

The Dispatch

Newspaper of the

CAPITAL DISTRICT CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

PO Box 14871 Albany, NY 12212
www.cdcwrt.net



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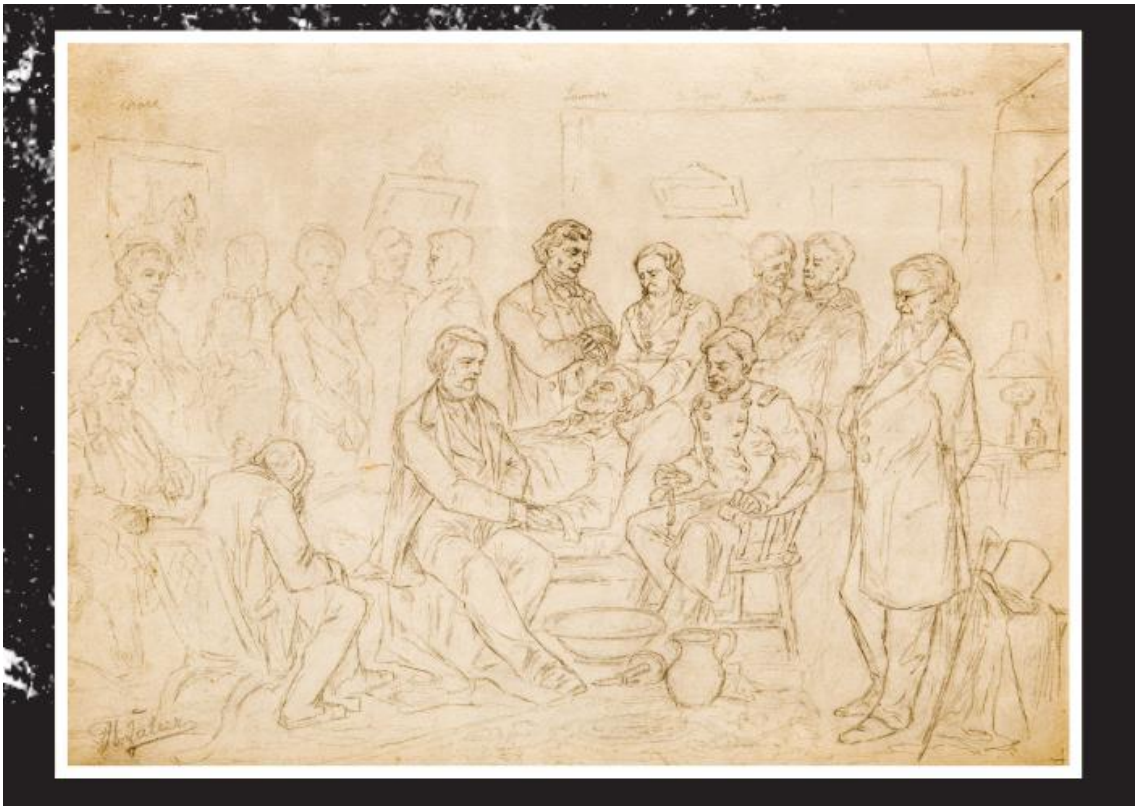
President Lincoln Dies at 7:20 a.m. April 15, 1865



In the sketch depicting Mr. Lincoln's deathbead, Dr. Stone is seen in the center, seated with a hand on the president's arm. Army medical artist, Hermann Faber, made this sketch just after the body was removed. (*Courtesy of the Otis Historical Archives, National Museum of Health and Medicine)*

MAY MEETING
FRIDAY, MAY 8, 2015

WATERVLIET SENIOR CENTER
1541 BROADWAY
WATERVLIET, NY

THE 11TH CORPS FIELD HOSPITAL AT SPANGLER'S FARM

BRITT ISENBERG

Social Hour	**6:00 – 7:00 p.m.**
Business Meeting	**7:00 – 7:15 p.m.**
Presentation	**7:15 – 7:45 p.m.**
Discussion	**7:45 - -8:15 p.m.**

CDCWRT MEETING

The May meeting of the CDCWRT will be held at the Watervliet Senior Center on Friday, May 8, 2015. Our special guest speaker is historian and battlefield guide, Britt Isenberg. His topic will be the history of the Spangler Farm at Gettysburg.

Of the thousands of civilians tormented in some manner by the Gettysburg Campaign, it could be argued that none were quite so profoundly impacted as the George and Elizabeth Spangler Family. Their farm was literally in the crosshairs and virtually the eye of the storm for the duration of the battle and its aftermath. As one of Gettysburg's largest field hospitals, the gruesome aftermath of the Battle of Gettysburg can finally be told in realistic proportions thanks to the recent preservation efforts by the Gettysburg Foundation to save this farm for all time. The program will focus not just on the Spangler Family, but on the farm's role as the 11th Corps field hospital from July 1, 1863 to August 5, 1863.

Britt Charles Isenberg is a Licensed Battlefield Guide and Historian at Gettysburg National Military Park and resides in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania with his wife, Snezana. He is a 2008 graduate of Millersville University of Pennsylvania and spends the majority of his days Guiding, lecturing, researching, writing and photographing topics in Civil War history. His greatest areas of expertise encompass Pennsylvania Troops at Gettysburg and in the Civil War, The Peach Orchard and The Wheatfield at Gettysburg and the Aftermath Story.

COMMEMORATIVE CACHETS

Over the past month and a half, the CDCWRT has organized four special postal cancellations for Sesqui-centennial Events: the destruction of the Fayetteville Arsenal by Sherman on March 14th, Lee's surrender to Grant at Appomattox April 9-12th, Johnston's surrender to Sherman on April 25-26th, and the Lincoln Funeral Train in Schenectady on April 25th.

The Virginia and North Carolina cancels are limited in some of the postmarks. If you are interested in purchasing cachets, please contact Matt Farina at (910)246-0452 or at mafarina@aol.com. Matt can tell you what is available and can save envelopes for you before the supply is exhausted. All small envelopes are $5 each or 5 for $20. All silk-screened large envelopes are $10 each.

The two new stamps for 2015 are an Appomattox stamp and a Five Forks stamp. They are available in the post office as of April 9, 2015.

UP-COMING MEETING/ EVENTS.

On June 12, 2015, Friday, the regular meeting of the CDCWRT at the Watervliet Senior Center will feature John McTague, who will provide a virtual tour of the National Cemetery at Gettysburg.

June 13-14, 2015, Saturday & Sunday. This marks the 23rd Annual Peterboro Civil War Weekend. Saturday starts with a Veterans procession led by A. Lincoln. Harold Holzer and Jan Reichard will be on hand for book signings and will exhibit their Lincoln funeral artifacts including a replica of the funeral casket. There will be exhibits, vendors, re-enactments and food. Patrick Schroeder will talk at 7 p.m. on the surrender at Appomattox. Adults $8.00. Check updates at civilwarweekend.sca-peterboro.org.

On September 11, 2015, Friday, the regular meeting of the CDCWRT at the Watervliet Senior Center will feature David Hochfelder who will talk about the telegraph and railroad during the Civil War.

CIVIL WAR EXHIBITS IN NYC

"Abraham Lincoln and the Jews" is an exhibit at the New York Historical Society on Central Park West in Manhattan until September.

"The Lincoln Papers and Letter" is an exhibit of documents in Lincoln's own hand writing at the Morgan Library on Madison Ave in Manhattan until June.

"Personal Correspondents – Photography and Letter Writing in Civil War Brooklyn" is an exhibit at the Brooklyn Historical Society on Pierrepont Street in Brooklyn Heights until next spring.

UA Researchers Solve Mystery of Lincoln's Funeral

By Eric Swedlund, University Communications

With the 2015 sesquicentennial of Abraham Lincoln's death, University of Arizona researchers turned their attention to one of the last remaining mysteries about what reportedly was the largest traditional funeral in American history. They have determined the precise color of the president's funeral railcar. A trove of information exists about Abraham Lincoln's funeral, which drew millions of mourners during a two-week railway pro-cession across the Northern states. But until now, the precise color of the president's railcar had been lost to history.

Wayne Wesolowski, a chemistry professor and model train maker, was director of the Lincoln Train Project at Benedictine University near Chicago for 10 years. In 1995, he completed a years-long project of building a scale model of Lincoln's car, the locomotive and hearse and horses, all together measuring nearly 15 feet in length.

A Chicago group known as The 2015 Lincoln Funeral Train approached Wesolowski to consult on their efforts to build a full-size version of Lincoln's funeral car, intending to trace as closely as possible the funeral route for the 150th anniversary. An obvious question: what color to paint the new replica? However, no color photographs, no color lithographs and no contemporary color paintings exist of Lincoln's private car, named "The United States." Newspaper accounts from the time describe the color as both "rich chocolate brown" and "claret red." But "chocolate" in 1865 was strictly a drink, very different from the milk chocolate we know today, so the two descriptions are compatible.

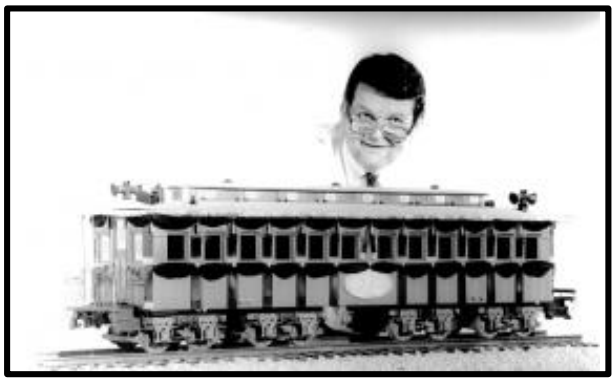
The car burned in a fire in 1911, having been sold at auction to Union Pacific after the funeral and passing through several private hands afterward. Just one artifact of exterior wood survived, and after years of searching, Wesolowski acquired a pencil sized piece of trim.

Using three separate labs at the UA – in chemistry/biochemistry, art and the Arizona State Museum – Wesolowski set about investigating for

the true color, and with the help of Nancy Odegaard, conservator and head of the preservation division, comparing layers of microscopic paint chips from the original car to national color standards. Wesolowski at last found the true original color, which he describes as a dark maroon, darker, but not too far off of what he'd painted his model.

The effort at historical exactness reflects on how deeply the country mourned Lincoln's death. In early 1865, the United States Military Railroad delivered Lincoln a private railroad car for presidential use. But Lincoln never used the car alive. His presidential funeral procession left Washington on April 21, 1865, closely retracing the route Lincoln traveled as president-elect in 1861.

"It was a procession of mourning and the only way to participate was to leave the farm, close the store and come trackside," Wesolowski says. "Just being there was so important. It was a colossal event." Millions of Americans – an estimated one-third of the Northern population – came in person to see the funeral. In New York and Chicago, the crowds topped a half-million. In the countryside, people lined the tracks just to glimpse the train as it passed, similar to the Robert Kennedy funeral train.



DEATH CERTAINLY WOULD SOON CLOSE THE SCENE

(This is an article by Marc Leepson in the **GW Magazine,** Spring 2015. I have omitted the well-known parts)

Racing through the darkened city in a carriage "driven at top speed," Robert King Stone arrived at the red brick boarding house in minutes. Inside, he found a clutch of doctors gathered around an unconscious Abraham Lincoln. The president, he would later recall, "was laid upon the occupant's bed and so great was his stature that his body had to be placed obliquely across it and while his head reached the left-hand top of the bed, his feet extended to the right- hand bottom of the couch."

Charles A. Leale, a 23-year-old surgeon working at the U.S. Army General Hospital in Washington, and the first person to rush to the president's box at Ford's Theatre earlier that evening, asked Dr. Stone if he would assume charge for the president's care; he agreed. But the Lincoln family physician and member of the medical faculty at the institution that would become GW had quickly realized there was little that could be done. "We had to wait for the slow exhaustion of that vital energy," Dr. Stone later said, "which a few short hours before had promised so many years yet to come of happy life and goodness to all men."

In 1825, four years after Columbian College opened its doors, the future George Washington University added a medical department—the first in the capital and only the 11th in the nation. In the 1840s, the growing medical school began operating out of the Washington Infirmary at Judiciary Square, launching the city's first general hospital. By the start of the Civil War in 1861, what was by then known as the school's National Medical College stood among the country's most prestigious medical institutions of higher learning.

But the Civil War brought significant change. Not long after hostilities began in March of 1861, the federal government took over the Washington Infirmary to use as a military hospital. The infirmary, which contained the hospital and medical school offices, then burned to the ground in November. The medical college reopened two years later.

Adding to the Civil War facilities problem was the fact that many medical students and professors left school to join the fight—most on the Confederate side. That included Alexander Garnett, the chair of the National Medical College's Theory and Practice of Medicine Depart-ment. When war broke out, Dr. Garnett moved back to his native Virginia and became a surgeon in the Confederate Army. He went on to become the personal physician, notably, for Robert E. Lee and his family, as well as for several other high-ranking Confederate generals,

many members of the Confederate Cabinet and Congress, and Confederate States of America President Jefferson Davis.

GW also contributed the family physician to the president of the United States in Dr. Stone, who has been described as "the dean of the Washington medical community." President Lincoln met Dr. Stone in February of 1861, soon after moving to Washington with his family. "I am personally acquainted with Dr. Stone," Lincoln wrote to William Hammond, the surgeon general of the U.S. Army, and I "believe him to be a skilful [sic] physician, altogether capable." The president then asked the skillful, capable doctor to become his family's physician. Dr. Stone, for his part, was an admirer of the 16th U.S. president. Mr. Lincoln, he told a friend, was "the purest hearted man with whom I ever came in contact."

Dr. Stone was born in 1822 in Washington. He received an undergraduate degree from Princeton in 1842 and his medical degree from the University of Pennsylvania three years later. He then went abroad—to Edinburgh, Paris and Vienna—for specialized eye and ear medical training. He returned to Washington in 1847 to open his own medical practice. Soon thereafter, Dr. Stone was appointed professor of anatomy and physiology at the National Medical College. He served as its dean in 1853 and later became professor of ophthalmic and aural surgery and, in 1860, professor of clinical surgery. He was president of the D.C. Board of Health from 1858 to 1861.

For nearly four years Dr. Stone ministered to the entire first family: the president, his wife Mary Todd Lincoln and their sons Robert Todd (who was 17 when the Lincolns came to town), William Wallace (known as Willie, the Lincolns' favorite child, who was 10), and Thomas (known as Tad, aged 8). Dr. Stone "became a more or less frequent caller on the president and his family," Milton Shutes wrote in his 1933 book Lincoln and the Doctors. "Mrs. Lincoln suffered much from attacks of severe headache [probably migraines], and the children had the usual aches and pains of which most children complain. Tad was born with a partial cleft palate, and his pronunciation of certain words suffered accordingly."

In February of 1862, Dr. Stone treated Willie and Tad when they came down with what most likely was typhoid fever caused by the notoriously sewage-contaminated drinking water at the White House. Tad survived. Willie did not. The 11-year-old died in his bed in the White House on Feb. 20.

By early 1865, the almost unimaginable extent of the slaughter of the Civil War had taken its toll emotionally and physically on Abraham Lincoln. One needs only to compare photographs of him from four years earlier to ones taken early in 1865 to see how precipitously the president's health had declined. Early in February Mr. Lincoln's personal physician worried that the president was near exhaustion when he fainted during an argument with Attorney General James Speed over pardoning soldiers for desertion. According to Dr. Shutes, the author, Dr. Stone ordered the president to rest in bed for "an entire day and night, and with another warning insisted on more rest and shorter working hours." Two weeks later Mr. Lincoln "looked badly and felt badly," his old friend from Illinois, Orville H. Browning, later wrote. Mr. Lincoln, he went on to say, was "apparently more depressed than I have seen him since he became president."

Despite the depression and the nervous exhaustion, Mr. Lincoln did not slow down in the following months. He continued to direct the Union effort as the Civil War wound down. The emotionally drained president summoned the strength to deliver his memorable, religiously themed "with malice toward none; with charity for all" second inaugural address on March 4.

"Fondly do we hope—fervently do we pray—that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away," Mr. Lincoln said. "Yet, if God wills that it continue, so still it must be said 'the judgments of the Lord, are true and righteous altogether.'"

The war continued for four more weeks. Then, on April 9, 1865, hostilities ceased when Robert E. Lee surrendered the Army of Northern Virginia to Ulysses S. Grant at Appomattox Court House. Five days later, on April 14, the president decided to celebrate with an evening out at one of the Lincolns' favorite venues, Ford's Theatre. For their eighth visit to the 10th Street playhouse the first couple decided to take in the show "Our American Cousin."

Dr. Stone was not at Ford's Theatre that night. The first physician who made it into the presidential box after the shooting was Dr. Leale, the 23-year-old surgeon working at the U.S. Army General Hospital. Not long after the shot rang out, Dr. Leale "ran to the president's box and as soon as the door was opened, was admitted and introduced to Mrs. Lincoln," he later wrote. She "exclaimed several times, 'O Doctor, do what you can for my dear husband'" and "'send for Dr. Stone.'" Mr. Lincoln, he recalled, "was in a state of general paralysis." The president's eyes were closed and "he was in a profoundly comatose condition, while his breathing was intermittent" and extremely labored.

The second doctor to make his way into the Lincoln box and tend to the stricken president was Albert Freeman Africanus King, an 1861 graduate of GW's National Medical College who was a lecturer there in toxicology and had served as a Union Army surgeon. Dr. King, who was sitting in the dress circle near the Lincoln box, arrived very soon after Dr. Leale had made his way to Mr. Lincoln's side, followed by Charles Sabin Taft, a 30-year-old Army surgeon. Drs. Leale, King and Taft agreed it would be best to move the president to "the nearest house" according to Dr. Leale. A group of men (including Dr. King, who supported Mr. Lincoln's left shoulder) carried the unconscious president across the street to a boarding house owned by William and Anna Petersen. They placed the president on a bed in a back bedroom—a "plain but comfortable apartment," as Dr. Stone later put it—about 20 minutes after he was shot.

Dr. Stone arrived and, as he later described, he found Mr. Lincoln "surrounded by sympathizing fellow citizens whose very hands seem wrung with love, but who, in spite of the exasperating ugliness of the act, still controlled the longing of their aroused passions and maintained a discreet silence around his humble couch."

Fourteen physicians attended Abraham Lincoln that night in the townhouse. The group included three National Medical College instructors—Drs. Stone, King and John Frederick May, as well as Surgeon General of the Army Joseph K. Barnes, Army Assistant Surgeon General Charles H. Crane and Army surgeon D. Willard Bliss, along with Charles A. Lieberman, the president of the D.C. Medical Society. According to Dr. Stone, Dr. Taft "held the president's head." Drs. Leale, Lieberman, King and Ford made "every attempt to render the president air and afford him every comfort." Right after he arrived, Dr. Stone said, he "proceeded to the exploration of the wound." Mr. Lincoln was "perfectly passive on his back as if quietly asleep, without any distortion of features though at times his respiration was somewhat" labored. Dr. Stone "instantly" saw that the president had been shot by a gun in "the back part of the left side of his head, into which I carried immediately my finger."

Mr. Lincoln's "hair or scalp was not in the least burnt," Dr. Stone reported. "The edges of the wound were sharp and distinct. On probing the wound, with the finger, the projectile was found to have cut a distinct and perfectly round aperture." He had quickly realized "that the case was a hopeless one; that the president would die." Mr. Lincoln's "vital tenacity was very strong," Dr. Stone said, "and he would resist as long as any man could, but death certainly would close the scene."

Just before 7 a.m., it appeared that Mr. Lincoln had stopped breathing. Dr. Barnes "held his finger to the carotid artery," Dr. Leale said. "Col. Crane held his head, Dr. Stone, who was sitting on the bed, held his left pulse, and his right pulse was held by myself." He died at about half past seven o'clock.

The shock of her husband's death had brought about a nervous disorder" in Mary Todd Lincoln, one observer remembered. "Her physician, Doctor Stone, refused to allow her to be moved [from the White House] until she was somewhat restored."

After seeing to Mrs. Lincoln, Dr. Stone went on to preside at her husband's autopsy. It began at 11 the next morning in the Guest Room on the second floor of the White House, three and a half hours after the president had died. Joseph J. Woodward, a prominent Philadelphia pathologist who served as a Union Army surgeon in the Civil War, and Edward Curtis, a fellow Army surgeon who was working in the brand-new Army Medical Museum in Washington, performed the autopsy. Mr. Lincoln's body was placed on a table moved into the room for the occasion. In addition to Drs. Woodward, Curtis and Stone, the others in the autopsy room were Drs. Crane, Barnes and Taft, along with former Army surgeon William Notson, who had been at Ford's Theatre. U.S. Army Maj. Gen. Christopher Augur (who commanded Union forces in Washington), and the incoming president, Andrew Johnson, also were in the room.

Dr. Curtis later wrote of the moment when he and Dr. Woodward found the bullet in the president's brain. "There it lay upon the white china, a little black mass no bigger than the end of my finger," he recalled, "dull, motionless and harmless, yet the cause of such mighty changes in the world's history as we may perhaps never realize."

Following the autopsy, Drs. Stone and Taft took charge of the fatal bullet. They gave it to Secretary of War Edwin Stanton, who placed it—along with a tiny bone fragment from Mr. Lincoln's skull and the probe used in the procedure—in sealed envelopes. The items today are on display at the National Museum of Health and Medicine in Silver Spring, Md. Dr. Lieberman had clipped a few strands of the president's hair around the wound at his bedside. He gave them to Dr. Stone at the autopsy. After the procedure ended, Dr. Stone presented a lock of Mr. Lincoln's hair to his widow and to each of his fellow physicians at the autopsy.

Closure of the affair, however, was still to come. GW's John Frederick May, one of the physicians at the president's deathbed, was called upon to help make a positive identification of the body of Mr. Lincoln's assassin, who had been hunted down and killed on April 26 in Port Royal, Va., 17 days after fleeing the scene at Ford's Theatre.

Dr. May examined the deceased aboard the *USS Montauk* the following day, along with several other physicians. He confirmed that the dead man was the same person he had operated on two years earlier to remove a fibroid tumor from the back of his neck: John Wilkes Booth.

TEACHING AWARD

On April 15th, the following letter arrived.

"Congratulations! On behalf of the Capital District Council for the Social Studies Board of Directors and the Awards Committee it is my pleasure to inform you that the Capital District Civil War Round Table is our Partners in Education Institutional Winner for 2015.

CDCSS established this award to recognize non-school individuals and/or organizations that promote the ideals and goals of education in our communities.

We would be honored if you and a guest would join us at our annual dinner and awards ceremony at the Van Schaick Island Country Club on Thursday, May 14, 2015 to accept the award. Additional guests are welcome at the rate of $40 each. (Children under 3 are free, children 4-12 are $14) The May CDCSS Board meeting will start at 5 pm. There will be a cash bar starting a 5:30 pm and a buffet dinner starting at 6 pm.

Please feel free to share this with family and friends and invite them to join us in celebration. This year we've included the option for online registration. The deadline for participation is Thursday, May 7.

Sincerely, Mary Miller, Editor of ***The Liason"***

Much of the teaching by non-school participants in the CDCWRT has been provided by Matt George, J.J. Jennings and Matt Farina. Members are encouraged to attend the dinner.