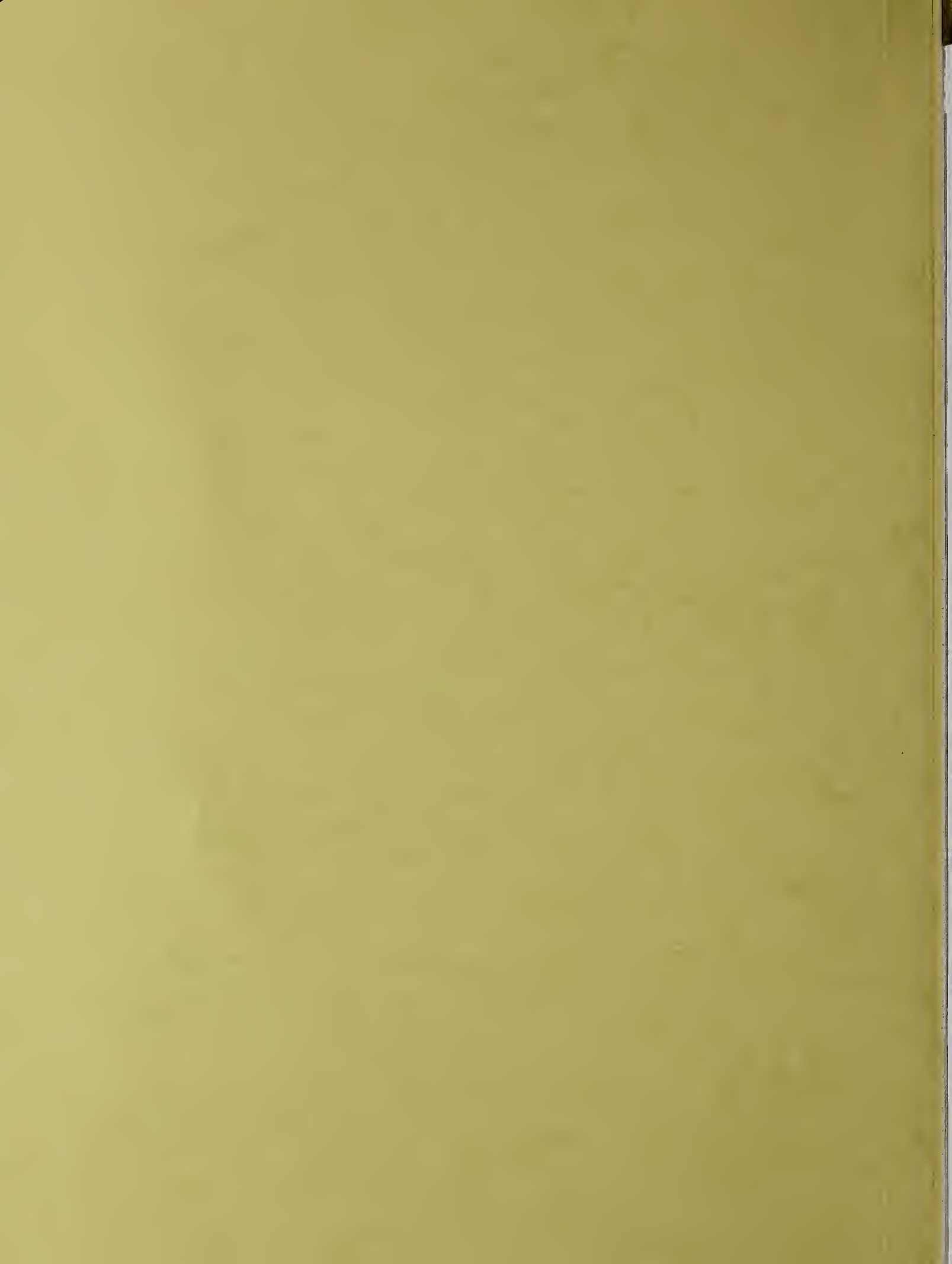


SEWING, M. H.

DRAWER 13A

PERSONAL

712009.085.0328



The Assassination of Abraham Lincoln

William H. Seward

Excerpts from newspapers and other
sources

From the files of the
Lincoln Financial Foundation Collection

Further Particulars of the Attempted Assassination.

REPORTS IN REGARD TO BOOTH

STRANGENESS OF HIS CONDUCT BEFORE THE MURDER.

New York, April 17. The *Times'* Washington dispatch, dated 10 A. M. yesterday, says Secretary Seward is decidedly better. Frederick is still unconscious, but resting quietly. The pistol with which he was struck is very heavy. Secretary Seward's throat and face were frightfully cut. The wounded soldier clung to the assassin while Mr. Seward threw himself from the bed upon the floor.

The door bell was answered by a small colored boy, who told the assassin he could not go up stairs, but he reached by and encountered Frederick at the head of the stairs. Augustus, Mr. Seward's eldest son, who interfered, was severely cut, as was the wounded soldier, Kauling. Mr. Seward's daughter was sitting by him.

The colored boy ran to a sentinel on the corner of a street, telling him there was a murderer in the house, but the sentinel did not feel at liberty to leave his post.

Mr. Seward had information of the plot, but this information was so common with the Administration it was disregarded. The assassin was a large athletic, powerful man, armed with a heavy revolver and bowie knife.

LATER.

At 1 P. M. Frederick is still unconscious. The Secretary is not quite so comfortable tonight. The *Tribune's* Washington dispatch, dated 16th, 4:50 P. M., says no hopes are entertained of Frederick Seward's life. The Secretary shows wonderful vitality. There is no danger from his wounds. It is the prostration his system received from his first injuries which excites apprehension.

Secretary Stanton inclines to the belief that the murderer Booth is secreted in the city, but if he and his accomplice have escaped it was across the Eastern Branch.

Of the movements of Booth on Friday this correspondent says: About 8 A. M. three men called at the National and inquired for Booth. The clerk informed them that he was not in. After an earnest conversation between themselves they left. Knowing Booth's acquaintances to be respectable the clerk thought it strange that he should be called upon by such shabby looking persons. They had the general appearance of South Carolina refugees. They left their cards, which the clerk did not look at. About 11 A. M. Booth was in the office, but presented an unusual appearance, except that he was unusually pale.

At 1 P. M. he asked the clerk if any letters had been left for him, and on being answered in the negative appeared disappointed, and nervously called for a sheet of paper and an envelope. He was about to write, but as it some one might see what he was writing, asked to be admitted inside of the office. The clerk asked him if he had made a thousand dollars that day? with a startled look he replied in a heavy voice, No, but I have worked hard enough to have made more than ten times that amount. He had written but a few words when he said earnestly to the clerk, "Merriek, is this the year 1866?" Merriek said he must be joking. Booth said sincerely "I do not know." Merriek says he was entirely at variance with his usual deportment. He sealed his letter, put it in his pocket and left. He reappeared, took tea at 6:30 P. M., and left his key at the office as he went out.

Mr. Brady saw him on the avenue opposite Grover's theatre, seated on a horse, at half-past 4 P. M., in conversation with Mr. Matthews of Ford's theatre. He talked with him, but noticed nothing extraordinary in his demeanor.

The assassin of Secretary Seward is believed to be a man named Sutack, a noted Maryland rebel. At least six persons were engaged in the conspiracy, four of whom neglected to perform their parts. The murderers have probably escaped across the Potomac and joined Mosby.

The following is a copy of a note sent to Vice President Johnson last Friday, but which was only found on his table yesterday among other papers:

"I do not wish to disturb you, but would be glad to have an interview. J. WILKES BOOTH."

Mr. Johnson was out at the time and never saw the note until yesterday.

The wounds inflicted on the Secretary's face have greatly reduced the inflammation and pain caused by the fracture of his jaw by the accident.

New York, April 17. The following is a private dispatch received by Col. E. S. Sanford this morning from C. A. Seward:

WASHINGTON, April 17—7 A. M.

To E. S. Sanford:

I have great hopes of Fred. this morning. He has recognized me with voice and eyes. The medical testimony is concurrent as to the favorableness of the change in his condition. Will send you word later as to the Secretary.

(Signed)

C. A. SEWARD.

It appears by the *Herald's* account that Major Rathbone was not aware of the presence of the assassin in the box until he heard the pistol, when turning he saw the man within six feet of the President. The Major sprang toward and seized him. The man struggled, and at the same time made a thrust at the Major's heart with a knife. The Major received the blow on his left arm and shoulder, and at once again sprang for him as he leaped from the box. He cried, "Stop that man," and thinking it impossible for him to escape from the crowd below turned to the President. The President did not change his position, except that his eyes were closed and his head slightly bent forward. The whole time consumed by the assassin from entering the box and disappearing did not consume 30 seconds.

Major Rathbone has suffered much from loss of blood. He is however in good condition and progressing rapidly.

The *Herald's* correspondence says Booth asked the clerk at the National hotel if he was going to Ford's theatre that night, telling him that he ought to, as there was to be some splendid acting there that night. The next head of Booth was a little after 7 o'clock, when he in company with five others entered the drinking saloon of George Henry, adjoining Ford's theatre, and all of them drank together. The emphasis of their manner in taking the drink attracted attention. After drinking they formally shook hands with each other, bidding one another "good bye." Upon leaving the bar-room, two of the party rode off on horseback.

After the tragic occurrence, an officer, commanding one of the fortifications east of the city, was returning to his command accompanied by an orderly. Between Lincoln Hospital and Camp Barry they came upon two men riding desperately. These two turned down a lane in which were four others all mounted. The officer and orderly gave chase and were fired upon. The orderly was wounded, and the party pursued rode rapidly away and escaped with those who were waiting for them.

LATER.

WASHINGTON, April 17.

E. S. Sanford:

We think that the Secretary is gradually improving. His arm has been rebandaged and he appears to feel easier. C. A. SEWARD.

WASHINGTON, April 17. The deep interest felt in Secretary Seward has thronged his residence with visitors, among them members of the Cabinet, Foreign Ministers, and a large number of others. He was informed yesterday, for the first time, of the assassination of President Lincoln, and of the attempted assassination of himself and the Assistant Secretary, and to some extent of the condition in which the latter lay.

Mr. Seward, though moved with the most intense sorrow and horror at the report of the awful fact, nevertheless bore it with considerable firmness and composure, his strength having so far returned as to enable him to undergo the trying ordeal.

THE TRAGEDY AT WASHINGTON.

\$30,000 Reward Offered for the Arrest of the Assassins.

WASHINGTON, April 17. Every effort is being put forth by all the proper authorities to capture or trace the assassins.

The Common Council have offered a reward of \$20,000 for the arrest and conviction of the assassins, and to this sum is added \$10,000 by Col. Baker, Agent of the War Department, making \$30,000.

The following is a description of the individuals secured:

Description of J. Wilkes Booth, who assassinated the President on the evening of the 14th, 1865: Height, five feet eight inches; weight, 160 pounds; compact built; hair jet black, inclined to curl, of medium length and parted behind; eyes black, and heavy, dark eyebrows; wears a large seal ring on his little finger; when talking inclines his head forward and looks down.

Description of the person who attempted to assassinate Secretary Seward: Height 5 feet one inch; hair black, thick, full and straight; no beard nor appearance of beard; cheeks red on jaws, face moderately full; 22 or 23 years of age; eyes large, not prominent; color unknown; brows not heavy, but dark; face not large, but rather round; complexion healthy; nose straight and well formed, and of medium size; mouth small; lips thin; the upper lip protrudes when he talks; chin pointed and prominent; head medium size; neck short; hands soft and small; fingers tapering, showing no signs of hard labor; broad shoulders; taper waist, straight figure; a strong-looking man; manner not gentlemanly, but vulgar; wears an overcoat with pockets in the side and one on the breast with flaps; pants black, and of common stuff; new heavy boots; voice small and thin, and inclined to tremor.

WASHINGTON, April 17. The *Intelligencer* says: "We can state on the highest authority that it has been ascertained that there was a regular conspiracy to assassinate every member of the Cabinet, together with the Vice President. The names of the severally appointed assassins are known, and after the present investigation is concluded and published the public will be astonished at the developments."

BY TELEGRAPH.

FROM WASHINGTON.

Condition of Mr. Seward and his Family.

MATTERS AT THE WHITE HOUSE.

Favorable Impression made by President Johnson.

ACTION OF THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS.

[SPECIAL DISPATCH TO THE BOSTON JOURNAL.]

WASHINGTON, April 17—11.30 A. M.

Secretary Seward passed a comfortable night, although it had been feared that the excitement of several interviews with his friends yesterday might have had an injurious effect. Thurlow Weed is of opinion that he will speedily recover. Fred. Seward is very low, but may recover. Mr. Hansell of the State Department, who was cut across the side, is doing well.

Mrs. Lincoln was quite indisposed yesterday, and saw no one except her lady friends, her pastor and her physician, Dr. Stone, who called twice. Capt. Lincoln received the distinguished persons who called. Gens. Howard, Haskin and Rucker are in attendance at the White House with a strong military guard.

President Lincoln's remains have been placed in the massive coffin prepared for them, which has four silver handles on either side. The East Room has been draped in mourning, the mirrors covered with black crape, and the chandeliers with barege. In the centre is the catafalque, in which the remains are to lie in state, its canopy rising to the height of eleven feet from the floor.

To-morrow the people will be permitted to pass through the apartments where they have been so often welcomed by the cordial smile of the illustrious departed, and to gaze upon the work of the agent of the barbarous slave power.

A majority of the stores are closed to-day, and nearly every house in the District is draped in mourning, including those inhabited by rabid secessionists, who evidently fear a popular outbreak.

Senator Sumner had a long interview with President Johnson on public affairs on Saturday night. Senators Anthony and Foster also saw him. It is understood that the President has made a most favorable impression on all who have had an opportunity of conversing with him.

Gen. Butler has not unfortunately the direction of the investigation as was reported yesterday evening. He had an interview with President Johnson last night.

Gen. Grant is at present the guest of Gen. Halleck, at his residence on Georgetown Heights.

The government officials and experienced detectives are busily engaged in ferreting out the conspiracy. As yet no arrests have probably been made, although some insist that Booth was captured while crossing the Potomac, and is confined on board of a monitor, but it is desirable to conceal the fact.

It is certainly known that five persons were in the city engaged in the plot. The names of four of these villains are known and their persons well described. One of them lodged at the Kirkwood house and had a room over that of Gov. Johnson, and he left for Baltimore at 6 o'clock on Saturday morning, having failed to do his work. It is now thought the assassin at Secretary Seward's house was named Thompson.

The Diplomatic Corps met this morning to choose a deputation from among their number to wait on Mrs. Lincoln and present their condolence. Several of them have called personally on Secretary Seward to express their regrets and sympathies.

Meetings of the citizens of different States have been called for to-night to make arrangements for appearing in the funeral procession.

Among the acts of justice and clemency performed by President Lincoln in the last day of his life, was the restoration to work and position of Paymaster Geo. P. Folsom of Dover, N. H., at the request of Ex-Senator Hale and Representative Rollins. It is understood that Maj. Folsom does not desire to remain in the Paymaster's Department, but that his friends claimed his restoration as an act of justice. Mr. Lincoln, after hearing the case stated, directed that papers be made out.

The meeting of members of Congress was quite numerously attended. Vice President Foster presided, and Mr. Colfax acted as Secretary. Senator Foote, in announcing the object of the meeting, was overcome by grief, and Vice President Foster, and Senator Johnson of Maryland, who also spoke briefly, were deeply affected.

A committee was chosen to report at an adjourned meeting, at four o'clock, a list of pall bearers and where the remains should rest. Many wish to have them deposited in the crypt of the Capitol where it was designated to have Washington repose.

It is believed that two of the assassins fled toward Annapolis, perhaps to escape across the bay to Kent's Island. They are said to have changed horses at a place called Long Old Fields, in Prince George's County, at the house of a secessionist named Berry, who has been arrested.

The Cabinet meets at two o'clock P. M.

HALF-PAST TWO O'CLOCK. The popular indignation has just been manifested near the capitol. A Sergeant's guard was escorting to the Old Capitol Prison two men in citizens' dress, when the cry was raised—"That's Surratt!" "That's the man who stabbed Seward!" As if by magic, a crowd collected, and the prisoners, with their guard, were surrounded by an increasing mob, without distinction of color. The guard quickened their steps, and fortunately a large body of troops came up on their way to the prison, to escort some rebel officers from the Old Capitol to the depot, on their way to Sandusky. The officer in command promptly brought his men to the charge, and the crowd fell back before the bayonet.

It is very evident from the demonstration that the people are infuriated and that the assassins must be carefully guarded from their vengeance. All the bar rooms of the city are to be closed until after the funeral. Yesterday a light colored sack coat fully answering to the description of that worn by the attempted assassin of the Messrs. Seward was found near Fort Saratoga, which is situated in the north of the city, not far from the Soldiers' Home. The coat was stained with blood. In one of the pockets were found a false mustache and a small brush. The coat and the articles found in it were delivered to the Provost Marshal's office. It is believed that this discovery will furnish an additional clue to the route of the criminal. The circumstances would seem to throw discredit on the commonly received theory, at least as to one of them, that the suspected party crossed the navy yard bridge on Friday night.

PERLEY.

THE NATIONAL LOSS.

Secretary Seward and Son
Improving.

The Would-be Assassin of Secretary
Seward Secured.

BOOTH BROUGHT TO BAY.

PREPARATIONS FOR THE FUNERAL.

Delegations Wait Upon President Johnson

HE ADDRESSES THEM.

Lying in State.

Special Dispatch to The N. Y. Tribune.

WASHINGTON, Tuesday, April 18, 1865.

At an early hour this morning Pennsylvania Ave. was thronged with people of both sexes, white and black, pouring toward the White House in order to avail themselves of the privilege of beholding for the first time the remains of the Nation's former chief.

The city—which, over since the assassination, has been darkened with funeral decorations—still retained its mournful aspect; both citizens and soldiers generally wore badges of orange, and, as the procession waited for admission to the western avenue leading to the White House, the minute-guns at long intervals boomed in respect to the memory of the sixteenth President.

Notwithstanding the preparations made, there seemed to be a great lack of officials to stem and regulate the masses moving toward the entrance to the Presidential Mansion. At 10 o'clock the gates were thrown open, and the vast crowd by half dozens admitted between the bayonets of soldiers of the Reserve Corps, stationed at the west entrance.

At that time, the rear of the procession rested on Fifteenth-st., nearly down to the avenue, and occupied the whole breadth of the walk to the gate, where it culminated in one vast, swaying, surging mass, which, as the bayonets of the guards were elevated for a moment, made frantic rushes to gain admittance to the avenue leading to the White House.

A large number, perhaps a majority, of these forming the procession were colored men and women of all ages and sizes, who had been drawn thither to look upon the animate form of one who, in the last four years of a life of perplexing cares, anxiety and turmoil, intensified by a war for the nation's existence, proved himself their's and humanity's friend.

Although the morning was cloudy a sultriness like that of Summer oppressed everyone, but, notwithstanding, the long column extending the length of nearly four blocks, remained sweltering yet patiently awaiting their admission to the presidential grounds. Every countenance bore evidence of sympathy in the nation's sorrow and every low toned voice referred in heartfelt words to our great calamity.

As the main column neared the gate it was beset on either flank by the crowd which had there accumulated, and the struggle at this point for the position opposite the crossed bayonets was eagerly but not noisily contested.

"It isn't dat I car' for Massa Linkum more'n for any odder man," says an old gray-haired negress, who, with the sweat-drops standing on her ebony brow, is holding her little grandchild above the heads of people to prevent it from being smothered; "but I wants dis little chile to see de man who made her free." "Truly de good Lord has open de eyes of de nation," says another; "and though dey kill Massa Linkum, wese got Massa Johnson and Butler left."

As the procession slowly moved through the entrance of the Presidential Mansion to the East room, where lay the body, the scene was one of the greatest solemnity. Many an eye was wet with tears from both

sexes, and a stranger to the circumstances might have easily imagined, as the crowd filed by on either side of the coffin, every person a near relative of the deceased.

When the writer passed, a colored woman bowed with years and clad in the habiliments of mourning, obstructed the narrow passage on the right of the coffin, and with her faded hand on her eyes, with tears and sobs bewailed the Nation's loss. For several moments did she tarry, alternately gazing and sobbing, until at length she was gently reminded by an official that others were waiting. She stepped aside as we passed, but remained to weep as the cortege reluctantly wended its way from the room.

Several naval and army officers were standing or seated around the room, which was draped appropriately in the robes of mourning. The expression of the face was serene and life-like, but the skin was discolored, and appeared of a greenish yellow—probably necessarily made so by the ointments.

The huge columns of the White House were completely enveloped in mourning, and all surroundings were in keeping with the solemnities of the occasion.

A number of persons suspected of complicity in the crime of the assassination have been arrested to-day, and the scenes of yesterday repeated. Large crowds have been drawn together by rumors of the capture of Booth and abortive attempts made to rescue the prisoners, most of whom were arrested for the expression of traitorous sentiments.

How the Game was Bagged.

Special Dispatch to The N. Y. Tribune.

WASHINGTON, Tuesday, April 18, 1865.

Late last night R. C. Morgan of New-York made a lucky strike in working up the assassination plot. Acting as one of the Special Commissioners of the War Department, under Mr. Orent, he visited the residence of Surratt on H-st., between Ninth and Tenth.

The women were put under arrest and sent to headquarters for examination. Then a search of the house was made. Papers and correspondence of a most important character were found, but the most important event transpired while search was being made in the garret.

A peccoliar knock was heard at a lower outer door. The expert at once entered and opened the door, when a large man confronted him with a pick-ax in his hand. Stepping aside, the man entered rapidly and unbidden. Morgan then closed the door upon him, and quickly locking it, put the key in his pocket.

The stranger, here discovering that something was wrong, turned and remarked that he had made a mistake—was in the wrong house, &c. "Who did you wish to see," was asked. "I came to see Mrs. Surratt," said he. "Well, you are right, then—she lives here," was replied.

He nevertheless insisted upon retiring, but a pistol was pointed at him and he was ordered into the room adjoining. His pick-ax was taken from him and he

ordered to sit down. Here a lengthy questioning and cross-questioning took place.

He stated that he was a refugee from Virginia; was poor man's son; had been brought up on a farm; did not know how to read; had always been kept hard at work, because his father was poor, and then showed his oath of allegiance which he had in his pocket, and said he had worked on the horse-railroad here.

When asked where he lived, he hoggled a little. When asked where he slept last night, he said, "Down to the railroad." When asked where the night before the 14th Friday, he was still more embarrassed, and equivocated considerably. He said he came to this house to dig a drain for Mrs. Surratt; that he was to work at it early in the morning, and thought he would come up before he went to bed, as she would not be up in the morning.

It is proper to state that up to the question of where he stayed, no suspicion had been excited that he was other than a veritable laborer; but the fact of his coming in so late an hour led to suspicion that he might know something of the family connections.

Surratt himself having disappeared with Booth, glance at his boots covered with mud disclosed them to be fine ones; his pants, also very muddy, were discovered to be of fine black cassimere. His coat was better than laborers usually wear, and nothing but his hat indicated a refugee.

He was still further questioned, and on saying that he had no money he was searched and twenty-five dollars in greenbacks and some Canada coins found on his person, a fine white linen pocket handkerchief with a delicate pink border, a tooth and nail-brush, a cake of fine toilet soap and some pomatum, for all of which he tried to give a plausible account, though hothered a good deal about his taste for the white handkerchief in his possession.

Here his hat was examined, and found to have been made of a fine gray or mixed undershirt of his own, which he had taken off to make a hat of, cut out in Confederate soldier style, and not sewed up but pinned. This led to the conviction that he had lost his hat, and other circumstances fixed suspicion that he was the assassin of the Seward family.

The Secretary's negro doorkeeper was sent for with out the knowledge of what was wanted, came into the room and was seized, the gas having been turned down previously. After he was seated the gas was turned up brightly, and, without a word being spoken, the poor boy started as if he had been shot and the pseudo laborer started also and turned doudly pale.

The recognition was instantaneous and mutual. On being asked why he seemed so affected, the negro immediately answered: "Why, dat's the man wot cut Massa Seward," and moving for a moment uneasily around with his eyes intently fixed on the prisoner, he continued: "I does'n't want to stay here, no how."

Major Seward and sister were sent to identify him this morning and did so completely. His identification is absolute and he is now a prisoner on board a monitor. All of the circumstances connected with his arrest and detection are of the most marvelous character.

The detectives would not have been at the house but for the fidelity of a freedman, a poor colored woman, and the merest accident divested him of his well-assumed character of a poor laborer.

Other evidence makes it probable that he is one of the St. Albans raiders. He gives his name as James Malone, and is known here by several aliases. We hear the supposition is, that, finding himself unable to get out of the picket lines he had returned to Surratt's house for success.

BOOTH.

It is confidently believed that Booth cannot much longer escape arrest. Booth is known to have long been a member of the Order of Knights of the Golden Circle.

THE SEWARDS.

The Swards are very much better to-night. Strong hopes are entertained for even Frederick's recovery.

MR. SEWARD'S FIRST KNOWLEDGE OF THE DEATH OF LINCOLN.—Mr. Seward had been kept in ignorance of the attack on the President, his physician fearing that the shock would be too great for him to bear, and all newspapers were rigidly excluded from his room. On the Sunday following his assassination, the Secretary had the bed wheeled around so that he could see the tops of the trees in the park opposite, just cutting on the spring foliage, when his eyes caught the stars and stripes at half-mast on the War Department, on which he gazed a while, then, turning to his attendant, said: "The President is dead!" The confused attendant's amercd and changed color as he tried to say nay; but the sagacious old man said: "If he had been alive he would have been the first to call on me; but he has not been here, nor has he sent to know how I am, and there's the flag at half mast." The old statesman's inductive reason had told the truth, and he lay in silence, the great tears coursing down his gashed cheeks as the dreadful truth sank into his mind.

THE ATTACK ON THE SEWARDS.—The following account of the sensations experienced at the time of their attempted assassination by Payne, was given by Mr. Secretary Seward and his son Frederick:

"Mr. Frederick Seward said, that on stepping from his bed-room into the passage, and seeing the assassin, he merely wondered what he was doing there, and called him to account. On his resisting the fellow's endeavor to pass into Mr. Seward's room, the assassin drew a revolver, which he presented at Mr. Frederick Seward's head. What followed, it must be remembered, took place in a few seconds. Mr. Frederick Seward's first thought was, 'That's a navy revolver.'

"The man pulled the trigger, but it only snapped; and his intended victim thought, 'That cap missed fire.'

"His next sensation was that of confusion; and being upon the floor, resting upon his arm, which, like his father's jaw, was barely recovered from a bad fracture, — the assassin had felled him to the floor with the butt of the pistol, — he put his hand to his head, and finding a hole there, he thought, 'That cap did not miss fire after all.'

"Then he became insensible, and remained so for two days or more. His first indication of returning consciousness was the question, 'Have you not got the ball out?' after which he fell off again into a comatose condition, which was of long continuance.

"On the very afternoon of the day when Mr. Lincoln was assassinated, Mr. Frederick Seward, who was Assistant Secretary of State, had asked his father what preparation should be made for the presentation of Sir Frederick Bruce, which was to take place the next day. Mr. Seward gave him the points of a reply to be made to Sir Frederick, and he laid the outline of the speech upon the President's table, and, as I have previously informed my readers, Mr. Lincoln that afternoon wrote out the reply, adopting Mr. Seward's suggestions, and thus preparing the reception of the British Minister by President Johnson, which was regarded at the time by the people to whose representative it was addressed as so friendly, and fair, and dignified.

"Mr. Frederick Seward's first inquiry, after he came fully to his senses, which was a long time

after the assassination, was, 'Has Sir Frederick Bruce been presented?' He thought that only one night had passed, since he knew not what had happened to him, and his mind took up matters just where it had left them.

"Mr. Seward's mental experience during his supposed assassination was in its nature so like that of his son, that it raises the question whether this absence of consternation, and observation of minute particulars is not common in circumstances of unexpected and not fully apprehended peril. Mr. Seward was lying upon his side, close to the edge of the bed, with his head resting in a frame, which had been made to give him ease and protect his broken jaw from pressure.

"He was trying to keep awake, having been seized upon by a sick man's fancy — it was, if he slept he would wake up with lockjaw. He was brought to full consciousness by the scuffle in the passage-way, followed by the entrance of the assassin, and the cry of Miss Seward, 'O, he will kill my father!' But he saw nothing of his assailant until a hand appeared above his face, and then his thought was, 'What handsome cloth that overcoat is made of!' The assassin's face then appeared, and the helpless statesman only thought, 'What a handsome man!' (Payne was a fine-looking fellow.)

"Then came a sensation as of rain striking him smartly upon one side of his face and neck, then quickly the same upon the other side, but he felt no severe pain. This was the assassin's knife. The blood spouted; he thought, 'My time has come,' and falling from the bed to the floor, fainted. His first sensation of returning consciousness was, that he was drinking tea, and that it 'tasted good.' Mrs. Seward was giving him tea with a spoon. He heard low voices around him, asking and replying as to whether it would be possible for him to recover. He could not speak, but his eyes showed his consciousness, and that he desired to speak. They brought him a porcelain tablet, on which he managed to write, 'Give me some tea; I shall get well.' And from that moment he has slowly but steadily recovered his health and strength."

Frank Moore p 363

12/2/65

MR. SEWARD'S ACCOUNT OF THE ATTACK UPON HIM—AN INTERESTING STORY. The American correspondent of the London Spectator writes that he recently heard Mr. Seward and Mr. Frederick Seward give the following account of their own sensations at the time of the attempted assassination:

"Mr. Frederick Seward said that on stepping from his bedroom into the passage and seeing the assassin, he merely wondered what he was doing there, and called him to account. On his resisting the fellow's endeavor to press into Mr. Seward's room, the assassin drew a revolver, which he presented at Mr. Frederick Seward's head. What followed, it must be remembered, took place in a few seconds. Mr. Frederick Seward's first thought was, 'That's a navy revolver.'

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Mr. Seward's mental experience during his supposed assassination was in its nature so like that of his son, that it raises the question whether this absence of consternation and observation of minute particulars is not common in circumstances of unexpected and not fully apprehended peril. Mr. Seward was lying upon his side, close to the edge of his bed, with his head resting in a frame, which had been made to give him ease and to protect his broken jaw from pressure.

He was trying to keep awake, having been seized upon by a sick man's fancy—it was that if he slept he would wake up with lock jaw. He was brought to full consciousness by the scuffle in the passage way, followed by the entrance of the assassin, and the cry of Miss Seward, 'Oh, he will kill my father!' But he saw nothing of his assailant until a hand appeared above his face, and then his thought was, 'What handsome cloth that overcoat is made of.' The assassin's face then appeared, and the helpless statesman only thought, 'What a handsome man!' (Payne was a fine-looking fellow.)

Then came a sensation as of rain striking him smartly upon one side of his face and neck, then quickly the same upon the other side, but he felt no severe pain. This was the assassin's knife. The blood spouted, he thought, 'My time has come,' and falling from the bed to the floor, fainted. His first sensation of returning consciousness was, that he was drinking tea and that 'it tasted good.' Mrs. Seward was giving him tea with a spoon. He heard low voices around him, asking and replying as to whether it would be possible for him to recover. He could not speak, but his eyes showed his consciousness and that he desired to speak. They brought him a porcelain tablet, on which he managed to write 'Give me some more tea. I shall get well.' And from that moment he has slowly but steadily recovered health and strength."

A Famous House for Sale.

The historical house in which Payne, the assassin, attempted the life of Secretary Seward at the time of Lincoln's assassination, is now offered for sale. As is well known, Seward was confined to his bed by sickness at the time, and his escape was almost miraculous. After this the house was purchased by the government, and has since been used by the commissary general as his headquarters. The approaching completion of the new wing to the state, war and navy department building removes the commissary general's office to that building, and it is on this account that the government now offers the house for sale. It is located in full view of the White House, on the east side of Lafayette park,

which makes it very valuable. It was in front of this house that the tree once stood that one of Gen. Dan Sickles' bullets was imbedded when he shot Barton Key for undue intimacy with his wife. The tree from that time was literally cut to pieces by fanatical relic hunters, until it finally died and was removed.—Baltimore American, Aug. 4, 1887.

The Stabbing of Lincoln's Secretary of State on the Night the President Was Shot

John K. Lattimer, MD

The shooting of Abraham Lincoln, just 100 years ago, was not the work of an isolated fanatic, working alone. It was only one part of an organized plot by a group of dedicated enemy sympathizers who planned to kill not only the President, but also the vice-president and the secretary of state. By thus destroying the top leadership of the federal government, they hoped to create such disorder and confusion that the South would overturn its decision to surrender, made just five days before.

Thus, President Lyndon Johnson's worry about a larger plot, immediately after President Kennedy's shooting, was well-founded in his knowledge of the historical precedent.

Lincoln's vice-president, Andrew Johnson, was spared when his assigned assassin, George Atzerodt, who had no stomach for murder, went into an "oyster bay" [sic] to have a drink or two, drank himself into a state of confusion and rode off.¹

Lincoln's secretary of state, the patrician William H. Seward, whom Lincoln had narrowly defeated for the Republican nomination in 1860, was not as fortunate as Johnson. The assassin assigned to kill Secretary Seward was Lewis Payne, a brutish, backwoods type of young Confederate soldier, who had fought at Antietam and Chancellorsville, had been wounded at Gettysburg, and had lost his two brothers in the war (Fig 1). After recovering from his wound, he had deserted and was wandering the streets of Baltimore when he was recruited by Booth, whom he had met previously in Richmond, Va, after a theatrical performance, and whom he greatly admired.

As the fatal hour of 10:15 PM approached, Payne and a young drug clerk, Herold, rode into Lafay-

ette Square in front of the Seward house. Payne was apparently not intelligent enough to be trusted to locate his victim's house, nor indeed was he even able to find the escape route south over the Navy Yard Bridge out of Washington, DC, when the time came. Herold was therefore assigned to guide him to the target.

Payne tied his horse to a tree, mounted the low doorstep of the massive three-story residence on Madison Place, sometimes known as the "Clubhouse," and rang the bell. The door was opened by the Negro houseman, William H. Bell, who testified at Payne's trial as follows:

The bell rang and I went to the door and that man (Payne) came in. He had a little package in his hand; he said it was medicine for Mr. Seward from Dr. Verdi, and that he was sent by Dr. Verdi to direct Mr. Seward how to take it. He said he must go up.²

Capitalizing on the privileged status of his supposed package of medicine, Payne insisted that Bell lead him up the stairs to the third floor, to Mr. Seward's bedroom. On the third floor landing, Mr. Seward's middle son, Assistant Secretary of State Frederick Seward, intercepted him, saying that his father had just been composed for sleep and could not be disturbed. Here again, through sheer insistence, Payne persuaded Seward to look into his father's room to see if he was really asleep. By doing so, young Seward identified the room in which the victim was situated. When the son would not permit him to enter, Payne pretended to start down the stairs but, as young Seward testified at the later trial,

I was turning to go to my room when a noise behind me occasioned me to turn and look back. I found that he (Payne) had turned back and was at my side with a pistol at my head. I remember noticing the shape of the pistol, which was that of a Navy revolver. The next instant I heard a click of the lock, and then thought "Well, the pistol has missed fire."³

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1. Lewis Payne, ex-Confederate soldier and accomplice of Booth, who wounded Secretary Seward while attempting to kill him, and wounded four other men in the household before escaping. He was hanged, with Mrs. Surratt, Atzerodt, and Herold, after their trials.

Payne then raised the pistol and struck Seward at least two major blows on the head, once on the left parietal bone, which crushed the outer table, since osseous spicules were taken out, but the internal table, even if fractured, was not depressed, according to the family doctor, Dr. Verdi, in his 1865 description of the wound.⁴ There was a second wound on the left side of the frontal bone just about the line of intersection with the parietal. Young Seward did not lose consciousness for more than an hour but was unable to articulate, and then became comatose for the next several days, recovering so slowly that he was permitted to ride out of the house only after two months, and it was six months before he was able to resume his duties at the State Department. He wore a skull cap throughout the rest of his life to hide the depressed scar on his forehead. His older brother, Major Augustus Seward, stated that "After pieces of fractured skull were taken out, it left the covering of the brain open,"⁵ but this is a layman's statement, and not as likely to be accurate as that of Dr. Verdi, who stated clearly that the inner table of the skull even if fractured, was not depressed. On the other hand, in still another description of the wounds, made eight years later, Dr. Verdi stated that the brain was exposed in both wounds.⁶

Augustus Seward also stated that, "It was such a wound that I should have supposed could have been made with a knife, but the Surgeons seemed to think it was made by the hammer of a pistol." This would seem to indicate that there was a linear character to the wounds which suggested knife wounds, but it seems much more likely to the author, after examining the actual pistol at the Ford's Theatre Museum in Washington, DC, that Seward was struck by the edge of the long, narrow ramrod which runs under the barrel of this pistol and which is broken across in its sturdiest portion, as if by a severe blow. The ramrod probably dropped down and caught in one of the chambers so that the cylinder would not revolve for further shots. The rigid frame of the pistol made it suitable for striking (Fig 2). Certainly, the hammer of the pistol would have inflicted a more punctate, penetrating wound, which would have entered the skull deeply. Furthermore, Payne would have had to disengage his finger from the trigger guard and reverse the pistol in his hand in order to strike Seward with the hammer of the gun, which would have taken more time than seems to have transpired.

Despite these wounds, young Seward continued to grapple with Payne, past his sister's room, past his own room, and into the door of his father's room which was being opened by Seward's daughter and the male nurse, to see what the commotion was about.

Mr. Seward stated that his father was lying in a recumbent position, but about half raised by one of those frameworks which are made for the accommodation of the sick and mostly used in hospitals. His right arm had been broken (in a carriage accident nine days before) and he was lying on the right edge of the bed, as he lay on it. His object in lying there was to prevent his broken arm from coming in contact with the bed. The nurses were continually watching to see that he did not fall from the bed, as he insisted on lying just at the edge. In the room the gas was turned low but the gas in the hall was bright.³

Mr. Seward's male nurse, Pvt George T. Robinson, a convalescent wounded soldier from Maine, stated that as he opened the door,

I discovered the flash of a knife aimed at me, which I warded off to some extent, it striking me on the forehead and partially prostrating me on the floor. I have a scar in the edge of my hair from this. He [Payne] pushed the door wide open and then entered the room, making a bound for Mr. Seward's bed. Mr. Seward lay on the opposite side of the bed from the side which was next to the door where Payne entered. He got to the edge of the bed and, placing his hand on Mr. Seward's breast, struck at his neck with the knife which he had. After I was knocked partially down, I jumped to my feet as quickly as possible and, while I was doing that, Payne had struck two or three times at Mr. Seward without hitting him. Before I got to him, however, he had cut the right side of his face. I looked for something with which to strike Payne but saw nothing in the room that I could handle, large enough to be of any service. I then jumped on the bed with the intention of striking him, but when I got there his arm was already raised for another blow. I caught him round the arms from behind and, while I was doing that, he cut him on the left side of his neck. As he was coming off the bed

he reached the knife over his shoulder, I being behind him, and struck it into my shoulder to the bone, twice. We came off on the floor. He got his arm around my neck and struck me two or three times under the ear with the butt of his revolver, but he was in such a position that he could not hurt me. He then dropped that and took hold of me, and then took his knife to strike into my breast or bowels. While he was doing this we became clenched together, face to face. Before I got him to the door, another person clenched him from behind. The room was rather dark and I could not see who it was, so I kept quiet. I thought if he was a confederate he might be as likely to cut the wrong person as the right one. As soon as we got out into the hall where a bright jet of gas was burning, I recognized the person who had just come up as Major Seward. Payne, unclenching his hand from around my neck, struck me again, this time with his fist, knocking me down, and then broke away from Major Seward and ran downstairs. On his way down, on the first flight, he overtook Mr. Hansell, a messenger at the State Department, who had been roused by the noise and had apparently turned to go downstairs for help. He came within reach of him and struck him in the back [with the knife]. The revolver appeared to be a Whitney Navy revolver, and the knife was a long heavy one with a straight stiff handle on it, with a cross piece. I returned to Mr. Seward's room and found him lying on the floor on the opposite side of the bed, with a lot of bedding around. I undertook immediately to see if life was extinct. Feeling his wrist, I could not discover any pulsation at all. I pulled his clothes off and felt his heart; I found that it beat and replied that he was not dead. The Secretary then opened his eyes, looked up and said "I am not dead; send for a surgeon, send for the police, close the house." I found where the wound was and held my hand over it. He was bleeding profusely, and as soon as assistance came we put him to bed.⁷

The victim had not rolled out of bed until Robinson pulled Payne away from him, and since Payne had his hand on his breast, he could not have rolled out of bed even if he had desired to do so. Robinson continued,

I saw Payne strike as many as four or five blows, perhaps six. He seemed to strike with all the energy that he had. The first two or three times that he struck at him, he struck beyond him—the first time in particular. The Secretary at that time was lying in a half recumbent position. As Payne appeared and struck at him he exclaimed "Oh" and then seemed to go off into an insensible condition. I think only two of the blows struck him, one on each side of the face. I was there when the doctor examined the wounds and they appeared to be severe. I think his right cheek was cut clear through so that you could see into his mouth; I am not positive about it, for it bled so hard I could not tell. His cheek kind of slid down—hung only on the back part.

Major Augustus H. Seward, oldest son of the secretary, testified that he had retired to bed on the same floor, with the understanding that he was to be called about eleven o'clock to sit up with his father. He stated at the trial,

I was awakened by the screams of my sister, and jumped out of bed and ran into my father's room in my shirt and drawers. The gas in the room was turned down rather low and I saw what appeared to be two men, one trying to hold the other at the foot of my father's bed. I seized by the clothes on his breast the person who was held, supposing it was my father, delirious; but immediately on taking hold of him I knew from his size and strength that it was not my father. The thought then struck me that the nurse had become delirious sitting up there and was striking about the room at random. Knowing the delicate state of my father, I shoved the person of whom I had hold to the



2. Whitney Navy revolver with which Payne intended to shoot Seward. When the first chamber misfired, Payne struck Seward's son over the head with it, breaking the ramrod under the barrel. The two skull fractures of young Seward were inflicted with this weapon.

door, with the intention of getting him out of the room. While I was pushing him, he struck me five or six times on the forehead, on top of the head, and once on the left hand with what I supposed to be a bottle or decanter that he had seized from the table. During this time he repeated, in an intense but not strong voice, the words "I'm mad! I'm mad!" On reaching the hall he gave a sudden turn, sprang away from me and disappeared downstairs.⁵

Secretary Seward's wife, coming from her bedroom at the back of the third floor, had an indistinct view of Augustus, her son, and Payne struggling at the door of her husband's room, and supposed it was her husband with the knife. She got the impression that the whole occurrence consisted in her husband's being more than usually delirious, and that, in that condition, he had injured their other son Frederick.⁶

In her diary,⁸ Seward's daughter, Fanny, who was in the sick room, stated that her brother Fred and the assassin came through the door side by side, and wrote as follows:

In the hand nearest me was a pistol, in the right hand a knife. I ran beside him to the bed, imploring him to stop. I must have said, "Don't kill him." Father awakened. He says, hearing me speak the word "kill" and seeing first me speaking to someone whom he did not see, and then he raised himself and had one glimpse of the assassin's face bending over him and next felt the blows, and by their force, he being on the edge of the bed, was thrown to the floor. I have no remembrance of going around the foot of the bed to the other side but I remember standing there by the corner of the foot and thinking this must be a fearful dream. Then I looked about and saw first what I had seen before, I think, but more fully now—three men struggling beside the bed. I knew who they all were then. I could not tell the next day, that they were Fred and Robinson and the assassin. Next I saw all the familiar objects in the room, the bureau, the little stand, the book I had been reading, all looked natural. Then I knew it was not a dream. I remember pacing the room back and forth from end to end, screaming. My screams awakened Gus but I do not remember seeing him when he came in. Some vague idea of calling for assistance carried me into the hall. I think at that time the assassin and those struggling with him were by the door in father's room and that I had passed them as I went out. I remember mother and Anna [Frederick's wife] asking me what had happened and my saying, "Is that man gone." And they said, "What man?"

Here we encounter an interesting possible analogy to recent events, in the fact that Private Robinson testified at the trial that the assassin had

punched Anna out of the way as he came through the door, nearly punching her over him.

She saw him go to the bed and make a blow at her father. Then she hallooed "Murder" and ran out into the hall and cried out that there was someone trying to kill her father. She came back into the room and went to the window next to the avenue next to where the Provost Marshal's office then was—which I had shoved up some eight or ten inches and which she shoved clear up and hallooed the same out there.⁷

In her diary Fanny states, "I did not open any window and cry "Murder," as the report of Robinson's statement said, neither did I leave the room as then mentioned, but at the time I have stated. I remember running back crying out "Where's father?" seeing the empty bed. At the side I found what I thought was a pile of bedclothes—then I knew it was father. As I stood, my feet slipped in a great pool of blood. Margaret [one of the maids] says she heard me scream "Oh, my God, father's dead!" Robinson told me everything about staunching the blood with cloths and water. He applied them to the right side and I, kneeling on the bed on the left side, put them on the wound on that side of his neck. William had gone for Dr. Verdi, and he came and had ice applied to the wounds.

Fanny Seward's amnesia for many of the things that she was quoted by other witnesses as having said and done,⁸ during the moments when she saw her father and her brother being butchered before her eyes, brings to mind Mrs. Kennedy's amnesia for her actions in the horrible moments just after her husband was shot.⁹

Miss Seward's diary also tells us that her father was in bed because he had been injured nine days previously, when she and Fred had picked him up at his office and stopped at their door for her father's coat. The carriage door, not being tightly closed, kept flying open. The coachman was told to dismount and shut it. While he was doing so, the horses started. The coachman had the reins in his hand, and was swung by them some distance. Fred immediately jumped out, thinking to head the horses, but was thrown to the ground. The horses kept increasing their speed, and Mr. Seward, Sr., had some idea of being able to stop them and sprang from the carriage also, but his heel apparently caught and he was thrown heavily to the ground. The horses were stopped in an alley by a soldier. A crowd of men carried Seward to his bed, where he was found to have a fracture of the right humerus, between the shoulder and the elbow. Fanny stated:

He was so disfigured by bruises and his face was so swollen that he scarcely had a trace of resemblance to himself. His eyes were closed by immense swellings. The blood from his nose was almost suffocating him.

The surgeon-general, Dr. Barnes, and Dr. Norris, a medical officer attending officers of the regular Army there, and Dr. Verdi, the family physician, all attended him. Attempts to immobilize the jaw by bandaging were unsuccessful and, just the day before the stabbing, Dr. Norris had attempted to secure the fractured jaw by wiring one tooth to another.⁸ On that day Seward also had an attack of gout in the right foot, but this was considered a good thing, to divert a tendency to inflammation.

Seward's Wounds

As with the wound of President Lincoln, it is difficult to make a precise interpretation from the various available descriptions of the wound or wounds sustained by the secretary of state, by those who saw them (Fig 3). Private Robinson, who was the first to attempt to staunch the blood with his hand, described cuts on the right cheek and the left side of the neck.⁷ He said he thought the right cheek was cut clear through so that you see into his mouth, but admitted that he was not sure of this, which, indeed, was denied by medical observers later. In testifying at the first trial (of the conspirators), Private Robinson stated:

I saw him cut Mr. Seward twice that I am sure of; the first time he struck him on the right cheek and then he seemed to be cutting around his neck. I afterwards examined the wounds and found one cutting his face from the right cheek down to the neck and a cut on his neck which might have been made by the same blow, and another on the left side of the neck.¹⁰

The surgeon-general, Dr. Joseph K. Barnes, stated at the trial:

The Secretary was wounded in three places, by a gash in the right cheek passing around to the angle of the jaw, by a stab in the right neck and by a stab in the left side of the neck. He had recovered from the shock of the accident of ten days previous and was getting along very well. His right arm was broken close to the shoulder joint and his jaw was broken in two places; but the serious injury of the first accident was a concussion.¹¹

From this description alone, one might even wonder if there were three separate cuts.

The first physician on the scene, the family doctor T. S. Verdi, determined immediately that the wounds were not mortal.⁴ He said,

The carotid artery and jugular vein had not been divided or injured; the bash [sic] was semicircular, commencing just below the high bone of the cheek and extending downward toward the mouth, and then backward over the submaxillary gland, laying open the inflamed and swollen part of the face and neck that had been injured by his previous accident. On examining further, I found another stab, under the left ear, wounding the parotid gland; but this cut, however, was not very deep. Mr. Seward had lost much blood and I immediately applied ice to arrest the bleeding temporarily.

Eight years later, in another article, Dr. Verdi described only a single cut, crescentic and on the right cheek, some five inches long and two inches deep.⁶

Perhaps the most precise description of the wounds was made by the dentist, a self-made expert on the treatment of fractures of the lower jaw by interdental splints, Dr. Thomas Brian Gunning.^{12,13} Dr. Gunning stated:

Unsuccessful attempts had been made to hold the jaw in place by bandages and also with ligatures on the teeth, by the Surgeons first called into the case. On the fourteenth, the patient was attacked by an assassin and a cut inflicted which reached from under the zygoma to the left of the trachea. Attending Surgeon Basil Norris, USN [Dr. Norris was actually USA] informed me that the jaw was fractured on the right side between the bicuspid teeth and also in the ramus of the same side; that the jaw had been

bandaged against the upper gum [edentulous] but this proving insupportable to the patient, the bandages were removed. On examination I found discoloration caused by the accident still remaining on the right side of the face. A cut [inflicted in the attempted assassination] commenced under the zygoma, passed forward about three inches, then downward and backward an equal distance, to the lower border of the jaw, from whence it crossed over the front of the throat to the left of the trachea. On the skin, its first direction fell somewhat from a horizontal line, the second passed down at a little less than a right angle to the first, while the third went forward and downward. These three divisions, of nearly equal length, appeared to have been made by one sweep of the knife. Across the throat the wound was superficial, but above the border of the jaw it grew deeper as it split the cheek—the point of the knife making no entrance into the mouth, except so far as it may be considered to have done so by laying open the right fracture externally, the gum being already lacerated internally from the great displacement of the bone following upon the original injury. The knife was evidently aimed at the throat, but the head being thrown over, the cheek and jaw received the brunt of the blow. No arteries had been ligatured. The wound was neatly sewed up, and healing by first intention, except immediately under the fracture. The swelling and stiffness made the examination difficult, but the ramus proved to be uninjured. There was, however, a second fracture, but on the other side of the mouth, the jaw being fractured on both sides between the bicusps. The [lower] jaw contained all the ten forward teeth. The right wisdom tooth and root of the left were all that remained back of the bicusps. The part in front, containing eight teeth, was drawn down out of place, while the right back fragment with the wisdom tooth and second bicuspid was drawn up, showing its fractured end white and bare. The fracture was square across, vertical and smooth, and the parts were separated vertically over a quarter of an inch when at rest, sometimes more. On the left side, the first bicuspid fell forward and downward from the second, one quarter of an inch. This fracture passed forward somewhat in descending. Here the bone could not be seen, as the gum had separated from both teeth and lay swollen over it. Pus discharged profusely from both fractures. The gum was pale and flaccid, in keeping with the general condition of the patient. The upper jaw was entirely without teeth. Deeming it important to set the exposed bone in place as early as possible and also to give the patient time to recuperate—as he had already been subjected, during the morning, not only to a relation of the President's [Lincoln's] death, but to much that has been said and written upon the subject.

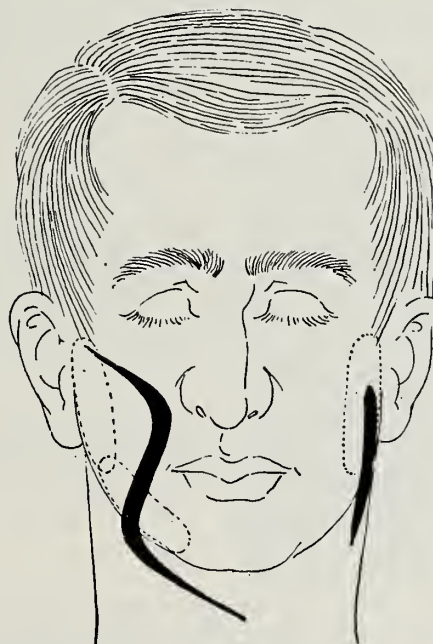
Since the patient's artificial teeth did not fit him well, Dr. Gunning decided not to try to use them as an interdental splint to which to fix the lower teeth, and proposed a new interdental splint, but this idea was rejected by the surgeons in charge, at the time.

Twelve days later, by April 28, the jaw had become more displaced and Gunning was recalled. He states:

I found the sensation of the right side of the forehead, face and lips deficient. The separation of the inferior dental nerve by the displacement of the bone and of branches of the facial nerve, by the knife, did not seem sufficient to account for it. There was also irregular motion in the right eye. The front of the jaw was lower and the right back fragment showed its alveolar to a greater extent. There were no indications of any tendency to union on either side. The fragments could be put precisely in place, no splinters or anything else intervening. There was little swelling, but great discharge of pus. Took wax impression of upper jaw and removed the tartar from the lower teeth. On April 29 I set the jaw, and held it in place by wire and

silk ligatures. Took a wax impression of the teeth and gum and obtained the bite directly from the teeth. The patient felt much relieved as the ligatures held the front of the jaw well up. Tried in a gutta-percha splint, arranged the wings in it, removed it carefully from the mouth, placed the upper and lower casts and female screws in it, and set them in a vulcanizing flask.

Although the front of the jaw containing the eight forward teeth was greatly displaced (before the setting), the silk and wire ligatures held well until May 2 when they were removed and the splint applied. It was of hard vulcanized rubber, covered the roof of the mouth and adjacent gum, enclosed all the lower teeth, and went down over the gum on the outside somewhat. The opening in front was seven-eighths of an inch wide, half an inch high in the center, the wings preventing any more room sideways as they were set clear of the commissure of the lips. To have given any more room in the height, by depressing the lower jaw, would have made it very difficult to prevent the saliva from overflowing at the lips. Upon putting in the



3. Locations of the stab wounds of Secretary Seward, from the descriptions of witnesses. The long cut on the right cheek was inflicted as he looked upward and to his left. It exposed the nine-day-old fracture of his right lower jaw.

splint, the breathing was spasmodic for several minutes but this soon passed off, and I screwed it fast to the lower teeth. They held it against the upper gum for the first night, but after that a cap [on the head] with adjuncts, was worn to support the splint. The upper wings [supporting rods connected to the cap on the head] only were used, as the lower jaw was held up in the splint by screws passing into the lower canine. After giving the excellent Army nurses, who were in attendance upon the patient, full directions for keeping the splint clean in the mouth and properly balanced by the cap which I had fitted to the head, I left Washington May 3.

While talking was very difficult and frustrating at first, through the opening in the mouth, the patient was able to talk freely and was much encouraged when I saw him on May 8. Saliva accumulated several times in the cheek, probably from the severed Steno's [Stenson's] duct, but

had been let out by lancing externally. By June 11 the left side of the jaw was well united but the right still ununited, although the wound under it was nearly closed, the last of several pieces of bone having been removed around the first of June.

This splint had held the jaw firm for 68 days and, while the left side was united, the right fracture was still ununited, which did not surprise Dr. Gunning since the bone had been exposed to so much during the twenty-four days which elapsed before he had been permitted to set it. The saliva from the right parotid gland had discharged through the fracture from a short time after the attack. Gunning felt that these unfavorable circumstances, with the enfeebled condition from loss of blood, had been followed by necrosis of the ends of the bone on that side, and, indeed, several pieces had come away externally during the first six weeks, as well as a long piece from along the inside of the jaw on the left side. Dr. Gunning removed the necrosed alveolar of the second bicuspid in June, but left the tooth in, as it appeared to have healthy connections with the lower parts of its socket. The other teeth had grown firm. The external appearances indicated that the saliva followed the course taken by the point of the knife. By July 9, Stenson's duct proved to be completely closed. Gunning could not pass the smallest probe into it, and the saliva discharged entirely through the ununited fracture on the right side. A second splint was inserted and worn from July 9 to Aug 4, and another one until October 1865.

Dr. Gunning stated:

In a letter to me of March 29, 1866, the patient says: "The whole jaw moves quite well and firmly. Thus at last I begin to regard my cure in that respect as complete." I have not seen him myself since October 1865, therefore cannot speak of it by personal observation.

Protective Collar

Much has been written about the fact that Secretary Seward was wearing some type of iron frame or a collar made of leather and iron, which stopped the plunging point of the knife from entering the thorax, first on the right and then on the left. While many of Seward's biographers¹⁴⁻¹⁶ state that this collar was in some way connected with the apparatus to repair his broken jaw, the contemporary medical witnesses mention only bandages and wires to the teeth as being used for the jaw. Van Doren¹⁷ mentions the fact that the collar was used to keep the head from nodding, and this seems far more logical and in keeping with the events described. It seems to this author that a padded and stiffened collar might well have been used to immobilize the secretary's slender neck, which must have sustained a severe wrench when his head and shoulders struck the ground forcibly enough to fracture the jaw in two places, as well as break the shoulder and give him a brain concussion. His neck was certainly not sturdy, as indicated in his photographs.

While none of the first-hand witnesses speak

about a collar, either in their testimony at the trial of the conspirators, or at the trial of Surratt two years later, it is certainly true that all of the wounds described stopped their downward courses at a level which would have conformed to the upper border of a supportive cervical collar. This lends credence to the theory that a collar stopped the point of the knife, and is in keeping with Robinson's description of the assassin cutting around the neck after his first stab.

It is apparent, from studying the diagrams and testimony about the house, that the door through which the assassin entered must have been in the same wall against which the head of the bed rested. The secretary was on the far side of the bed, dangling his right arm over the edge, so that the assassin must have knelt across the bed to lean over the huddled figure, propped up on a backrest, and difficult to discern clearly in the darkened room, after he had entered from the brightly lighted hallway. It also seems apparent that the secretary must have turned his head sharply towards his left and looked upward at the assassin at the same moment, so that the point of the knife, striking from above downward, as described by Robinson, picked up the sagging flesh of his right cheek as it stretched upward, grazing and laying open the bone of his broken jaw just at the point of fracture, and then coming downward and forward across his neck towards the left side. This would be towards the assassin, as he pulled the knife towards himself. Whether the assassin then struck him once more, making only a small second wound over the parotid gland and left side of the neck,¹⁸ or whether the left-sided wound was merely a continuation of the original single sweeping wound,¹² cannot be determined. Whether the "superficial cuts across the throat" were a continuation of the right-sided wound, or additional¹¹ cuts made in attempts to get inside the collar, also cannot be determined from the testimony. The fact that Stenson's duct was cut by the knife seems likely, and the saliva from the cut duct appears to have discharged through the external wound, which now compounded the fracture to the outside, which had also been compounded into the mouth at the time of the carriage accident.

If the protective collar had been severely cut by any strokes of the knife which it had halted, it is surprising that this was not mentioned in any of the contemporary accounts of the stabbing. Seward's daughter spoke specifically of the fact that the bed clothing had been cut severely by several stabs of the knife which had obviously missed her father. In the dim light, no doubt, the assassin mistook the frame upon which the secretary was propped for his victim. In fact, Private Robinson stated that Payne struck beyond the Secretary with the first blow in particular. A bed sheet exhibiting cuts from the knife is among the memorabilia at the Seward Household Museum in Auburn, NY.¹⁹

The Weapons

The knife used by Payne for the stabbings was a very large bowie knife with a straight stiff handle and a cross guard of heavy German silver (Fig 4). The pommel was of silver or German silver, embossed with an alligator and decorative scroll work which glittered in the light.²⁰ Payne had enlisted with a Florida regiment, where the alligator motif was popular. It was made by the Garrick works of Sheffield, England, and bears on its blade inscriptions typical of the day ("Real Life Defender" and "The Hunter's Companion"). Only faintly discernible are the words "General Taylor Never Surrenders" (General Taylor had been the hero of the Seminole wars in Florida). Knives of this type were popular imports from England into the South, both before and during the Civil War. A number of similar ones have been recovered from the wreck of the blockade runner "Modern Greece" which was sunk off Fort Fisher in 1862.²¹ The point is not now as sharp as the rest of the blade, which is still extremely sharp. The balance of the grip is made of two pieces of horn, riveted to the sides of the metal handle.

The pistol was a Whitney Navy revolver with a rigid frame, which made it more suitable for striking than the less rigid Colt revolvers of the day. The blow inflicted by Payne upon the skull of young Seward broke the ramrod in the thick portion, which enters the cylinder. This undoubtedly prevented the cylinder from revolving, preventing further attempts to fire the pistol. During the scuffle in Seward's bedroom, the ramrod and the pin holding the cylinder in place were apparently dislodged and the cylinder fell out. Fanny Seward described Private Robinson's search on the floor for the priming, because he was afraid that if someone stepped on the percussion caps, mischief would be done. She stated that he *did* find the priming, indicating that some of the other chambers would have fired if Payne had continued to cock the weapon and pull the trigger, instead of using the pistol as a club, after the first chamber misfired.

It is amazing that the powerful Confederate ex-soldier, armed with a revolver and a knife, failed to kill any of the five people whom he attacked by frontal assault, whereas Booth, acting with stealth and cunning, succeeded with a single-shot Deringer.

While all three of the male members of the Seward family recovered from their wounds, as did Mr. Hansell and Private Robinson, still further consequences of this horrendous night befell the two ladies of the Seward family. Mrs. Seward became ill with palpitation on the night of the stabbing, suffered another heart attack and died two months later. Fanny Seward never recovered from the horrors she went through, declined slowly, with a steadily worsening cough, and died 18 months after the awful experience of seeing three members of her family so brutally attacked.

Dr. Verdi's statement²² that he thrust his un-

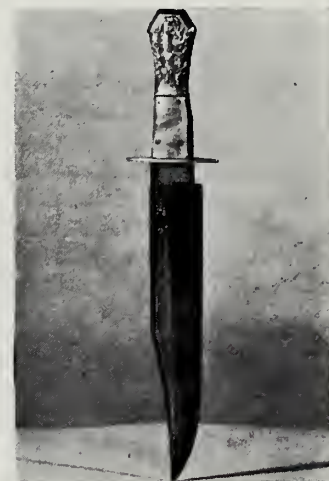
sterile fingers into Hansell's wound to see if the lung had been penetrated, gives the modern reader the same startled sensation as when he reads of the doctor's probing into Lincoln's brain with unsterile fingers, in a vain effort to reach the pistol ball.²³ It is hard to realize that these men did not know that bacterial contamination causes disastrous infection.

Summary

The attempted assassination of Secretary of State Seward was part of a larger plot to kill President Lincoln, Vice-President Johnson, Secretary Seward, and perhaps others. Seward's attacker, Lewis Payne, was a powerful ex-Confederate soldier, who got into the house by saying that he had a packet of medicine and instructions which he must give to the patient personally.

He located his victim's room by asking if the son would look in the door to see if Seward was asleep or not.

4. The bowie knife with which Payne stabbed Seward and cut Seward's son, the male nurse, and the State Department messenger. It is of English manufacture, of the type being sent in great quantities to the Confederacy by blockade runners.



The first several stabs missed the victim, probably because of the darkened room and the fact that he was propped on a frame.

The major stab wound was a zigzag slash below the right cheek bone, which went downward and forward about three inches, then backward and downward three inches and then forward again, exposing the fracture of the jaw on the right side which had been incurred in a fall from his carriage nine days before. There were superficial cuts around the neck, and a moderate cut in the left side of the neck, into the parotid gland. The right cheek hung backwards and downward in a loose flap, and Stenson's duct was severed, causing a salivary fistula out through the external wound. Whether these cuts were all one long slash or the effects of several separate stabs, one on each side of the neck and one as the assassin cut around the neck, cannot be determined from the evidence at hand.

The cuts stop at a level consistent with the top of any leather and iron collar which the patient

may have been wearing to keep his neck from wobbling. It seems entirely possible that this collar stopped the point of the knife from plunging down into the thorax, where it might have killed the patient. No major vessels were cut, and the trachea was not entered.

Secretary Seward was wearing the collar because his jaw had been broken between the bicuspids on each side, and was compounded into the mouth, during a fall from his carriage due to a runaway of the horses nine days previously. His right humerus had also been fractured just below the shoulder, causing him to lie on the edge of the bed farthest away from the door, so that his injured arm would not come in contact with the bed. The collar, his distance from the door and the darkness of the room probably saved his life.

His wounds were sutured by Army surgeon Basil Norris, who also attempted to wire Seward's teeth together after it was determined that bandages to compress the broken jaw against his edentulous upper jaw were too painful. Wiring of the teeth was not successful in maintaining good position and, after several weeks, a self-made dentist, Dr. Thomas Brian Gunning of New York, rewired the teeth and made an interdental splint which occupied most of his mouth and into which the remaining teeth of his lower jaw were affixed in alignment. A hole through the center of the interdental splint permitted the patient to take food, talk, and swallow saliva. Rods held the splint to a cap affixed to his head. It was five months before he was able to chew with the jaw, but he had a good result in the long run. The salivary fistula persisted for many months, and accumulations of saliva under

the skin had to be incised on several occasions. Stenson's duct apparently eventually closed off by scar tissue.

Seward's second son, whose skull was fractured by Payne's pistol as he attempted to keep him out of his father's room, and Seward's oldest son, Maj Augustus Seward, who was cut on the head and on the hand as he wrestled Payne out of the room, both recovered. Army nurse Private Robinson, who was stabbed three times over the scapula and once on the forehead as he grappled with Payne to prevent him stabbing the Secretary further, also recovered, as did Mr. Hansell, the State Department messenger who was stabbed in the back, but outside the lower ribs, by Payne, who overtook him as the two ran down the stairs after the attack on Seward. Seward's wife's death from a series of heart attacks was apparently hastened by the excitement of the attempted assassination, and Seward's daughter, Fanny, who was in the room at the time, declined rapidly from that point on and died 18 months later from a progressive cough and possibly typhoid.

The often quoted legend that the collar around Seward's neck was used to hold his broken jaw in place is not borne out, either by evidence or by analysis of the reasons for such a collar. It seems likely any such collar would have been used to keep his neck, which must have been severely twisted, from wobbling or flexing. Fanny Seward's admitted inability to remember exactly what she did during the butchery of her father and brothers, provides a striking parallel for the acute amnesia of Mrs. Kennedy for her actions immediately after the late President Kennedy was shot.

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An historic case of jaw fracture

On April 14, 1865, at Ford's Theater, President Lincoln was fatally wounded by John Wilkes Booth. That same night, an attempt was made on the life of William H. Seward, Lincoln's Secretary of State. For 100 years, the exact nature of Seward's wounds has been debated. New evidence gives detailed description of these injuries and Dr. Thomas Brian Gunning's successful new technics of jaw fracture treatment.

At about 10:30 P.M. on the night of April 14, 1865, an intruder armed with a Whitney revolver and a bowie knife gained entry to the Washington home of William H. Seward, Lincoln's Secretary of State. At about the same time that an army surgeon was trying to revive the mortally wounded Lincoln in the presidential box at Ford's Theater, the would-be assassin pushed by the Negro house-boy at the Seward residence and demanded ad-

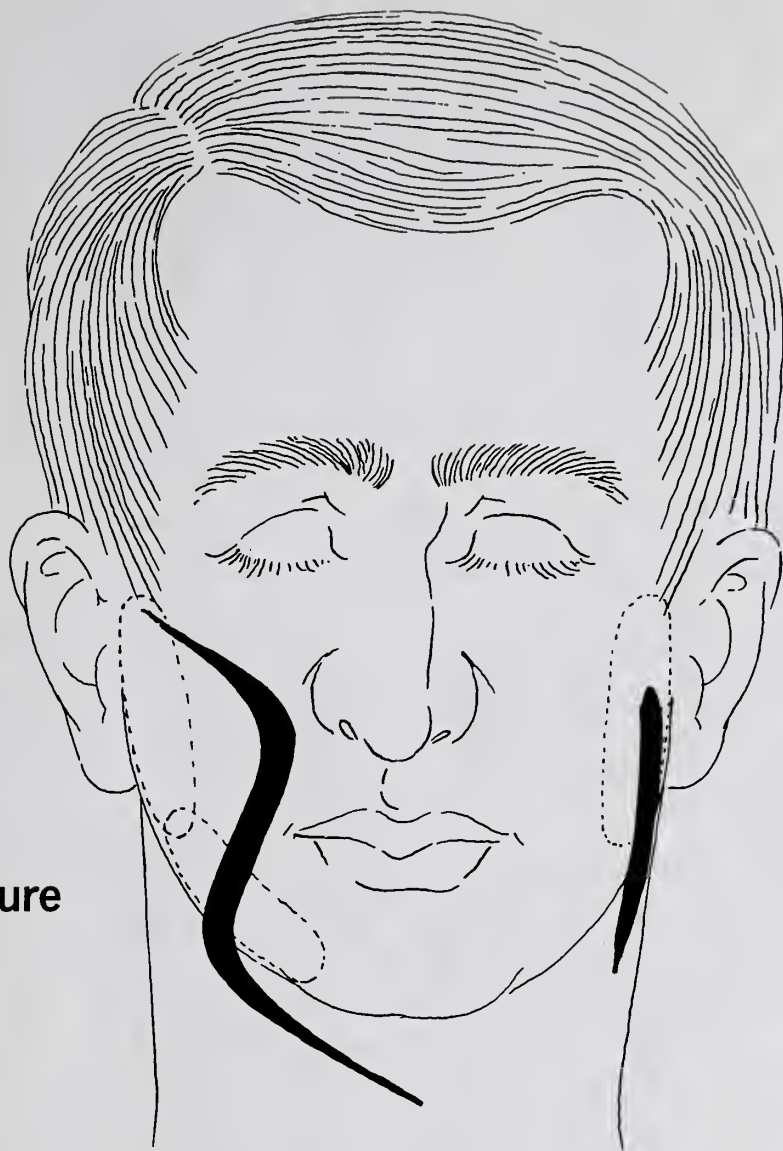


Fig. 1 ■ Locations of stab wounds of Secretary Seward, from descriptions of witnesses. Long cut on right cheek was inflicted as he looked up and to his left side. It exposed 9-day-old fracture of his right lower jaw.

mittance to the Secretary's sickroom. Holding a packet of "medicine," he represented himself as a messenger from the Seward family physician, Dr. Thomas S. Verdi.

Seward had suffered severe injuries 9 days previously in a carriage accident. He lay half propped up in his bedroom. He was attended by an army male nurse, Private George T. Robinson, himself convalescing from wounds, and the Secretary's

daughter, Fanny Seward. The gas was turned low and Seward lay on the extreme right-hand edge of his bed, farthest from the door, to avoid painful contact of the bedding against his broken right arm.

His physician described his injuries from the carriage accident in the following way: "His right arm was broken close to the shoulder joint and his jaw [mandible] was broken in two places; but the serious injury. . . was concussion." Despite the distress and pain the elderly Seward "was getting along well."¹

Ignoring the protests of the houseboy, William Bell, the assailant insisted that Bell lead him up the two flights of stairs to Seward's room. The intruder, Lewis Paine, alias Powell, was a young, heavily muscled man, more than 6 feet in height. On the third floor landing, Seward's middle son, Frederick Seward, Assistant Secretary of State, intervened, saying his father could not be disturbed. The persistent Paine finally persuaded young Seward to look in on his father to see if he was really asleep, thus identifying the bedroom of his intended victim.

When the son would not permit him to enter, Paine pretended to start down the stairs, then whirled and, catching Frederick off guard, pulled the trigger of his revolver at close range. The gun misfired, whereupon Paine clubbed the son, striking at least two heavy blows with the gun barrel, the first crushing the outer table of the left parietal bone, the second inflicting a deep wound on the left side of the frontal bone at about the line of intersection with the parietal. "Young Seward did not lose consciousness for more than an hour, but was unable to articulate, and then became comatose for the next several days, recovering so slowly that it was six months before he was able to resume his duties at the State Department."²

Despite his wounds, Frederick grappled with Paine from the hall to the door of the bedroom. Seward's nurse, Robinson, opened the door to see what the noise was, and the onrushing Paine bowled him over onto the floor. Paine leaped on the bed and struck several times at the propped-up Seward, but only two of the slashing blows found their marks on Seward's face and neck, as Robinson grappled him from behind, and was cut repeatedly by the assassin's knife.³ No clear understanding of the events of the next few minutes is possible because of conflicting testimony of those involved in the furious struggle in the darkened room. Eventually Robinson was aided by another son, Augustus, who was also cut.¹

Paine fought his way to the stairs and escaped,

severely wounding a State Department employee, Hansell, at some point in his flight from the bedroom and down the stairs.

Secretary Seward, with the weight of the assassin's body removed, rolled to the floor, where he was found by the nurse Robinson, who administered first aid until the attending physician, Doctor Verdi, could be summoned.

Students of this night of assassination have been puzzled as to the exact nature of Seward's knife wounds, which have been variously and indefinitely described. Now, 102 years later, one of the authors (J.K.L.) has found a careful and precise clinical description by Dr. Thomas Brian Gunning, a New York dentist, who was called to the case on April 16. Doctor Gunning said:

Unsuccessful attempts had been made to hold the jaw in place by bandages and also with ligatures on the teeth, by the Surgeons first called on the case. On the fourteenth, [April] the patient was attacked by an assassin and a cut inflicted which reached from under the zygoma to the left of the trachea. Attending Surgeon Basil Norris, USA, informed me that the jaw was fractured on the right side between the bicuspid teeth and also in the ramus of the same side; that the jaw had been bandaged against the upper gum [edentulous] but this proving insupportable to the patient, the bandages were removed. On examination, I found discoloration caused by the accident still remaining on the right side of the face. A cut [inflicted by Paine] commenced under the zygoma, passed forward about three inches, then downward and backward an equal distance, to the lower border of the jaw, from whence it crossed over the front of the throat to the left of the trachea. On the skin, its first direction fell somewhat from a horizontal line, the second passed down at a little less than a right angle to the first, while the third went forward and downward.

These three divisions, of nearly equal length, appeared to have been made by one sweep of the knife. Across the throat the wound was superficial, but above the border of the jaw it grew deeper as it split the cheek—the point of the knife making no entrance into the mouth, except so far as it may be considered to have done so by laying open the right fracture externally, the gum being already lacerated internally from the great displacement of the bone following upon the original injury. The knife was evidently aimed at the throat, but the head being thrown over, the cheek and jaw received the brunt of the blow. No arteries had been ligatured. The wound was neatly sewed up, and healing by first intention, except immediately under the fracture [Fig. 1].

The swelling and stiffness made the examination difficult, but the ramus proved uninjured. There was, however, a second fracture, but on the other side of

the mouth, the jaw being fractured on both sides between the bicuspid. The [lower] jaw contained all ten forward teeth. The right wisdom tooth and root of the left were all that remained back of the bicuspid. The part in front, containing eight teeth, was drawn down out of place, while the right back fragment with the wisdom tooth and second bicuspid was drawn up, showing its fractured end white and bare. The fracture was square across, vertical and smooth, and the parts were separated vertically over a quarter of an inch when at rest, sometimes more. On the left side, the first bicuspid fell downward and forward from the second, one-quarter of an inch. This fracture passed forward somewhat in descending. Here the bone could not be seen, as the gum had separated from both teeth and lay swollen over it. Pus discharged profusely from both fractures. The gum was pale and flaccid, in keeping with the general condition of the patient. The upper jaw was entirely without teeth. [It was] important to set the exposed bone in place as early as possible and also to give the patient time to recuperate—as he had already been subjected, during the morning, not only to a relation of the President's [Lincoln's] death, but to much that has been said and written upon the subject.⁴

Seward was unable to bear the added discomfort of a poor-fitting upper denture, so Doctor Gunning proposed a new interdental splint. However, the idea was rejected by the surgeons in charge in consultation with members of the family.²

Twelve days later, April 28, Gunning was recalled to Washington. He said:

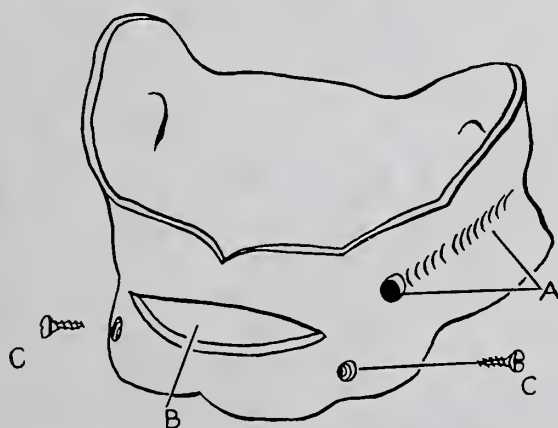


Fig. 2 ■ Gunning's vulcanite interdental splint for Seward. Saliva accumulating in buccal pocket was led by channeled vulcanite to hole A, into mouth proper. Anterior opening, B, level with incisal edges of lower teeth for food, speech, and mouth hygiene. Nut, or female screws embedded in vulcanite allowed screws, C, to be tightened against suitable mandibular teeth, immobilizing splint.

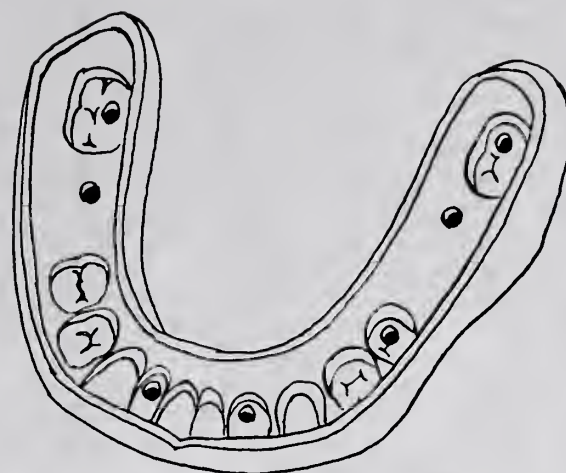


Fig. 3 ■ Gunning's basic design for vulcanite splint shows occlusal surface of mandibular splint. Dark holes through splint allowed "syringing the parts with warm water" without necessity of removal from mouth.

I found the sensation of the right side of the forehead, face, and lips deficient. The separation of the inferior dental nerve by the displacement of the bone and of branches of the facial nerve, by the knife, did not seem sufficient to account for it. There was also irregular motion in the right eye. The front of the jaw was lower and the right back fragment showed its alveolar to a greater extent. There were no indications of any tendency to union on either side. The fragments could be put precisely in place, no splinters or anything else intervening. There was little swelling, but great discharge of pus. Took wax impression of the upper jaw and removed the tartar from the lower teeth. On April 29 I set the jaw, and held it in place by wire and silk ligatures. Took a wax impression of the teeth and gum and obtained the bite directly from the teeth. The patient felt much relieved as the ligatures held the front of the jaw well up. Tried in a gutta-percha splint, arranged the wings in it, removed it carefully from the mouth, placed the upper and lower casts and female screws in it, and set them in a vulcanizing flask,⁴ [Fig. 2].

Gunning described the construction of the splint in a later article. On February 12, 1861, he had first applied a hard vulcanized rubber splint for a patient:

The radical and distinctive feature of these splints is, that, when suitable teeth are in the mouth, nothing is required on the outside, and the patient may move about. In the use of these splints fractures of the lower jaw are divided into two distinct classes; first those in which the teeth and gum of the fractured jaw are alone used to control the fractured bone, and the jaw is allowed to move naturally; second, those in which the splint is fitted to both upper and

lower teeth, the jaw being held still; but no bandage is used around the head⁵ [Fig. 3].

Gunning describes his basic technic of splinting as follows:

To apply these splints the fractured jaw should, if possible, be set and held by ligatures around the teeth while an impression of the teeth and gums is taken in warm wax. The plaster cast from the impression will then be precisely what is required to mold the splint. If the bone cannot be held in place an impression of the teeth may be taken in the best attainable position, the plaster cast then separated where necessary and the parts set in place. . . I have generally used this splint without any fastenings but . . . it is sometimes advisable to secure it by . . . screws passing into or between the teeth. . . . When screws are used to hold any rubber splint fast on the teeth, metal nuts must be imbedded in the splint, for the screws to work in.⁵

In Seward's case, Gunning continues:

Although the front of the jaw containing the eight forward teeth was greatly displaced [before the setting] the silk and wire ligatures held well until May 2 when they were removed and the splint applied. It was hard vulcanized rubber, covered the roof of the mouth and adjacent gum, enclosed all the lower teeth, and went down over the gum on the outside somewhat. The opening in front was seven-eighths of an inch wide, half an inch high in the center, the wings preventing any more room sideways as they were set clear of the commissure of the lips. To have given any more room in the height by depressing the lower jaw, would have made it very difficult to prevent saliva from overflowing at the lips. Upon putting in the splint, the breathing was spasmodic for several minutes, but this soon passed off, and I screwed it fast to the lower teeth. They held it against the upper gum for the first night, but after that a cap [on the head] with adjuncts, was worn to support the splint [Fig. 4].

The upper wings only were used, as the lower jaw was held up in the splint by screws passing into the lower canines. After giving the excellent Army nurses, who were in attendance upon the patient, full direction for keeping the splint clean in the mouth and properly balanced by the cap which I had fitted to the head I left Washington May 3.

While talking was very difficult and frustrating at first, through the opening in the mouth, the patient was able to talk freely when I saw him on May 8. Saliva accumulated several times in the cheek probably from a severed Steno's [Stenson's] duct, but had been let out by lancing externally. By June 11 the left side of the jaw was well united, but the right still ununited, although the wound under it was near-

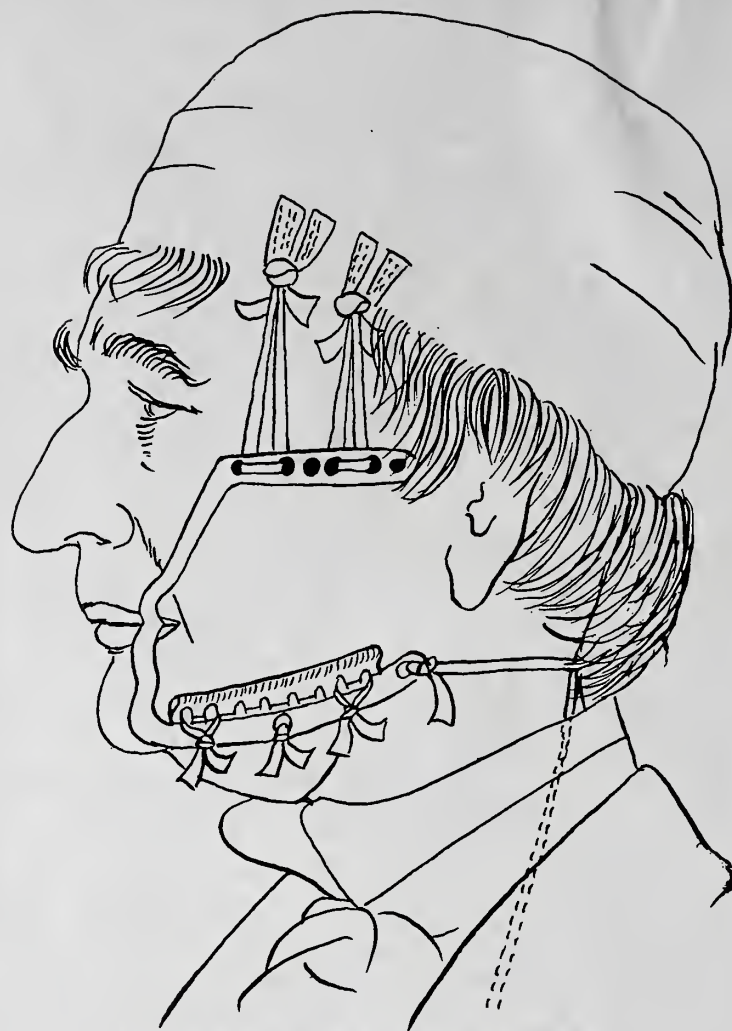


Fig. 4 ■ Gunning interdental splint. Adapting splint shown in Figure 2, iron wings tinned to prevent rusting and for easier soldering were embedded in splint. These wings, placed as far laterally as was comfortable, emerged from mouth at normal lip line and were arched to avoid contact with swollen facial tissues. Holes in wings or iron pins in some of lower wings afforded tape connection with headcap, submental sling, or both. The headcap was stabilized by tapes at rear which passed under patient's shoulders. Immobilization of mandible to maxilla was thus accomplished by one or combination of three devices: bilateral use of screws through vulcanite to tooth surfaces or interproximal areas; use of maxillary iron wings and headcap, or use of mandibular wings and submental linen sling.

ly closed, the last of several pieces of bone having been removed around the first of June.⁴

This splint had held the jaw firm for 68 days, and . . . while the right fracture was still ununited [it] did not surprise Dr. Gunning since the bone had been exposed to so much during the twenty-three days which elapsed before he had been permitted to set it. The saliva from the right parotid gland had dis-

charged through the fracture from a short time after the attack. Gunning felt that these unfavorable circumstances, with the enfeebled condition from loss of blood, had been followed by necrosis of the ends of the bone on that side, and, indeed, several pieces had come away externally during the first six weeks, as well as a long piece of bone from the inside of the jaw on the left side. Dr. Gunning removed the necrosed alveolar bone around the second bicuspid in June, but left the tooth in, as it appeared to have healthy connections with the lower parts of the socket. The other teeth had grown firm. The external appearances indicated the saliva followed the course taken by the point of the knife. By July 9, Stenson's duct proved to be completely closed. Gunning could not pass the smallest probe into it and the saliva discharged entirely through the ununited fracture on the right side. A second splint was inserted and worn from July 9 to August 4, and another one until October 1865.²

Dr. Gunning stated: "In a letter to me of March 29, 1866, the patient says: 'The whole jaw moves quite well and firmly. Thus at last I begin to regard my cure in that respect as complete. I have not seen him myself since October 1865, therefore cannot speak of it by personal observation'."²

Summary

A case of mandibular jaw fracture treatment is described. Historically interesting, because the patient was Lincoln's Secretary of State, William H. Seward, the clinical picture and treatment described by a New York oral surgeon, Dr. Thomas

Brian Gunning, may be, also, a dental landmark. The patient, Seward, suffered a concussion, arm fracture, and bilateral fracture of the mandible on April 5, 1865. Nine days later, Seward again suffered serious injury—knife wounds inflicted by an assailant on the night of Lincoln's assassination.

Doctor Gunning had to treat a mandibular fracture complicated by concussion, weakness from blood loss, arm fracture, face bruises and contusions, and deep facial knife wounds. Gunning's suggested treatment, refused by the army surgeons 2 days after the attack, was begun 12 days later, 23 days after the accident when severe suppuration further complicated the picture.

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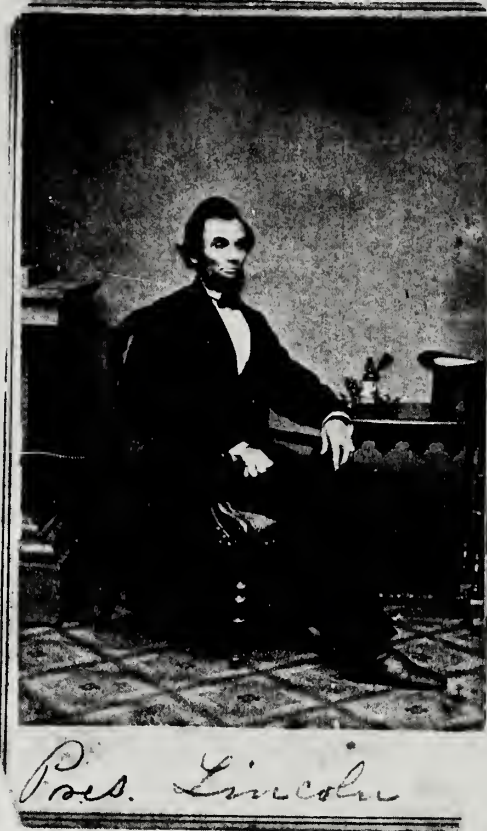
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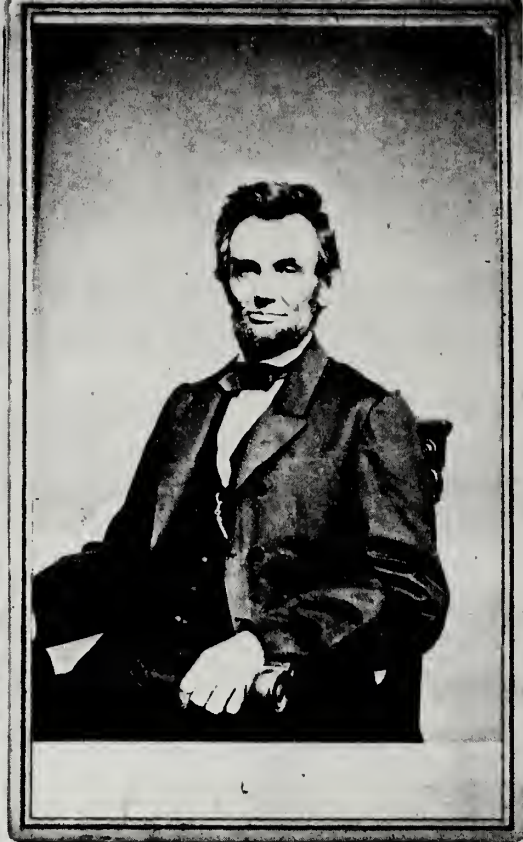
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Pres. Lincoln

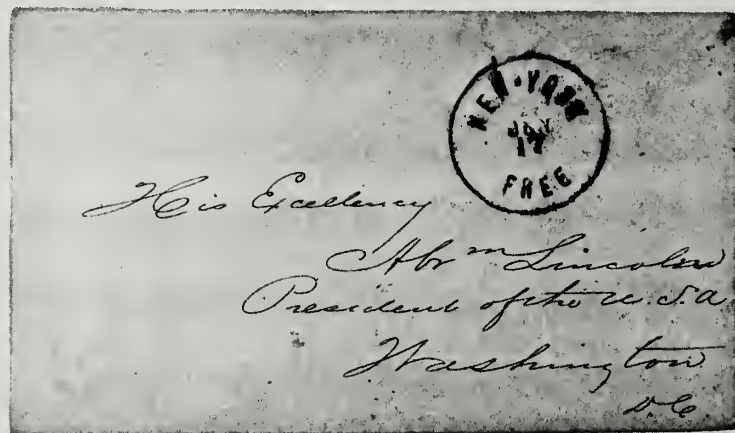


Lincoln's First Photograph as President

49 Abraham Lincoln – CDV photograph by Mathew Brady, Feb. 24, 1861, just before his inauguration, Lincoln's beard had excited much interest in the Capitol, this photograph was taken for Harper's Weekly, apparently to satisfy public curiosity about his beard. Anthony/Brady backmark (Ostendorf 51) 500.

50 Abraham Lincoln – CDV photograph by Mathew Brady, Jan 8, 1864, a handsome portrait of Lincoln with a quiet smile, light beard, otherwise Very Fine (Ostendorf 84) 500.

*President Lincoln was murdered
on the night of April 14th 1865
Frederick W. Seward*



51 Frederick Seward – ANS, son of Secretary of State William Seward and Acting Secretary of State at the time of the assassination conspiracy, he was wounded and almost killed by the assassin Lewis Paine, who broke into the Seward home the same night Lincoln was assassinated by Booth, and attempted to kill him and his father. He solemnly writes:

'President Lincoln was murdered on the night of April 14, 1865 – Frederick W. Seward'

A historical quote by a firsthand witness, who narrowly escaped being assassinated himself. Superb

750.

52 (Abraham Lincoln) – Free Franked envelope to 'His Excellency Abraham Lincoln, President of the USA, Washington, D.C.', with a perfect New York postmark, it is interesting to see free franked mail to him. Very fine and attractive 150.

DEPARTMENT OF UROLOGY

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PROFESSOR & CHAIRMAN, EMERITUS

August 2, 2001

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Director, The Lincoln Museum
200 E. Berry Street
Ft. Wayne, Indiana 46802

Dear Sir:

In the May issue of THE LINCOLNIAN, from the Lincoln Group of D.C., I noticed the announcement of your new temporary exhibit entitled, "NOW HE BELONGS TO THE AGES: THE ASSASSINATION OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN."

I am greatly in favor of exhibits of this sort and items from our large collection of assassination memorabilia have been lent to various Presidential museums and for many exhibits related to the assassination of Lincoln. The most recent was at the Surratt Society near Washington.

In describing your exhibit, you state that it includes, "such dramatic items as the knife used by one of Booth's conspirators, Lewis Thornton Powell, to stab Secretary of State Seward."

As the staff of the Huntington Museum may have told you, we have in our family collection a different knife, which was the one actually turned in as evidence, and exhibited at the trial of Powell, by the doctor (Wilson) who had attended the Seward family, on the night of the attempted assassination. (Fig. 1) Dr. Wilson definitely identified the knife at the trial of the conspirators, including Powell. In the trial transcript he stated "That is the knife. It bore an identifying mark he had placed upon it, on the morning of Powell's attack. He had asked the three Seward family members, whose wounds he attended to, on that night, if he could have the knife as a souvenir, after the trial was over. They procured the knife for him and even wrote him a grateful note in a book about the trial, signed by all three Swards. (This is also in our collection) Fig. 2

Sometime later, Private (now Sgt.) Robinson, the invalid-soldier nurse who had been guarding Seward, also decided he would like the knife as a souvenir. He asked Secty of War Stanton to procure it for him, and Stanton wrote a note to the authorities telling them to give him the knife. He was given one of the several knives of the conspirators, which were in the files following the trial.

Two years later, the son of Mrs. Surratt, John Surratt, was finally captured in Europe, and returned for trial, to Washington. Sgt. Robinson came to the trial and testified that he had his knife, but did not bring it to court. Thus, Dr. Wilson, who had the original knife, had no chance to challenge the authenticity of Robinson's knife.


It should be noted that there was great sympathy for Robinson, who was also stabbed by the assassin in the attempts to pull him off the victim. He was given a gold medal by the Congress and was indeed a hero, so that no one was anxious to upset him by demonstrating that his knife was the wrong knife.

If his knife had indeed been shown in court, Dr. Wilson would have had a chance to state that it was not the correct knife, but since Robinson's knife was never actually shown, the occasion was gracefully avoided and the embarrassment of this national hero was avoided, to the happiness of all concerned. Sgt. Robinson admitted that he never actually saw the knife, in the darkness, so that he was not actually prepared to say that his was the correct knife or not, if he had been asked directly.

I enclose a photograph of the knife Dr. Wilson marked and turned over to the authorities on the morning of the assassination, which had been dropped by Powell, as he mounted his horse outside the Seward mansion on the night of the stabbing. You can see the alligator on the pommel, which appealed to Powell, since he was a Florida native, and the distinctive structure of the knife which could not possibly be confused with the much simpler pattern of knife, like the one given to Robinson (a photograph which is also enclosed).

Incidentally, if you should want to borrow this, or any of our other assassination memorabilia, to fill out any corners of your exhibit, my family and I would be happy to help out, since we are very much in favor of the kind of thing you are doing to memorialize this event.

Sincerely,



John K. Lattimer, M.D., Sc.D.

JKL/edp
encl

Fig. 1 - (Top) The Bowie knife dropped by Powell as he mounted his horse after stabbing Secretary State Seward, and injuring Seward's 2 sons. Powell was proud of the alligator on the pommel, since he was from a Florida Regiment. Dr. Wilson marked it and turned the knife over to the authorities so it could be used as an exhibit at Powell's trial. Both Dr. Wilson and the Seward's house boy said "That is the knife" turned in, at the trial.

(Bottom) A similar, plainer knife of the type carried by several of the other associates of Booth, when they were rounded up, after the assassination.

Fig. 2 - The grateful note the 3 Seward men (the Secretary of State and his 2 sons). Two were stabbed by Powell with this knife, and one son had his skull fractured when Powell struck him with his revolver.

Dr Nelson

from his gentleman
and efficient friend.

William W. Seward

F. W. Seward

A. H. Seward

