

One of the Washington newspapers April 25, 1903. Col. Wood of the Secret Service and Supt. Capital Prison 1865 (clipping in F.L.Bates' scrap book)

HOW JOHNSON ESCAPED.

On the evening of the assassination a lady friend called on Vice President Johnson at the Kirkwood hotel, where he made his home, and insisted on his spending the evening in her company.

The gallant Tennessean willingly accepted the pressing invitation. Before leaving the hotel he took the trouble to inform the clerk that he would not return before morning. When Atzerodt (who was detailed to kill Johnson) discovered that the room was vacant, he reported the fact to Herold, Booth's lieutenant. Herold went to the clerk of the hotel to learn when Johnson would return. He was told not till morning. Then Herold, first telling Atzerodt to look out for himself, hurriedly mounted his horse and rode rapidly to the navy yard bridge, where he had previously agreed to meet Booth. Thus, while the keen-edged knife of Payne was handled with the vigor of a demon, and while the fatal bullet of the assassin Booth had completed its awful work on that awful evening, totally oblivious of the fact that the bloody work of that night had made him president of the United States, Johnson was enjoying himself in the company of his fair friend.