The **assassination of Abraham Lincoln** on **April 14, 1865**, was a shocking and pivotal moment in American history. It marked the first assassination of a U.S. president and had a profound impact on the nation as it grappled with the aftermath of the Civil War.

**The Event**

1. **Location**:
   * Lincoln was shot at **Ford's Theatre** in Washington, D.C., while attending a performance of the play *Our American Cousin* with his wife, **Mary Todd Lincoln**, and two guests.
2. **The Assassin**:
   * **John Wilkes Booth**, a 26-year-old actor and Confederate sympathizer, was the perpetrator.
   * Booth was a passionate supporter of the South and resented Lincoln for his role in ending slavery and defeating the Confederacy.
3. **The Attack**:
   * Booth entered Lincoln's private box at around 10:15 PM and shot him in the back of the head with a **.44 caliber Derringer pistol**.
   * After shooting Lincoln, Booth leaped from the box onto the stage, breaking his leg in the process, and reportedly shouted, *"Sic semper tyrannis!"* ("Thus always to tyrants"), the motto of Virginia.
4. **Lincoln's Death**:
   * Lincoln was carried across the street to the **Petersen House**, where he succumbed to his injuries at 7:22 AM on April 15, 1865.
   * He was 56 years old.

**Booth's Plot**

* Booth's assassination of Lincoln was part of a broader conspiracy to decapitate the U.S. government:
  1. **Vice President Andrew Johnson**: Conspirator **George Atzerodt** was assigned to kill Johnson but lost his nerve and fled.
  2. **Secretary of State William H. Seward**: Conspirator **Lewis Powell** brutally attacked Seward with a knife, severely injuring him but failing to kill him.
* The conspirators aimed to destabilize the Union government and reignite the Confederate cause.

**Manhunt and Capture**

1. **Pursuit of Booth**:
   * Booth fled Washington, initially hiding in Southern Maryland before crossing the Potomac River into Virginia.
   * A massive manhunt ensued, with Union soldiers and detectives in pursuit.
2. **Booth's Death**:
   * On April 26, 1865, Booth was cornered in a barn near Port Royal, Virginia.
   * The barn was set on fire, and Booth was fatally shot by Union soldier **Boston Corbett**. He died from his injuries shortly afterward.

**Aftermath**

1. **National Mourning**:
   * Lincoln's assassination plunged the nation into grief. He was widely mourned as a martyr who preserved the Union and ended slavery.
   * His funeral procession traveled through several cities, culminating in his burial in **Springfield, Illinois**.
2. **Trial of Conspirators**:
   * Eight conspirators were captured and tried by a military tribunal. Four were executed, including Mary Surratt, the first woman executed by the federal government.
3. **Political Impact**:
   * Vice President **Andrew Johnson** became president. Johnson's lenient approach to Reconstruction caused tension with Congress and slowed efforts to secure rights for formerly enslaved people.

**Legacy**

* Lincoln's assassination altered the course of post-Civil War Reconstruction, leading to a less unified approach to rebuilding the South and protecting African Americans' rights.
* The event is remembered as a tragic turning point in U.S. history and a stark reminder of the challenges the nation faced in transitioning from war to peace.