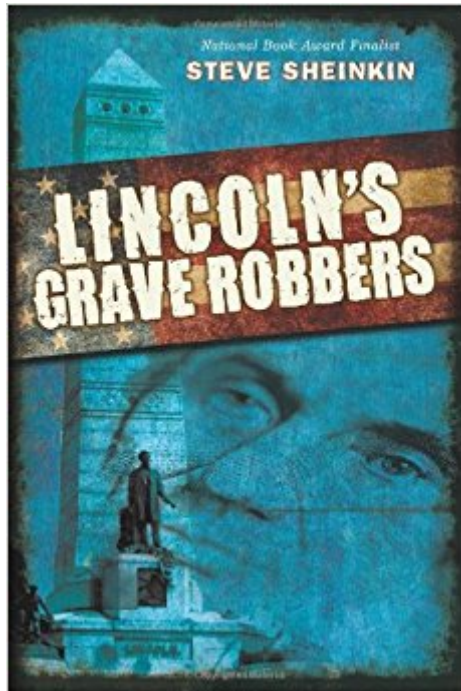




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Lincoln's Grave Robbers



Synopsis

A true crime thriller -- the first book for teens to tell the nearly unknown tale of the brazen attempt to steal Abraham Lincoln's body! The action begins in October of 1875, as Secret Service agents raid the Fulton, Illinois, workshop of master counterfeiter Ben Boyd. Soon after Boyd is hauled off to prison, members of his counterfeiting ring gather in the back room of a smoky Chicago saloon to discuss how to spring their ringleader. Their plan: grab Lincoln's body from its Springfield tomb, stash it in the sand dunes near Lake Michigan, and demand, as a ransom, the release of Ben Boyd --and \$200,000 in cash. From here, the action alternates between the conspirators, the Secret Service agents on their trail, and the undercover agent moving back and forth between the two groups. Along the way readers get glimpses into the inner workings of counterfeiting, grave robbing, detective work, and the early days of the Secret Service. The plot moves toward a wild climax as robbers and lawmen converge at Lincoln's tomb on election night: November 7, 1876.

Book Information

Lexile Measure: 930L (What's this?)

Hardcover: 224 pages

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Age Range: 10 - 14 years

Grade Level: 5 - 9

Customer Reviews

Gr 5-9-Lively dialogue and a fascinating narrative make this an entertaining read. A true-crime thriller set in 1876, the story involves Secret Service agents on the trail of counterfeiters who hoped to spring their leader from jail by holding the body of President Abraham Lincoln for ransom. The

men involved included "Big Jim" Kennally, the mastermind behind the plot; Terrence Mullen; and Benjamin Boyd. Among the lawmen are James Brooks, chief of the Secret Service, and agents Patrick Tyrrell and Elmer Washburn. The account of the body-snatching plot is interwoven with the presidential election of 1876 between candidates Rutherford B. Hayes and Samuel Tilden. There is also information about Mary Todd Lincoln and her son, Robert, who was a prominent Chicago attorney at the time. Readers also learn about the workings of the association in Springfield that operated the Lincoln Tomb. The book includes a glossary of phrases used in the dialogue. Readers will be entertained by the animated writing style, which creates a real page-turner, and learn history at the same time. An essential addition for all collections. -Patricia Ann Owens, Illinois Eastern Community Colleges
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With a title uniting two highly popular topics—Abraham Lincoln and ghoulish crime—this is sure to pique the interest of many readers, and Sheinkin's gripping narrative will hold them to the thrilling climax. In 1876, a group of Chicago counterfeiters hatched a half-baked plan to remove President Lincoln's corpse from its resting place near Springfield, Illinois, and hold it for ransom. Although there was minimum security at the grave site and little to prevent the thieves from carrying out their dastardly scheme, the fledgling Secret Service was onto them (more for their counterfeit operations than their grave-robbing conspiracy), and their plans were foiled in the nick of time. While describing this small episode, Sheinkin weaves in information about the formation of the Secret Service, the history of counterfeit operations, presidential campaigns and elections, and much more. Excellent pacing within an appealing format. Photo elements were not available for review. Grades 5-8. --Randall Enos

My 11 year old son found this book to me compelling and could not put the book down. Every summer we require our son to read one book a week and this one was read in 3 days. He thoroughly enjoyed it and is a fan of history. I am a Lincoln historian myself and found this book to be mostly accurate. There are a few issues but overall the book is well written and enjoyed by my son and I. Steve Sheinken did a superb job of capturing the characters in such a way that my son could not put the book down. But more importantly it sparked a conversation between my son and I about the events. He spend long hours discussing the events and why the people did what they did. Nice job Steve.

I had no idea that counterfeiters tried to steal Lincoln's body! Even for readers who already know about this amazing bit of historical trivia, this book will hold your attention and probably teach you something. Plus, it's a Texas Lone Star book which generally means it's a great choice for readers grades 6-9.

Sheinkin does it again. He creates a vivid picture of a time and place while telling a story that most people have probably never heard before. I know this isn't something I had ever heard about before and I've read a lot about Abraham Lincoln. What isn't to love here, I mean, there are counterfeiters, jail breaks, and undercover agents. What kid wouldn't want to hear about that? The icing on the cake is that the story is true. The sad part is how Lincoln's body was treated after the attempted robberies. Hiding the casket behind a bunch of lumber in a back room?! I had to admire the caretaker's efforts to protect the body when so few were willing to help him. With plenty of excitement and enough twists and turns to satisfy most readers, Sheinkin once again presents readers with a great read. Highly recommended.

The book was good visually. There were plenty of relevant pictures that really helped to understand the book. It accurately told the story of what happened. 3 stars though because you have to have a certain taste to enjoy the way it was written. At some points it seemed like you were reading an actual story, and then right before you know it, it switches to a more documentary type tone. It is like a show that has actual footage, and then a reenactment.

I read this book for a book club made up of adults ranging from 25-30 years old. The consensus was that, while we each enjoyed it to different degrees, it would be great for young adult readers. Sheinkin gave this historical episode, which could have proven quite dry, a voice that intrigued me and left me wanting to read more of his books. As a history teacher who doesn't like many young adult history-themed books, I will gladly recommend this to my students. Adult readers who are interested in wild, little-known events of history should also enjoy this quick read.

The year is 1865 and counterfeiting is rampant. Master engraver Ben Boyd has been arrested and this affects business in a very bad way. In order to spring Boyd, his buddies hatch a plot to steal Lincoln from his grave, hold his body for ransom and collect \$200,000. Will this scheme work? Follow the conspirators, the Secret Service, and an undercover agent while learning about the Lincoln Monument, grave robbing, and the Presidential Election of 1976. This is a must read for

junior and senior high school social studies classes. Includes photographs and glossary.

Brand new and was a great book.

There is a lot of history about different attempts to steal famous body's and each one is completely different and interesting. I recommend this book.

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