

H. CLAY FORD

Treasurer Ford's Theater

May 31, 1865. Page 99 - 100

Testified:-

On the 14th of April last I was treasurer of Ford's Theater. I returned to the theater from my breakfast about half-past 11 o'clock that day, when my brother, James. R. Ford, told me that the President had engaged a box for that night. John Wilkes Booth was at the theater about half an hour afterward. I do not know that the fact of the President's going to the theater that night was communicated to Booth, but I think it is very likely he found it out while there. I saw him going down the street while I was standing in the door of the theater; as he came up he commenced talking to the parties standing around. Mr. Raybold then went into the theater and brought him out a letter that was there for him. He sat down on the steps and commenced reading it. This was about 12 o'clock. He staid there perhaps half an hour. I went into the office, and when I came out again he was gone.

The letter that Booth received on the day of the assassination, and read on the steps of the theater, was a long letter, of either four or eight pages of letter-paper - whether one or two sheets I do not know, but it was all covered with writing. He sat on the steps while reading his letter, every now and then looking up and laughing. It was while Booth was there that I suppose he learned of the President's visit to the theater that evening. There were several around Booth, talking to him. Mr. Gifford was there; Mr. Evans, an actor, and Mr. Grillet, I remember, were there at the time.

The President's visit to the theater that evening could not have been known until 12 o'clock, unless it was made known by some one from the Executive Mansion. It was published in the Evening Star, but not in the morning papers.