

JOHN WILKES BOOTH

. . .

The Trajedian

. . .

SOURCE: The Players, 16 Gramercy Park, New York City

BOOK: "Notable Players of the Past and Present" which is composed of biographical articles carefully pasted; clipped from "The New York Clipper", 1910-11.

PAGE: 41

CAPTION: John Wilkes Booth

After mentioning his very early life it stated that he prevailed upon his brother-in-law, John S. Clarke, for a start on the stage and that soon later:

....."he made his debut as Richmond, in "Richard The Third" at the St. Charles Theatre, Baltimore, 1855. He was favorably received and gave promise of future excellence. He appeared on the stage at stated intervals for about two years. On the 15th of August, 1857, he became a regular member of the Old Arch Street Theatre Company, at Philadelphia, and made his first appearance there under the assumed name of "John Wilkes" as second Mask, in "Belle's Strategem", and remained at the theatre during the season. His reason for changing his name from Booth to Wilkes was because he was doubtful as to his meeting with that success which his ambition had pictured for him; also to keep the name of Booth from anything but brilliant success.

"During the season he appeared in a variety of Characters and became a general favorite with the audience. The next season---1858-9, he wended his way down South--became a member of the Richmond (Va.) Theatre, and so rapid was his progress in the dramatic art that we find him playing some of Shakespeare's most prominent characters. He became one of the greatest favorites in the theatre.

"At the commencement of the season of 1860-61 he started out on a starring tour, visiting nearly all the principal cities in the South and Southwest, playing Romeo, MacBeth, and all the leading tragedy parts. His first star engagement was in September 1860, at the Columbus (Ga.) Theatre, under the management of Matt. Canning. While performing this engagement he was accidentally shot by the manager, who was handling a small revolver at the time.

"On March 31, 1862, he made his bow in New York at Wallack's Old Theatre (Mary Provost's), and appeared one week\*. He met with a hearty welcome, and was looked upon as a very clever tragedian. From that time up to the commencement of the season of 1864-65 he fulfilled star engagements throughout the country.

"When the season of 1863-64 closed he retired from the stage and speculated very extensively in the oil regions, and amassed a great amount of money. His retirement was owing to a bronchial affection which was so painful that he could not act. On the occasion of the benefit given for the Shakespeare Monument Fund at the Winter Garden on November 25, 1864, he, in company with his two brothers, Edwin and Junius appeared in Julius Caesar, J. Wilkes Booth playing Marc Antony, and won considerable applause for the excellent rendition of the role. This occasion, and his one week at Wallack's Old Theatre, were the only times he ever appeared in New York.

"Mr. Booth's last appearance on the stage was at Ford's Theatre, Washington, as Pescara, in Shiel's tragedy of "The Apostate", for the benefit of John McCullough, in March 1865.

----)(----

\* Booth acted in the Mary Provost's Theatre from March 17 to 31st; see next page.

SUBJECT: The Two New York City Appearances Of John Wilkes Booth  
 SOURCE: The advertising columns of The New York Times in March, 1862 and November, 1864.

THEATRE: Mary Provost's, formerly the Old Wallack's located at Broadway and Broome Street.

Booth made his first appearance in the City on March 17, 1862; he acted in various plays during the succeeding days ending March 31st in Richard III, one of his most popular roles. His appearance consisted of the following performances:

March, 17,	. . . . .	.Richard III
" 18,	. . . . .	"
" 19,	. . . . .	.The Robbers
" 20,	. . . . .	"
" 21,	. . . . .	.Richard III
" 22,	. . . . .	"
" 24,	. . . . .	.Hamlet
" 25,	. . . . .	.The Apostate
" 26,	. . . . .	.RichardIII
" 27,	. . . . .	"
" 28,	. . . . .	.MacBeth
" 29,	. . . . .	.Richard III
" 31,	. . . . .	"

He played the leading part in all the plays including Charles de Moor in The Robbers, Pescara in The Apostate and Hamlet, Richard and MacBeth in the others.

A sample of one of the "ads" follows;

March 19, 1862, Wednesday:

"Third Night of the Triumphantly Successful  
 Engagement of the Young Trajedian, J. WILKES BOOTH  
 Whose Appearance Has Been Hailed With the  
 GREATEST ENTHUSIASM  
 By Houses crowded In Every Part ---  
 Hundreds Turned Away Unable To Gain Admittance

WEDNESDAY EVENING, MARCH 19

Schiller's Great Play of

THE ROBBERS

Chrles de Moor . . . .J. Wilkes Booth  
 Supported by the entire strength  
 of the Company

Due Notice Will Be Given Of Repetition of RICHARD III"

Occasionally the leading feminine role was mentioned as Mrs. Farren. Booth's name was always featured in "caps".

At that time the newspaper consisted of eight to ten pages devoted to Civil War news, and activities in the music and theatrical field was "covered" once a week. References to Booth was thus limited to one or two lines.

-0-

JOHN WILKES BOOTH'S 2nd APPEARANCE:

Theatre: Winter Garden

Date: November 25, 1864.

This was mentioned accurately in the "sketch" on page 2. Since the "ad" was one of the largest theatrical "ads" I have seen during the research I thought it worth photostating.