

Clark, August 1865

Ordnance Office,

War Department.

Washington, April 16 1865

Dear Uncle

You have of course heard all the particulars of the dreadful death of the President on the 14<sup>th</sup> inst. But as I was an eye witness of the latter part I will endeavor to explain matters. At 10<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> O'clock I was looking out of a window of a house opposite the Theatre and seeing a large excited crowd rush from it I thinking some one might have been robbed ran down stairs and across the street into the theatre and then heard the awful words, "Lincoln is shot," - I sprang off towards the stage over the seats every one being in the wildest commotion and on reaching it saw a lady reaching over the right hand box second tier it was the daughter of senator Harris of N. H. I clambered up seized her hand and drew myself into the box and there on the floor lay Abraham Lincoln dying - his wife near him shrieking and wailing, Major Rathburn and a few others near by. Several of us lifted him and carried him out to the street and finding his carriage gone I said "take him across the street," he was carried into the house I had just left, and deposited on a bed, his clothes

stripped off: he was shot in the head on a line with the  
left ear about 2 inches towards the back of the head,  
the Ball was round and entered about three inches in a  
line towards his right eye. he was breathing very heavily  
and his pulse fluctuated from 105 to 42 in about three hours.  
the blood soon began to settle under his left eye and blackened  
the whole side of his face. Mrs Lincoln soon came over and  
was hardly gone all night and is now quite low, Laura  
Keane came over with her but did not stop. his <sup>own</sup> came in  
about eleven and was much agitated. Soon all the members  
of the Cabinet rushed in with grief and terror depicted on  
their faces: many Senators and members arrived during the  
night. the street was cleared of all strangers and a great  
military force stationed around the square. Stanton was there  
issuing orders to all parts of the Union and seemed to  
do most of the business. news came about eleven that Seward  
was fearfully stabbed and it seemed to strike terror into the  
hearts of all. Maj. Rathbone was wounded badly in the arm and  
fainted twice before his wound was dressed and he got home.  
Mrs Lincoln came into the room seven times during the  
night and felt dreadfully she fainted twice and fell over onto  
the floor. I remained in the room all night long and did  
all I could to help. the best surgeons were there but no

attempt was made to extricate the Ball as he was pronounced  
fatally wounded at first examination he lingered  
on till seven twenty "AM" when he breathed his last in  
presence of the members of the Cabinet several senators  
and others Mrs Lincoln was not in the room at the time of  
his death The body at nine o'clock was taken to the White  
House and has been embalmed I got a lock of his  
hair and a towel saturated with the blood of the best  
man that ever was President and a friend of the South  
They now have a President that will show them no mercy  
and they deserve none. I will enclose a piece of the towel  
for you as a relic.

The folks are all well and hope this  
will find you family the same Give my love to all  
and excuse this writing as it is quite late and I am  
very nervous

Love as ever Yours Truly  
Lincoln