

## AN UNHAPPY ACTOR.

### Troubles of Byron Douglas and His Wife, Marion Booth.

[Special Dispatch to the Boston Herald.]

New York, Nov. 30, 1892. The one topic of conversation in theatrical circles to-day was the suit for separation of Actor Byron Douglas against his wife, who is better known as Marion Booth, and the counter proceedings brought by the latter against her husband. The case came up yesterday, and was adjourned at the request of counsel.

Behind the suit is an interesting story, as told by an intimate acquaintance of Mr. Douglas. "I do not know," said the woman yesterday. "How Byron ever came to marry her at all. It may have been hypnotism or some queer influence of that kind. Byron was only 24 years old when he married Marion Booth, four years ago. He was merely a boy when he first met her as a member of her own company. She fairly forced him to marry her, for how else can you explain the queer marriage, when you consider that she is now about 40, and he is only 28?"

"When I first knew Marion Booth she had bleached hair, but later, after her marriage, when she immediately left the stage, her hair began to resume its former color, which is tinged with red. From the very start she led the poor boy an awful life. He could not enter the house but that she would demand money from him. No one could satisfy the demands of her extravagance, and this, too, in the face of the fact that she received \$100 a month from her uncle, Edwin Booth. I do feel sorry for Mr. Booth, to have this matter brought upon him in his old age and feeble condition.

"She would not let Douglas's mother see her son very often. An example of her remarkable feeling against her husband's mother was shown when the latter once sent him a couple of night garments, the work of her own hands, and Marion tore them to shreds before her husband's eyes. On one occasion she threw a clock at him, cutting his head severely. On another she tore his waistcoat in two, after the usual dispute about money.

"The way she treated her husband was simply scandalous. Last winter he left her, and she went to live in a flat uptown somewhere. He said to his mother shortly before that time that he could not stand such a life much longer; that if it continued he would simply go crazy. In fact, he was obliged to consult Dr. Hunter about nervous trouble brought on by his wife's treatment. He was taken with a paroxysm while on the stage. Mrs. Douglas left the stage two weeks after her marriage, four years ago. When I saw her last she weighed 218 pounds, but I understand that lately she has thought of returning to the stage, and has reduced her weight somewhat."

This morning Mr. Douglas and his lawyer had long consultation at the former's apartments. In the afternoon Mrs. Douglas and her attorneys conferred in a down town office.

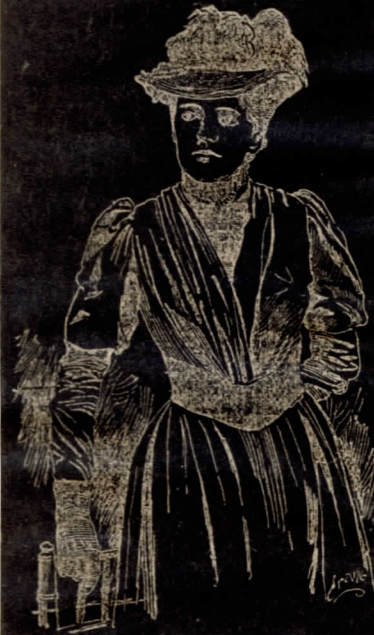
Byron Douglas has been on the stage six years. He has taken leading parts in the "White Squadron," "The Inspector" and other plays.

## WILKES BOOTH'S DAUGHTER.

### Rita Booth, Character Actress and Wife of Albert Henderson, Is Dead.

Rita Booth, who is said to have been the daughter of Wilkes Booth, the slayer of President Lincoln, and who for some years has been the wife of Al Henderson, the well-known orchestra leader, died on Tuesday in Binghamton, N. Y., where she was playing in the company of Floy Crowell. The body was brought to this city and the funeral will take place to-day.

Rita Booth was a clever character actress, and often declared that she did not wish to rise to any eminence in the dramatic profession, because she feared her relationship would bring unpleasant notoriety. She wore always a medallion locket containing the likeness of the ill-fated Wilkes Booth.



RITA BOOTH.

Several people who knew Booth claim to have noted in her the clear-cut features, the big ox eyes, the curly hair and high brow of the man who was regarded as the rising actor of his time. Two children, one a girl of thirteen, survive her. As her husband was an orchestra leader they always managed to get engagements with the same company, and were a very devoted pair.

It was stated at the Players' Club last night that Edwin Booth was not at home.

"The history of Mrs. Henderson's mother would be an interesting one," said a theatrical man last evening, "but she never talked of her parents, though she seemed to constantly think of them. It is a chapter of dramatic history that ought not to be lost."

## EDWIN BOOTH'S RELATIVES.

The grave of Richard Booth is in Greenmount Cemetery, alongside of that of his illustrious son, Junius Brutus, and a number of his grandchildren and their mother. Very few living people can recall Richard, the eldest of the Booths, who eventually found sepulchre in this city. He was father to two children, a son and a daughter, Junius Brutus and Jane Booth. In England he studied and practiced law, and it was said that his family belonged to Portugal, but left there and lived near London, where the name was translated to its English nomenclature, Booth. He was a great admirer of and married into the family of John Wilkes, the English member of Parliament and editor of the North Britton. When the then young tragedian came to America, in 1821, at the age of 25, and settled near Baltimore, the father, Richard Booth, soon followed, and a few years later the daughter, Jane, came with her husband, James Mitchell, and several children of whom two only are living. Robert G. Mitchell of Edenton, N. C., and Charlotte Mitchell Hyde of this city.

Eliza Mitchell, now dead, is remembered as a useful actress. She acted occasionally during the early ante-bellum years of Manager Ford's career and married one of his company, William Ward, a clever actor of that day, who traveled for a while with John E. Owens and others. His father, Thomas Ward, was a Baltimore manager in the forties. There was an eccentric brother of the Mitchells, who for a while was a carrier of the Sun and sold papers and magazines on the corner of Baltimore and South Streets. He was a picturesque character in the drama of "The Sea of Ice" when produced by Manager Ford in 1855-6. Mrs. Jane Booth Mitchell died in 1853, soon after her eminent brother's body was brought to this city and interred.

Mrs. Charlotte Hyde called on Edwin Booth at the Mount Vernon Hotel a few years ago. He immediately recognized his cousin, who was four years his junior, and then fixed an annuity of \$200 a year for her and sent aid also to her brother in North Carolina. If his will he left each \$25,000. His executors have conferred with Manager Ford as to her identity, and the legacy is now coming.—[Baltimore Sun.]

## Such a Poor Imitation.

EVEN BOOTH'S ACTING COULD NOT SATISFY THIS FAULT-FINDING CRITIC.

THE following story is told in an English paper about Edwin Booth:

On the occasion of his brother's benefit he was standing behind the

flag which draped the front of the President's box, and he landed on the boards upon his hands and knees, breaking his leg.

As he stood upon his feet once more, still acting tragedy, and with dagger uplifted, he shouted above the screams of Mrs. Lincoln, which just then rang through the house, the motto of the State of Virginia:—

"Sic semper tyrannis."

Unmindful of his broken leg, he ran toward the stage door, slashing viciously at every one who appeared to block his passage. He mounted his horse and galloped away into the night, and none of his friends in Washington ever saw him again.

Two hours afterward the military authorities at Washington were searching for John Wilkes Booth. They found that at eleven o'clock, thirty minutes after the fatal shot had been fired, two men crossed the Anacostia Bridge into Maryland. One gave the name of Booth and the other Smith. At first the authorities thought that the man Smith might be John Surratt, but at that time Surratt was riding on horseback to Baltimore, where he took the train to Montreal and escaped from the country. Smith, it appears, was none other than the boy Harold, a friend and devoted admirer of Booth. The two riders arrived at the house of Dr. Mudd, three miles from Brandytown, thirty miles from Washington. It took them six hours to cover the distance.

scenes, when a character actor, who had been giving imitations of noted actors, was about to respond to an encore

"Whom do you imitate next?" Booth asked.

"Well," was the reply, "I was going to represent you in Hamlet's soliloquy, but if you look on I'm afraid I shall make a mess of it."

"Suppose I imitate myself?" remarked the tragedian, and hastily putting on the other actor's wig and buttoning up his coat, he went on and delivered the well-known lines.

The next morning one critic stated that the imitations ruined the performance, "the personation of Edwin Booth being simply vile enough to make that actor shudder had he seen it."