ABRAHAM LINCOLN DIED IN THE BEDROOM OF A BOSTON BOY

Forty Years Have Passed Now Since the Assassination.

Today Judge Edward M. Yates of Old Orchard, Me, Has Among His Cherished Keepsakes Hair from the Dying President's Head and a Strip of Pillow Slip Stained with the Blood of the Martyr—Recollections of Dr Yates of West Paris, Me, Who Was in Ford's Theatre When the Shot Was Fired and Saw Booth Leap from the Box —An Interview with a Roxbury Woman, Sister of the Young Bostonian Who Tied the Crape to the Blind When the Great Heart Had Ceased to Beat.

A STRIP of cotton cloth, scarcely three inches square, not cut, but torn off, and on it a dull red spot as large over as a silver dollar.

Forty years ago today that stain was crimson bright.

For this strip of cloth is a piece of the pillow slip on which lay the head of an assassinated President, and this dull stain, fading year by year, was the life-blood of Abraham Lincoln.

Forty years ago yesterday morning, and on the same day in the week, he breathed his last. It was in the plain first-floor hall bedroom of a Washington lodging house, and a score or more of people were about the bedside and in the adjoining rooms when Secretary of War Stanton reverently and pathetically lifted his hand and said, "Now he belongs to the ages."

Outside, the street in front of the house was thronged with a hushed crowd, waiting for the latest, and, as every one feared, the last. The bedroom in which the President was dying was that of William T. Clark, a Boston boy, clerk at the department headquarters of the 22d army corps; and when at 7:22 in the morning Dr Stone announced that the heart had ceased to beat it was this thoughtful Boston boy who stepped to the open parlor window and tied a piece of crepe to the closed blind, in mute announcement to the gathered thousands that Abraham Lincoln was no more.

And when the body of the dead President was lifted from the bloodstained bed, the young soldier clerk reverently preserved many a relic of the last scene in the fearful tragedy; and when, an hour later, he went to his day's work, he offered to share with a fellow clerk and friend some mementos of that awful day.

Thus it comes about that today, 40 years after, that fellow clerk, now Judge Edward M. Yates of Old Orchard, Me, has, among other cherished keepsakes of the war, a piece of that fluttering crape, hair from the dying President's head, a bloodstained piece of napkin used that night, and this strip of pillow slip, tinged with its witness of the martyr's death.

It was on the 9th of April, in 1865, that Lee surrendered at Appomattox. Richmond had fallen, the rebel armies had been captured or put to flight, and the four years of war, that had cost 350,000 lives, was over at last. The whole north was in a blaze of excitement over the news. The general joy was unconfined, and the noise of gunpower was terrific and continuous everywhere, from the Atlantic to the Pacific. No more war and bloodshed; peace at last.

Judge Yates' Story.

"I well remember," says Judge Yates, in giving his recollections of the day, "that the 14th of April, 1865, was summer-like almost to sultriness. All day soldiers by regiments, local organizations and the people irrespective of organization had filled the streets, filing past the White House to greet and congratulate President Lincoln. At dark, in company with a comrade, I followed the crowd to the White House, whither a procession of city firemen—the last procession of that day—was marching with banners and music.

"They were on their way to pay their respects to the President. He appeared in the doorwey, and, simply bowing, received a marching salute. And that procession of stalwart firemen was to be the last of the almost countless marching hosts to receive the bow of recognition from Abraham Lincoln; the last to parade in honor of the triumph of the union over rebellion.

"Soon after the procession had passed the President and his wife, accompanied by several gentlemen, among whom I recognized Schuyler Colfax, then speaker of the house of representatives, came out to take his carriage for Ford's theatre. I stood near the steps of the portico. There were no bodyguards in those days, and the people thronged so closely about their President as to touch the hem of his garment at will. He passed within six feet of me, and I observed him closely. He appeared unusually happy, and chatted in a pleasant strain with his friends as he passed along. Then he bade them a cheerful good night, stepped into his carriage and was whirled down the broad driveway, on their way to the house of Senator Harris, where they were to be joined by Miss Clara Harris and her intended husband, Maj Rathbone, whom they had invited to go to the theatre with them."

At Ford's theatre, that night, where the party was to occupy a box that had been tendered them, the play was "Our American Cousin," presented by Laura Keene and her company. Among his souvenirs, Judge Yates has the playbill for that night, a single strip of paper some 12 inches long and about the width of this column. He has also a ticket of general admission used that night, printed on heavy glazed brown pasteboard. The theatre was then one of the finest in Washington.

That night's interrupted performance, however, was the last it was ever to see. All further performances there were forbidden, and the building itself was afterward purchased by the government and made over for use as a museum.

The box which the presidential party was to occupy was the upper box on the right-hand side of the body of the theatre. Access to it was, as in most theatres, by means of a door opening through the wall from the dress circle. This door, however, did not open directly into the box, but into a little entryway, or lobby, as it was called. This was because the box had originally been two narrow boxes separated by a partition, with a door opening into each of the boxes from the corridor. This partition had been removed, but the two doors and the little entryway had been left.

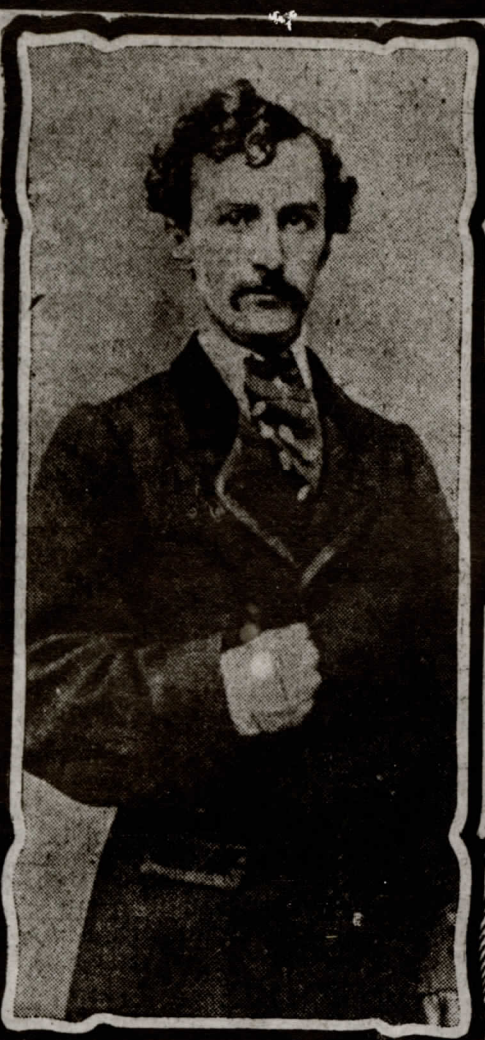
For that night, manager Ford had ordered a low-seated and heavily-stuffed rocking chair taken from his own bedroom to the box for the President's own use. This was placed near the front of the box and in the left-hand corner, bringing the President in that part of the box nearest the audience. Mrs Lincoln was to sit on his right, and beyond her, in the righthand corner of the box, Miss Harris, with Major Rathbone between these two but somewhat farther back in the box.

From the flag-draped front of the box to the stage below was perhaps 10 feet. With that stage and with all its construction behind the scenes, John Wilkes Booth was perfectly familiar. In fact, the strikingly handsome young actor had played a part upon that stage less than a month before, at a benefit given John McCullough, playing the leading role of Pescara in "The Apostate" to McCullough's Hemeya.

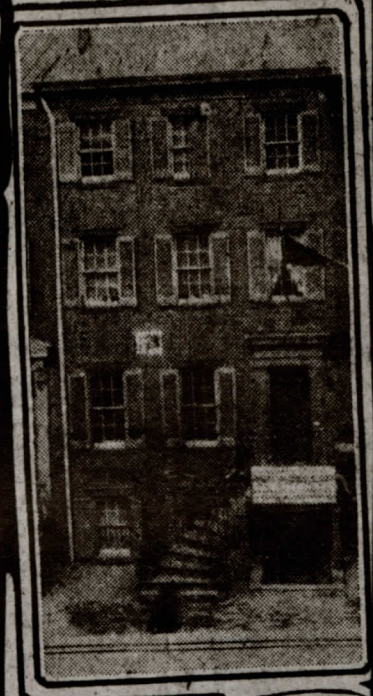
An Eye-Witness.

Although Judge Yates himself was not at the theatre that night, another Maine man, the judge's cousin, not only observed the assassination from a point directly opposite the President's box, but was one of the two men who leaped to the stage in an effort to overtake the fleeing assassin. This eye witness is Dr Octavius K. Yates, a practising physician at West Paris, Me, widely known and esteemed throughout that whole section of Oxford county. This is the story told by Dr Yates:

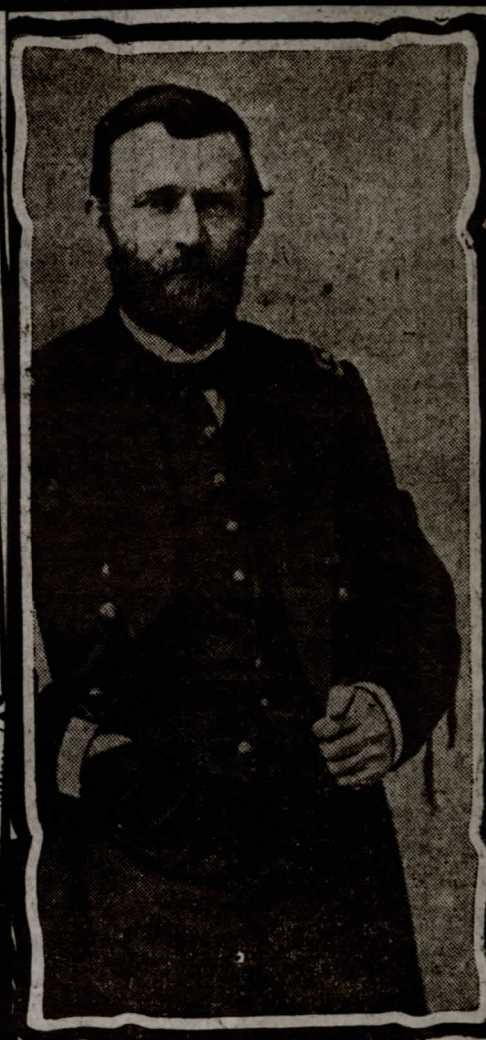
"In the spring of 1865 I was in Washington, summored there as a witness before a court-martial. On the morning of April 14 the papers contained a notice that President Lincoln, Gen Grant and other notable persons were expected to be at Ford's theatre that evening, to witness the play of "Our American Cousin" by Laura Keene and her dramatic company. Having an earnest desire to see the distinguished leaders of the great American conflict and feeling that this was a rare opportunity to do so, I decided to go.



JOHN WILKES BOOTH, THE ASSASSIN OF LINCOLN.



HOUSE IN WHICH LINCOLN DIED.



RARE PHOTO OF GEN. GRANT, WEARING ARM-KNOT OF CRAPE AFTER LINCOLN'S ASSASSINATION.

"Realizing that this announcement would call out a crowd to the theatre, a friend of mine suggested that we buy ourselves in before the opening of the doors. This plan proved successful, and by a liberal bestowal of cash in the right quarter we gained early admittance to the theatre and got the two seats in the front row of the dress circle, next to the box opposite the one to be occupied by the President and his party. Our seats were at the point directly over the outer corner of the stage, and not more than eight feet above it.

"The theatre was gayly decorated, especially the boxes, American flags being festooned at their front and framing their sides. When the doors were opened, there was a grand rush and the whole house was very quickly filled. Every available inch of ordinary seating space was occupied, except that there was no one in any of the boxes.

"The play began at 8 o'clock, but it was some minutes after that when the President and his wife, together with young Maj Rathbone and Miss Harris, came in and took their seats in the box. I shall never forget the wild excitement and rejoicing that was manifested by that packed audience when President Lincoln passed along the dress circle and entered his box with his party. The whole audience rose, the men swinging their hats and cheering vociferously, the ladies vying with them in waving their handkerchiefs and joining in the general chorus of noise, and the orchestra playing 'Hail to the Chief.'

"The President, looking to me unexpectedly tall and gaunt of form and homely of feature, with a broad smile, kept bowing his acknowledgments to this grand ovation. Then all got quieted down again, the actors resumed their parts and soon all attention was absorbed in the play. I frequently observed the President laughing heartily at the odd and amusing sayings of the actors

"About 10 o'clock a young man of military appearance and carrying a slouched hat in his hand passed along the wall of the dress circle on the other side of the theatre from me, going towards the door of the President's box. There was something so peculiar about the appearance of this man that my attention was unusually attracted, and supposing him to be some military man, I leaned over and asked my friend if he knew him. He answered in the negative. I had turned again to the stage, had glanced down and was looking at Laura Keene, who from the wings opposite was motioning to some one of the actors, when I heard my friend say: 'That man has gone into the President's box.'

"Then, at the very second that I looked over and saw the President leaning forward a little and looking out, there came the heavy 'Bang!' of a pistol, smoke clouded the box, there was a struggle, and, striking back with his dagger, the man we had seen go in put his left hand on the railing of the box and leaped out.

"But he came down partially falling and struck the stage rather sprawling. He scrambled to his feet again and made off the stage as fast as he could go. There have been stories that he stood up there and swung his dagger and exclaimed 'Sic semper tyrannis.' Now I was as near to him as any man in that house, and my attention was strictly fastened on him, and I firmly say that he did none of those things. He just got off the stage as quickly as he could.

"The next instant after he started to run I sprang up on the dress-circle railing in front of me and made a leap for the stage just below. But I was unused to such a jump, and in striking I wrenched my ankle in some way so sharply that for the instant I could only hobble along.

"I remained in the wings some minutes. Meanwhile the house was rapidly being emptied. At length my eye fell on a dish of water, and thinking it might be needed I managed to make my way with it out and up to the President's box. There I got a glimpse of his prostrate form breathing heavily, his head and shoulders lying in the lap of Laura Keene, drabbling her white dress with his blood."

Chased the Assassin.

Out of the few people in that audience who realized instantly the real significance of what was taking place before their eyes, only one other man had both the opportunity and the presence of mind to leap upon the stage and seek to grapple with the assassin. This was a young army officer, Maj Joseph B. Stewart.



ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT LINCOLN IN HIS PRIVATE BOX AT FORD'S THEATRE (FROM LESLIE'S WEEKLY)

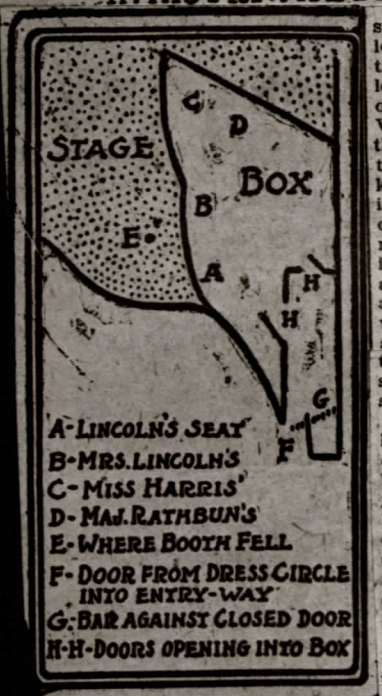


DIAGRAM OF BOX IN FORD'S THEATRE

"I was sitting in the front seat of the orchestra, on the right-hand side," testified Maj Stewart at the trial. "The sharp report of a pistol at about 10:30—evidently a charged pistol—startled me. I heard an exclamation, and simultaneously a man leaped from the President's box, alighting on the stage. He came down with his back slightly toward the audience, but rising and turning, his face came into full view. I recognized him as John Wilkes Booth. At the same instant I jumped upon the stage, and the man disappeared at the left-hand stage entrance. I ran across the stage as quickly as possible, following the direction he took, calling out: 'Stop that man!' three times. When I was about 20 feet from the door through which he ran, the door slammed to and closed. When I finally found the knob and opened the door, which opened into the alley back of the theatre, I perceived a man mounting a horse. The moon was just beginning to rise. I ran in the direction the horse was heading, aiming at the rein. He spurred him, at the same instant crouching down forward over the pommel of the saddle, and swept rapidly to the left and on toward F st. I still ran after the horse some 40 or 50 yards, commanding him to stop."

Booth, it appeared, had barred behind him the door that opened from the dress circle into the little entry-way behind the box by propping a piece of joist against it. Then he had noiselessly passed through the open inner door that led directly into the box, tiptoed forward, and, placing the muzzle of a heavy derringer close to the back of the President's head, pulled the trigger.

"I heard the discharge of a pistol," testified Maj Rathbone, "and saw through the smoke a man between the door and the President. He was not more than four feet from me. He said something that sounded like 'Freedom.' I seized him. He wrested himself from my grasp and made a violent thrust at my breast with a large knife. I threw up my hand and received a wound several inches deep in my left arm. The man rushed to the front of the box and I endeavored to seize him again, but only caught his clothes as he was leaping over the railing of the box. It was only a very few seconds from the time of the shot until he leaped."

Booth was spurred for a ride, and a horse was being held for him at the stage door by a boy whom he had hired to stay there with the spirited animal until its rider should come out. In his leap from the box his spur caught in the blue part of the flag that was draped around the box, and, as he came down, it tore a piece of the flag, and this piece was dragged half-way across the stage on the spur of his right heel. This catching of the spur in the avenging flag turned his jump into a fall, and when he struck the stage the small bone of his left leg below the knee was broken. But once outside and away, he fled with his companion Herold, until, 11 days later, surrounded by pursuers, he was shot by Boston Corbett in the blazing barn at Garrett's farm, with a bullet that pierced his spine at the neck, and so he died.

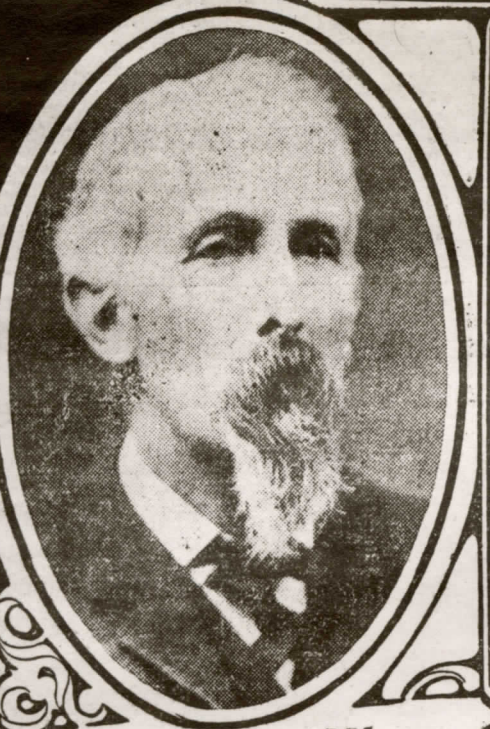
Doctor Rushed to Box.

Meanwhile the full horror of what had just taken place before their eyes was being realized by the excited crowd that filled the theatre. Men in the orchester were clambering upon the stage and those in the dress circle were crowding towards the President's box. The first medical man to reach the President's side was Dr Charles Taft, an army surgeon, and in a recent letter to Osborn H. Oldroyd of Washington he gives his recollections of that fateful night:

"I was in the theatre when Mr Lincoln was shot. When a call for a surgeon was made, I fought my way to the stage and was lifted up into the box by the people underneath. Two army paymasters had already entered the box from the dress circle, and had ordered the President's carriage to take him to the White House. As soon as I had located the wound, just behind the left ear, I countermanded that order and directed that the President be removed to the nearest bed.

"He would not have lived to reach home, because the jolting from the (then) cobblestone pavement would have brought on fatal hemorrhage. In leaving the theatre I took charge of the head, others the rest of the body, and several men preceded us and tore up the chairs from their fastenings to the floor. Maj Rathbone, with another gentleman, assisted Mrs Lincoln.

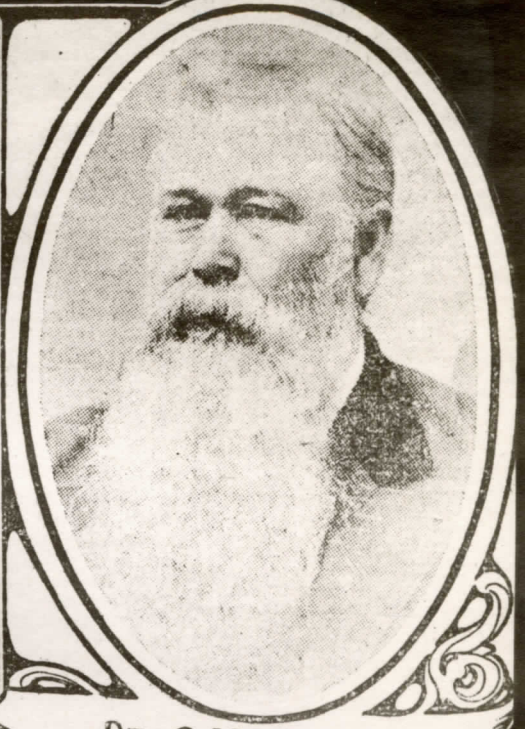
"On reaching the street I saw a man standing on the porch of a house opposite, the door open behind, showing a lighted hall. To that house I directed



JUDGE EDWARD M. YATES, OF OLD ORCHARD, POSSESSOR OF LINCOLN RELICS.



WM. T. CLARK, OF BOSTON, THE SOLDIER CLERK IN WHOSE ROOM LINCOLN DIED.



DR. O. K. YATES, EYE-WITNESS OF LINCOLN'S ASSASSINATION.

m7 steps, and was pleased to find a neat bedroom at the end of the hall without going upstairs. The single bed was pulled out from the corner of the room, and the dying President was laid upon it, diagonally, his extreme length not admitting of any other position."

Died in Boston Boy's Room.

This man who stood on the porch of the house and in whose room the dying President was taken was a Boston boy, William T. Clark. Mr Clark died in this city 17 years ago. His only sister, Mrs H. Estes Wright, living at 6o Waverly st, Roxbury, kindly gives the following facts regarding young Clark:

"Willie and I were born in Lowell. Father died when Willie was about a year old, and I was between 2 and 3. Five years later we moved to Boston. My brother went to the old Mayhew school, and then to Chauncey Hall school. He wasn't very strong and had to be kept out of school a great deal. Some time after the war broke out he began taking a course in civil engineering, but one day he ran away and enlisted. He was only 19 then, and so frail that we knew he couldn't live a week as a soldier. But somehow he did, and stood it a deal beter than many stronger men. He was in Co D, 13th Mass infantry, and was in 17 battles and never received even a scratch. He always wrote a beautiful hand, and not long before the battle of Gettysburg was detailed to Washington as a clerk.

"Willie's room was on 10th st, directly opposite Ford's theatre. He often told us the story of the night that Lincoln was shot. My brother had himself just come from the theatre, having come out before the play was done, as he didn't think much of it. It was a warm night, and he stood in the door of his lodging house awhile before going in to go to bed.

"He saw the peple beginning to come out, and stood awhile to watch them. He saw that everybody seemed excited and that here was a violent commotion. Then he heard somebody say that the President had been shot.

"Then two or three men bearing a body came out of the theatre. Behind them was a woman in evening gown, flowers in her hair, jewels on her neck. She was wringing her hands and crying. The bearers of the body halfstopped and appeared uncertain where to go. He heard one of them say: 'Where shall we take him?' Then my brother cried out to them: 'Bring him in here; take him in to my room.'

"So they brought the President up the steps and along the hall, my brother leading the way, until they came to his room at the end of the long hall. The blood fell in great drops from the President's head; there was a big drop on the top stone step of the house that a child sopped up the next morning with pieces of tissue paper so as to keep it. There were drops along the oilcloth the whole length of the hall.

"After the President had died and his body had been taken away, my brother put away the pillow case on which Lincoln's head had rested, and also the hair which had been trimmed from the back of his head by the doctors, and a few other such things as souvenirs. I suppose he gave away some of them; but such as he kept are now in a Lincoln museum in the very building in which Lincoln died.

"The name of the landlady was Mrs Peterson. She was in Philadelphia at the time of the assassination, and did not come back to Washington until sometime afterward. She was a bitter southerner, and pitched into my brother the first thing. 'So it was you who had them bring that beast into my house, was it?' said she. 'You have disgraced it forever. I give you notice to leave. Get out! I won't have you here!' And he had to get another lodging place."

This house to which the President was carried from the theatre was No. 453 10th st (now 516). It still stands, a plain brick structure of three stories and basement, a typical Washington lodging house. The room in which the President died measures 9x17 feet. The bed on which he lay was a low walnut four-poster.

All through the long, weary night, the watchers stood by the couch of the dying President. He was unconscious every moment from the time the heavy bullet from Booth's derringer crashed into his brain. His breathing was heavy and stentorious, and the terrific impact of the leaden ball, which had passed nearly through the head and was lodged just back of the left eye, had caused the eyes to turn a livid black. Only his tremendous vitality kept him living through all those hours. It was about 7 in the morning that Dr Stone, his family physician, announced that death was at hand, and at 7:22 the heart ceased beating. Then it was that Sec Edwin M. Stanton approached the bed and uttered in a low voice: "Now he belongs to the ages."

No Guard for President.

At the present day, when the President of the United States is so hedged about, protected, watched and guarded by secret service men, it will be a source of wonderment to some that a would-be assassin could make his way without hindrance into the private box of the head of the nation. But this nation had not then lost three Presidents by assassination; and, moreover, Lincoln himself objected to a guard whenever the matter was suggested to him.

"He positively refused," say Hay and Nicolay in their life of Lincoln, "to torment himself with precautions for his own safety. He would sum the matter up by saying that both friends and strangers must have daily access to him in all manner of ways and places; his life was therefore in reach of anyone, sane or mad, who was ready to murder and be hanged for it; that he could not possibly guard against all danger unless he were to shut himself up in an iron box, in which condition he could scarcely perform the duties of a President; by the hand of a murderer he could die only once, whereas to go continually in fear would be to die over and over. He therefore went in and out before the people, always unarmed, generally unattended."



BOOTH LEAPING UPON THE STAGE AND CATCHING HIS SPUR IN THE FLAG (FROM LESLIE'S WEEKLY)

That there was even an attendant sitting in the dress circle to watch the door that gave access to the box is by no means certain. If there was he must have let Booth in simply because he asked to go in. Hay says: "He showed his card to a servant in attendance and was allowed to pass in." Capt. Theodore McGowan, who sat near the door of the box, testified at the trial of the fellow-conspirators of Booth: "He (Booth) took out a visiting card and showed it to the President's messenger, who was sitting just below him. Whether the messenger took the card in or allowed Booth to go in, I do not know; but in a moment or two I saw him go through the door of the lobby leading to the box and close the door."

But this Maj McGowan was the only witness called at the trial to tell how Booth entered the box, and it seems incredible if there had been a better witness in the shape of the man who actually admitted the assassin to the box that he was not called on to testify. The only other witness at the trial who mentions this matter is James P. Ferguson, who kept a restaurant adjoining the theatre and knew Booth well. His sworn testimony is: "During the second scene of the third act I saw Booth pass along near the President's box, and then stop and lean against the wall. After standing there a moment, I saw him step down one step, put his hands on the door and his knee against it and push the door open—the first door that goes into the box." Such evidence as this, and the failure of the government to call such attendant as witness, leaves it certainly open to question if there was anyone at all that night to stand between the assassin's plan and his opportunity.

Sic Semper Tyrannis.

There is a popular misconception that after his leap to the stage Booth faced to the front, swung his dagger and shouted, "Sic semper tyrannis." Not only are the words of Dr Yates strong in their denial of this, but every morning paper in Washington the following morning and every witness at the trial but one stated that his cry of "Sic semper tyrannis" (Thusever with tyrants) was uttered from the box, or just as he was about to leap from the box. In Booth's diary, found on his dead body, is the statement: "I said 'Sic semper' in the box." It is well, then, that before this misconception has become tradition the clear statement of fact by an eyewitness should be made.

MODERN MIRACLE.

How Does a Coachman Keep on His Tall Hat in a Storm?

There are three things I have never yet been able to clearly understand. The first is how a train keeps on the rails; the second how a well-staircase endures so long without perpetually collapsing; and the third, which is the most difficult to comprehend of any, how a coachman manages to keep his hat on.

In the stormiest weather—when most hats are taking flight—when it is blowing fiercely and raining vindictively, you may see a coachman driving a pair of spirited horses and both hands so occupied that they could not touch the brim of his topper, and yet he never loses it.

How is this? Does he use some adhesive composition to make it fast to his head, has he an invisible string fastened under his chin, has he some extraordinary method of developing his occipito frontalis so as to render it equal to the occasion, or does he follow the example of the fair sex and run a hat pin through his back hair?

I am sure I cannot tell how this may be. All I know is that in the midst of a blinding deluge and a terrific hurricane you will find his hat securely planted on the top of his head as if it grew there.—London Graphic.