or to be heard. Leale wanted to go into the nearest house, but a soldier on the stoop made

motions that no one was home and made a helpless pantomime with a key. At the next house toward F Street, Leale saw a man with a lighted candle standing in the doorway, motioning. This was the William Petersen house at 453 Tenth Street. Mr. Petersen was a tailor.

Lincoln was carried up the steps and into the house. Part of the crowd followed. The man with the candle motioned for the doctors to follow him. They moved down a narrow hall. To the right was a stairway going up to the second floor. To the left was a parlor, with coal grate and black horse-hair furniture. Behind it, also on the left, was a sitting room. Under the stairway was a small bedroom.

Here, the President was placed on a bed. A soldier on leave, who had rented the room, picked up his gear and left. He was Private William T. Clark of the 13th Massachusetts Infantry. The room measured fifteen feet by nine feet. The wall-paper was oatmeal in character. A thin reddish rug covered part of the floor. There were a plain maple bureau near the foot of the bed, three straight-backed chairs, a washstand with white crock<sup>10</sup> bowl, a wood stove. On the wall were framed prints of "The Village Blacksmith" and Rosa Bonheur's "The Horse Fair." The bed was set against the wall under the stairway.

It was too small for the President. Leale ordered it pulled away from the wall. He also asked that the footboard be taken off, but it was found that, if that was done, the bed would collapse. The body was placed diagonally on the bed, the head close to the wall, the legs hanging off the other end. Extra pillows were found and Lincoln's head was propped so that his chin was on his chest. Leale then ordered an officer to open a bedroom window—there were two, facing a little courtyard—and to clear everybody out and to post a guard on the front stoop.

At the back end of the room, Leale held his first formal conference with the other doctors. As they talked in whispers, the man who had held the candle went through the house lighting all the gas fixtures. The house was narrow and deep, and

8. **impressed** (im·prest'): here, forced into service.

9. **interminable** (in·tur'mi·nə·b'l): seeming to last forever.

10. **crook**: short for *crocker*, earthenware pots and bowls.



Lincoln dying, as sketched by Herman Faber. At the top are the last names of some of those present, who included members of Lincoln's cabinet.

behind this bedroom was another and behind that a family sitting room which spread across the width of the house.

Leale, in the presence of the other doctors, began a thorough examination. As he began to remove the President's clothing, he looked up and saw Mrs. Lincoln standing in the doorway with Miss Keene and Miss Harris. He looked irritated and asked them to please wait in the front room. The patient was undressed and the doctors searched all of the areas of the body, but they found no other wound.

The feet were cold to the touch up to the ankles. The body was placed between sheets and a comforter was placed over the top. A soldier in the doorway was requisitioned as an orderly and the doctors sent him for hot water and for heated blankets. They sent another soldier for large mus-

tard plasters.<sup>11</sup> These were applied to the front of the body, covering the entire area from shoulders to ankles.

Occasionally, the President sighed. His pulse was forty-four and light; breathing was stertorous;<sup>12</sup> the pupil of the left eye was contracted; the right was dilated—both were proved insensitive to light. Leale called a couple of more soldiers from the hallway, and sent them to summon Robert Lincoln, Surgeon General Barnes, Dr. Robert K. Stone, President Lincoln's physician, and Lincoln's pastor, Dr. Phineas D. Gurley.

The death watch began.

11. **mustard plasters:** cloths spread with a paste made from powdered mustard, flour, and cold water. Mustard plasters were applied to relieve irritation and increase the flow of blood to the skin's surface.

12. **stertorous** (stur'tər-əs): loud, raspy, labored.