

Boston Globe,  
April 14 1896.

## SAW HIM FALL.

Mrs John B. Wright Tells  
of Lincoln's Death.

He Was Killed Just  
31 Years Ago.

Boston Woman Has  
a Lock of His Hair.

It is Stained With the  
President's Blood.

Mrs Wright's Escort was First  
to Attend Dying Executive.

She Spent the Night in  
Gloomy Theater.

Passed Out Through Same Door  
as the Assassin Booth.

Thirty-one years ago tonight Pres Lincoln was assassinated in Ford's theater. There have been many accounts printed of that fateful evening, but even at this late day new facts are constantly coming to light.

Mrs John B. Wright was an eye witness of the murder of the president, and in the Dorchester Beacon she gives an account of the tragedy as follows:

"In the season of 1865 we were in Washington, my husband being stage manager of Ford's theater at that time, which gave me an opportunity to often attend the theater, and witness the different plays, as well as become acquainted with many of the well-known actors of note.

"On Good Friday, April 14, there was a special attraction, the play was to be 'Our American Cousin' and was for

the benefit of the well-known star, Laura Keane). Pres Lincoln was expected to attend, his box had been draped with flags and bunting, a good audience and pleasant evening was anticipated. I had invited our friends, Dr Taft and wife, to go with me. We had seats in the parquet, left of the main entrance, well front, and in full view of the flag-draped box on the right.

"While waiting for the play to begin, the president, his wife, and their friends Miss Harris and Maj Rathbun, entered his box, first Miss Harris and Maj Rathbun, then Mrs Lincoln, and the president took his seat nearest to the door. The play began, all was life and gaiety, and the curtain had been raised for the fourth act. I, in the interim, looked about me, and like many others in the audience, my eyes were attracted to the box where sat our nation's ruler and chief.

I saw him sitting with his back to the door, leaning slightly forward with his arm on the cushioned edge of the box, his chin resting in his hand, and he was looking into space as if in deep thought (I had previously seen Booth leaning against the wall near the door of the box, and wondered why he was there) when suddenly there was a flash, the report of a pistol, and Pres Lincoln's head fell forward on his breast.

"Then a man whom I at once recognized as John Wilkes Booth sprang from the box on to the stage, falling on his knees, for his spurs had caught in the flag draping of the box. He could not easily arise and seemed in intense pain, but making a wild struggle drew a large dagger with wide shining blade, and like a maniac waved it above his head, exclaiming 'Sic semper tyrannis.' I never shall forget how he looked, his face a deathly white, and dark luminous eyes, gleaming as only the Booth eyes could do. He regained his feet, but being crippled, with desperate effort like a wild creature, made three bounds across the stage and disappeared behind the scenes.

"All this happened in less time than I can describe it, but it made an ineffaceable impression on my memory, never to be forgotten.

"For an instant after the shooting all was death-like silence, then an uproar among the audience. Mrs Lincoln stood waving her hands up and down, crying 'they have shot the president; they have shot the president.' Then there was the call 'is there a surgeon here, if so, come forward.' Dr Taft stood up, but how to get to the box he could not tell. The crowd dragged him away, his wife begging him not to go. Turning to me, he said: 'Mrs Wright, please take care of my wife,' and was lifted bodily by strong men on to the stage, and from there to the box, he clambered over the edge, and found the martyred president unconscious, with his brains oozing from the bullet wound in the back of his head.

"He placed his hand over the wound, and held it there for a long, long time, hoping the president might regain consciousness, and perhaps speak a few words to the grief-stricken wife, but no, it was not to be. After a while they removed our nation's ruler to a house opposite the theater, and then came the question, how were Mrs Taft and myself to get home?

"We had now no gentleman with us, and did not dare, if we could have got through the crowd, to go home alone, so I said, 'Let us get on to the stage, and behind the scenes.' We went into the orchestra, thinking we could climb up between the footlights.

"It was higher than we thought. I managed, however, to assist, and push Mrs Taft up until she gained a footing, and was safely on the stage. I was not so fortunate, being rather petite. While wondering what I had better do I noticed the musicians had left their musical instruments, in their hasty departure. Among them was a large bass viol. This I placed edgewise against the side, using it as a step.

"As most everything, however solemn, has a ludicrous turn, I mounted and was part way up, when my support gave away, and down I went into the bass-viol. Mrs Taft called my husband, who came and helped me out of my laughable position.

"I exclaimed, 'Why, that was Wilkes Booth!' he answered by placing his finger on his lip, and an almost inaudible hush-h-h-h. Everything then had been put under martial law. He remained in the theater a good part of the night, with only the light of the watchman's lantern. Near the gray of the morning we went out through a back door and alleyway, the same way that Booth had gone in his flight to gain his waiting horse a few hours before.

Mrs Taft went home with me, where we waited in suspense for the doctor to join us. All was excitement, business at a standstill, the streets crowded with people, each one waiting to gain tidings of the president. At about 7.30 all changed, horses were driven through the street at break-neck speed, that their riders might be first to send abroad the sad news, people ran to and fro shouting, 'Lincoln is dead; the president is no more.'

Mrs Wright has as one of her most valued treasures a lock of Pres Lincoln's hair, still stained with the blood which was so unmercifully spilled by the cowardly assassin.