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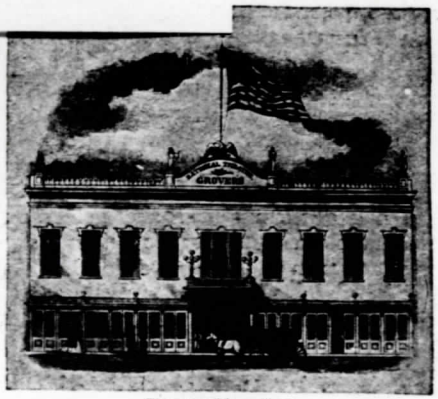

From an old wood-cut

EXTERIOR OF GROVER'S THEATRE, WASHINGTON

LINCOLN'S INTEREST IN THE THEATER

BY LEONARD GROVER

BORN and reared in western New York in the political atmosphere of William H. Seward, I left college at the age of nineteen, and with some of my fellow-students visited several parts of the country, giving amateur entertainments, musical and literary. The experience gained in exploiting and advertising our entertainments led to my taking charge of a professional concert tour, through which association I saw almost our entire country. Abandoning the amusement field, as I supposed permanently, I became connected with "The Southern Financial Reporter," published in Baltimore, and subsequently its editor. In its service I attended several commercial conventions in the South.

At Petersburg, Virginia, in the latter part of 1858, I attended the theater at which Maggie Mitchell was playing a star engagement. In the cast appeared the name of John Wilkes, playing the character of *Uncas*, an Indian. He seemed the most talented actor in the company, and later I learned that he was John Wilkes Booth. Some little time after John Brown's raid at Harper's Ferry I was in Richmond, where for the second time I saw John Wilkes Booth. He had left his position at the theater and had joined the Richmond Grays. Clad in the uniform of that battalion, and without any of his military companions, at least none in uniform, he was visiting the bars of the hotels and earnestly and bitterly asserting what manner of punishment should be meted out to John Brown.

The printers of our paper were of Quaker descent, from Pennsylvania, and held the accepted Quaker ideas against slavery. While I had been entirely silent on the subject as became one of my position in a journal distinctly Southern, they knew well my opinions in that respect. So it was with no little surprise that I received a personal invitation from them to accompany a delegation which was to visit Mr. Lincoln at Willard's Hotel in Washington, prior to his inauguration. To please them, I consented. The most I could conceive of the purpose of the delegation was a congratulatory call on the President-elect. We were admitted to Mr. Lincoln's presence in a small chamber of Willard's Hotel where he received us cordially and shook hands with each one.

In our party was a burly gentleman,

LAWRENCE BARRETT LAURA KEENE W. J. FLORENCE

E. L. DAVENPORT EDWIN BOOTH J. H. HACKETT

CHARLOTTE CUSHMAN

whose name I have forgotten, possessed of a great head, the size of which was materially amplified by a bristling shock of dark hair. It suddenly became apparent that he was to be the orator of the delegation. His features were saturnine, and one of his eyes was afflicted with strabismus to a degree that rendered General Butler a thing of beauty. When our gentleman smiled, it was necessary that one should love him dearly in order not to turn one's vision away in protest. He began:

"Mr. President"; to which Mr. Lincoln interjected "Not yet." Then our orator, smiling, began again: "Mr. President-*elect*."

Probably owing to the smile, Mr. Lincoln instantly dodged his gaze, and rested his eyes fixedly on me. It was a distressing oration, out of which cropped nothing but the utter selfishness of their mission. Though there had been only the fraction of a Republican party in Baltimore, the orator recounted how they had stood the brunt of obloquy, of abuse, of threats, and now it was but a matter of simple justice that they should be given the offices.

Whether it was that my face wore a counter smile of doubt, or whether he recoiled from the eye of the orator, Mr. Lincoln directed his entire response, by voice and gesture, direct to me. He thanked them for their visit and the expression of their good wishes. He sailed rapidly over existing conditions and at length found one of his famous similes. He likened the delegation to the zealous soldiers of the Crusade, discarding their homes and comfort, suffering the tortures of long marches, assailed by sickness, and at all times ready to give their lives for their belief. He pictured this distressed army attacking a walled city. Under fierce fires of arrows and huge catapults, they dragged their scaling ladders and placed them against the ramparts. With rapidly thinning ranks, they mounted round by round and ultimately some of them reached the top. The tide of the contest turned in their favor, and the besieged city was taken. "But, gentlemen," he concluded with a genial smile, "those heroic soldiers who were first on top of the walls did n't get the offices."

The delegation was answered and they seemed pleased. They had been likened to the Crusaders.

During the summer that followed, I was engaged in raising the First and Second Maryland regiments. Shortly after I removed to Washington and assumed the management of Grover's Theatre.

No President and few men ever went through so trying a personal ordeal as did Mr. Lincoln during the Civil War. Scarce a soldier gained a furlough who did not try to see him, nor a man with a petty wish or grievance who did not seek his personal aid. With a nature the most gracious, genial, and kind, it was almost impossible for him to stay them from his presence. To gain relief from the many importunates, he often sought the theater for rest and relaxation.

During the four years of his administration, he visited my theater probably more than a hundred times. He often came alone, many times brought his little son Tad, and on special occasions, Mrs. Lincoln. So far as I know he was never accompanied by any other member of his household. Mr. Nicolay and Mr. Hay, his secretaries, made frequent visits, together, but did not personally accompany the President. The tutor of Mr. Lincoln's younger boys,—Robert was away at Harvard,—occasionally came with Tad, but never with the President. It was evident that Mr. Lincoln came to be alone. At times he invited me to sit in the box with him, when such conversation as took place was always about the theater. As auditor, or spectator, Mr. Lincoln was not exacting. As is well known, he was exceedingly conversant with Shakspere. He enjoyed a classical representation, of which I gave many, with such stars as Charlotte Cushman, E. L. Davenport, James W. Wallack, Edwin Booth (his sole engagement in Washington), but he was satisfied with being entertained and amused, and to have his mind taken from the sea of troubles which awaited him elsewhere. On one occasion he said to me, "Do you know, Mr. Grover, I really enjoy a minstrel show."

Mrs. Lincoln was fond of the opera, and during the weeks in which I gave opera, they were almost nightly in attendance.

"TAD" LINCOLN AS A SUPERNUMERARY

I RECALL with warm affection Tad Lincoln and his merry pranks. The theater

caught his fancy and after many visits with his father, and occasional ones with his tutor, he felt at home and frequently came alone to the rehearsals, which he watched with rapt interest. He made the acquaintance of the stage attachés, who liked him and gave him complete liberty of action. As he could not sit contentedly in listless observation, he soon betrayed a desire to render assistance in whatever manner he might. He would frequently aid the property men in placing the stage settings. On the nights when he came alone, he was more of the time on the stage than in the auditorium.

At one time John McDonough was playing an engagement in a spectacular extravaganza entitled, "The Seven Sisters." The story was of a fabulous nature, the sisters being represented as banished from Heaven and as having returned to Earth to find suitable companions to accompany them in their doomed trip to the Inferno. As the play admitted of the introduction of modern episodes and local topics, McDonough, who was very patriotic, had interpolated an army tableau in which he sang a song that had great vogue, entitled, "Rally 'Round the Flag." The stage soldiers would join him in the chorus. Tad attended several performances of this play and was greatly taken with it; the fairy tinsel, fanciful costumes, bright and pretty scenery, appealed to him with more than usual interest. It might have been the first Christmas play he had ever witnessed. One night he induced his father to come. While Mr. Lincoln was engaged in watching the performance, Tad quietly stole out of the box and upon the stage. He went to the wardrobe and obtained an army blouse and cap, much too large for him, and when McDonough's song was ready for the chorus, there was Tad at the end of the soldier line, clad in his misfit uniform and singing at the top of his voice. The President had a bad quarter of a minute of shock at the sight, but the humor of the situation quickly restored him, and he laughed immoderately.

Nobody in the audience had the remotest idea that the President's son was taking part; he was accepted as an important factor in the scene, a sort of genus of Patriotic Young America. McDonough caught the spirit of the opportunity, walked over to the end and placed the American flag he had been waving in Tad's hands. Tad promptly rose to the occasion, took the initiative, stepped a little in front of the line, and waving the flag to the music, began to sing with all the might of his childish treble the refrain:

"We are coming, father Abraham, three hundred thousand more,—
Shouting the battle-cry of Freedom."

My little son, who was something more than five years Tad's junior, became acquainted with Tad and on the common ground of the theater they became quite chummy. They fished for goldfish in the fountains at the White House, and on one occasion, when the spirit of carnival was prevailing, they donned two demon dresses from the wardrobe of the theater and boldly set out for adventure on the Avenue. My partner Mr. Hess caught them and terminated the frolic. In 1864 Tad was allowed to fit up a room in the White House as a miniature theater, for which I lent him costumes and stage properties.

STANTON AS A BUTTONHOLER

THERE was one night when Mr. Lincoln came alone, and invited me to sit for a while. After half an hour, Mr. Stanton, who had followed in pursuit, entered the box unannounced and seated himself, giving me a glance that might have been construed as a suggestion that I was in the way. Mr. Lincoln introduced me to the Secretary, and after an interchange of courtesies, I was about to withdraw, when Mr. Lincoln asked me impressively to remain. Inferring that my presence might be useful to him, I sat slightly behind them and in the center, leaving the President in front nearest the stage and the Secretary beside him and slightly to his left. Now this of itself would scarcely deserve chronicling, but the incident illustrates the masterful, somewhat aggressive methods of the Secretary and the gracious, forbearing nature of the President, who, with ever polite tenacity, insisted on having his own way.

Mr. Stanton immediately began a conversation in a low tone of voice, the nature of which I made it my business not to hear. Mr. Lincoln responded in a short sentence and let his eyes drift away to the

stage. Mr. Stanton resumed in a longer statement. Mr. Lincoln turned quietly, nodded two or three times gently, and again his eyes sought the stage. This was repeated, Mr. Stanton's speeches always low, as both were in sight of the audience, growing in length, and Mr. Lincoln listening, nodding in an affable manner that said neither yes nor no, and then turning to the stage. This continued for some minutes until Mr. Lincoln's nods grew more infrequent, till finally he would do the nodding while his face was turned away and he was apparently occupied with the performance. Then Mr. Stanton twice deliberately reached out, grasped Mr. Lincoln by the lapel of his coat, slowly pulled him round face to face, and continued the conversation. Mr. Lincoln responded to this brusque act with all the smiling geniality that one might bestow on a similar act from a favorite child, but soon again turned his eyes to the stage.

I had pushed myself a little to the rear to indicate that I was not listening, and, in fact, I don't think I heard a word from first to last. I imagined that Mr. Stanton might be pursuing a subject that Mr. Lincoln had come away from the White House to avoid, and that Mr. Lincoln was not so much interested in the play as desirous that Mr. Stanton should think he was. Finally, impressed with the futility of his efforts, Mr. Stanton arose, said good night, and withdrew. Mr. Lincoln vouchsafed no explanation to me, but appeared to get much satisfaction out of the rest of the play.

As far as I know, that was the only visit Mr. Stanton ever paid to our theater, unlike other members of the Cabinet, notably Governor Chase, Montgomery Blair, and above all, Secretary Seward. There were family reasons that led Secretary Seward to take more than a passing interest in my welfare. He had begun his law-practice in Auburn in the office of my great-uncle John; he occupied the old homestead at the corner of Grover and Seneca streets; and he had visited my uncle's and my father's families in my childhood. Seward was a great admirer of the classical drama, especially those plays that dealt in state-craft, and I remember a dinner at his house in Edwin Booth's honor to which I was invited. Mr. Lincoln attended Edwin Booth's performances several times. He particularly admired his *Ruy Blas*, a part expressing sentiment, while Seward's admiration was for the crafty *Richelieu*.

ACTING-COACHMAN TO THE PRESIDENT

In January, 1863, a short time after the fiat of Emancipation, much feeling was shown in Washington against that measure even by many officers of the army. The immediate neighborhood of my theater, surrounded as it was by all kinds of saloons, was perhaps the center of such antipathy. Scenes of violence with pistol and knife were of frequent occurrence. The provost guard had kept the turbulent spirits under fair control, but now, with the prevailing sentiment against emancipation, threats of violence against its author were not uncommon. I have always believed that Mr. Lincoln was in ignorance of the prevailing temper.

At such a time Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln, with Schuyler Colfax, the Speaker of the House, and without guard or special attendance, appeared one evening at the theater. As I had been forewarned I met them at the curb and conducted the party through a private passage to their box. Then I retired to my private office, in front, on the second floor, where I had many duties to perform. Through the thin door I was made aware of the arrival and departure of the provost guard and, satisfied with the quiet conditions, I continued with my work until I was warned by the sound of the dispersing audience that the performance was over.

I hurriedly descended the stairs and met the President's party as they were leaving the box. We sauntered to the front of the auditorium, impeded by the gradual exit of the large audience, and I again conducted them through the private passageway to the street. By this time the audience had almost entirely departed. The President's carriage was drawn up against the curb, and a crowd of more than a hundred persons was gathered about it. Just as we reached the sidewalk, an outburst of jeering laughter greeted us. It was evidently not provoked by the appearance of the President, and there was nothing distinctly threatening in its character. Something had happened, something coarsely funny.

It transpired that during the time the President's party was within the theater, the coachman, an Irishman under thirty years, instead of returning to the White House stables had accepted an invitation to take a drink in one of the numerous saloons, leaving the carriage in the charge of a drummer-boy who, after losing an arm in the service, had found employment with the President. One drink led to many, and after nearly three hours the coachman was as full as he could hold of bad liquor.

In ignorance of the coachman's condition I opened the carriage door, handed in Mrs. Lincoln, Mr. Lincoln and Mr. Colfax following. As I closed the door of the carriage there was a second jeering outburst. I turned to learn the cause. The one-armed drummer-boy was on the box holding the lines in his single hand, while the coachman, having slipped from the wheel in his effort to mount to his seat, had fallen on the pavement. The coachman slowly regained his feet, staggered slightly, and then with a supreme effort clambered over the wheel, landed on the box, seized the reins from the hand of the drummer-boy, and turning to take his seat—fell sprawling his full length on the walk.

The jeering shout which followed had a threatening tone. Any overt act, the throwing of a stone, might have resulted in catastrophe. Twisting the reins from the fallen coachman's hand, I sprang to the box and started the team in quick time. At the head of the triangle, I pulled up and asked the President where he would like me to drive. He asked me, if I would n't mind, to take Mr. Colfax home. So to Mr. Colfax's house we went, somewhere off to the north of the Capitol; then we returned by way of F Street to the White House. When we arrived there, I handed the carriage over to the attendants.

As we stood under the White House portico, Mr. Lincoln grasped one of my hands and Mrs. Lincoln the other. Mr. Lincoln said, "Mr. Grover, you have done me a very great service to-night and one that I shall never forget. I have this to say to you: if at any time you want anything and it is in my power to grant it, you have only to ask and it shall be done."

Mrs. Lincoln tugged at my other hand and said, "Remember, Mr. Grover—what Mr. Lincoln says, he means."

Beyond treasuring those pleasant words, and the gracious manner with which they were impressed upon me, I gave the matter no further thought whatever. But I was to hear further from the incident. It came to be talked of, and some people went so far as to say that I had saved Mr. Lincoln's life. I knew that I had extricated him from a very annoying situation.

MR. LINCOLN'S SECOND NOMINATION

THE Baltimore Convention of 1864 went through the customary preliminaries and on the second day, June 8, adjourned the presentation of candidates until the evening. Instead of awaiting news at the White House Mr. Lincoln came to my theater and was placed by me in a box by himself. He said to me: "There is a convention, as I suppose you know, Mr. Grover, and I thought I would get away for a little while, lest they make me promise too much." He took a program and said, "Let 's see what you are giving us to-night."

At about nine o'clock, a messenger came from the White House with a telegram, instructed to deliver it to me. It was addressed to Mr. Lincoln. I took it to him, and it was found to contain the first news for him of his nomination. It is safe to say that in ordinary conversation, of twenty remarks made by Mr. Lincoln, nineteen of them were accompanied by a genial smile. "Well," said he, with the characteristic smile, "they have nominated me again." I ventured to congratulate him and to predict his reëlection. "I think it looks that way," he said, "but I am a little bit curious to know what man they are going to harness up with me. Still, I reckon I 'll stay a little while longer and look at the play."

The solitary presence of Mr. Lincoln on that occasion, when the one thought of the entire nation was upon him, when the White House was invaded and surrounded by an army of partizans, office-holders, and office-seekers, argues that he sought the theater as a sanctum of repose, his tired soul and body seeking a little rest, a little relaxation.

LINCOLN'S ATTITUDE TOWARD STANTON

IN the month of August, 1864, while on my way from New York to Boston to arrange for performances of opera, I encountered Montgomery Blair, the Postmaster-general, on one of the Bay Line boats. He seemed to be quite unattended and immediately engaged me in conversation. Referring to the impending Presidential election, he considered Mr. Lincoln's prospects for reëlection were fair and discussed the conditions at great length. But he added: "There is a strong feeling throughout the country against Mr. Stanton. The election would be a much safer proposition if he were retired."

Finally he said, "Mr. Lincoln likes you, Mr. Grover; he will give a great deal of consideration to anything you tell him." I protested politely. "Oh, yes he does," continued Mr. Blair. "I have heard him mention a service you rendered him. You ought to see him and impress upon him the possible danger of defeat if he continues to retain Mr. Stanton."

I replied that I could not think of taking a liberty of that kind. But Mr. Blair continued to argue the matter as though the decision really lay with me. I am afraid my head began to grow, for at last I assured him that if opportunity offered, I would place that opinion before the President.

Upon the completion of my various contracts, I returned to Washington to prepare for the opening of the theatrical season. After two or three days had passed, I sauntered up to the White House to pay my customary compliments to the President.

"Well, Mr. Grover," said the President, "what have you got in store for us this season?" I recounted a list of the forthcoming stars and plays, of the musicians I had employed, and added that, mindful of his liking for a minstrel band, I had engaged Hooley's Minstrels to follow after the regular season had closed.

He laughed heartily and said, "So you remembered that? Well, that was thoughtful of you." And then changing the subject, said, "Well, tell me, what do the people up through that part of the country say about the election?"

Here was the cue for the first speech in Mr. Blair's drama, for the latter had said: "He is sure to ask you,—'What do they say about the election?'" In some manner, I managed to convey to the President that there was an opinion among many that Mr. Stanton's presence in the Cabinet was a *handicap*. I shall never forget his answer. He was no longer the man talking about current amusements, but the President grasping the great problem of saving the Union:

"Mr. Grover," he said impressively, "many people tell me that. I feel that Mr. Stanton is not generally popular. And if they 'll find me a man who will do his *work* I 'll dismiss him."

He put a ringing accent on the word "work," for which Stanton was known to be a glutton; eighteen hours a day being too few for him.

On election day, I was giving opera in Philadelphia. Later in November when I returned to Washington I called to congratulate Mr. Lincoln on his reëlection.

"Well," said he, recalling my own phrase, "they stood for the handicap. When they were advising me against Stanton, I knew that my term of office did not expire till next March. I felt that with Grant and Stanton's help we would have the rebellion subdued by that time. And I still believe we shall. So I took whatever chance there might have been with Stanton, rather than take any part of a chance for defeat in a purpose much greater than my election. I thought in the emergency it was bad policy to swap horses."

THE ASSASSINATION

LINCOLN'S various biographers with singular unanimity have refrained from alluding to that which was his chief diversion. One of them says "Rulers of men must occasionally appear among the people; and it was more for this reason than for personal entertainment that Mr. Lincoln, with his wife and a few attendants, visited Ford's Theatre." The truth is that there was not the slightest atom of hypocrisy about Mr. Lincoln. He visited the theater as he listed, to be entertained, and for relaxation.

John T. Ford, manager of the rival theater, was an amiable gentleman, whose political proclivities differed little from mine. He was a stanch member of the Union party, which elected him to office as President of the Board of Aldermen, and acting Mayor, of the City of Baltimore. Doubtless his personal sympathies were

with his state and with that portion of the country in which he was born and reared, as mine were with my own native section. But he was as chary of expressing them as I was. It is therefore to completely absolve him in the memory of all from any possible connection with the crime which led to Mr. Lincoln's death, that I make this statement.

Mr. Lincoln had reserved a box at my theater for that fatal night, and it should be noted that up to that time he had never attended Mr. Ford's theater. It afterward came to light that Wilkes Booth, or his allies, made elaborate preparations to consummate their purpose at Grover's Theatre.

Within the last three years I have learned this additional fact from John Deery, the then billiard champion of America, who kept a large billiard saloon directly over the front entrance to Grover's Theatre. Deery has told me that during that fatal Friday, Wilkes Booth came to him in his office and, pleading that he did not want to put himself under obligations to Mr. Hess, who was my associate in the management, by accepting a complimentary box, which of course would be tendered him should he offer to pay at the box office, asked Deery to go down and buy a box, as though for himself, and handed him the money to pay for it. Deery said he did as he was requested, and if Mr. Lincoln had visited my theater that night, Wilkes Booth would have had the adjoining box.

But some time during the day Mrs. Lincoln learned that Laura Keene was to have a benefit and a last appearance at Ford's and she requested Mr. Lincoln to change his destination.

On that eventful day I was in New York, busily getting ready for my approaching Easter season of opera at the Academy of Music. I had passed a laborious day and retired at, for me, an early hour at the old Metropolitan Hotel. I was soundly sleeping when a sharp rap at the door awoke me, and some one called, "Mr. Grover, here 's a telegram for you." Thinking it was the usual message from one of the theaters (for I was then managing a Philadelphia theater as well) which would simply convey the amount of the receipts of the house, I called back: "Stick it under the door."

But the rapping continued with vigor, and there were calls, "Mr. Grover, Mr. Grover, please come to the door!"

I arose, hastily opened the door, when the light disclosed the long hall compactly crowded with people. Naturally, I was astonished. A message was handed to me with the request: "Please open that telegram and tell us if it 's true."

I opened it and read:

"President Lincoln shot to-night at Ford's Theatre. Thank God it was n't ours. C. D. HESS."

I was horrified. The phrasing of the telegram was unmistakably that of Mr. Hess. I said, "Gentlemen, it is undoubtedly true." A heavy sigh and subdued moan like that of the quieter stages of a funeral arose from the crowd.

Mr. Hess had hastened to inform me of the tragic event and his telegram had had precedence over the news despatches. After nine o'clock there was then no uptown telegraphic service; the messenger spreading the dreadful news had hastened from the corner of Liberty Street and Broadway, and the chance wayfarers, at that rather late hour for lower Broadway, had accompanied him one and all bent upon learning if the telegram was true.

After Lee's surrender, as has been frequently attested, Mr. Lincoln's every thought was of conciliation. From no actions or expressions of Mr. Ford (for he was seldom in attendance at his Washington theater), there had gradually come about a separation and widening of the theatrical clans, until Ford's Theatre had been regarded as the accepted House of the Bourbons. I have sometimes thought that perhaps the motive which prompted Mr. Lincoln to visit Ford's, that night, was in furtherance of his general purpose, to extend the hand of conciliation.

A STRANGE COINCIDENCE

IN the early part of 1866, about one year after the assassination, having taken a theater in New York, I moved to that city. While I had a special desk at my home for current work, there had accumulated a vast quantity of miscellaneous papers which I bestowed in a large and deep bureau drawer. One hot day in July, I set

out to overhaul these. The task was a long one, and countless papers were sorted and destroyed, or classified and filed. When I was nearing the bottom, I picked up a letter which had a strip of paper fluttering from it. There had been humidity and the slip of paper had become attached to the gum of the envelop. I pulled off the strip of paper. It had evidently been torn from the margin of a newspaper and sent in that form. On it I read, written with a pencil:

"Dear Mr. Grover, Tad and I will occupy the box to-night. A. LINCOLN."

Because of its unique character, I had preserved it.

Then I opened the letter to which the strip had attached itself, and found that it was a letter from John Wilkes Booth applying for a starring engagement, written and sent by him from Cleveland.

Almost immediately afterward, I related the circumstance to Mr. Stoddard, who had had a clerical position in the White House, and was then connected with the New York "Evening Post," and he published the coincidence in that paper at the time.

LINCOLN AND WILKES BOOTH AS SEEN ON THE DAY OF THE ASSASSINATION

BY M. HELEN PALMES MOSS

MY first introduction into Washington life was in the autumn of 1864. While it was not an uncommon sight to see President Lincoln on the street or in a box at the theater, I had never met him face to face until, at the Inauguration Ball, March 4, 1865, passing in line with the multitude, I received a kindly grasp of the hand that I again held on the day of his tragic death.

The fall of Richmond, Virginia, on April 3, 1865, and the surrender of General Lee on April 9, virtually closed the War of the Rebellion. There was great rejoicing all over the land. Plans for the celebration of the event were being made in every city of the Union. As my home was then in Washington, I was naturally interested in the great celebration that was to be there on April 14. Business houses and government buildings, as well as most private residences, were gorgeously decorated with flags and bunting. The theaters were brilliantly draped, extra attractions were put on the boards, with flaming advertisements to attract the multitude that would be abroad that night. The two principal theaters, the "National" (sometimes called "Grover's") and "Ford's," were vying with each other to secure the largest patronage, for they had always been great rivals. A private box had been specially decorated in each theater, with the hope of having the President and his family occupy it.

J. Wilkes Booth, an actor of little prominence except as the brother of the great tragedian, Edwin Booth, but who, having once been a member of the National Stock Company, was well acquainted with the managers, Leonard Grover and C. Dwight Hess, having the night before called to see if an invitation was to be sent to the President to occupy their box, came the next morning to learn the answer.

If the President went to the National Theatre, he was to be shot while alighting from his carriage, as Booth had found no one connected with the theater to assist him; consequently, he was very anxious that morning to know which invitation