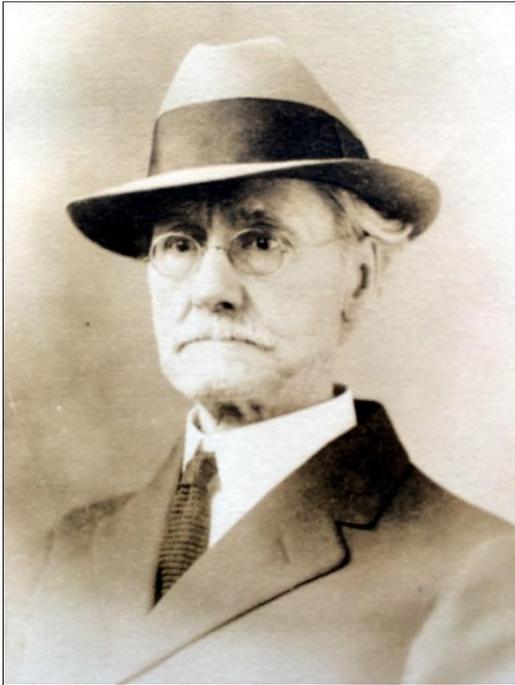


## When President Lincoln Came to Town

Part Two of a Two-Part Series

By Bill Poray, Perinton Town Historian

Abraham Lincoln twice traveled by train through Perinton. The first instance was the President-elect's journey from his Illinois home to Washington, DC, passing through Perinton on February 18, 1861. Lincoln's second passage through this community occurred 153 years ago. Sadly, it was the President's funeral train that brought him. The train crept slowly into the village of Fairport on April 27<sup>th</sup>, 1865, shortly after 3:00 am. Despite the late hour, hundreds witnessed the somber event, including Hebert Howard, just five years old, and 14-year-old John Talman Jr. Their memories were each published years later in newspaper accounts, and excerpts are included here.



John Talman Jr. in about 1913

Because he was so young, Herbert Howard's memories were sparse, and his commentary, published in the Fairport Herald-Mail, December, 1935, is brief:

*I was then a youngster of five years, and too young to go down to the depot alone, so my sister Mary very likely was the one to take me down. Frank, three years older than I, must have gone on ahead. I wonder if the train went through in the daytime. I can see the soldiers standing on the platform with drawn bayonets. If the train was moving at all, it must have been very slowly. I was too young to take in any particular significance, but the slowly moving train and the solders with bayonets will always have a place in my memory.*

At about 14 years of age, John Talman Jr.'s recollections were more vivid, and were published in the Duluth (Minnesota) Herald in April, 1925:

*I went out in response to the milkman's bell, to obtain our daily supply. The milkman, well along in years, was one of the northern sympathizers with the South known as "copperheads." He was grinning from ear to ear. "Lincoln has been shot", he announced.*

*Never shall I forget the Lincoln memorial sermon delivered shortly after by Reverend Jeremiah Butler, pastor of the Fairport Congregational Church. He was a rather gruff and decidedly outspoken man and not to be reckoned among those who "wear their hearts on their sleeves." But during his discourse – a model of simplicity and patriotic earnestness – tears ran down his face, his voice broke, and only with the greatest difficulty did he regain sufficient self-control to continue.*

*The funeral train bearing the immortal martyr in the cause of human liberty and national oneness passed through Fairport on its way to Springfield, Illinois. My father and I arose at three o'clock in the morning to join the waiting hundreds at the station. With a feeling of awed solemnity never before or since experienced, we watched the long train, with its somber drapings, pass slowly, to the sound of tolling bells.*