

Department of State,
April 15th, 1865. 10 Am.

My Dearest Mother,

Within the last 12 hours
this city has been the scene of the most
terrible tragedy that can be found upon the
records of the historians. Abraham Lincoln
our noble, self sacrificing President has
fallen by the hand of an accursed, traitorous
assassin! The fearful act was committed
last evening at 10 o'clock, at Ford's Theatre
on Tenth street. I was almost an eye witness
of the melancholy occurrence, occupying a front
seat in the "Parquette" not more than twenty feet
from the President's box. I had gone out and
was just entering the door when I heard
the report of a pistol and turned just in

time to see the hell-hound of treason leap
from the box upon the stage, and with glittering
dagger flourishing above his head disappear
behind the scenes, as he leaped from the
box he exclaimed, "Die semper tyranni!", and
just before he disappeared from the stage
he cried out "I have done it. the South is
arranged!". It is impossible to describe the
intense excitement that prevailed in the theatre.
The audience arose as one single person,
I helped carry the President out, and we bore
our precious burden into the house of Mr
Peterson in next door to my boarding house,
where he remained until he died, which
melancholy event took place at precisely
twenty one minutes past seven this morning.
It is impossible to describe the awful event.
The mind cannot contemplate the result. Mr Sinsler,

to see, and to know whom, was to honor and to
love him, has released, his hold from the
'Ship of State' to which he has clung, with
such heroic and noble daring, during
the past four years of a fratricidal war,
unknown and unparalleled. The good old
ship is now at the mercy of the wind,
God grant that she may survive the
storm, and anchor in safety in some good
harbor, in the harbor of peace and prosperity.
But Tuesday, 4th, I listened to
his voice, a voice from Richmond and the
defeated army of General Lee, as it rung
out clear and loud from the historic window
of the executive mansion, in his last speech,
the last speech he shall ever make. Cheers
upon cheers greeted him last night as he
entered the theatre. I looked plainly into his

face, and I assure you it was a smiling
one, as he stooped in his last bow, the
last one ever to be made to an enthusiastic
audience, as he entered the door of his private
box which was so appropriately decorated with
American flags. It is difficult to realize
this fearful act, though I have seen the
train, motionless from its place, which but
a few hours ago directed the affairs of this
great Republic, and the rattle of the wheels
of the train upon the pavement has not
yet died away, up the avenue, as the sacred
remains of Abraham Lincoln are being borne
to the Executor's mansion for a last brief residence
there preparatory to their being deposited in
the vault of death.

But I have not yet
finished this dreadful chapter of horror. At

the same hour of the attack upon Mr Seward,
a murderer entered the house of Secretary
Seward with designs upon the life of that good
and patriotic statesman. After forcing his way
into the house he was stopped by Mr Frederick
N. Seward the Special Secretary, whose head
he crushed in with the but end of a pistol
and otherwise wounded with a dagger: he
then pushed his way to the chamber of the
Secretary, who was still suffering from his
recent accident, the fracture of an arm and
jaw, and dragging him from his bed sprang
upon him and attempted to cut his throat.
This he partially succeeded in doing and would
undoubtedly have accomplished it had it not
been for the interference of the nurse, a
disabled soldier, who received four shots
while dragging him from the body of Mr Seward.

Major Seward was also badly cut. Supposing
his work accomplished, he started to leave
the room, at the door of which he met Mr.
Mr. Hamell, the chief messenger in this department.
In endeavoring to prevent the escape of
the ruffian Mr. Hamell was severely wounded.
It is possible that the Secretary will recover,
but the Assistant Secretary is said to be beyond
the influence of human skill, and probably his
soul has ere this passed that dreadful barrier
~~from which no traveler ever returns.~~ Since
the 11th of April 1861 when Fort Sumpter was
fried into nothing has occurred so calculated
to cooperate the loyal millions of the country
and cause them to demand vengeance upon
the authors of this inholy rebellion. Sinecure
lost its champion, when Abraham Lincoln came
to breathe and now deeds must take the place

of words! Andrew Johnson is now President of the
United States. Let us hope that his misconduct
during the inauguration exercises resulting from
a too free use, on account of sickness, of spirits,
will be
retired. I cannot think he will be equal to
an Abraham Lincoln; but, supported by the
people of the country he will crush this
hydra of treason and retelling North and South
so deep into the soil on which it germinated
that the blasts from the trumpets of Gabriel
will fail to call it forth on the morning of the
resurrection! The crimson blood of a Lincoln

of a Seward and of a hundred thousand
fallen patriots and martyrs calls loudly
for revenge and it calls not in vain.

The news has just reached me that one
traitor - at least in this city has met
his desert. He dared to say, in company,

that he was glad that President Lincoln
had been assassinated, The words had
hardly left his mouth before the bullet
from the pistol of a Union Soldier went
crashing through his brain. The same
fate awaits others if treason does not
hold its infamous tongue. My seven shooter
is in my pocket and I shall not fail to
use it should I hear any such remark.
The greatest gloom pervades the community
~~Every house and store from the most costly~~
~~prominent~~
to the most obscure and the Street is draped
in mourning. The faces of the passers by are
stamped with the most abject grief, even
the Sky is weeping great tears, and the Sun
is hidden by black clouds. Never has a Nation
passed through such an awful ordeal as this!
It has been positively ascertained that the

murderer of President Lincoln was

John Wilkes Booth

an actor who has appeared on the stage in
Troy on several occasions. The officers of justice
are at his heels and I hope will apprehend
him. A reward of thirty thousand dollars
has already been offered for his arrest. Although
there have been several rumors of his capture
I am sorry that they are unfounded so far
as I can ascertain; but, that he will be
captured I have not the least doubt; it is
only a matter of time. I understand that
no train will be permitted to leave
Washington to day, and consequently no mails
can go. I will keep this letter open
until to morrow.

Sunday, April 15th 3 P.M.

The arrangements for the funeral are rapidly

approaching completion. I think it will
take place on Thursday. The rebel General
Payne has just passed my window under
a strong guard: He is a notorious
guerrilla chief. It is said Booth has
been captured and placed on board a
Monitor for safe keeping. The house in which
President Lincoln breathed his last, has been
visited by thousands this morning, and if
they do not tear down the house by inches
~~I shall be very much surprised.~~ I have
several relics of the awful event. Among them
are. A piece of the Presidents collar stained with
his blood. ^{Two} several pieces of the sheet and
pillow case on which he died, these are
also stained with his blood. I was very
much surprised to meet Stimetz here this
morning. He is in one of the Departments.

and gets \$1000. per year. I must now close
No Departments will be open until after
the funeral and no stores nor places of amusement
are to be opened. Write soon.

Your affectionate son,

A. Daggert,

P.S. I enclose a Washington Chronicle.

Will write Annie and Albi soon. You must make this
letter do for all the family.

A.D.

Handwritten numbers and faint text in the top flap of the envelope, including "58", "47", "80", "3", "9", and "8".

Department of State

Mrs Joseph Saggitt
New York

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Handwritten text, possibly a name or address, located in the center of the envelope flap.

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