

formed a remarkable element in Abraham Lincoln's character.

The murder of the President was not the original purpose of the band of conspirators, which included, besides Booth, Lewis Thornton Powell, alias Payne, of Florida, a deserter from the Confederate army; George Atzerodt, a coach-maker, who had been a spy and a blockade runner; David E. Harold, a young druggist's clerk; Samuel Arnold and Michael O'Laughlin, Confederate soldiers from Maryland, and John H. Surratt. Their scheme was to capture Mr. Lincoln and take him to Richmond, and they spent much time in elaborating it, making their usual rendezvous the house of Mrs. Mary E. Surratt, the widowed mother of John H., formerly a woman of some property in Maryland, but reduced to keeping a small boarding house in Washington. Booth was the leader of the band, and he is described as a strikingly handsome man of 26, with a pale olive face, dark eyes and black curly hair, the figure, great muscular strength, and that ease and grace of manner which came to him of right from his theatrical ancestors.

It has often been said that he was a great actor, but those who remember him well are more conservative with regard to his histrionic ability. John Matthews, who has been mentioned as his close friend, says: "He had not the application. He played rough parts like Pescara pretty well—I think that was his best part, but he would not get down to study and bring himself into shape. Personally he was a generous, affectionate fellow, brave for a friend, and thoroughly agreeable to know and be with. Still, I have always thought he was 'cracked in the upper story!'"

There are indications in the evidence given in the trial of the conspirators that they suffered some serious disappointment in the latter part of March. However this may have been, Booth called them together after the surrender of Lee, and propounded a new scheme. The kidnapping project was abandoned, and in its place was substituted a plan for a series of assassinations. Booth was to kill Lincoln, Powell, alias Payne, was to murder Seward, and Atzerodt was to remove Andrew Johnson. Herold's duty was to assist Booth's escape. In anticipation of the abduction of Lincoln, Herold, Atzerodt and Surratt had previously deposited at a tavern at Surrattville, Md., owned by Mrs. Surratt, and kept by a man named Lloyd, a quantity of ropes, several carbines, with ammunition, some whisky, etc. On April 11 Mrs. Surratt, being at the tavern, told Lloyd to have the "shooting irons" in readiness, and on April 14 again visited the place and told him they would probably be called for that night.

Booth learned at noon on the 14th that the President and Gen. Grant were to be at the play that evening, and he, or one of his friends, went to Ford's Theatre in the afternoon and arranged the bar and bored the hole through the box door to which reference has been made. He hired a fleet horse, which at 10 o'clock in the evening he took around to the stage door and gave in charge of a boy connected with the theatre. Then he took a big drink, entered the theatre, passed rapidly through the crowd in rear of the dress circle and made his way to the passage leading to the President's box, where he gave a card to an attendant, and was allowed to enter. Fastening the door behind him with the bar, he went into the box and shot the President, as has been described, a few minutes past 10 o'clock.

Atzerodt did not carry out that part of the scheme which called for the Vice-President's murder; but Powell got into Seward's house on the pretext that he was a messenger with some medicine, frightfully gashed the secretary of state (who was confined to his bed as the result of a carriage accident), about the face and neck with a knife, beat in the skull of the secretary's son Frederick with the butt of a revolver he had in vain tried to fire, and seriously stabbed a male nurse named Hansell. Neither Mr. Seward nor his son was expected to survive his wounds, but both eventually recovered. Powell escaped to the suburbs, but was driven back to town by hunger two days later, and was captured at Mrs. Surratt's house.

Booth, followed by Herold, galloped out to the Navy Yard bridge, and passed the sentinels on duty there with the explanation that he was returning to his home in Charles county, and had waited for the moon to rise before starting. At midnight they reached Mrs. Surratt's tavern, and Lloyd brought out the carbines, cartridges, whiskey and a field glass; Booth took the whiskey and the glass, but refused the gun, owing to his crippled condition. Before they rode away Herold told Lloyd that Booth had killed the President; the landlord held his tongue for a day or two, but the secret grew too heavy to keep, and he finally told all he knew to the authorities. Booth and Herold pushed on to the house of Dr. Samuel Mudd, who set the former's broken leg, put it in pasteboard splints, and furnished him with a rude crutch. To follow the conspirators through their wanderings during the next 11 days would require too much space, and it must suffice to say that they underwent frightful hardships and sore privation. Booth suffered tortures from his fractured limb, and after his capture it was the opinion of surgeons who saw it that amputation would scarcely have saved his life.

In his diary he wrote concerning his first night's flight: "Rode 60 miles with the bone of my leg tearing the flesh at every jump." On the 21st he wrote: "After being hunted like a dog through swamps and woods, and last night chased by gunboats till I was forced to return, wet, cold and starving, with every man's hand against me, I am in despair."

Thomas Jones, a contraband trader between Maryland and Richmond, ferried the fugitives across the Potomac into Virginia, after they had killed the horses that brought them out of Washington for fear the animals might be recognized and lead to their detection. The immediate cause of their capture was the disclosures made by the wife of a ferryman, who had taken them, together with three disbanded Confederate soldiers, across the Rappahannock from Port Conway to Port Royal. Three miles from the latter place Booth and Herold found refuge on the farm of a man named Garrett, while the soldiers went on to Bowling Green. Lieut. Doherty's command reached Port Conway on the 25th of April, and Booth's photograph, which the officer carried, was recognized by the ferryman's wife. The troops crossed the river and went to Bowling Green, where they took out of his bed William Jett, one of the Confederate soldiers above mentioned, and forced him, under penalty of immediate death, to guide them to Garrett's farm.

Booth and Herold were sleeping in the barn, and when called upon to surrender, the former refused point blank, and threatened to shoot the first man who opened the door. Herold, however, was less resolute, and gave himself up after a parley. Booth continued for a long time to defy his pursuers, and finally one of Col. Baker's detectives, who accompanied the troops, set fire to some straw at the rear of the building. Boston Corbett, the sergeant of Lieut. Doherty's company, was looking through a crack in the side of the barn, and by the light of the burning straw saw Booth levelling a carbine at the lieutenant, who stood at the door. The sergeant immediately fired at Booth's left arm so as to disable him, but the latter made a sudden movement, and the bullet struck him in the back of the head, about an inch below the spot where his bullet had entered the head of the President. Lieut. Doherty, in relating the story of the capture for publication in the Century Magazine, said:

"I heard a shot and thought Booth had shot himself. Throwing open the door * * * I rushed into the burning building, followed by my men, and as he was falling caught him under the arms and pulled him out of the barn. The place becoming too hot, I had him carried to the veranda of Garrett's house. * * * Booth asked me by signs to raise his hands. I lifted them up, and he gasped, 'Useless, useless!' We gave him brandy and water, but he could not swallow it. I sent to Port Royal for a physician, who could do nothing when he came, and at 7 o'clock Booth breathed his last."

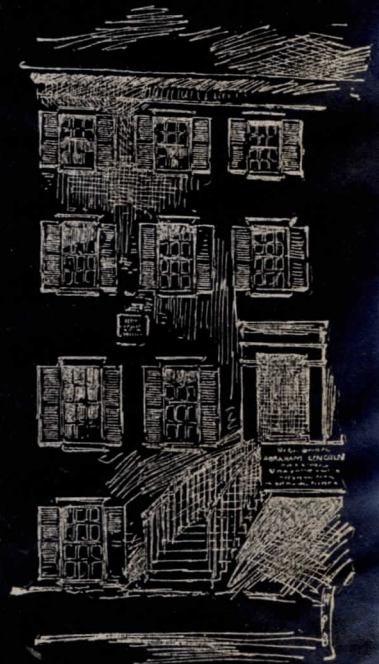
The body, sewn up in a saddle blanket, was taken to Washington and placed on board the monitor Montauk. The next morning it was identified and an autopsy was made, after which the remains were buried in a cell in the penitentiary. There they lay four years, when they were given up to the Booth family, and now are at rest in a cemetery at Baltimore.

The surviving conspirators, with the exception of John H. Surratt, were tried by a military commission in Washington in May and June, and were found guilty in various degrees. The commission united in recommending Mrs. Surratt to mercy, but President Johnson disregarded this, and approved her sentence with the others, subsequently preventing habeas corpus proceedings in her behalf by his orders to the military in charge of the prisoners. Mrs. Surratt, Powell, Herold and Atzerodt were hanged on July 7. Dr. Mudd, Arnold and O'Laughlin were sentenced to life imprisonment at the Dry Tortugas, though their term was subsequently shortened; and Spangler was sent to jail for six years. Surratt escaped to Canada, hid in a monastery until the autumn, went to Europe, and, after wandering about for a time, enlisted in the Papal Zouaves. Then he deserted and fled to Egypt, where he was recognized and apprehended. He was brought back to Washington in 1867 and put on trial; but the jury disagreed and he finally was released.



JOHN DYOTT.

Of the company who played "Our American Cousin" on the evening of the President's murder, there appear to be only five living besides Mr. Hawk and Mr. Matthews—Mr. Emerson of Lynchburg, Va., Mr. W. J. Ferguson, who is still reaping fame on the stage; Jennie



HOUSE WHERE LINCOLN DIED.

Gourlay, now Mrs. Struthers of Brooklyn; May Hart, who married Charles Brooks, the well-known Philadelphia lawyer, and Mrs. J. H. Evans, yet acting under the name of Kate Spencer.