

John B. Stonehouse John B. Stonehouse Jr.

Washington D.C., 16 April 1865.

Autograph letter signed, 4 pages.

Washington

April 16, 1865

Dear Johnny

Since I have been here this time the most exciting times that this Country ever saw have taken place

Thursday evening Washington was crazy with joy over the surrender of Lee. every one of the Public Buildings was, illuminated, and every private house was blazing with candles from top to bottom. the people were wild with excitement. Men women & children [2] [*struck*: were] were all out of doors.

The next evening a grand performance was advertised to be given at Fords Theatre and it was announced that the President & ladies and Gen^l Grant and wife were to be present.

Just as I was going to bed a man ran in breathless and pale enquiring which of the Theatres the President was attending- he said he must find him at once as M^r. Seward had been murdered in his bed – We followed him to the door and there met people [3] rushing from the Theatre saying the “President is shot,” “the President is murdered” such a [*struck*: scene] time I never before beheld and never want to again

At first no one seemed to believe it but it soon became certain that it was all true

Just as I got to Fords Theatre they were carrying the President to a house across the street. he did not move or speak after he was shot- You have seen in the papers a full account of it I have no doubt

I was at Secretary Swards house several [4] times yesterday. I saw the knife the assassin stabbed M^r. Seward with and the Pistol with [*struck*: wich] which he broke Mr Frederick Swards skull There is blood and hair sticking to it still neither of the men have as yet been caught

I am as well as usual & glad to hear you are the same. I have been instructed to remain here until further orders – Love to Mamma Matey and yourself

Your affectionate father

JB Stonehouse