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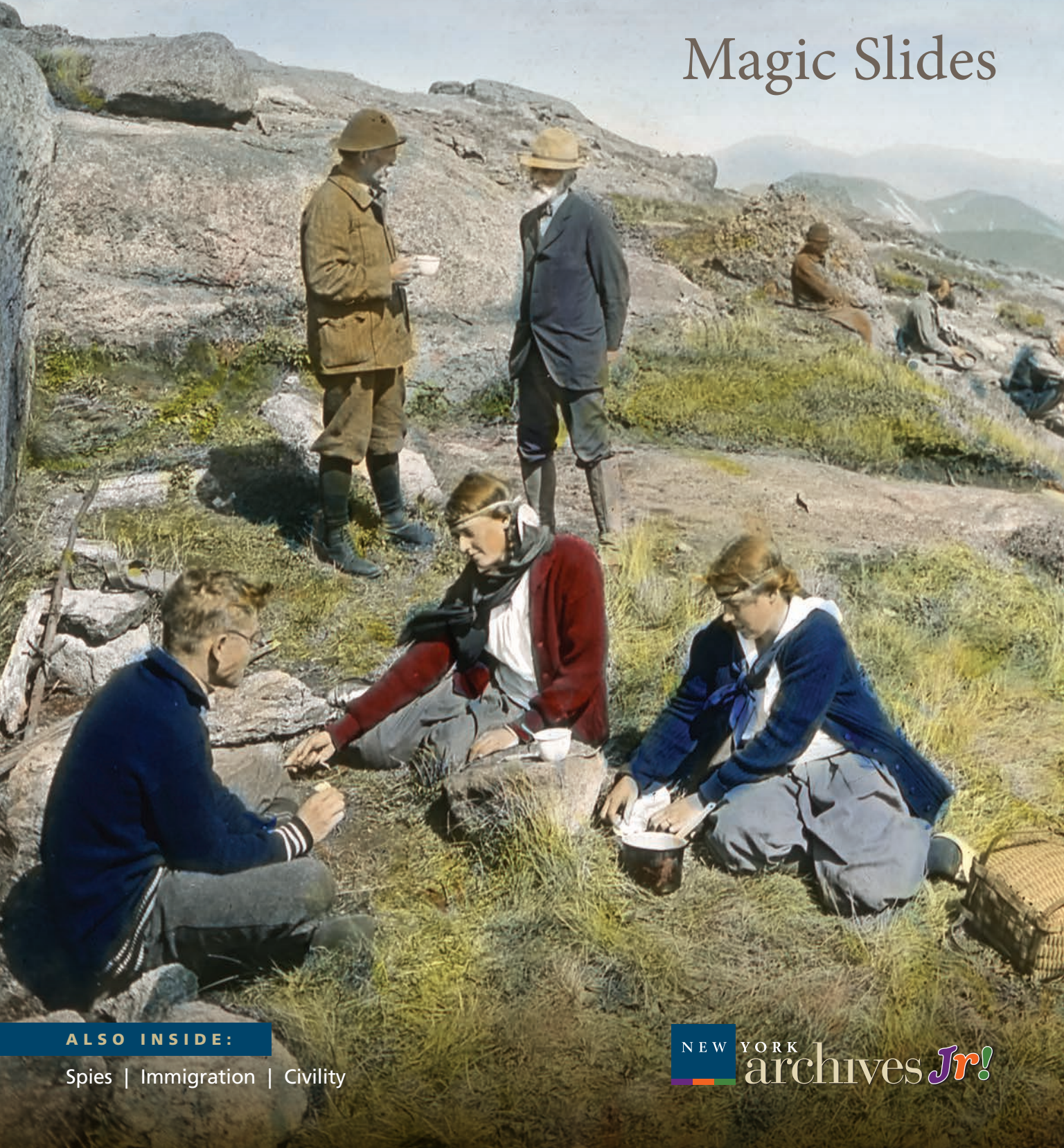
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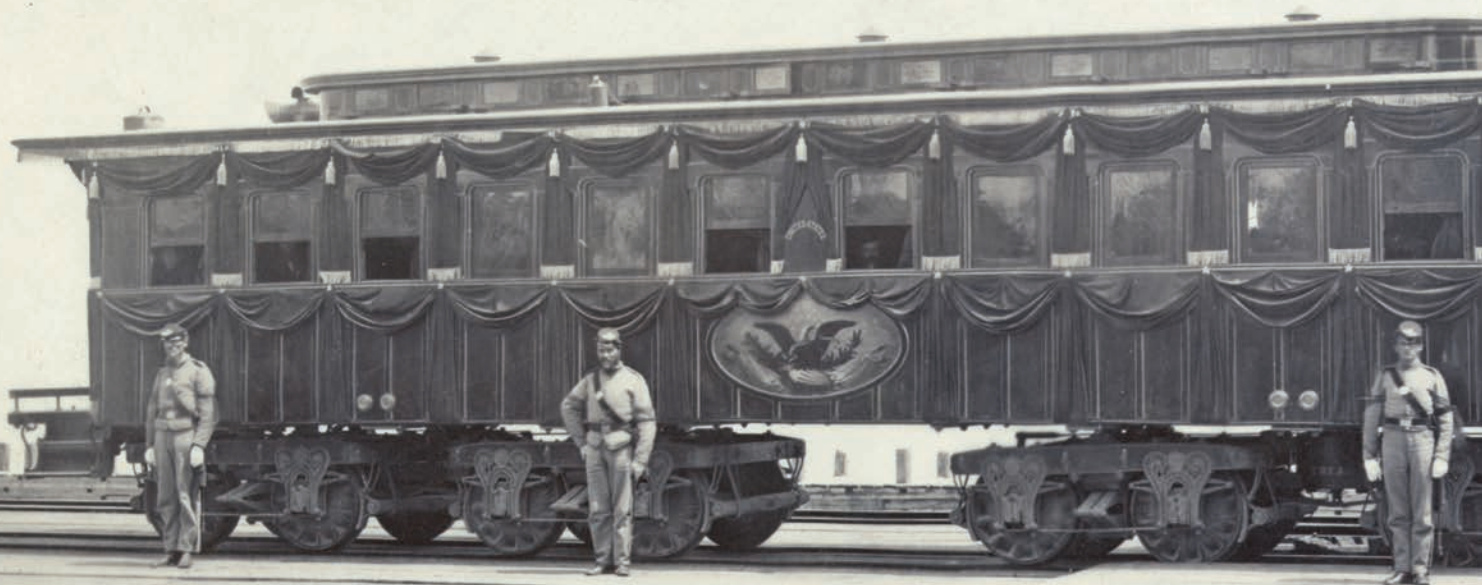
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# Ghost Train

BY JODI OAKS



After President Abraham Lincoln's assassination on April 14, 1865, preparations were made to transport the president's remains, along with the body of his young son Willie, who had passed away in 1862, from Washington, DC, to their final resting place in Springfield, Illinois. On April 21, 1865, the president's funeral train began its long journey across seven states, a trip spanning nearly 1,700 miles. Four days later, on April 25, the train was traveling along the Hudson River Railroad between New York City and Albany. It had departed New York City at 4 p.m., arriving that night in the neighborhood of East Albany. The president's funeral train had the right of the track over all other trains and ran at a slow rate of speed through the towns and villages it passed, giving mourners a

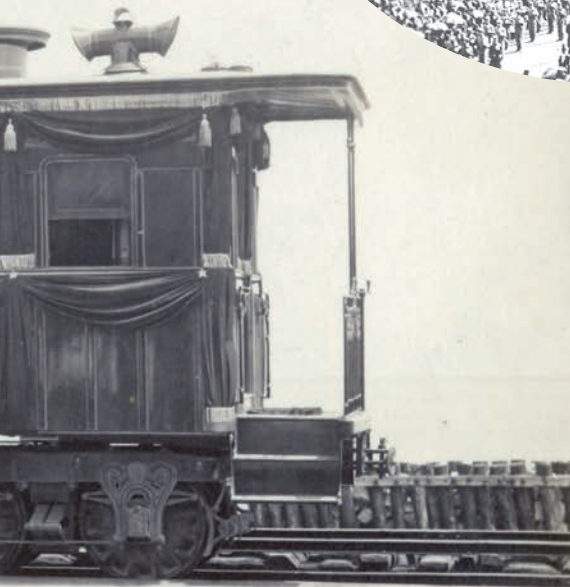
moment to pay their respects to the president.

During its journey from New York to East Albany, President Lincoln's funeral train passed through the town of Hyde Park shortly before 8 p.m. Ever since this historic occasion, a tale has been told of an eerie event that occurs each April along the tracks there. Witnesses say that on the night of April 25, a black carpet appears to roll down the tracks, deadening all sound. This is followed by the ghost of Lincoln's funeral train, adorned in black crepe. The ghost train has been seen slowly inching its way north along the tracks to Albany.

Hyde Park's tale is one of a collection of stories told of sightings of the ghost of President Lincoln's funeral train. One can find similar legends of Lincoln's ghost train passed along in communities along the train's path



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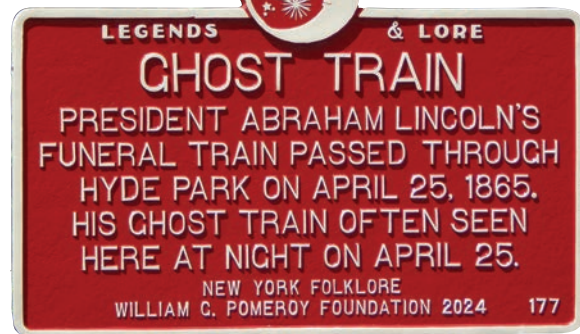


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that are still told by locals. These stories belong to a body of narratives that have been developed with President Lincoln, and his death, as a focus. Such Lincoln lore, while rooted in historical events, can serve as an example of how people found ways to cope through traumatic times of crisis and the societal stressors of a country coming out of civil war, while grappling with the shock of the assassination of its leader. The stories they told, and have continued to pass along, have become part of the shared heritage of a community. Those stories continue to resonate to this day. ■

**Jodi Oaks** is the senior research historian and grants reviewer at the William G. Pomeroy Foundation.

*Ghost Train Legends & Lore marker in Hyde Park, New York, awarded to the Hudson Valley Railroad Society by the William G. Pomeroy Foundation.*



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IMAGE: NEW YORK STATE ARCHIVES

*New York. Schoharie. Old Fort. Man operating  
Apple parer apparatus. Stone structure and vine  
foliage in background. c.1910s*