

“...TO
Bind
UP THE
NATION'S
Wounds...”

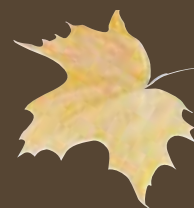
LINCOLN'S LAST DAYS

The title of this play, "To Bind Up the Nation's Wounds," was derived from Abraham Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address, delivered on March 4, 1865. The phrase set the tone for what Lincoln hoped to accomplish in his second term as President of the United States.

Tragically, Lincoln's dream for a "just and lasting peace," was cut short by the fanatical, misguided actions of John Wilkes Booth in Ford's Theatre on April 14, 1865. This is not the story of Lincoln's assassination. Lincoln's greatness and enduring legacy as a humanitarian did not originate in the way he died, but rather in the way he lived. Lincoln's decisions and actions made during the final few weeks of his life, as described in the play, were some of the most critical ones of his entire career. Of particular historical significance was the way in which Lincoln instructed his military commanders to treat the vanquished Confederate foe; he insisted the Southern soldiers be treated as wayward brothers being welcomed home by their Northern counterparts, despite the Southerners turning their backs on the Union, and in the process, threatening to destroy the American experiment in self-government. Lincoln's humble entry into Richmond, Virginia on April 4, 1865; not as a conqueror, but as the elected representative of all the people, further demonstrated his desire to reunite the war-torn nation.

Although Lincoln is the central figure in the drama; it is told through the eyes of his faithful bodyguard, William Crook; through the eyes of his military officers: General Grant, General Sherman, and Admiral Porter; and through the eyes of his wife Mary Todd [Lincoln] and sons, Robert, and Tad. Of all the characters, Tad grew the most in his appreciation for his father.

Whenever possible, direct quotations were used in constructing the dialogue between characters to give the audience both an accurate and objective portrayal of Lincoln. Complete citations and a full bibliography ensure both historical authenticity as well as scholarship. Within the play are numerous stage directions to aid in directing the production.



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