Lincoln Boyhood to Host Solar Eclipse Programs

Erin Hilligoss-Volkmann, NPS
March 16, 2024

Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial in partnership with the National Science Foundation will present hands-on activities and space science demonstrations at Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial Visitor Center throughout the weekend of April 6 to April 8, 2024. Education activities will include a night sky Star Party event, Junior Ranger programs and make and take SpaceCrafts.

On Monday, April 8 the public is invited to view the unique phenomenon of the solar eclipse from a beautiful national park setting. Blankets will be allowed for sitting areas on the lawn. Chairs and umbrellas are not allowed.

Event specific Junior Ranger booklets and badges will be available at the park April 6-8 as supplies last. Educational solar eclipse books and commemorative educational merchandise will be available at the Eastern National Book Store in the Memorial Visitor Center.

“We are excited to share the experience of a total solar eclipse with our visitors and neighbors,” said Superintendent Rhonda Schier. “Abraham Lincoln was passionate about science and a stargazer who wrote about his observations of the heavens and his visit to the Naval Observatory in Washington DC while he was president. This is an opportunity to bring your families to stand in the moon’s shadow at the very place where Lincoln lived as a boy and looked to the stars.”

Public parking at the park is limited. Vehicle access to the park will be closed when parking spaces are filled. Ample additional parking will be available at the adjacent Heritage Hills High School parking lot where there will be a shuttle bus to transport visitors to the Lincoln Living Historical Farm and the Lincoln Boyhood Memorial Visitor Center. A pedestrian path will also be available between the HHHS parking lot and the park for those who prefer to walk.

A full schedule of events can be found at Calendar - Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial (U.S. National Park Service) (nps.gov)

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Path to Confederate Fort Gregg

Kaitlyn Dodge, NPS
March 15, 2024
PETERSBURG, Va — On Saturday, April 6, 2024, Petersburg National Battlefield will participate in the 28th Annual Park Day. Volunteers will work on clearing taller vegetation (young trees, bushes, etc.) from the field around Confederate Fort Gregg at Stop 4 on the Western Front Driving Tour. This event will begin at 10:00 am and will

end at 12:00 pm. Volunteers will meet at the parking area for Stop 4, Fort Gregg. Interested participants should email Volunteer Coordinator at PETE_VIP@nps.gov, registration is limited to 35 people. Volunteers are recommended to bring water, sunscreen, gloves (if they choose), bug spray, and to dress for the weather. Long pants and closed-toe shoes that can get wet are also recommended.

About Stop 4-Fort Gregg
On April 2, 1865, about 3,000 Federal Soldiers of the 24th Corps attacked Fort Gregg. Nathaniel Harris' Brigade of 350 soldiers defended Fort Gregg. The attack lasted throughout the afternoon. This allowed for General Lee to fill in the Dimmock Line and prolonged the Confederate retreat out of Petersburg until the evening.

About American Battlefield Trust
The American Battlefield Trust is a national nonprofit land preservation organization that protects America's hallowed battlegrounds. This event allows the Trust to spotlight beloved American landscapes nationwide. Projects will keep historic sites and battlefields clean, open, and accessible. Learn more www.battlefields.org.

Learn more about Petersburg National Battlefield at nps.gov/pete or follow @PetersburgNPS on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube.

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The Real History Behind Apple TV+'s 'Manhunt' and the Search for Abraham Lincoln's Killer

A new series dramatizes Edwin Stanton's hunt for John Wilkes Booth and his co-conspirators in the aftermath of the president's 1865 assassination.

Vanessa Armstrong, History Correspondent, Smithsonian

Tobias Menzies (right) as Secretary of War Edwin Stanton in "Manhunt" Apple TV+

In the hours following Abraham Lincoln's assassination on the evening of April 14, 1865, Secretary of War Edwin Stanton sent a flurry of telegrams to his officers in the field. "Make immediate arrangements for guarding thoroughly every avenue leading into Baltimore, and if possible, arrest [John] Wilkes Booth, the murderer of" the president, Stanton wrote in one early morning missive.

Despite the secretary of war's best efforts, Booth—a famous actor-turned-assassin—evaded capture until April 26, when he was killed in a showdown with Union soldiers at a farm in Virginia. Historian James L. Swanson's 2006 book, Manhunt: The 12-Day Chase for Lincoln's Killer, chronicled the twists and turns of Booth's attempted escape, unraveling the vast conspiracy he organized to undermine the Union. Now, Apple TV+ is releasing a seven-episode

adaptation of the gripping tale, also titled "Manhunt."
Tobias Menzies, perhaps best known for starring in "The Crown" and "Outlander," plays Stanton, while Anthony Boyle, who recently appeared in the Apple TV+ show "Masters of the Air," plays Booth. Hamish Linklater takes on the role of Lincoln.

Here's what you need to know about the real history behind "Manhunt" ahead of the show's two-episode premiere on March 15.

The assassination of Abraham Lincoln
Lincoln's assassination is arguably one of the most infamous moments in United States history. On the night of April 14, 1865, Booth snuck into the president's box at Ford's Theatre in Washington, D.C., where Lincoln; his wife, Mary; and their guests, Clara Harris and Major Henry Rathbone, were watching a production of Our American Cousin.

At a moment when Booth knew the audience would burst into laughter, he shot Lincoln in the back of the head. Rathbone tried to subdue Booth, but the assassin attacked him with a knife. As Booth tried to escape, he got caught on a portrait of George Washington and an American flag hanging from the box, leading him to land inelegantly on the stage. Before leaving the theater, he shouted "Sic semper tyrannis"—the Virginia state motto, which translates to "Thus always to tyrants." Lincoln died at 7:22 the next morning.

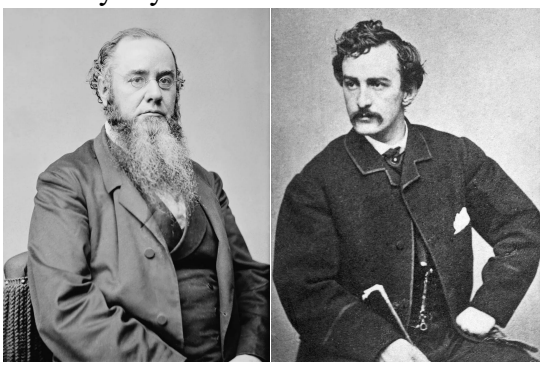
An illustration of the assassination. L to R: Henry Rathbone, Clara Harris, Mary Lincoln, Abraham Lincoln and John Wilkes Booth Public domain via Wikimedia Commons

The subsequent search for Booth followed Lincoln's killer from Washington to Maryland and Virginia. Helmed by Stanton, the investigation uncovered the Confederate sympathizer's larger plot: On the night of the assassination, one of Booth's co-conspirators, Lewis Powell, attempted to murder Secretary of State William H. Seward. Another man, George Atzerodt, was tasked with killing Vice President Andrew Johnson but failed to go through with the actor's plan.

"Many will blame me for what I am about to do, but posterity, I am sure, will justify me," Booth wrote in a letter to a friend before the assassination. Only the first half of his prediction proved correct: Stanton and his team immediately began sending out telegrams rallying soldiers and detectives to hunt down Booth.

The making of "Manhunt"
"Manhunt" showrunner Monica Beletsky traces the series' origins to her research on

Harriet Tubman. The abolitionist was friends with Seward, who shared her commitment to ending slavery. “That [connection] led me to find out that essentially, we had no president between the moment Booth shot Lincoln and the next day when Johnson was sworn in,” Beletsky says.



Edwin Stanton Public domain via Wikimedia Commons & John Wilkes Booth Public domain via Wikimedia Commons

Though Seward survived Powell’s attack, he was in no shape to lead the nation in the immediate aftermath of the assassination; Johnson, meanwhile, “remained in the background and chose not to assert himself,” allowing Stanton to take the lead in the manhunt, according to Swanson’s book. “Learning that the presidency fell on the shoulders of Stanton as de facto president, essentially, for those 12 hours or so was a dramatic situation I was really compelled by,” Beletsky says.

“Manhunt” centers on Stanton’s mission to hunt down those responsible for Lincoln’s murder, as outlined in Swanson’s book. But the show goes beyond a play-by-play of the search to offer flashbacks that shed light on Stanton’s dynamic with the president.

Lincoln loved Stanton’s devotion to the Union, even nicknaming him Mars after the Roman god of war. The politicians bonded over the deaths of their sons, with Lincoln losing Willie in February 1862 and Stanton losing his infant child in July of that same year. For Stanton, Lincoln’s death was not only a great loss for the country but also a great loss for him personally. They were friends. And he was determined to see those responsible for his friend’s murder hanged.

John Wilkes Booth on the run Booth wasn’t alone on the road after he fled Washington via horseback. He met up with David Herold, a friend who had promised to help him escape. “Herold was very much—I don’t want to say obsessive—but he was very much a fanboy of Booth,” Swanson tells Smithsonian magazine. “He viewed Booth as his mentor, his superior.”

After a brief stop at a tavern owned by Mary Surratt, who also ran a boarding house in the capital, the two fugitives rode toward Bryantown, Maryland, to the house of another acquaintance: physician Samuel Mudd. Though Mudd later claimed he didn’t recognize Booth when the actor and Herold showed up at his doorstop around 4 a.m. on April 15, that claim is undoubtedly false, as Mudd was involved in Booth’s previous failed plot to kidnap Lincoln and exchange him for Confederate prisoners.

“When Booth arrived at the house, Mudd knew exactly who he was,” says Swanson. “His lie—‘I didn’t know this man, I didn’t recognize him’—that’s like saying Taylor Swift showed up at my house in her car, and she just committed a crime and assassinated

someone, and she spent a night at my house, and I didn't know who she was."

Mudd and Booth knew each other, but a trip to the doctor's residence wasn't part of the initial plan. It was a necessary detour due to Booth breaking his left leg, either when jumping onto the stage at Ford's Theatre or falling from his horse during the escape. The delay kept him and Herold off the road until around 7 p.m. on April 15, when the two left the doctor's home on horseback. They subsequently got lost but hired a local man to help them find the home of Captain Samuel Cox, who told them to hide in a pine thicket near the Potomac River. Thomas Jones, a Confederate agent and Cox's foster brother, agreed to smuggle the men to safety.

David Herold Public domain via Wikimedia Commons & Mary Surratt, the first woman executed by the U.S. government Public domain via Wikimedia Commons

"[Booth's] voice was pleasant," Jones later recalled. "Though he seemed to be suffering intense pain from his broken leg, his manner was courteous and polite." The assassin's charm won Jones over, and he convinced the fugitives to wait in the pine barrens for five days and four nights, until the detectives and soldiers hunting them had moved on. The men left the wilderness on the evening of April 20, with Jones leading them to a small boat they could use to cross the Potomac into Virginia.

But Booth and Herold got confused in the night and rowed in the wrong direction. They ended up landing once again on Maryland soil, no closer to Virginia. After acquiring food from a friend of Herold's at a nearby farm, the two inexplicably remained in Maryland another night, only rowing on to Virginia on April 22. At 1 p.m. the following day, they finally connected with Jones' contact: Elizabeth Quesenberry, a member of the Confederate Secret Service, a spy network whose reach extended from the South to Canada.

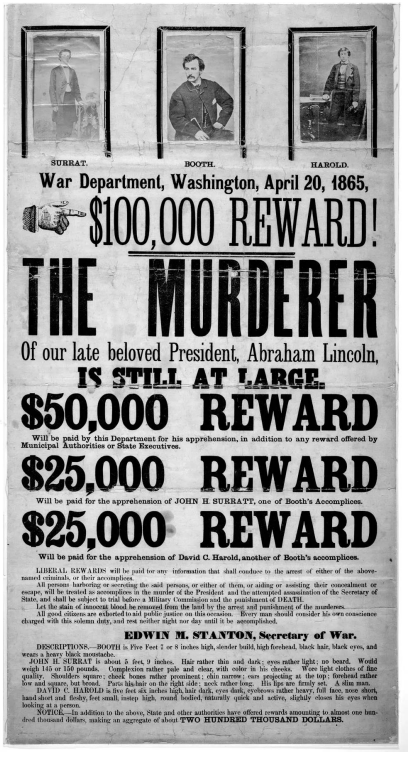
In Virginia, the fugitives sought help from a series of other Confederate sympathizers, some more accommodating than others. They also threatened their way into the cabin of William Lucas, a free Black man, at knifepoint. On April 24, the pair forced Lucas' son to give them a ride to Port Conway, where they encountered a group of former Confederate soldiers. Booth convinced the soldiers to help him and his accomplice cross the Rappahannock River into more Confederate-friendly territory. The assassin was so elated by his arrival in the state's heartland that he reportedly cried out, "I'm safe in glorious old Virginia, thank God!"

The death of John Wilkes Booth

Booth's declaration quickly proved wrong. The rest of his journey—and his life—lasted little more than a day. He only made it 3.5 miles past the Rappahannock before Union troops caught up with him.

Stanton had called on both the Union Army and New York City detectives to hunt down Lincoln's killers. As days passed without success, the secretary of war grew more and more agitated. On the morning of April 20—the day after Lincoln's funeral procession in Washington—Stanton issued a proclamation offering a combined $100,000 reward for Booth; Herold; and John Surratt, Mary's son, who'd fled to Canada after hearing about the assassination.

"Let the stain of innocent blood be removed from the land by the arrest and punishment of the murderers," the reward poster stated. "All good citizens are exhorted to aid public justice on this occasion. Every man should consider his own conscience charged with this solemn duty, and rest neither night nor day until it be accomplished."


SURRAT. BOOTH. HAROLD.

War Department, Washington, April 20, 1865.

$100,000 REWARD!

THE MURDERER

Of our late beloved President, Abraham Lincoln,

IS STILL AT LARGE.

$50,000 REWARD

Will be paid by this Department for his apprehension, in addition to any reward offered by Municipal Authorities or State Executives.

$25,000 REWARD

Will be paid for the apprehension of JOHN H SURRATT, one of Booth's Accomplices.

$25,000 REWARD

Will be paid for the apprehension of David C. Harold, another of Booth's accomplices.

LIBERAL REWARDS will be paid for any information that shall conduce to the arrest of either of the above-named criminals, or their accomplices.

All persons harboring or secreting the said persons, or either of them, or aiding or assisting their concealment or escape, will be treated as accomplices in the murder of the President and the attempted assassination of the Secretary of State, and shall be subject to trial before a Military Commission and the punishment of DEATH.

Let the stain of innocent blood be removed from the land by the arrest and punishment of the murderers.

All good citizens are exhorted to aid public justice on this occasion. Every man should consider his own conscience charged with this solemn duty, and rest neither night nor day until it be accomplished.

EDWIN M. STANTON, Secretary of War.

DESCRIPTIONS.—BOOTH is Five Feet 7 or 8 inches high, slender build, high forehead, black hair, black eyes, and wears a heavy black moustache.

JOHN H. SURRATT is about 5 feet, 9 inches. Hair rather thin and dark; eyes rather light; no beard. Would weigh 145 or 150 pounds. Complexion rather pale and clear, with color in his cheeks. Wore light clothes of fine quality. Shoulders square; cheek bones rather prominent; chin narrow; ears projecting at the top; forehead rather low and square, but broad. Parts his hair on the right side; neck rather long. His lips are firmly set. A slim man.

DAVID C. HAROLD is five feet six inches high, hair dark, eyes dark, eyebrows rather heavy, full face, nose short, hand short and fleshy, feet small, instep high, round bodied, naturally quick and active, slightly closes his eyes when looking at a person.

NOTICE.—In addition to the above, State and other authorities have offered rewards amounting to almost one hundred thousand dollars, making an aggregate of about TWO HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS.

A wanted poster issued for Booth, Herold and John Surratt Public domain via Wikimedia Commons

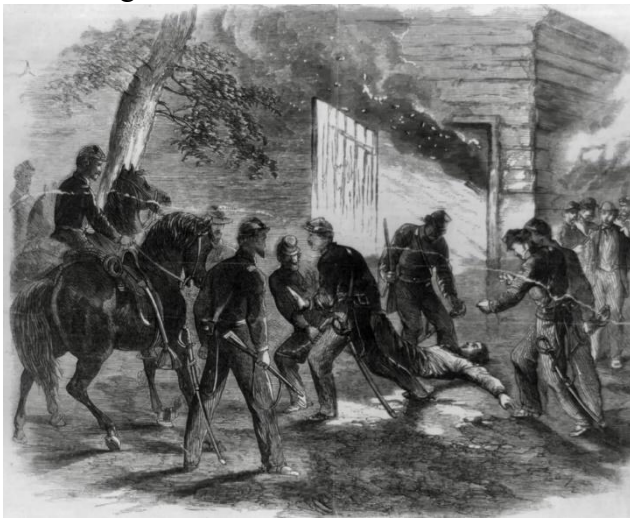
Stanton hoped the bounty—$50,000 for Booth and $25,000 each for Herold and John—would galvanize his forces. Most of the hunters believed the fugitives were still in Maryland, hiding out in the pine barrens. But a telegram sent to the War Department on the morning of April 24 shifted the search's focus to Virginia.

The missive stated that soldiers had tracked Booth to Mudd's house and were considering two main theories: first, that Booth and Herold were still hiding in the Maryland wilderness, and second, the "belief that they crossed from Swan Point to White Point, Va., on Sunday morning, April 16, about 9:30, in a small boat, also captured by Major [James] O'Beirne."

Colonel Lafayette C. Baker, one of the New York City agents called in by Stanton after Lincoln's death, read the telegram and decided the hunt should move to Virginia. He ordered 26 members of the 16th New York Calvary to take two detectives—including his cousin Luther Byron Baker—to Port Conway. The group arrived on the afternoon of April 25, just a day behind Booth and Herold.

The fugitives had sought refuge on the 500-acre farm of Richard Garrett, who took them in under the assumption that they were wounded Confederate soldiers, not the already-infamous fugitives responsible for Lincoln's death. The first night, Garrett allowed the men to sleep inside his house with his family. The second night, however, he grew suspicious and told them to sleep in the tobacco barn.

Early on the morning of April 26, the Union cavalry surrounded the tobacco shed, trapping the fugitives inside. Herold surrendered, leaving Booth alone inside the barn. Though Stanton wanted Booth alive for questioning, the assassin had no intention of surrendering: Writing in his diary while on the run, Booth reflected, “I have too great a soul to die like a criminal.”



An illustration of Union soldiers dragging the dying Booth out of Garrett's tobacco barn Public domain via Wikimedia Commons

With this aim in mind, Booth addressed Luther directly, saying, “I know you to be a brave man, and I believe you to be honorable. … I have got but one leg. If you will withdraw your men in line 100 yards from the door, I will come out and fight you.” In an effort to convince Luther of his honorable intentions, Booth added, “Captain, I have had half a dozen opportunities to shoot you, but I did not.”

In response, the soldiers tried to smoke Booth out by setting fire to the barn. The assassin was prepared to storm out with guns blazing, but before he could make his move, Sergeant Boston Corbett shot him through a gap in the barn’s slats. The bullet struck the back of Booth’s head, in approximately the same spot where he had shot the president.

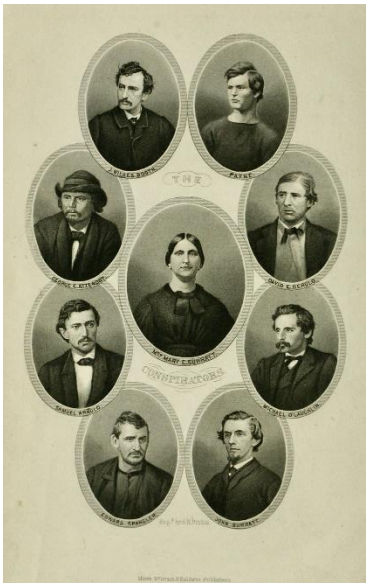
“The night at the Garrett farm was Booth’s last performance on the American stage,” says Swanson. “He acted in a Shakespearean manner. He was an actor. Just as he performed the assassination of Abraham Lincoln, he didn’t just do it, he performed it.”

Booth died on the porch of Garrett’s house as the sun rose on April 26. His last words, uttered while looking at his hands, were “useless, useless.”

Punishing the co-conspirators

Stanton’s manhunt didn’t end with Booth’s death. His investigation extended to the actor’s co-conspirators, including Mudd; failed assassins Powell and Atzerodt; boarding house owner Mary and her son John; Michael O’Laughlen and Samuel Arnold, who were involved in Booth’s earlier kidnapping plot but not the assassination; and Edman Spangler, who’d held Booth’s horse outside of Ford’s Theatre during the murder.

Rumors of a grand conspiracy circulated, but in truth, most of the individuals who helped Booth were more loyal to him than the Confederate cause. “Booth’s inner circle of conspirators got involved because they were admirers of [him],” says Swanson. “He did not hold himself above these followers of his, and they really basked in his glory and friendship.”



Illustrations of the co-conspirators Public domain via Wikimedia Commons

Mary and John, who was captured abroad in 1866 but ultimately escaped punishment, were the exceptions. “They were really angry about Lincoln and the North wanting to end slavery,” says Kate Clifford Larson, author of The Assassin’s Accomplice: Mary Surratt and the Plot to Kill Abraham Lincoln. “Mary was a very bright woman, and she knew how to take care of herself and her family, her farm, her boarding house. She watched and she listened, and she aided and abetted the assassination of Abraham Lincoln.”

Though John was involved with the Confederate Secret Service, no evidence suggests that the plot to assassinate Lincoln originated with anyone besides Booth. “It was really Booth’s passions and Booth’s mental state that led to the assassination,” says Swanson. “But there was a strong feeling in popular sentiment that it was the last act of a slave empire to slaughter Abraham Lincoln and change the outcome of the war. … Probably almost everyone in the North believed that there was a Confederate plot, believed that the Confederate Secret Service was involved. But there ended up being no proof of that.”

Charles A. Dunham, a spy who worked for both sides, claimed Confederate President Jefferson Davis was connected to the plot before reversing his testimony. But, Larson says, “there’s no evidence whatsoever that [Davis] knew that Booth was going to do this.” She adds, “People under Davis may have known. … But it’s not clear. There were Confederate agents everywhere who were working independently, just like there were United States agents working independently in the South.”

An illustration of the conspirators' trial in May and June 1865 Public domain via Wikimedia Commons

Ultimately, no Confederate leader was put on trial for the assassination. Eight of the conspirators faced a military tribunal in May and June 1865; the transcripts of that trial helped Beletsky and the “Manhunt” team depict the series’ tribunal hearings and develop another major character in the show, Mary Simms (played by Lovie Simone).

"Simms is listed as one of about ten African American witnesses for the prosecution," says Beletsky. "And so we have her testimony, and we know that she worked for Mudd as an enslaved person and then as a servant."

Records of Simms' life beyond these scant biographical details are scarce—Beletsky points out that historians know more about Booth's horse than Simms—so the production team had to imagine what her life was like. Though Simms had left Mudd's farm by the time of the assassination, her testimony offered concrete evidence of his ties to Confederate agents.

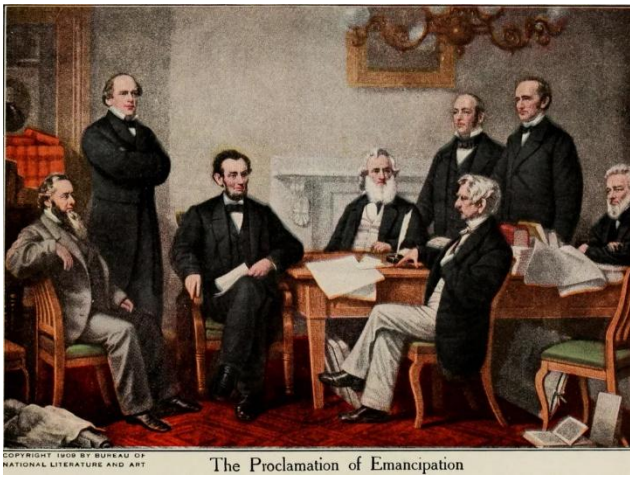
"It was really an honor and very moving to me to highlight [Simms], because she's absolutely an unsung American hero," says Beletsky. "African Americans were only legally allowed to be a witness in court a few years before the assassination, so she was very likely one of the first Black people to stand trial as a witness, which was extremely courageous of her, knowing what the consequences outside the courtroom for her might have been."

Lovie Simone (left) as Mary Simms in "Manhunt" Apple TV+

On July 7, 1865, the government executed four of the conspirators—Mary, Powell, Atzerodt and Herold—by hanging. The tribunal also sentenced O'Laughlen, Arnold and Mudd to life imprisonment and Spangler to six years. O'Laughlen died in prison in 1867, but none of the others served their full sentences: Shortly before leaving office in 1869, Johnson issued presidential pardons to Arnold, Mudd and Spangler.

In 1868, Johnson had faced impeachment for a range of "high crimes and misdemeanors," chief among them his attempt to fire Stanton after they repeatedly disagreed on how to handle Reconstruction of the South. The Senate failed to convict Johnson by one vote, but the proceedings squandered any hopes the president harbored of securing re-election. The winner of the next presidential election, Ulysses S. Grant, appointed Stanton to the Supreme Court, but the former secretary of war died just one day before he was set to take office. Stanton faded from common knowledge, his many achievements—from leading the manhunt for Booth to helping Lincoln guide the Union to victory—largely forgotten.

"As far as I'm concerned, Edwin Stanton is one of the great heroes of the Civil War and of American history," says Swanson, who adds he is "very happy to see that Stanton has finally gotten his due."



The Proclamation of Emancipation

Stanton appears at far left in this depiction of the first reading of the Emancipation Proclamation. Public domain via Wikimedia Commons

Vanessa Armstrong is a freelance culture, history and entertainment writer with bylines at the New York Times, Smithsonian magazine, Atlas Obscura, Travel + Leisure, and many other outlets. You can find more of her work at vfarmstrong.com.

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Near the Site of the Gettysburg Address, These Black Civil War Veterans Remain Segregated, Even in Death

Denied burial alongside Union soldiers killed during the Battle of Gettysburg, the 30 or so men were instead buried in the all-Black Lincoln Cemetery

Kellie B. Gormly, Contributing Writer, Smithsonian, February 21, 2024

Lincoln Cemetery was established in 1867, two years after the Civil War ended. Courtesy of the Adams County Historical Society

At the edge of a busy emergency room parking lot in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, Lincoln Cemetery holds the remains of more than 450 Black Americans, including about 30 Civil War veterans. Many of these individuals' stories are untold; 136 of them are buried in unmarked graves.

Lincoln Cemetery—established in 1867, two years after the end of the Civil War—stands in easy walking distance from Soldiers' National Cemetery, which President Abraham Lincoln designated as the final resting place for more than 3,500 Union troops killed during the Battle of Gettysburg in July 1863. Local Black civilians dug most of these soldiers' graves. But Black veterans themselves were denied burial in the whites-only military cemetery.

"It's ironic that Lincoln spoke about a new birth of freedom, in perhaps the greatest oration ever, … several hundred yards away

from what would become this cemetery," says Andrew Dalton, executive director of the Adams County Historical Society and its Beyond the Battle Museum. "Many [Black locals] enlisted right after the [November 1863] Gettysburg Address. Some were there that day to hear this message of hope and democracy and … then continued to face these obstacles even years later, after the war."

In October 2023, the Lincoln Cemetery Project Association conducted a ground-penetrating radar survey of the graveyard. Kellie B. Gormly

The society is one of several local organizations working to renovate and restore Lincoln Cemetery, as well as research the stories of the African Americans laid to rest there. In collaboration with Gettysburg College, the Lincoln Cemetery Project Association (LCPA) and the Gettysburg Black History Museum, the society hopes to identify the individuals buried in the cemetery's unmarked graves and erect headstones for each one. The joint effort includes an online community database with 443 records and counting.

The veterans buried at Lincoln Cemetery were members of the United States Colored Troops (USCT), a division primarily made up of Black soldiers. Members of the USCT faced discrimination from other Union troops and were often assigned to supporting noncombat roles; if captured by the Confederates, they were subjected to harsher treatment than their white counterparts.

None of the men interred at the cemetery fought at Gettysburg, but all were from Adams County and participated in other engagements during the Civil War. Archival sources offer a glimpse into some of these veterans' lives. Samuel Stanton, who enlisted in the Navy and later joined the Army under an alias, died in 1912 and was "one of the best-known [Black] residents of Gettysburg," according to his obituary. George Bolen, a man of mixed ancestry who enlisted in 1864 and spent time guarding Confederate prisoners, died in 1899. Isaac Buckmaster, who was wounded at the Battle of Olustee in Florida on February 20, 1864, died in 1882 in his 30s.

Jean Howard Green, president of the LCPA, looks back on this period of history, when segregation extended to the grave, with grief.

Locals are trying to identify the individuals buried in 136 unmarked graves at Lincoln

Cemetery. Courtesy of the Adams County Historical Society

"It's a sad moment, but that was just how it was. Those were the times," says Green, a 72-year-old Black woman who grew up in Gettysburg. Her family traces its presence in the area back to 1890, and she has many relatives buried at Lincoln Cemetery.

Green points out that the USCT veterans "fought along with their [white] counterparts, but in the end, [they] still could not be buried with them."
"It was a whole different world back then," says Bernadette Loeffel-Atkins, a past chairperson of the LCPA and the author of *Widow's Weeds and Weeping Veils: Mourning Rituals in 19th-Century America*. "These soldiers fought for this country and came back and were mistreated."

The cemetery's gates are currently locked, with visits by appointment only. Green hopes to have the site open by the spring, most likely from dawn to dusk on the weekends, while Dalton, who also serves as an LCPA board member, hopes to one day host Memorial Day and Juneteenth events there.

Burials at the cemetery had mostly stopped by the early 2000s, with only a few more interments taking place before 2010. Because the cemetery is almost full, it's generally closed to new burials, but family members can be cremated and interred in existing graves on top of older caskets.

In October 2023, the LCPA used ground-penetrating radar, which detects disruptions in soil, to identify 136 unmarked graves in Lincoln Cemetery. Some families lacked the money to buy a headstone for the deceased, Green says, but the high number of unmarked burials is also the result of the cemetery being neglected for many years.

In 1948, the town's Memorial Day Committee, which had become the de facto caretaker of most Gettysburg graveyards, established the Colored Citizens Cemetery, an organization that cared for Lincoln Cemetery specifically, Green says. She recalls the cemetery falling into disrepair around the 1960s, when most of the people responsible for it moved away or died.

As part of the surveying project, workers placed orange flags on top of both marked and unmarked graves.

"It was really exciting for us to see all these flags and to know where all these people were buried," says Dalton. "We knew they were there, but we didn't know exactly where." (Just 26 years old, Dalton is the youngest-ever president of the historical society. He got the job after graduating from Gettysburg College with a history degree in 2019.)

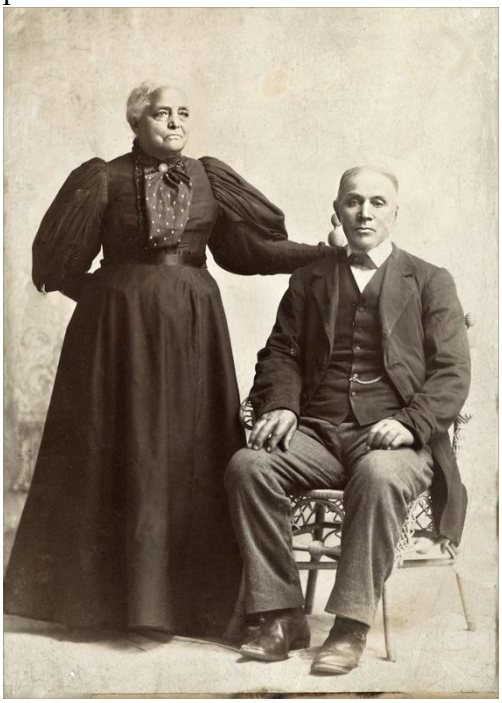
The orange flags denote the locations of unmarked graves at Lincoln Cemetery. Kellie B. Gormly

Dalton has dedicated many hours to researching death certificates, obituaries and other public records linked to Lincoln Cemetery. The database is the result of this work, containing all of the information that Dalton and his colleagues have found about each burial.

LCPA members are drawing on historical books and other records that list detailed burial information for the town of Gettysburg to see if they can match the unmarked graves to people named in the texts. They will then use metal detectors to try to locate original markers in the ground. "We're going to make the best attempt to do this," Green says. "In the event we cannot, a stone marked 'unknown' will be laid at the marker."

Dalton remembers passing by the cemetery as a boy and sensing just how much history was waiting to be told. "There are so many stories in our community that haven't seen the amount of the attention they deserve," he says. "This is an incredible story. It's a sad story. It's an inspiring story. It's a hidden story. [Green] has given all of us the motivation to make sure we include these stories in all the work we do."

In Dalton's opinion, "the worst thing that can happen is for someone to be forgotten." He adds, "The cemetery is a way to at least make sure their names last. This is a resource in Gettysburg that has to be protected."



Basil Biggs and his wife, Mary Jackson Biggs Courtesy of the Biggs descendants / Adams County Historical Society

Scholars have traced Gettysburg's African American history back to a woman named Sydney O'Brien, who was reportedly the first Black resident of the town. She was

enslaved by the Gettys family, who founded Gettysburg.

A favorite story that Green shares during tours centers on Basil Biggs, a town veterinarian and a founding officer of the Sons of Good Will, which established Lincoln Cemetery. Biggs was born a free man in the slave state of Maryland and later moved to Gettysburg, where his farm was ruined during the July 1863 battle. Biggs played a leading role in the creation of the Soldiers' National Cemetery, assisting with the reburial of more than 3,000 bodies. He died in 1906 at age 86 and has many surviving descendants, some of whom live in nearby York County.

Green says many sites linked to the town's Black history no longer survive. A Methodist church and the Franklin Street "Colored" School, for instance, were both torn down decades ago. The Agricultural Hall, where Frederick Douglass spoke in 1869, was razed in 1991.

"Lincoln Cemetery is the only really concrete evidence that there was an early Black community here in Gettysburg," Green says. "We do not want to forget their contribution to the town of Gettysburg. … We want their stories to live on."
She adds, "Each person in that cemetery has a story to be told."

A group of Biggs' descendants at Lincoln Cemetery Courtesy of the Biggs descendants / Adams County Historical Society

The burials at Lincoln Cemetery include several dozen bodies that were exhumed from the only other Black cemetery in town. Opened in 1828 at the corner of York Street and Third Street, this graveyard—which was unnamed but is identified as "Colored Cemetery" on old maps of Gettysburg—was abandoned in 1906. Today, a brick house stands at the site of the shuttered cemetery.

Rita C. Frealing, who was elected Gettysburg's first Black and first woman mayor in 2021, lives near Lincoln Cemetery and enjoys walking to the burial ground to reflect on its history.

"It's a very important part of our community, and it's now becoming a prouder part of our community because of people putting effort into it," says Frealing. Her mother's best friend, Betty Dorsey Myers, author of the 2001 book *Segregation in Death: Gettysburg's Lincoln Cemetery*, has been like an aunt to her. Myers played a key

leadership role in the LCPA from 1998 until around 2022.

Frealing says, "[The cemetery is] just a part of my heritage, … and Jean Green is carrying on the tradition."

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Civil War Treasure: What Happened to the Mysterious Lost Gold of Richmond's Banks?

Robert S. Davis, March 18, 2024, blueandgrayeducation.org

Artist's imaginary rendering of the robbery of the gold train, in Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper | public domain

The Confederate States of America did not surrender but, in the last days of the fighting in the Civil War, faded into history. The most famous of that conflict's many lost gold stories come from those final days. By 1865, the southern government was bankrupt, relying solely on donations and a controversial loan. Virginia borrowed $300,000 in gold and silver coins from the banks of Richmond. Despite denials by some, the money was indeed borrowed for the Confederate government. Confederate officials repeatedly directed payments be made in gold from Richmond's banks as evidence. This gold, kept separate from the Confederate government's gold, was loaned to the Confederate government in exchange for cotton securities. In other words, Confederate cotton served as security for the loan.

On April 2, 1865, Jefferson Davis and his government escaped Richmond, leading to his capture by federal cavalry at Irwinville, Georgia, on May 10. The last of the Confederate treasury was paid out along Davis' escape, but what remained of the Richmond banks' funds was left behind at the Bank of the State of Georgia in Washington, Georgia.

An illustration of treasure hunting on a southern farm, Harper's Weekly | public domain

THE OLD LINER

Union Captain Lot Abraham arrived in Washington on May 5, with 50 men from the Fourth Iowa Cavalry. Representatives of the Richmond banks arrived on May 8. They decided to ship the coins overland by wagon to the railhead at Abbeville, South Carolina, and eventually back to Virginia. Abraham provided seven federal soldiers to escort the five wagons.

The treasure train set out from Washington on May 24, 1865. Fourteen Tennessee cavalrymen and one Alabama soldier set out to rob the wagons. The wagons and their escort traveled 18 miles and camped on the Moss farm near the Savannah River. Around midnight, the pursuers raided the wagons. The seven guards offered no resistance, and the bandits filled whatever they had with coins. Some of the Federal soldiers also looted.

Bank agents totaled the money lost at $251,029.90. What remained in the wagons, $159,929.90, eventually went to the United States Treasury. Stories swirled that much of the gold remained hidden, but almost all of the money was, extraordinarily, eventually recovered.

After a lengthy federal investigation, the Richmond bankers obtained government permission to receive the assets. However, a Congressional resolution in late March 1867 ordered that the Treasury retain the funds. Throughout the 1870s and 1880s, attorneys for various claimants and successors tried to obtain the money. On June 22, 1893, the U.S. Court of Claims decreed that the claimants receive only $16,987.88. Critics argue that the greatest thief became the United States government!