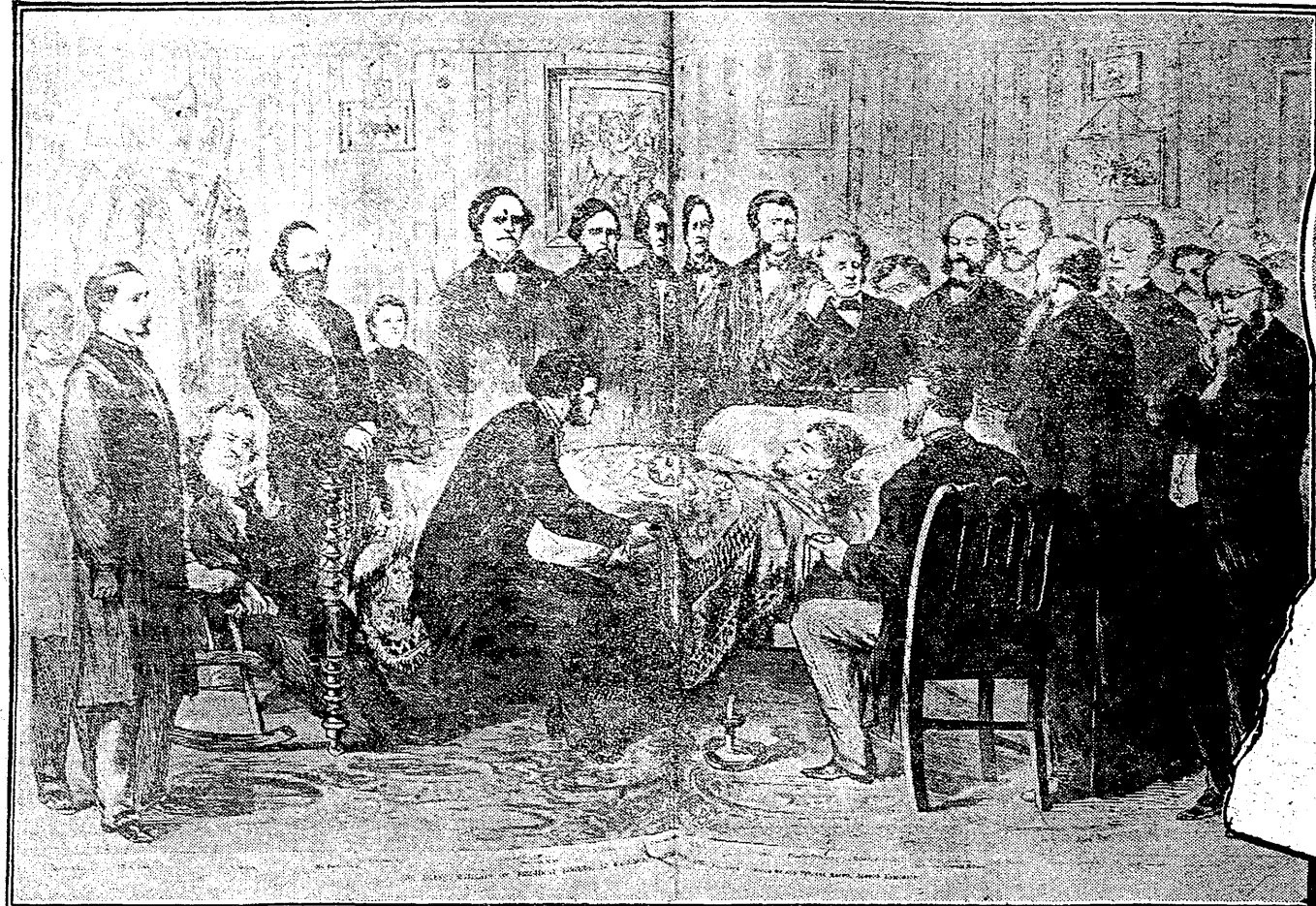


LINCOLN'S DEATH OCCURRED IN BOSTON MAN'S ROOM

Letter Written to His Sister by William T. Clark, Then a Clerk in the War Department, Gives Detailed Circumstances That Make This Plain and Disprove the Claim Made by an Aged New York Pauper in the City Home on Blackwell's Island Whose Mind Is Failing and Whose Memory Has Become Confused



Handwritten note: Mrs. D. M. ...
106 Tenth Street
Boston, Mass.

Handwritten note: portion of his brain...
which he lay upon...
apparel...
I will write again soon.



By JOE TOYE
THE SUNDAY HERALD today settles forever an historical controversy that has raged for some time in New York, Washington, Baltimore and Boston.

It has to do with the death of Abraham Lincoln.
Recently a pauper at Blackwell's island, New York, stated that the Great Emancipator had died in his room in Washington, having been brought there after having been shot while sitting in a box at Ford's Theatre.

The pauper's name is Thomas Proctor, formerly an attorney of standing in New York, an amateur naturalist and friend of the late John Burroughs. Proctor, when 17 years old, in 1865, was a clerk in the war department and had a room in the lodging house opposite Ford's Theatre.

His story, backed up by friends, was that returning from an entertainment, he reached the lodging house in Tenth street, opposite the theatre, shortly after 10 P. M., just as a number of men crossed the street carrying the body of Lincoln, already unconscious from the bullet which had struck his brain.

Proctor claims to have directed the party to his room, where the President was laid upon Proctor's bed.
This statement the SUNDAY HERALD has been able to disprove. It was NOT Proctor's room; it was the room of a former Bostonian, William T. Clark.

Proctor's Memory Was at Fault

Proctor said that he was in the room at 7:30 the following morning when Lincoln died. The old man's memory was very faint on many points, but many friends expressed faith in his story that Lincoln died in Proctor's bed.

This THE SUNDAY HERALD today disproves. He did have a room in the house. But his room was upstairs, while it was the Boston man's room Lincoln was brought and there he died the next morning.

The day after Proctor told his story last week, he received a visit at Blackwell's island from Dr. Charles A. Leale of 599 Madison avenue. It was Dr. Leale, who, 52 years ago, as a young army doctor, first ministered to Lincoln in the box at Ford's Theatre, and later caused him to be moved across the street to the 106-room house conducted by a man named Peterson where he attended him until the arrival of Surgeon-General Burch.

Dr. Leale, though nearly 59 years old, is a man of great vigor and mental energy still practicing his profession. Proctor, formerly a fairly well known lawyer, is still in fair bodily health, but his mind has weakened. At first Proctor's memory seemed nearly blank on everything. For a while he responded mechanically, then, apparently failing under the magnetic influence of Dr. Leale, Proctor replied more brightly and had more success in searching the obscure corners of his memory for the events connected with the death of Lincoln. After some preliminary questions, Dr. Leale asked: "Where you in Washington when President Lincoln was killed?"



"Of course, Ford's Theatre was right there."
Coming down to the scene in which the two men had participated, Dr. Leale asked: "Did you see President Lincoln?"

"Of course. He died on my bed. He was carried there by those who carried him and put diagonally across the bed because he was a tall man."

Dr. Leale's Reply
Dr. Leale has a large collection of Lincoln literature and relics, including a plaster cast of the left hand of the President, which is said to be the only one extant. After Lincoln's death, Dr. Leale made a minute examination of the body.

"He was without a single physical defect of any kind. His body was extraordinarily muscular and free from any trace of fat. He has been frequently caricatured and seldom represented successfully, although the statue of Bordium in Newark is a good one. The one piece of statuary which reminds me of the physique of Abraham Lincoln, especially the lower part of the body, is the 'Moses' of Michelangelo."

Dr. Leale said he had had a clear recollection of most of the details of the final scene of Abraham Lincoln's life, but he could not be sure of all who were in the room. He could not identify Proctor as one who was there, and he was almost sure that Proctor was not in the room when death actually occurred. On the other hand, he said, persons might have passed in and out without his knowing it.

Mrs. Wenzing's Story
Dr. Leale said he had never made inquiries as to the tenant of the room, but he understood that it was the room of a daughter. This fits in with a story told by George Proctor, that his mother, when Pauline Peterson, had usually occupied the room, but was attending a boarding school at Bethlehem, Pa., at the time of the assassination. She is now Mrs. Pauline L. Wenzing of Baltimore, Lincoln, she says, was carried to the home of her father, William Peterson, and laid on her bed, where he died the next morning.

No one so young as Proctor, who was 17 at that time, was in the room, Mrs. Wenzing says. She is now 70 years old, and her younger son was not admitted, she says.
Mrs. Wenzing, who was 14 years old then, has retired, her room being on the first floor of the house. Her father had gone out and she was alone with a servant, she said.
She was awakened by shouting and a disturbance in front of the theatre, which was directly across Tenth street from her home. She heard some one call out that the President had been shot, and she left her bed. There she saw the injured man carried into her home.
President Lincoln was placed on the girl's bed, to avoid carrying him up stairs. The bed was a short one, and the foot of it was broken off so that the tall man could lie on it comfortably. The bed was solid, along with the house, after Mr. Peterson's death.
There was so much uproar, Mrs. Wenzing says, that she does not remember clearly everything that happened. She and the servant got towels and bandages and heated water, with which physicians bathed the President's

Handwritten letter: Since the death of our President...
I was engaged nearly all of Sunday with one of Francis Leslie, Special Artist, writing him my...
I had a lock of his hair which I had

HEREWITH ARE REPRODUCED PORTIONS OF MR. PROCTOR'S LETTER GIVING THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF LINCOLN'S DEATH. IN THE UPPER LEFT HAND CORNER IS A REPRODUCTION OF THE DEATH BED SCENE FROM LESLIE'S WEEKLY OF APRIL 29, 1865. MR. PROCTOR GAVE THE ARTIST A DESCRIPTION TO ASSIST HIM IN MAKING THE SKETCH. THE PERSONS IN THE SKETCH ARE, LEFT TO RIGHT: STANDING, J. ULKE, H. ULKE, MR. FARNSWORTH, MR. PETERSEN, JR., CHIEF JUSTICE CHASE, MR. COLFAX, POSTMASTER-GENERAL DENISON, MR. PROCTOR, MR. PETERSEN, CHARLES SUMNER, ROBERT LINCOLN, RUFUS F. ANDREWS, GEN. MEADE, SURG. CRANE, GEN. HALLECK, MR. SANFORD, SECRETARY STANTON; SEATED, SECRETARY WELLES, SURG. STONE, SURG.-GEN. BARNES. NEXT IS A PORTRAIT OF LINCOLN; THE HOUSE WHERE HE DIED, AND THOMAS PROCTOR, THE NEW YORK PAUPER WHO CLAIMED THAT LINCOLN DIED IN HIS ROOM. BELOW ARE PICTURES OF MRS. LINCOLN AND WILLIAM T. CLARK

wound. She got a pair of scissors, she says, with which a doctor cut away the hair from the injury on the left side of Lincoln's head. Soldiers came to guard the house, being stationed at all the doors and windows, and even on the roof.
THE SUNDAY HERALD'S documents prove her to be mistaken. Clark, the Boston man, occupied the room at that time, in answer to a request as to whether he had a room, he occupied another room, was present.

Letter Confirms Her Story
"I have one letter written from my uncle at the time in question in which he says he spent all Sunday morning with Frank Leslie's artist (my uncle was also an artist) helping them to make their famous picture, as he knew exactly where each person sat or stood about the bed. A later letter says: "The same pillow is under my head and the same coverlet covers me at night that covered the dying President."
"At the time Miss Ida Tarbell was writing her 'Life of Lincoln,' she wrote several letters to my father, or saw him personally. I forget which, in regard to the occupant of that room, and I am not very much mistaken, has given my uncle's name of William T. Clark as the occupant of that room in her book. This Mr. Proctor is a very old man and 'forgets.'
William T. Clark died nearly 40 years ago.

SUNDAY HERALD presents them today:
Here is a copy of Clark's letter:

What Mr. Clark Wrote
WASHINGTON, D. C.,
Wednesday, April 19, 1865.
Dear Sister Ida:
Today the funeral of Mr. Lincoln takes place. The streets are being crowded at this early hour (9 A. M.) and the procession will not move for three hours. We are moved back into the old building (cor. 15 1/2 St.), it having been repaired. Ladies are thronging in here now. I have moved my desk close to my window to secure its use for myself and friends. The past few days have been of intense excitement. Arrests are numerous made of any party heard to utter secession sentiments. The time has come when people cannot say what they please. The people are awfully indignant. Leniency is no longer to be thought of. A new code must be adopted. They talk of the tyrannical administration of Mr. Lincoln, but we have a man now for a President who will teach the South a lesson they will know well how to appreciate. The people are worth keeping for its historical value.
I have a lock of his hair which I have had neatly framed, also a piece of linen with a portion of his brain, the pillow and case upon which he lay when he died and nearly all his wearing apparel, but the latter I intend to send to Robt. Lincoln as soon as the funeral is over as I consider him the one most justly entitled to them.
The same mattress is on my bed and the same coverlet covers me nightly that covered him while dying. Enclosed you will find a piece of lace that Mrs. Lincoln wore on her head during the evening and was dropped by her while entering my room to see her dying husband. It is worth keeping for its historical value.
The cap worked by Clara and the cushion by you, little dreamed would be so historically connected with such an event.
I received your letter, but before I answer it I must see what I can do. With that exception I have not received any letters although you blam me for not writing when to my knowledge I have written four and you must be aware I am very anxious to hear about mother's health, which in your letter you did not mention.
Remember me to Henry Littlefield. Tell him I shall write him soon.

Remember (me) to Mrs. Little and family and all inquiring friends. Love to father, mother and Clara, and don't forget you have a brother and send me a letter soon. I will write again soon.
Your affe brother,
WILLIE.
Please not give away any of this lace out of our own family. The letter is addressed to Miss Ida F. Clark, No. 7 Warren street, Boston, Mass.
The Boston Traveler of April 28, 1865, printed the following letter from one of its correspondents at Washington: "I went this afternoon to visit the house on Tenth street, opposite Ford's Theatre, and into the room where the late lamented President died. I saw the bed on which he breathed his last. The room is in the rear of the hall. A German family by the name of Peterson—common people—own the house. A young man named William Clark rented the room. The bed was made up. He has slept in it since the President's death, as usual. Upon the outside were placed pillows and three slips covered with blood, on which the President died. In a chair nearby were the shoes the President wore that night. Clark remained with the President all night. Gustavus Clark, formerly of Boston, was one of those who assisted in taking the President over to the house, and remained until 4 o'clock in the morning."
From the evidence gathered by THE SUNDAY HERALD, which includes Mrs. Wenzing's story, the following indisputable facts are established: Abraham Lincoln died in a lodging house opposite Ford's Theatre, in a small room on the first floor, occupied before and after that night by William T. Clark of Boston. Thomas Proctor's room was in another part of the house. Proctor was there when Lincoln died. He is included in the sketch by Leslie's artist. Clark directed the artist to place Proctor there. Clark's portrait is absent because, as he wrote in his letter to his sister, he didn't wish the publicity. As to the claim of the daughter of Peterson, the landlord, it would appear that Clark's room might have been hers, but she was not occupying it at the time.

Handwritten note: Please not give away any of this lace out of our own family

Handwritten note: Your affe brother Willie