SHE SAW LINCOLN SHOT

A SEATTLE WOMAN RECALLS THE NIGHT OF THE ASSASSINATION.

There Was No Panic, Mrs. Caleb Milligan Insists, and Few Knew What Had Happened for Several Minutes.

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SEATTLE, Feb. 11.—While the nation celebrates the anniversary of the birth of Abraham Lincoln, there is in the little navy yard city of Bremerton an aged woman whose mind dwells on the fateful night when the Great Emancipator met his death. She is Mrs. Caleb Milligan, 80 years old, one of the few living persons who was in the Ford theater in Washington the night Lincoln was shot.

[*Editor's Note*—William J. Ferguson, the veteran actor, may be the only other person still living who was in Ford's theater the night of the assassination. He was a member of the company playing "Our American Cousin," and has written an interesting reminiscence of the greater drama that was enacted beyond the footlights that night.]

Mrs. Milligan was 17 years old at the time of Lincoln's assassination. She attended the performance of "The American Cousin" unknown to her mother, in company with the wife of a janitor at the theater, who was her cousin.

"It is in my mind as though it were yesterday," says Mrs. Milligan, as the light of remembrance kindles in her eyes, "though at the time I did not realize what had happened until several minutes after it was all over."



MRS. CALEB MILLIGAN OF SEATTLE, WHO WITNESSED THE ASSASSINATION OF LINCOLN.

LEG INJURED IN FALL.

"When we heard a shot fired in one of the boxes, we thought it was a part of the play. Then John Wilkes Booth jumped from President Lincoln's box on the left side as you enter the theater onto the stage. As he jumped his spur caught in some of the bunting which decorated the box, and his leg was injured when he landed on the stage. He raised his hand shouting something which I could not understand, but historians say was '*Sic semper tyrannis.*' I believe that for the moment nearly everyone in the theater thought as I did, that it was all a part of the performance, and of course it had been so arranged by the plotters that the audience would think just that. It seemed minutes passed while all we heard was the commotion attending Booth's escape before a man jumped onto the stage and shouted that Lincoln had been shot. There was a deadly silence that spoke louder than the loudest shrieks. This was broken by a gasp that seemed to come simultaneously from every throat. Then cool heads averted a panic, the names of everyone in the theater were taken, and everyone filed silently out of the house as though stunned.

"There was some commotion when those in the audience arose to leave their seats, and I understood some were injured slighly in trying to get out of the seats, but I cannot agree with stories that there was a panic as the house was emptied. Recognition of the terrible tragedy was not expressed by a violent demonstration.

A SCOLDING FROM MOTHER.

"When I reached home my mother scolded me severely, telling me the theater was no place for me to go. My cousin had gone home with me, and she and I told my mother it must have been all right for me to go there, as President Lincoln was there. Then she told my mother of the President being shot, and she was almost broken-hearted."

Mrs. Milligan's great-great-grandfather was an English lord, who settled at Jamestown, Va., and for years Mrs. Milligan, then Annie S. Brown, lived in that state on the banks of the Potomac. She is a second cousin of Jefferson Davis. Her parents were Capt. "Jack" Brown of the Southern army and Mrs. Eliza Brown. Their Washington home at the time of the assassination was at 1912 Eighth street N. W., a short distance from the Ford theater. Mrs. Milligan was acquainted with John Wilkes Booth and knew Mrs. Mary E. Suratt, at whose home the assassination plot was formed.

Nine years ago Mrs. Milligan fell and suffered a broken leg, and since that time has been able to move about only with the assistance of crutches or a wheelchair.