

WASHINGTON EVENING STAR -- Apr. 14, 1913.

RECALLS THE SHOOTING OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN

H. Clay Ford Declares Picture of Washington Delayed
Booth's Escape.

H. Clay Ford a retired theatrical manager, formerly a Washingtonian, and now a resident of Rutherford, N. J., who is spending a few days here, today talked interestingly of the shooting of Abraham Lincoln forty-eight years ago tonight in Ford's Theater, on 10th Street.

Mr. Ford who is visiting his son, H. Chapman Ford, at the Thatcher Hotel, on 13th Street, was treasurer of Ford's Theater the night of the tragedy, and he declares that the story that John Wilkes Booth, Lincoln's assassin, caught his foot in the folds of an American flag as he was making his escape, and that "Old Glory" delayed the murderer, is a popular misconception. A picture of George Washington served to delay Booth, Mr. Ford says.

REMEMBERS TRAGEDY WELL

"I remember the tragedy as if it were but yesterday", Mr. Ford said. "The theater was owned by my brother, the late John T. Ford and I was his treasurer and in the box office at the time. When I heard Booth's shot, which eventually ended Lincoln's life it occurred to me casually that the pistol used by Sir Edward Prenchard, in "Our American Cousin", the play that night, had gone off accidentally. Sir Edward, in the play puts a pistol to his head at the end of the first act.

"In a second, however, an afterthought came to me. I knew it was not the time of the evening for him to put the pistol to his head."

"In the ticket office there was a window from which I could see the audience. I looked out and there was Booth on the stage, where he had leaped from the box. I knew him well. The President and his party had been seated in two boxes, which I had helped to make into one, decorating them with flags which we borrowed from the Treasury Department. In the center of the box I had placed a picture of George Washington, with the flags on both sides. It was this picture which caught Booth's foot. I know it because his spur made a large cut in the picture. They always say "Old Glory" delayed him, but it didn't --- George Washington's picture did it. I saw the picture again in Baltimore Saturday, while I was visiting the widow of John T. Ford, in whose possession it now is.