

America's Story

from America's Library



Meet Amazing Americans



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Explore the States



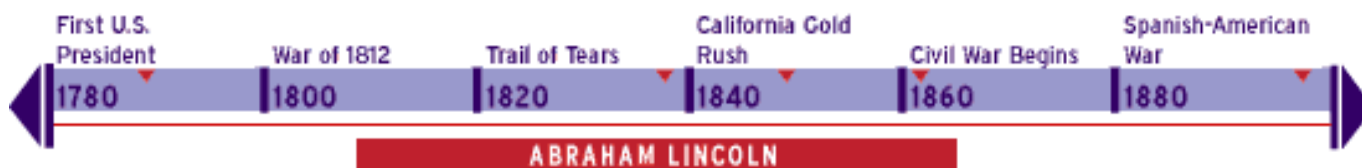
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Meet Amazing Americans ▶

U.S. Presidents ▶ Abraham Lincoln



The contents of Abraham Lincoln's pockets from April 14, 1865. Image includes newspaper reporting his assassination.

Lincoln's Pockets

Do you carry money or a favorite photo in your pocket? How about eyeglasses? The things we carry often hold clues to who we are and what's important to us. When Abraham Lincoln was assassinated on April 14, 1865, at Ford's Theatre in Washington, D.C., he had all the things you see in this picture in his pockets.

On that night, Lincoln was carrying two pairs of eyeglasses, a lens polisher, a pocketknife, a linen handkerchief, a watch fob, a brown leather wallet with a \$5 Confederate note, and nine newspaper clippings. You might carry some of the same things today--eyeglasses and a wallet are pretty common--but you probably don't have a \$5 Confederate note in your pocket.

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A Confederate \$5 bill

Lincoln's Pockets

After 11 Southern states withdrew from the Union to form the Confederate States of America, the Confederacy printed its own money, which was different from the money used in the North. When the Civil War ended, the South had lost to the North, and its money was worth very little. The day he was killed Lincoln had a \$5 Confederate note in his pocket, but no one is sure why. Do you know whose face is on the \$5 bill we use today?



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Reward poster for Lincoln's murderer, 1865

Lincoln's Pockets

If you guessed Abraham Lincoln, you'd be right on the money! And take a look at whose face is on our penny. Even during his day, Lincoln's face was well-known. Pictures and stories of him appeared regularly in the newspapers. After he was assassinated, there was a huge search for the people who were responsible for plotting and carrying out the murder. Here you see a wanted poster offering a reward for Lincoln's assassin.



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