

sung most beautifully by four men.

The speakers were interrupted by long and continued applause especially when any reference was made to the President, his administration, or the crushing of the Rebellion. The speaking continued until about ten o'clock. We left during the speaking of Col. Carrington, District Attorney. We felt well paid for going, the only annoyance was the noise at the door near which we were seated. We lost the first few remarks of nearly every speaker. The President had his little boy with him. He was climbing upon his lap one moment & the next down again, and he took his father's hat, put it on his head, it came down to his shoulders. He acted just like any other little boy who was getting tired & uneasy.

Father Abe looks so careworn that one could but pity him. It seems that he bears a load nearly enough to crush anybody. Never a President occupied so trying a place, nor do I believe there is in the U. S. one who could do better than he.

[Note: On the following day, April 1, 1863, Miss Wheelock and a companion visited "some places of interest" in Washington, including the Navy Yard and the White House. At the Navy Yard they "saw them make shells, balls, nails, percussion caps, etc., and saw them roll out red hot pieces of copper." At the White House they "went into three rooms called the Red Room, the Green Room and the Blue Room. The Blue Room was private though we did not know it until we got into the door." They then went out into the garden, through the Green House, where they "got a few flowers and leaves to press, in memory of the White House." At this point in the diary, some leaves were between the pages which are believed to have been those gathered at the time of this visit. These leaves are now preserved in the Department of Lincolniana, as a part of the memorabilia of the White House in Lincoln's time.]

*Meets General Grant at City Point, June 18, 1864*  
*Saturday, June 18, 1864, City Point, Va.* Remained at anchor until day light this morning when the pontoons were removed & all were down on the shore bound for City Pt. where we arrived about 10 o'clock. The barge containing our goods & the rest of our delegates have not yet arrived . . . This P. M. had the honor of receiving a call from Lt. Gen. Grant. He was standing in the yard a short distance from our tent, when someone expressed a wish for his autograph, and no one could muster courage to go & ask him for it. Finally after some urging concluded I dare go. His reply, upon my asking him if he would favor us with his autograph was, "With pleasure." He came into our tent, remained about 15 or 20 minutes,—is very plain & unassuming — conversed very freely about the war. To our questions whether he would be in Richmond the 4th, replied, "No, I have not laid my plans to that effect. I shall go there, but we have hard fighting to do yet." Said he was nearly worn out, had hardly had a day's rest since the war began. As he was about to leave he shook hands with each of us & bid us good by. We assured him he should have our prayers as he had already our confidence . . . Some 2000 wounded are expected tonight—cannonading heard all day—The Hospitals are not yet established—the Surgeons have gone to select the grounds.

*Report of the Assassination of Lincoln*  
*Friday, April 14, Washington. A pleasant day.*  
This morning called to see Dr. Alvord, Mr. Moses,

Judge Clark, Oscar & Perry Thompson at their offices . . . This evening we went out to see the torch light procession. It was fine. They marched from the Navy Yard to the White House & through some of the principal streets of the city. We went as far as the W. H. hoping to hear the President speak, but did not see him. Retired about 10 o'clock feeling very tired.

*Saturday, April 15, Washington.*

*The Assassination of President Lincoln*  
O! What sad tidings has thrilled the entire country this day. Early this morning the terrible news reached us that our Noble President, Abraham Lincoln was assassinated last night at half past 10 o'clock, while sitting in his private Box at Ford's Theatre, and mortally wounded. He was shot in the head. At 7.20 o'clock the bells commenced tolling, then we knew death had done his work. *Our President was dead.*

Soon the sad tidings was borne with lightning speed to the remotest parts of our country & the civilized world. This has been a day of days, long to be remembered. The city is wild with excitement. Many anticipate a riot before morning. *Avenge, Avenge* his death seems to be the cry of every loyal heart. Washington, so recently decorated with flags, is now draped in mourning. The Nation is bowed in grief. Only last evening the country was nearly wild with joy, today a sorrow so great has succeeded, that the "huge earth can scarce support it." All nature mourns—even the elements seem to share in the universal gloom, darkening clouds have filled the Heavens & misty rain is falling. I have scarce done anything but weep.

About the same time the President was shot, Secretary Seward was assassinated & his two sons, but none killed, though one son was not expected to live. The Sect.'s life is also despaired of, he being an old man & already suffering from the effects of a broken arm.

Very strict orders have been issued. Rebel Sympathizers are not allowed to utter any disloyal sentiment on penalty of being shot. Two have already been shot & one bayonet[ed], and many arrested. Many more ought to be.

Gen. Grant arrived in the City this P. M. He left last evening for the North but on arriving in Phila. heard of the President's death, returned on the first train. Mrs. Lincoln has been almost frantic with grief ever since the fearful tragedy took place.

Booth, a Stage Actor, is supposed to be the assassin. He is still at large, \$30,000 reward have been offered for his arrest. No persons are allowed to go out of or come into the city. All trains have been stopped except for carrying the mail, & no boat is allowed to leave the wharf. The President after his assassination was taken to No. 453 10th St. bt. E. & F streets to Mr. Petersons, opposite Ford's Theatre where he died at 22 minutes past 7 o'clock A. M.

In the death of Abraham Lincoln, the country has sustained a loss which is irreparable. His place can never be filled. Truly a great and good man has fallen. A noble patriot, the best friend of humanity, generous to a fault, merciful, kind and forgiving. I doubt whether the world has his equal. In him were exemplified the true principles of the christian religion. It seems that we can't spare him. O! how cruel, after 4 years of toil & burdens which none other ever bore, that a midnight assassin,—nay, a fiend from Hell,—should take

### Humiston Children

his precious life, just on the eve of peace,—victory final & complete had just perched upon our banner, but alas, alas he lives not to enjoy the fruits of those long years of toil. "Him, whom a nation loved & honored, have they slain." We can find comfort only in the belief that "Our loss is his eternal gain."

*Tuesday, April 18th, Washington.* A warm & pleasant day though it rained some. About 9 o'clock A.M. Mrs. Thompson & myself went up to the White House to see the President, or rather all that now remains of our once honored and beloved President. Thousands had already collected there, were waiting to get in. They were passing in and out as rapidly as possible from 9 A.M. to 5 P.M. & yet thousands had to go away without seeing him.

Oh how sad & gloomy the House now looks,—the columns in front are all wound with black, completely covering them, besides a large piece tied around each one,—around & above the door was heavy drapery. We passed slowly through one large room, then through the Green Room which presented a sad appearance. The room was darkened and the gas dimly burning which seemed to add to the gloom. From this we passed to the East Room where lay the body of our Noble President in state. The windows, mantle & walls were heavily draped in black. In the middle of the room on a platform covered with black sat the coffin which was beautiful beyond description. A wreath of white flowers & green leaves lay all around the coffin, & overhead was a canopy of black. Then in the cold embrace of death lay the Chief Magistrate of our country . . . A placid smile was upon his countenance. It seemed he must only be sleeping, that he would soon awake, but alas! he sleeps the sleep that knows no waking.

[Note: Miss Wheelock went again to see the body of Lincoln on Thursday, April 20th, at the Capitol, before it was finally taken for the long funeral journey to Springfield. In every daily entry there are expressions of great sadness as she went about her duties. In her entry of Thursday, April 27, she concluded with an after-note: "Booth, the assassin of our Noble, Glorious Lincoln, is caught, but is dead—was killed in being taken."]

#### *The Review of the Returning Armies*

*Tuesday, May 23rd, 1865, Washington.* A delightful day. The Army of the Potomac was reviewed today by the President and Gen. Grant. They were six hours in passing a given point . . . I was at the Washington House. . . had a good view of the Army as it passed. Saw several officers whom I knew but could not distinguish many.

*Wednesday, May 24th, 1865, Washington, D. C.* Another beautiful day. A fine breeze stirring all day. Gen. Sherman's Army was reviewed today. It included the Army of Tennessee and the Army of Georgia, containing the 19th, 15th, 17th & 20th Corps, about 75,000, on review each day. A most magnificent sight. The Generals looked splendid, the Army marched so grand, but the men looked tired and many of them were worn out, with their long marches . . . We got in to where the seats were erected just opposite where the President & Gen. Grant, & all the great Generals were seated. Had a good view of the President, Sects. Stanton, McCollough, P.M. Gen. Dennison, Gens. Grant Sherman, Meade, Howard, Blair, Logan, Smith, Mower, Torbet, Merritt, Hancock, & a lot of Brigadiers . . . Also Admiral Farragut, an Indian with

the rank of Colonel on Gen. Grant's staff, and many noted persons. Besides thousands on thousands of spectators, there were said to be 50,000 persons from abroad in the city.

[Note: In her book, "The Boys in White," Miss Wheelock enlarged upon her comments about this occasion, mentioning various military leaders. She said of General Howard: "But in that bright constellation of noble heroes, none shone with purer radiance—though perhaps with greater brilliancy—than that one-armed Christian soldier, Major General O. O. Howard."]

#### *At the Trial of the Conspirators*

*Friday, May 26th, Washington, D. C.* A very unpleasant day, rained all the time . . . we [went] to the old Penitentiary to see the prisoners who were the accomplices of Booth in the Assassination of the President and Seward [and] are now having their trial. We got very wet and muddy as we had to walk a long way, the rain almost pouring down,—but we saw the prisoners, 8 in all. First on the seat was Arnold, next Dr. Mudd, then Spangler, then O'Laughlin, then Atzerodt, Paine, Harold, and lastly Mrs. Surratt. The testimony of some of the witnesses was quite interesting. Mrs. Surratt appears very much broken down. She is dressed in black, a black veil over her face, sits with her head most of the time leading against the wall, keeps her fan to her face much of the time. Paine is a bold, defiant looking fellow, looks as though he dared to do anything, is young, only about 22 years of age. Dr. Mudd appears very uneasy, seems much agitated, and well he may. O'Laughlin looks rather sad, his head down part of the time. The rest appear more indifferent. Harold and Atzerodt are very inferior looking. I think it will not be long before they will all stretch hemp. And Jeff Davis in the bargain.

### STORY OF A PICTURE

In the quaint old photographic album of Miss Julia S. Wheelock which has come to us in the Schaefer Collection, we discovered a small picture of three children. On the back was printed:

#### "THE SOLDIER'S CHILDREN"

Copy of an ambrotype found in the hands of Sergeant Humiston, of the 154th Regiment, N. Y. Volunteers, as he lay dead on the Battlefield at Gettysburg. The proceeds of the sale of the copies are appropriated to the support and education of the orphan children.

We sensed a story in this picture which Miss Wheelock had placed in her album, having heard something about the existence of an orphan's home at Gettysburg after the war. We wrote to the Gettysburg National Military Park, and Frederick Tilberg, historian for the park, has furnished us with an account of the picture and the Soldiers' Orphans' home which operated from 1866 until



"THE ORPHAN CHILDREN"  
From an ambrotype found in the hands of  
a soldier who fell at Gettysburg.

1877, when it was discontinued for the lack of funds. Briefly, this is the story:

A few days after the battle of Gettysburg, the body of a Union soldier was found in a vacant lot near the corner of what is now North Stratton and York Streets. Tightly clutched in the hand of the dead soldier was an ambrotype of three small children, mute testimony that the soldier's last thoughts were of those three youngsters. With appropriate services the body was buried on the property. Later it was removed to the National Cemetery.

Dr. Francis Bourns, a wealthy man of Philadelphia, learned of the incident. He borrowed the picture and had thousands of copies struck off and circulated, in an effort to identify the soldier and three children. Later, it was discovered that the soldier was Amos Humiston, orderly sergeant, Company C, 154th Regiment of New York Volunteers, and that he was killed in the retreat through the town of the Eleventh Army Corps, commanded by General O. O. Howard, in the afternoon of July 1, 1863. Sergeant Humiston was from Cattaraugus County, N. Y., and the three children were Frank, Frederick and Alice.

The discovery of the identity of the children led to a nation-wide interest in the future of children orphaned by the war. It resulted in the establishment of the Soldiers'

Orphans' Home at Gettysburg in 1866, and Dr. Bourns was active in its promotion. Other leaders of the country joined him. Sunday Schools were used to secure financial support.

The building used for the Home is now the Harry E. Koch residence on Baltimore Street, opposite to the Cyclorama. By October, 1866, twenty-two children had been accepted. It is believed that among the children helped were the Humiston orphans, whose picture had inspired the undertaking. A total of over 500 children were helped before the project was abandoned in 1877, after Congress had failed to give governmental support.

### HIGH ON THE MOUNTAIN

From high on the mountain  
Through Flat Lick town,  
On through the long home road,  
On into sublimity vally  
Clear down,  
He followed the corn land sound,  
Then reaching the Corbin hollows,  
Lincoln laid himself down,  
And leaned against the shadows  
In 'sublimity valley, dark beneath the town.  
He rested beneath the valley,  
Whispering beneath a tomb  
That held a flexless body  
Unpatterned in the loom.  
He whispered of the corn sound  
That was textless and mute,  
Never realizing in the valley  
Of the unforbidden fruit.  
He spoke of those unshocked hollows  
That held the corn land sound,  
And of that fruit never tasted  
Above the casket ground.  
But sensing the lifeless body  
Unlistening and silent above,  
Lincoln wept and trembled  
For its lost, unrealized love.  
Then toward the mountain  
Through Flat Lick town,  
On through the long home road,  
On past sublimity valley,  
Clear down the valley  
Lincoln retreated,  
And was gone.

—Maurice Natanson

EDITOR'S NOTE: The above poem by a student of Lincoln Memorial University was accorded first place in a Lincoln poetry contest at the college, 1943-44. Mr. Natanson is from Brooklyn, N. Y.