

STATEMENT OF AN ACTOR  
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From the Chicago Post, April 20th

Mr William J Hawke of this city, who resides at No. 254 State Street has received a letter from his son Harry, who is a member of Laura Keene's theatrical company, who were playing "Our American Cousin" at Ford's Theatre in Washington on the night of the horrid tragedy. He gives some new facts in reference to the assassination and the assassin. We are permitted to publish the letter, which is as follows:

Washington, April 16, 1865

This is the first opportunity I have had to write to you since the assassination of our dear President on Friday night, as I have been in custody nearly ever since. I was one of the principal witnesses of that sad affair, being the only one on the stage at the time of the fatal shot. I was playing Asa Trenchard, in the American Cousin. The "old lady" of the theater had just gone off the stage, and I was answering her exit speech when I heard the shot fired; I turned, looked up at the President's box, heard the man exclaim, "Sic semper tyrannis;" saw him jump from the box, seize the flag on the staff, and drop to the stage. He slipped when he gained the stage, but got upon his feet in a moment, brandished a large knife, saying, "The South shall be free!" turned his face in the direction I stood, and I recognized him as John Wilkes Booth. He ran toward me, and I, seeing the knife, thought I was the one he was after, ran off the stage and up a flight of stairs. He made his escape out of a door directly in the rear of the theater, mounted a horse and rode off.

The above all occurred in the space of a quarter of a minute, and at the time I did not know that the President was shot; although if I had tried to stop him he would have stabbed me.

I am now under \$1,000 bail to appear as a witness when Booth is tried, if caught.

All the above I have sworn to. You may imagine the excitement in the theater, which was crowded, with cries of "Hang him!" "Who was he?" &c., from every one present.

In about fifteen minutes after the occurrence the President was carried out and across the street. I was requested to walk down to the police headquarters and give my evidence. They then put me under \$1,000 bonds to appear at ten o'clock next morning. I then walked about for some time, as the city was wild with excitement and then I went to bed. At 3 $\frac{1}{2}$  o'clock I was called by an aid of the President to go to the house where he was lying to give another statement before Judge Carter, Secretary Stanton, and other high officials assembled there. I did so, and went to bed again. On Saturday I have bail.

----New York Daily Tribune, Monday, April 24, 1865.