

Saw Lincoln Shot Down by Assassin

Attleboro, Mass., April 14.—(P)—
Seventy-one years ago today
Thomas Sherman, a "down easter"
who went to Washington because
he had learned the new magic of
the telegraph key, slipped into a
balcony seat at Ford's theater. The
play sped on to the third act.

Suddenly a shot cracked through
the theater. A scuffle broke out
in a box from which powder smoke
lazily drifted. A man leaped from
the box to the stage, and a cry
rang out:

"Hold him! The president has
been shot!"

Today white-haired, white-
bearded 93-year-old Thomas Sher-
man quietly recounted events he
saw when Abraham Lincoln was
assassinated April 14, 1865.

Only Polite Applause.

Only a polite burst of applause
greeted Lincoln when he entered
his box, Sherman mused. The
crowd, he said, had come princi-
pally in the hope of seeing General
U. S. Grant, war hero of the day,
who at the last minute was unable
to attend.

"The shot seemed like a trick of
the play until smoke issued from
the president's box. Then a hand-
some young man of medium build,
immaculately dressed in black,
leaped from the box to the stage.

"He seemed a veritable fiend as
he rose to his full height and bran-
dished a dagger.

Actor Backs Away.

"The only actor on the stage,
Harry Hawk, backed away, his
hands held high, as John Wilkes
Booth, the assassin, made a dive at
him. Then both disappeared
through the red-curtained exit."

For a moment, Sherman related,
it was said the man had been
caught and there were cries, "Kill
him! Hang him!"

"I came onto the stage," Sherman
continued. "At the height of the
confusion Laura Keene, an actress,
came on. She seemed the only
cool person there. 'For God's sake,
gentlemen,' she begged, 'be quiet
and keep cool.' She sent a pitcher
of water to the president.

"Quiet was soon restored and the
president, unconscious, was carried
out by four men. Mrs. Lincoln fol-
lowed, sobbing and wringing her
hands."

As a telegrapher, Sherman was
in the midst of Civil war activity.
From the senate gallery, he re-
called, he sent messages of im-
peachment proceedings against An-
drew Johnson.

Later he became private secre-
tary to James G. Blaine, and wrote
a book, "Twenty Years With James
G. Blaine." Sherman's career also
carried him to Liverpool as Amer-
ican consul.