

# *The Surratt Courier*

Published Bimonthly by the Surratt Society

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Louise Oertly, Editor

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## **President's Message**

**The President of the Surratt Society is inviting you to  
the Annual Meeting of the Surratt Society.  
It will be held via Zoom on  
Saturday, April 5, from 2:00 to 4:30 p.m. (ET).**

There will be a brief business meeting for the election of officers for the 2025-6 term and the proposed slate is:

<b>President</b>	<b>William Binzel</b>
<b>Vice President</b>	<b>Louise Oertly</b>
<b>Treasurer</b>	<b>Nathan Willis</b>
<b>Secretary</b>	<b>Rebecca Morris</b>

Afterwards, we are pleased to have two presentations:

**Paul Severance will speak on the trial of the Lincoln Assassination Conspirators.**

**Francis J. Gorman is the author of a newly published book, *Confronting Bad History - How a Lost Cause and Fraudulent Book Caused the John Wilkes Booth Exhumation Trial*. Frank was the attorney for Green Mount Cemetery in Baltimore in the effort to exhume the body of Booth.**

**Topic: Surratt Society Conference 2025**

**Time: April 5, 2025, at 2:00 p.m. Eastern Time (US and Canada)**

**Join Zoom Meeting. The link is:**

**<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81547245578?pwd=oiHBmbayEaQEmwbit7cPYVfe4DzAZr.1>**

**Meeting ID: 815 4724 5578**

**Passcode: 416937**

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*This newsletter is a bimonthly publication of the Surratt Society. The Surratt Society's website is [surrattmuseum.org](http://surrattmuseum.org).*

*Contact us at [surratt.society@gmail.com](mailto:surratt.society@gmail.com) or by mail at: Surratt Society, 9201 Edgeworth Drive #3853, Capitol Heights, MD 20791-3853.*

*The Surratt House Museum, a historic property of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission. The Surratt House Museum's phone number is (301) 868-1121.*

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This year is the 160<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the assassination of President Abraham Lincoln, and I was curious as to what the news of the day was saying about the events that took place on the night of April 14, 1865. Keep in mind that in 1865, unlike today, newspapers were the sole source of news, so I thought it worthwhile to review what people were learning of the events of April 14<sup>th</sup>, and when they learned it.

I did a quick search on the Library of Congress's website, Chronicling America, for 1865 Washington, D.C., newspapers. I found the following articles in *The Evening Star*.

Louise Oertly, Editor

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This section was reprinted from *The Evening Star*, April 15, 1865, columns 4-6

**ASSASSINATION OF THE PRESIDENT.**

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**ATTEMPTED MURDER OF SECRETARY SEWARD AND SONS.**

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**Dispatches from Secretary Stanton.**

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WAR DEPARTMENT  
WASHINGTON, D. C., April 15, 1:30 P.M.

*Major General John A. Dix, New York:*

Last evening, at 10.30 p. m., at Ford's Theatre, the President, while sitting in his private box with Mrs. Lincoln, Miss Harris, and Major Rathbone, was shot by an assassin who suddenly entered the box. He approached behind the President. The assassin then leaped upon the stage, brandishing a large dagger or knife, and made his escape by the rear of the theater. The pistol ball entered the back of the President's head. The wound is mortal. The President has been insensible ever since it was inflicted and is now dying.

About the same hour an assassin, either the same or another, entered Mr. Seward's house and, under pretense of having a prescription, was shown to the Secretary's sick chamber. The Secretary was in bed, a nurse and Miss Seward with him. The assassin immediately rushed to the bed, inflicting two or three stabs on the throat, and two in the face. It is hoped the wounds may not be mortal. My apprehension is that they will prove fatal. The nurse alarmed Mr. Frederick Seward, who was in an adjoining room, and hastened to the door of his father's room, where he met the assassin, who inflicted upon him one or more dangerous wounds. The recovery of Frederick Seward is doubtful.

It is not probable that the President will live through the night.

General Grant and wife were advertised to be at the theater this evening, but the latter started to Burlington at six o'clock last evening.

At a Cabinet meeting, at which General Grant was present today, the subject of the state of the country, and the prospects of speedy peace was discussed. The President was very cheerful and hopeful, spoke very kindly of General Lee and others of the Confederacy, and the establishment of Government in Virginia. All the members of the Cabinet, except Mr. Seward, are now in attendance upon the President. I have seen Mr. Seward, but he and Frederick were both unconscious.

E. M. STANTON, Secretary of War

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WAR DEPARTMENT,  
WASHINGTON, D. C., 3 A.M., APRIL 15, 1865.

*Lieutenant General Grant:*

The President still breathes, but is quite insensible, as he has been ever since he was shot. He evidently did not see the person who shot him, but was looking on the stage, as he was approached behind.

Mr. Seward has rallied, and it is hoped he may live. Frederick Seward's condition is very critical. The attendant who was present was stabbed through the lungs and is not expected to live. The wounds of Major Seward are not serious.

Investigations strongly indicate J. Wilkes Booth as the assassin of the President. Whether it was the same or a different person that attempted to murder Mr. Seward remains in doubt.

Chief Justice Cartter is engaged in taking the evidence. Every exertion has been made to prevent the escape of the murderer. His horse has been found on the road near Washington.

EDWIN M. STANTON, Secretary of War.

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WAR DEPARTMENT,  
WASHINGTON, D.C., April 15, 4:10 A.M.

*Major General Dix, New York:*

The President continues insensible and is sinking. Secretary Seward remains without change. Frederick Seward's skull is fractured in two places, besides a severe cut upon the head. The attendant is still alive, but hopeless.

Major Seward's wounds are not dangerous. It is now ascertained with reasonable certainty, that two assassins were engaged in the horrible crime—Wilkes Booth being the one that shot the President; the other, a companion of his, whose name is not known, but whose description is so clear that he can hardly escape.

It appears, from a letter found in Booth's trunk, that the murder was planned before the fourth of March, but fell through then because the accomplice backed out until Richmond could be heard from. Booth and his accomplice were at the livery stable at six o'clock last evening, and left there with their horses about ten o'clock, or shortly before that hour.

It would seem that they had for several days been seeking their chance, but for some unknown reason, it was not carried into effect until last night. One of them has evidently made his way to Baltimore, the other has not yet been traced.

EDWIN M. STANTON, Secretary of War.

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**TEN THOUSAND DOLLARS REWARD.**

Headquarters Dep't of Washington,

April 15, 1 865.

A REWARD OF TEN THOUSAND DOLLARS will be paid to the party or parties arresting the murderer of the President, Mr. Lincoln, and the assassin of the Secretary of State, Mr. Seward, and his son.

C. C. Augur,  
Major General, Com'd'g Department.

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**GENERAL GRANT ADVISED OF PRESIDENT LINCOLN'S ASSASSINATION.**

Philadelphia, April 14.

General Grant received the news of the attempted assassination of the President when at Walnut Street wharf, when about to take the cars for Burlington [NJ].

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**ASSOCIATED PRESS ACCOUNT.**

President Lincoln and wife, together with other friends, last evening visited Ford's Theatre for the purpose of witnessing the performance of *Our American Cousin*. It was announced in the newspapers that General Grant would also be present, but that gentleman, instead, took the late train of cars for New Jersey. The theater was densely crowded, and everybody seemed delighted with the scene before them.

During the third act, and while there was a temporary pause for one of the actors to enter, a sharp report of a pistol was heard, which merely attracted attention, but suggesting nothing serious, until a man rushed to the front of the President's box, waiving a long dagger in his right hand, and exclaiming "*Sic Semper Tyrannis*," and immediately leaped from the box, which was of the second tier, to the stage beneath, and ran across to the opposite side thus making his escape, amid the bewilderment of the audience, from the rear of the theater, and, mounting a horse, fled. The screams of Mrs. Lincoln first disclosed the fact to the audience that the President had been shot, when all present rose to their feet, rushing toward the stage, exclaiming, "Hang him!" "Hang him!"

The excitement was of the wildest possible character, and, of course, there was an abrupt termination of the theatrical performance.

There was a rush towards the President's box, when cries were heard. "Stand back!" "Give him air!" "Has anyone stimulants!" &c.

On a hasty examination it was found that the President had been shot through the head, above and back of the temporal bone, and that some of the brain was oozing out. He was removed to the private residence of Mr. Peterson [sic.], opposite to the theater, and the Surgeon General of the Army and other surgeons sent for to attend to his condition.

On examination of the private box, blood was discovered on the back of the cushioned rocking chair in which the President had been sitting, also on the partition and on the floor.

A common single barreled pocket pistol was found on the carpet.

A military guard was placed in front of the private residence to which the President had been conveyed.

An immense crowd was in front of it, all deeply anxious to learn the condition of the President. It had been previously announced that the wound was mortal, but all hoped otherwise.

The shock to the community was terrible.

At midnight the Cabinet, with Messrs. Sumner, Colfax, Farnsworth, Judge Cartter, Governor Oglesbay, General Meigs, Major Hay, and a few personal friends, with Surgeon General Barnes and his medical associates, were around his bedside. The President was in a state of syncope, totally insensible, and breathing slowly, the blood oozing from the wound at the back of his head. The surgeons were exhausting every possible effort of medical skill, but all hope was gone. The parting of his family with the dying President is too sad for description.

The President and Mrs. Lincoln did not start to the theatre till fifteen minutes past eight o'clock. Speaker Colfax was at the White House at the time, and the President stated to him that he was going, although Mrs. Lincoln had not been well, because the papers had advertised that General Grant and themselves were to be present, and, as General Grant had gone North, he did not wish the audience to be disappointed. He went with apparent reluctance and urged Mr. Colfax to go with him; but that gentleman had made other engagements, and with Mr. Ashmun, of Massachusetts, bade him goodbye.

When the excitement the theater was at its wildest height, reports were circulated that Secretary Seward had also been assassinated.

On reaching this gentleman's residence, a crowd and a military guard were found at the door and, on entering, it was ascertained that reports were based upon truth.

Everybody was so much excited that scarcely an intelligible account could be gathered. But the facts are substantially as follows: About ten o'clock, a man rang the bell, and the call having been answered by a colored servant, he said he had come from Dr. Verdi, Secretary Seward's family physician, with a prescription, at the same time holding in his hand a small piece of folded paper, and saying, in answer to a refusal, that he must see the Secretary, as he was entrusted with particular directions concerning the medicine. He still insisted on going up, although repeatedly informed that no one could enter the chamber.

The man pushed the servant aside and walked heavily toward the Secretary's room and was there met by Mr. Frederick W. Seward of whom he demanded to see the Secretary, making the same representation which he did to the servant. What further passed in the way of colloquy is not known, but the man struck him on the head with a billy, severely injuring the skull, and falling him almost senseless.

The assassin then rushed into the chamber and attacked Major Seward (paymaster United States Army) and Mr. Hansell, a messenger of the State Department, and two male nurses, disabling them all. He then rushed upon the Secretary, who was lying in bed in the same room, and inflicted three stabs in his neck, but severing, it is thought and hoped, no arteries, though he bled profusely.

The assassin then rushed downstairs, mounted his horse at the door and rode off before an alarm could be given, and in the same manner of the assassin of the President.

It is believed the injuries of the Secretary are not mortal, nor those of either of the others, although both the Secretary and the Assistant Secretary are very seriously injured.

Secretaries Stanton and Welles, and other prominent officers of the Government, called at Secretary Seward's house to inquire into his condition, and hearing there of the assassination of

the President, proceeded to the house where he was lying, exhibiting, of course, intense anxiety and solicitude.

An immense crowd was gathered in front of the President's house, and a strong guard was also stationed there, many persons evidently supposing that he would be brought to his home.

The entire city last night presented a scene of wild excitement, accompanied by violent expressions of indignation, and the profoundest sorrow. Many persons shed tears.

The military authorities have dispatched mounted patrols in every direction, in order, if possible, to arrest the assassins, while the Metropolitan police are vigilant for the same purpose. The attacks, both at the theater and at Secretary Seward's, took place at about the same hour—ten o'clock—thus showing a precented [sic. preconceived?] plan to assassinate these gentlemen.

Some evidence of the guilt of the party who attacked the President is in possession of the police.

Vice President Johnson is in the city, and his hotel quarters are guarded by troops.

2 ½ A.M.—The President is still alive, but is growing weaker. The ball is lodged in his brain, three inches from where it entered the skull. He remains insensible, and his condition utterly hopeless.

The Vice President has been to see him, but all company except the Cabinet, his family, and a few friends, are rigidly excluded.

Large crowds still continue in the street, as near to the house as the line of guards allow.

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**IMPORTANT ORDER BY A. C. RICHARDS,  
SUPERINTENDENT OF THE METROPOLITAN POLICE.**

The following was issued by Superintendent Richards at 3 o'clock this morning:

In view of the melancholy events of last evening, I am directed to close all places where liquor is sold and to be closed during this day and night.

The sergeants of the several precincts will see that this order is enforced.

A. C. RICHARDS, Superintendent.

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**FURTHER PARTICULARS OF THE ASSASSINATION.**

[From the Chronicle.]

“At half-past ten o'clock last night, in the front upper left hand private box in Ford's Theatre, while the second scene of the third act of *Our American Cousin* was being played, a pistol was fired, and Abraham Lincoln shot through the neck and lower part of the head. A second after the shot was fired, a man vaulted over the baluster of the box, saying, “*Sic Semper Tyrannis!*” and, adding another sentence, which closed with the words, “revenge for the South,” ran across the stage with a gleaming knife, double-edged and straight, in his right hand. The man was of middle stature, well-built, white faced and beardless, save that he wore a black moustache. His hair and eyes were black.

“The crowd ascended the stage; the actresses, pale beneath their rouge, ran wildly about. Miss Keene, whose benefit night it was, came forward, endeavoring to quiet the audience. Several gentlemen climbed to the box, and finally the audience were ordered out by some gentlemen.

“Mrs. Lincoln, Miss Harris and Major Rathbone were in the box with the President.”

The assassin left behind him his hat and spur, which have been identified as belonging to the suspected man, (J. W. Booth.)

The ball entered three inches below the left ear and behind it a little, just beneath the base of the brain, taking an upward direction and lodging in the brain, where it could be felt by the surgeons but not dislodged.

### **Police Headquarters.**

“No sooner had the dreadful event been announced in the street, than Superintendent Richards and his assistants were at work to discover the assassins. In a few moments the telegraph had aroused the whole police force of the city. Mayor Wallach, and several members of the city government, were soon on the spot. Every measure of precaution was taken to preserve order in the city, and every street was patrolled. At the request of Mr. Richards, General Augur sent horses to mount the police. Every road out of Washington was picketed, and every possible avenue of escape thoroughly guarded. Steamboats about to depart down the Potomac were stopped.

“As it is suspected that this conspiracy originated in Maryland, the telegraph flashed the mournful news to Baltimore, and all the cavalry was immediately put upon active duty. Every road was picketed, and every precaution taken to prevent the escape of the assassins.

“As everything that tends to throw light upon this matter is of interest, we think it well to add, that last evening, a dark roan horse was hired at Thompson's stable, on the corner of E and 13th Streets, at about ten minutes after ten o'clock. The horse had a black English saddle and ordinary stirrups. The man who hired him was dressed in black and was some five feet six inches in height. When asked when he would return, he said, ‘Probably in two hours, perhaps never.’ He wore a black mustache and goatee. One of the stable boys followed him, but lost sight of him on 10<sup>th</sup> Street.

“After hearing of the assassinations, the same stable boy rushed to the Nary Yard, thinking to head the man and horse off, should he prove the criminal, but learned that the man and horse he described had passed over the bridge some time before; and being told that if he followed, he would not be allowed back over the bridge, he followed no further, but returned.”

### **The *National Intelligencer* says:**

“The President was seen to turn in his seat, and persons leaped upon the stage and clambered up to the box. His clothes were stripped from his shoulders, but no wound was at first found. He was entirely insensible. Further search revealed the fact that he had been shot in the head, as is described elsewhere. Major Potter, paymaster in the Army, and Major Rathbone (the latter having been in the box), assisted by others, carried the President from the theater. The blood from the death wound falling upon the floor, stairway, and sidewalk as he was borne to the nearest house opposite, which was that of Mr. Ulke [Editor's Note: The house belonged to Mr. William Petersen]. Mrs. Lincoln was assisted in crossing the street with the President [she was] in a frantic condition, at the same time uttering heart-rending shrieks. She was attended by Miss Laura Keene and others. At the house, an army surgeon being at hand, called for a small quantity of brandy, which was administered, and it was thereupon announced to the pressing and excited crowd that he was alive, and not dead, as Mrs. Lincoln, in her agony, insisted. It was then found that Major Rathburn had received a wound in the arm, which he had intentionally concealed to prevent

excitement. He then fainted. The Surgeon General was sent for, and Drs. Hall and Stone also arrived.

“An immense crowd had now assembled, but a strong military force arrived and guarded the entire locality.”

### **Attack on Mr. Seward.**

“Just as the man in charge of Lafayette Square called out that the gates were closed, a man made his way into Secretary Seward's house, representing that he was the bearer of a medicine prescribed by Surgeon General Barnes, and which he was ordered to deliver to Secretary Seward in person.

“Pushing into the Secretary's room, he seized the old, suffering statesman with one hand and cut him with a dagger-knife on both jaws, then turned and forced his way into the hall, where, meeting with Frederick Seward, the Secretary's son, he attacked him and inflicted three wounds with a dagger-knife (probably the same) on the young man's head, breast, and hand. He also attacked Major Seward, another son of the Secretary of State, and inflicted upon him several serious wounds.

“The assassin then rushed out, mounted a bay horse, with light mane, and rode off, not at a gallop, but at what is called a ‘pace.’

“The person who assassinated Secretary Seward left behind him a slouched hat and an old rusty navy revolver. The chambers were broken loose from the barrel; as if done by striking. The loads were drawn from the chambers, one being but a rough piece of lead, and the other balls smaller than the chambers, wrapped in paper, as if to keep them from falling out.”

Crowds now gathered in all parts of the city. Nothing was talked of but the murder of the President, of Mr. Seward, and of the members of Mr. Seward's family. Intense excitement was added to the already nearly wild masses by a rumor that General Grant had been assassinated in the cars, en route for Philadelphia, and that Mr. Stanton had barely escaped with his life by being warned in time to exclude the conspirators from his house. (This is discredited.) It may be added that a person who was passing Mr. Seward's house saw the murderer mount his horse, pass up Fifteen and-a-half Street, where Mr. Seward resides, and thence rapidly to H Street, where he disappeared.

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This section reprinted from *The Evening Star*, Extra Edition, April 15, 1865, column 1

## **THE DEATH OF THE PRESIDENT.**

At 22 minutes past seven o'clock the President breathed his last, closing his eyes as if falling to sleep, and his countenance assuming an expression of perfect serenity. There were no indications of pain, and it was not known that he was dead until the gradually decreasing respiration ceased altogether.

Rev. Dr. Gurley (of the New York Avenue Presbyterian Church), immediately on its being ascertained that life was extinct, knelt at the bedside and offered an impressive prayer, which was responded to by all present.





Sumner; F. R. Andrews of N.Y.; General Todd of Dacotah; John Hay (Private Secretary); Gov. Oglesby of Illinois; General Farnsworth; Mrs. and Miss Kenny; Miss Harris; Captain Robert Lincoln, son of the President; and Drs. E. W. Abbott, R. K. Stone, C. D. Gatch, Neal, Hall, and Leiberman; Secretary McCullough remained with the President until about 5 o'clock, and Chief Justice Chase, after several hours attendance during the night, returned again early this morning.

### **SPECIAL CABINET MEETING.**

Immediately after the President's death a Cabinet meeting was called by Secretary Stanton and held in the room in which the corpse lay. Secretaries Stanton, Welles, and Usher; Postmaster General Dennison and Attorney General Speed present. The results of the conference are as yet unknown.

### **REMOVAL OF THE REMAINS TO THE WHITE HOUSE.**

Shortly after nine o'clock this morning the remains were placed in a temporary coffin, under the direction of Mr. Frank Sands, and removed to the White House, six young men of the Quartermaster's Department carrying the body to the house.

An escort of cavalry, (Union Light Guard), under the command of Lieut. Jamison, accompanied the remains, which were followed by Generals Auger, commanding Department of Washington; Rucker, Depot Quartermaster; Colonel Pelouze, of the War Department; Captain Finley Anderson, A.A.G., Hancock's corps; Captain D. G. Thomas, Clothing Depot; Captains J. H. Crowell; and C. Baker.

The solemn procession moved slowly up 10th Street to G, and thence to the White House. The large crowd present along the route standing uncovered. Immediately on the guard being removed a rush was made towards the house occupied during the night by the President, remaining about the entrance for some time.

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This section reprinted from *The Evening Star*, Second Edition, April 15, 1865, column 3

## **Additional Details of the Assassination**

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### **MILITARY MOVEMENTS.**

As soon as the news reached Gen. Augur's Headquarters that the President had been shot, the military of this department was ordered out, and in a few moments the city was encircled with pickets, they being stationed at a distance of about fifty feet apart. Cavalry was placed upon all the roads leading from Washington, and mounted men and military detectives proceeded to scour the country in every direction with orders to arrest any suspicious parties that they might find.

### **J. WILKES BOOTH THE ASSASSIN.**

Colonel Ingraham, Provost Marshal of the defenses north of the Potomac, is engaged in taking testimony today, all of which fixes the assassination upon J. Wilkes Booth.

Judge Olin, of the Supreme Court of the District of Columbia, and Justice Miller are also engaged today at the police headquarters on 10th Street in taking the testimony of a large number of witnesses.

Lieutenant Tyrell, of Col. Ingraham's staff, last night proceeded to the National Hotel, where Booth had been stopping, and took possession of his trunk, in which was found a colonel's military dress coat, two pairs of handcuffs, two boxes of cartridges, and a package of letters, all of which are now in the possession of the military authorities.

One of these letters, bearing date at Hookstown, Md., seems to implicate Booth. The writer speaks of the "mysterious affair in which you are engaged," and urges Booth to proceed to Richmond and ascertain the views of the authorities there upon the subject. The writer of the letter then endeavors to persuade Booth from carrying his designs into execution at that time, for the reasons as he (the writer) alleges the "Government here had its suspicions aroused."

The writer of the letter seems to have been implicated with Booth in the "mysterious affair" referred to, as he informs Booth in the letter that he would prefer to express his views verbally; and then goes on to say that he was out of money, had no clothes, and would be compelled to leave home as his family were desirous that he should dissolve his connection with Booth.

This letter is written on note paper in a small, neat hand, and simply bears the signature of "Sam." [Editor's Note: Sam was later identified as Sam Arnold.]

#### **THE POLICE REPORT.**

That about eleven o'clock two men were seen rapidly riding into Maryland, by way of the Anacostia bridge. A knife, answering the description of that flourished by Booth on the stage, was picked up this morning on F street, between 8th and 9th, and turned over to the police. At a late hour last night, a horse, with a saddle and bridle, was also taken up in the street by a soldier and identified by the owner as the animal hired by one of the men. This morning, Edward [sic. Edman] Spangler, a livery man, who held the horse of Booth when the latter rode up to the theater, and a boy named Peanut John, were arrested by the Third Ward police, and are now in custody. Peanut John asserted that Booth sold the horse he usually rode, and purchased another, a small bay horse.

John Surratt, of Prince George's County, Maryland, is said to be the man who cut Mr. Seward, but as yet no clue to the direction he took, unless he went with Booth, has been obtained.

#### **SUSPENSION OF TRAVEL.**

At 12 o'clock last night, orders were received at the River Transportation office, directing that no vessels be allowed to take their departure. The Alexandria and Washington ferry boats have ceased running for the present.

Today no one is allowed to leave the city by rail, conveyance, or on foot, and the issuing of passes from the headquarters of the Department of Washington has been suspended by General Auger.

#### **NARROW ESCAPE OF THE MURDERER.**

Mr. Jos. B. Stewart, of the firm of Stewart & Stevens, was sitting in a front seat of the orchestra below the box occupied by the President, and as the assassin leaped down upon the stage, sprang over the railing and pursued him. The murderer, however, having a better knowledge of the wings than Mr. Stewart rushed through to the door without hindrance, and having a horse in the alley galloped off. Mr. Stewart was close on the heels of the fugitive, and had he been more familiar with the stage would probably have seized him before reaching his horse.

William Withers, Jr., leader of Ford's orchestra, was coming from the rear of the stage to the orchestra, and came in contact with the murderer as the latter ran through the wings, receiving two cuts from the knife, resulting, fortunately, in only penetrating the clothing back of the shoulder. Mr. Withers corroborates the statements of others charging the act upon Booth.

It was reported this morning that Booth had been arrested on one of the roads leading from the city, and this report with another, to the effect that three secessionists, who were of the party of assassins, had been captured by some of the military, near Rockville, and hung, created a great deal of excitement, numbers of persons besieging all quarters where it was likely to ascertain the truth of such statements. No information of the capture of either of the assassins has yet been received by the authorities, and it is feared that, for the present at least, the criminals have escaped.

Mr. James Pumphrey had been hiring a horse to Booth for some weeks past. Yesterday, he went to Pumphrey's at 12 o'clock and engaged a horse. At about 4 ½ o'clock he called for a favorite small bay mare, a very fiery animal, which Mr. Pumphrey praised highly, which he took to the stable in the rear of the theater. Edward [sic.] Spangler, stage carpenter, took the mare at Booth's request to put her in the stable. When about to take the bridle off to place a halter on her, Booth told him not to do it, but put the halter over her head, and Spangler tied her to the trough. When she was brought out at night, the boy John was holding her to relieve Spangler, and when Booth rushed past John to mount, he struck John with the butt of the knife, which he had in his hand, and mounting rode off rapidly down the alley.

#### **THE FUNERAL.**

It is expected, though nothing has been definitely determined upon, that the funeral of the late President Lincoln will take place on or about Thursday next. It is supposed his remains will be temporarily deposited in the Congressional Cemetery.

#### **GENERAL GRANT,**

who left yesterday for New Jersey, and who was informed of the assassination as he was leaving Philadelphia, this morning arrived here in a special train, about noon, and immediately proceeded to the President's House.

#### **MR. SEWARD AND SON.**

Mr. Seward is improving, the wounds on his throat not being of a serious character, and it is hoped and believed that he will recover. Mr. F. W. Seward, Assistant Secretary of State, is, however, very seriously injured and his wounds may prove fatal. The other members of the household are not much injured and will recover.

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### **TELEGRAPHIC NEWS**

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#### **THE FEELINGS IN BALTIMORE**

BALTIMORE, APRIL 15. —The feeling here of the horrible crime which has deprived the country of its revered President is too deep for utterance. Sorrow profound and rage intense pervade all loyal hearts. All kindly feeling towards rebels and rebel sympathizers has, as it were, been obliterated, and one intense feeling of detestation and abhorrence for all connected with the rebellion takes its place. Flags are at half-mast and houses draped in mourning denote the public grief, whilst the bells are tolling mournfully.

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**SORROW IN NEW YORK.**

NEW YORK, APRIL 15, 9 a.m.—Immense sorrow is depicted on all countenances at the horrible events that occurred in Washington City last night. The grief of all good men is apparent everywhere at the demise of the President. No flags were hoisted this morning until the state of the President was ascertained, then they were all placed at half-mast.

The people appear perfectly horrified, and the utmost rage is undoubtedly felt toward all known secessionists and rebel sympathizers.

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The following is reprinted from *The Evening Star*, Second Edition, April 15, 1865, column 4

**Inauguration of Andrew Johnson as President of the United States!**

At an early hour this morning, Hon. Edwin M. Stanton, Secretary of War, sent an official communication to Hon. Andrew Johnson, Vice President, that, in consequence of the sudden and unexpected death of the Chief Magistrate, his inauguration should take place as soon as possible, and requesting him to state place and hour at which the ceremony should be performed. Mr. Johnson immediately replied that it would be agreeable to him to have the proceedings take place at his rooms in the Kirkwood House, as soon as the arrangements could be perfected.

Chief Justice Chase was informed of the fact and repaired to the appointed place in company with Secretary McCulloch of the Treasury Department; Mr. Attorney General Speed; F. P. Blair, Sr.; Hon. Montgomery Blair; Senators Foot of Vermont, Ramsey of Minnesota, Yates of Illinois, Stewart of Nevada, Hale of New Hampshire, and General Farnsworth of Illinois.

At 11 o'clock the oath of office was administered by the Chief Justice of the United States in his usual solemn and impressive manner.

Mr. Johnson received the kind expressions of the gentlemen by whom he was surrounded, in a manner which showed his earnest sense of the great responsibilities so suddenly devolved upon him, and made a brief speech, in which he said: "The duties of the office are mine; I will perform them—the consequences are with God.

"Gentlemen, I shall lean upon you; I feel that I shall need your support. I am deeply impressed with the solemnity of the occasion and the responsibility of the duties of the office I am assuming."

Mr. Johnson appeared to be in remarkably good health and has a high and realizing sense of the hopes that are centered upon him. His manner was solemn and dignified, and his whole bearing produced a most gratifying impression upon those who participated in the ceremonies.

It is probable that during the day President Johnson will issue his first proclamation to the American people.

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The following is reprinted from *The Evening Star*, April 18, 1865

## **THE ASSASSINATION.**

### **THE MURDEROUS ASSAULT UPON MR. SEWARD.**

Yesterday morning, we had an interview, through the kindness of Dr. Haight, with George F. Robinson, the nurse in attendance upon Secretary Seward on the night of the 14th instant, and through whose brave and determined endeavors the consummation of the murderous design of the fiend were frustrated. His statement of the attempt to murder the Secretary cannot fail to be read with interest.

Mr. Robinson is a soldier, belonging to Company E of the 8th Maine volunteers. On the 11th of August last, he came to Douglas Hospital badly wounded. After he had partially recovered, he obtained a furlough to return home, and subsequently another furlough, having been almost continually since the 11th of August unfit for military service. He returned to the hospital after his second furlough, on the 4th of last February. On the 12th of April, he was detailed to act as nurse for Secretary Seward, and the arrangement was that he was to remain with him from five o'clock in the evening until after breakfast the next morning. He had entirely recovered from the effects of his wound, also from the spell of sickness afterwards, but had not quite regained his strength.

Mr. Robinson states that, on the morning of the 13th inst., while seated at breakfast in the breakfast-room of the Secretary's residence, which room fronts on the street, a person bearing a most remarkable resemblance to, if he was not the same man who subsequently committed the horrible attempted assassination of the Secretary, stopped at the window and inquired as to the condition of the Secretary's health. Mr. Robinson supposed him to be some friend of the family and opened the window and answered his question. The next morning, on the 14th, on the night of which the assassination was attempted, the same person again appeared and asked a similar question. No suspicion was excited in the mind of Mr. Robinson, however, and for the reason, as above stated, that he considered him a personal friend of the family.

To the best of the recollection of Mr. Robinson, the man entered the room in which Mr. Seward lay about ten o'clock in the evening. His recollection of the time is very distinct, as only about time previous he had examined the thermometer to see that the proper temperature of the room was preserved, and at the same moment observed the time by a watch. Mr. Seward was bolstered up, on a long French bedstead, in a reclining posture, and was quietly sleeping. The lights were turned dimly down, and the arrangement had been perfected for the night. Miss Fanny Seward was also in the room at the time. Presently, he heard a man's footsteps ascending the stairs with heavy and noisy tread, and Miss Seward and he were both surprised at this. Then there was a pause. It appears the man was met at the landing by Mr. Frederick Seward, with whom he had some conversation—probably referring to his alleged mission from the attending physician—for, a short time. Afterwards, Mr. Seward entered, and noticing that his father slept, said "Father is asleep now. I guess we will not disturb him." Miss Seward followed her brother to the door, looked out, and returned; and she did this the second time, then returned and sat down on the bedside. As soon as she was seated the second time, a slight noise was heard on the staircase, as

though a man had struck another with a walking-cane. Mr. Robinson opened the door slightly to see what was the cause of the disturbance.

The moment Mr. Robinson opened the door, he saw a man who appeared to be covered with blood, whom he supposed to be Major Seward, and immediately in front of him the assassin. The villain was about six feet in height, of medium-sized round face, of extremely light complexion, with light sandy hair, and whiskers and moustache, both light in color and in growth, and was broad-shouldered. He wore a slouched hat, which he left behind, a light-colored overcoat, buttoned closely to the throat with what seemed to be pearl buttons. His hands were soft and delicate-looking, but he displayed wonderful muscular power. As Mr. Robinson opened the door, the assassin struck at his breast. In his hand he had a long knife, the blade of which appeared to be about twelve inches in length and one inch in width. Robinson determined to oppose his progress and raised his arm to parry the blow. The consequence was that a wound was inflicted in the center of Mr. Robinson's forehead close to the hair, which he wears turned back. The knife glanced, and the clenched hand in which the man held the dagger came down upon Mr. Robinson's face and felled him to the floor.

Miss Seward, at this juncture, escaped from the room, and ran to the front window, screaming "murder." The assassin leaped on to the bed where Mr. Seward lay, still apparently in a helpless condition, and gave a tremendous blow at his face. He misled his mark, however, and, in his effort, almost fell across Mr. Seward's body.

By this time Robinson had recovered, jumped on to the bed, and caught hold of the assassin's arms. While he was thus attempting to hold the assassin, the latter struck Mr. Seward on the left side of the face, and then on the right side.

The assassin then raised up, and he and Robinson came to the floor together. They both got on to their feet, Robinson still keeping a firm hold upon him. The assassin reached his left arm over Robinson's shoulder and endeavored to force him to the floor. Finding he could not handle Robinson in that position, he dropped his pistol, which had been forced against Mr. Robinson's face in the hand, which was around his neck, caught hold of Robinson's right arm with his left hand, and struck behind Robinson with the knife.

They still continued to struggle for a few moments, Robinson forcing him toward the door, which was open, with the intention of throwing him over the balusters. When they had nearly reached the door, Major Augustus H. Seward entered the room, Robinson calling upon him to take the knife out of the assassin's hand. Major Seward immediately clutched the assassin. The latter struck Robinson in the stomach, knocking him down, broke away from Major Seward, and rushed down the stairs.

During the scuffle between Robinson and the assassin, when Mr. Robinson cannot say, he (the latter) received a wound quite serious, some two inches in breadth, on the upper part of the right shoulder blade, another a little lower down on the same side, and a slight one on the left shoulder. While struggling with the man near the bedside, he had seized the wrist of his right hand, in which was the dagger, and did not release his hold until knocked down by the assassin, near the door, and after Major Seward had come to his assistance.

He returned to the room after he found that the assassin had escaped and found that the Secretary had got off the bed on to the floor, and dragging with him the bed clothes, and was lying in a pool of blood. Upon going to the Secretary, he found no pulse in his wrist and stated to Miss Seward, who had re-entered the room and asked if her father was dead, that he "believed he was;" but upon a second examination, Robinson ascertained that his heart was still beating.

The Secretary then said, "I am not dead. Send for the police and a surgeon and close the house." He then placed the Secretary upon the bed, telling him that he must not talk. Mr. Seward did not speak after that.

Mr. Hansell subsequently told Mr. Robinson that having been alarmed by the noise, he had started for the Secretary's room, and was met on the stairway by the assassin, and was wounded and thrust to one side.

Mr. Robinson remained with Mr. Seward until the next morning at eleven o'clock, when he was removed to Douglas Hospital. Every attention is being paid to this brave man by the surgeons of this institution, and his condition is very favorable? —Chronicle.

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## **THE ASSASSINATION.**

### **DEPOSITIONS OF MAJOR RATHBONE AND MISS HARRIS.**

*District of Columbia, City of Washington:*

Henry R. Rathbone, Brevet Major in the Army of the United States, being duly sworn, says, that on the 14th day of April, instant, at about twenty minutes past eight o'clock in the evening, he, with Miss Clara H. Harris, left his residence at the corner of 15th and H Streets, and joined the President and Mrs. Lincoln and went with them in their carriage to Ford's Theatre, in 10th Street. The box assigned to the President is in the second tier, on the right-hand side of the audience, and was occupied by the President and Mrs. Lincoln, Miss Harris, and this deponent, and by no other person. The box is entered by passing from the front of the building in the rear of the dress circle to a small entry or passageway, about eight feet in length and four feet in width. This passageway is entered by a door which opens on the inner side. The door is so placed as to make an acute angle between it and the wall behind it on the inner side. At the inner end of this passageway is another door, standing squarely across, and opening into the box. On the left-hand side of the passageway, and being near the inner end, is a third door, which opens into the box. This latter door was closed. The party entered the box through the door at the end of the passageway. The box is so constructed that it may be divided into two by a movable partition, one of the doors described opening into each. The front of the box is about ten or twelve feet in length, and in the center of the railing is a small pillar overhung with a curtain. The depth of the box from front to rear is about nine feet. The elevation of the box above the stage, including the railing, is about ten or twelve feet.

When the party entered the box, a cushioned armchair was standing at the end of the box farthest from the stage and nearest to the audience. This was also the nearest point to the door by which the box is entered. The President seated himself in this chair and, except that he once left the chair for the purpose of putting on his overcoat, remained so seated until he was shot. Mrs. Lincoln was seated in a chair between the President and the pillar in the center above described. At the opposite end of the box, that nearest the stage, were two chairs: in one of these, standing in the corner, Miss Harris was seated. At her left hand, and along the wall running from that end of the box and to the rear, stood a small sofa. At the end of this sofa, next to Miss Harris, this deponent was seated. The distance between this deponent and the President, as they were sitting, was about seven or eight feet, and the distance between this deponent and the door was



about the same. The distance between the President, as he sat, and the door was about four or five feet. The door, according to the recollection of this deponent, was not closed during the evening.

When the second scene of the third act was being performed and this deponent was intently observing the proceedings upon the stage, with his back towards the door, he heard the discharge of a pistol behind him, and looking around, saw through the smoke a man between the door and the President. At the same time, deponent heard him shout some word which deponent thinks was "Freedom." This deponent instantly sprang toward him and seized him. He wrested himself from the grasp and made a violent thrust at the breast of deponent with a large knife. Deponent parried the blow by striking it up and received a wound several inches deep in his left arm between the elbow and the shoulder. The orifice of the wound is about an inch and a half in length and extends upwards toward the shoulder several inches. The man rushed to the front of the box and deponent endeavored to seize him again, but only caught his clothes as he was leaping over the railing of the box. The clothes, as deponent believes, were torn in this attempt to seize him. As he went over upon the stage, deponent cried out with a loud voice, "Stop that man." Deponent then turned to the President. His position was not changed. His head was slightly bent forward and his eyes were closed. Deponent saw that he was unconscious and supposing him mortally wounded rushed to the door for the purpose of calling medical aid. On reaching the outer door of the passage as above described, deponent found it barred by a heavy piece of plank, on end of which was secured in the wall and the other rested against the door. It had been securely fastened, so that it required considerable force to remove it. This wedge or bar was about four feet from the floor. Persons upon the outside were bearing against the door for the purpose of entering. Deponent removed the bar and the door was opened. Several persons who represented themselves to be surgeons were allowed to enter. Deponent saw there Colonel Crawford and requested him to prevent other persons from entering the box. Deponent then returned to the box and found the surgeons examining the President's person. They had not yet discovered the wound. As soon as it was discovered it was determined remove him from the theater. He was carried out, and this deponent then proceeded to assist Mrs. Lincoln, who was intensely excited, to leave the theater. On reaching the head of the stairs, deponent requested Major Potter to aid him in assisting Mrs. Lincoln across the street to the house to which the President was being conveyed. The wound, which the deponent had received, had been bleeding very profusely and, on reaching the house, feeling very faint from the loss of blood, he seated himself in the hall, and soon after fainted away and was laid on the floor. Upon the return of consciousness deponent was taken in a carriage to his residence.

In the review of the transaction, it is the confident belief of this exponent that the time elapsed between the discharge of the pistol and the time which the assassin leaped from the box, did not exceed thirty seconds. Neither Mrs. Lincoln nor Miss Harris had left their seats.

H.R. Rathbone.

Subscribed and sworn before me this 17th day of April 1865.

A.B. Olin

Justice of the Supreme Court of the District of Columbia.

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*District of Columbia, City of Washington*

Clara Harris, being duly sworn, says, that she has read the forgoing affidavit of Major Rathbone, and knows the contents there of; that she was present at Ford's Theatre with the

President and Mrs. Lincoln and Major Rathbone, on the evening of the 14th of April, instant; that at the time she heard the discharge of the pistol, she was attentively engaged in observing what was transporting on the stage, and looking round she saw Major Rathbone spring from his seat and advance to the opposite side of the box; that she saw him engaged as if in a struggle with another man, but the smoke with which he was enveloped prevented this deponent from seeing distinctly the other man; that the first time she saw him distinctly was when he leaped from the box upon the stage; that she then heard Major Rathbone cry out, "Stop that man!" "Won't somebody stop that man!" A moment after someone from the stage asked, "What is it!" or "What is the matter!" and the deponent replied, "The President is shot." Very soon after two persons, one wearing the uniform of a naval surgeon and the other that of a soldier of the Veteran Reserve Corps, came upon the stage, and the deponent assisted them in climbing up to the box.

And this deponent further says that the facts stated in the foregoing affidavit, so far as the same came to the knowledge or notice of the deponent, are accurately stated therein.

Clara H. Harris

Subscribed and sworn this 17<sup>th</sup> day of April, 1865.

A.B. Olin  
Justice Supreme Court D.C.

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Reprinted from *The Evening Star*, EXTRA edition, April 18, 1865

### **IMPORTANT!**

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### **THE ASSAILANT OF SECRETARY SEWAARD ARRESTED!!**

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HIS IDENTITY FULLY ESTABLISHED

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About 3:00 this morning and clad in laboring clothes, covered with mud and bearing a pick-axe on his shoulder, was arrested entering a house occupied by members of the Surratt family on H street, between 9th and 10th. On removing the mud from his person, he turned out to be of much more genteel appearance than his disguise indicated.

He has since his arrest been confronted with those at Secretary Seward's, who saw the Secretary's assailant on Friday night, and he was at once identified as the man.

It is reported that his name is Payne, but the full particulars have not yet transpired.

Surratt, it is now believed, not a direct actor in the assassination, but seems to have been in some way implicated in the plot.

Upon the prisoner being brought to General Augur's headquarters this morning, Mr. Seward's colored servant, who was at the door at the time the assassin applied for admission, was sent for. The servant had no knowledge of the arrest of the prisoner, but upon entering the room, in which the prisoner and a number of persons were, instantly exclaimed, "Why here is the man that cut Mr. Seward."

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## **Frequently Asked Question about the Seward Assassination Attempt**

### **Why assassinate Secretary of State Seward?**

If Booth's plot to assassinate both President Lincoln and Vice President Johnson had been successful, the president pro tempore of the Senate would become acting president until the electoral college could be convened to choose a new one. There is only one problem. The Secretary of State is needed to start the process.

If Seward was eliminated, the Federal government would, no doubt, be thrown into chaos.

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