

BOOTH'S LETTER TO GRANT

By H. H. KOHLSAAT

ON THE night of April 14, 1865, President and Mrs. Lincoln invited General and Mrs. Grant to accompany them to Ford's Theater; but General and Mrs. Grant wanted to see their children and left on the six o'clock train for Burlington, New Jersey. So the President invited Miss Clara Harris, daughter of Senator Harris, of New York, and Col. Henry R. Rathbone to go with them. As they entered the theater the audience arose and gave the President a great ovation. He bowed his acknowledgment and took his seat in the box.

During the performance of the play, Our American Cousin, John Wilkes Booth entered the theater. He was an extremely handsome man of twenty-six and was well known to the managers and employes of the theater.

Ten minutes later he entered the presidential box. Creeping up behind the President, he shot him in the head just back of the left ear. Dropping his derringer pistol, he drew a long knife with which he slashed Colonel Rathbone, who tried to stop him. Leaping out of the box onto the stage, his legs passed between the folds of the flag decorating the box. His spur caught in the fringe, throwing him nine feet to the stage, breaking his ankle.

With a cry "Sic semper tyrannis"—Thus always with tyrants—he fled through a stage door, jumped on a saddled horse held by a boy, rushed out of the alley through the streets, crossing the Potomac over Anacostia Bridge into Maryland, arriving at Dr. Samuel Mudd's residence at Bryantown, Maryland, thirty miles from Washington, at four o'clock next morning.

The Capture of Booth

DOCTOR MUDD set his broken ankle, and Booth, joined by one of his fellow conspirators, Herold, left that afternoon and hid in a thicket for five days. Finally crossing the Rappahannock River, they reached the Garrett residence near Bowling Green, Virginia, April twenty-fourth.

When a company of United States cavalrymen arrived, Booth hid with his confederate, Herold, in Garrett's barn. When he refused to surrender, Lieut. Col. Everton J. Conger, of Ohio, threw a rope of lighted straw into the barn and set fire to a pile of hay. As the flames made the interior brilliant, Sergeant Boston Corbett, through a crack, shot Booth with a pistol. As he sank down, the soldiers

Barnum Hotel
Baltimore
Sept. 11th
1867

Genl. U. S. Grant

Sir,

Having once received a promise from Mr. Stanton that the family of John Wilkes Booth should be permitted to obtain the body when sufficient time had elapsed, I wrote to the undertaker of my Mother and applied for it to the Secretary of War - I fear too soon, for the letter was unintended - if, indeed, it were reached him.

I now appeal to you on behalf of my heart-broken Mother - that she may receive the remains of her son - You, Sir, can understand what a consolation it would be to an aged parent to have the privilege of visiting the grave of her child, and I feel assured that you will, even in the midst of your busy preparing duties, feel a touch

of sympathy for her - one of the greatest sufferers living.

May I not hope to that you will listen to our entreaties and send me some encouragement - some information how and when the remains may be obtained?

By so doing you will receive the gratitude of a most unhappy family and will - I am sure - be justified by all right-thinking minds should the matter ever become known to others than ourselves.

I shall remain in Baltimore two weeks from the date of this letter - during which time I could send a trustworthy person to bring hither and privately bury the remains in the family grounds, thus relieving my poor Mother of much misery.

Apologizing for my intrusion, and anxiously awaiting a reply to this - I am, Sir, with great respect,
Yr. obt. Servt.
Edwin Booth

opened the door, dragged him out and laid him on the grass. They finally carried him to the front porch of the house. He was apparently dead, but some water thrown in his face revived him. His lips moved. An officer put his ear to his lips and heard him say, "Tell my mother I died for my country. I did what I thought best." He said no more.

Letters

HE WAS shot at 3:15 A.M. and died two hours later, April 26, 1865, twelve days after the assassination of President Lincoln.

Booth's body was sewed up in an army blanket and carried to the Rappahannock and placed on board the steamer Ide. At Alexandria it was put on board the monitor Montauk, with the conspirator Herold, who was in double irons.

After complete identification, Booth's body was put in a pine box and secretly buried under a stone

slab in a cell in the old Government Penitentiary, a part of the Government Arsenal, where it remained until February 15, 1869, when President Andrew Johnson gave Edwin Booth permission to remove it to the family burial plot in Green Mount Cemetery, Baltimore.

A Historic Correspondence

THE letter of Edwin Booth to General Grant, presented herewith, formerly belonged to Gen. Adam Badeau, who was on General Grant's staff. All of General Badeau's letters were left to Mr. George Corsa, of Ridgewood, New Jersey, for many years Badeau's private secretary.

Mr. Corsa died about two years ago and willed his estate to Mrs. Ella F. Cooper, of Ridgewood, New Jersey. Mrs. Cooper sold the letter at auction November 1, 1923, in the Anderson Galleries, New York, to Dr. A. S. W. Rosenbach for one thousand dollars.

When I read of the sale I asked Doctor Rosenbach if he would give me a photographic copy of the letter; he did so, and I started hunting for a possible answer from General Grant. After diligent search through the New York Public Library and the histories of Lincoln's assassination and John Wilkes Booth's capture, I found no reference to it anywhere, and believe this is the first knowledge of its existence.

Failing to find any record of Booth's letter to Grant in New York, I went to Washington and

(Continued on Page 56)

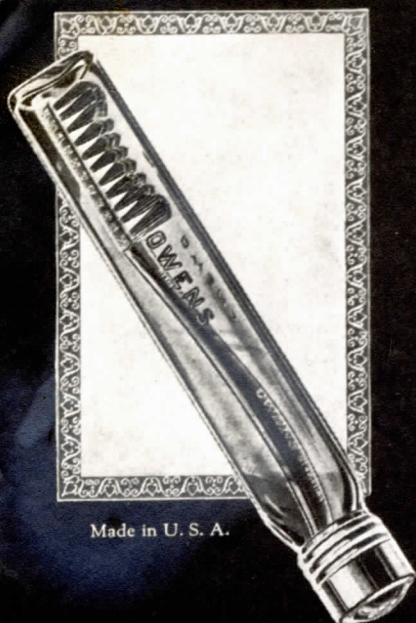
84 P. 1864 War Dept. C. O. B. 7
July 15, 1867
Hon. Maj. Gen. G. D. Renshaw,
U. S. Army,
Quadrant of Washington Arsenal
City of Washington

Sir: The President directs that the body of John Wilkes Booth, interred at the Washington Arsenal, be delivered to Mrs. John Cooper, Sexton of Christ Church Baltimore, for the purpose of having it removed & properly interred. Please report the execution of this order.

I am, Sir,
Very truly,
Yours,
G. H. [Signature]

BOOTH'S LETTER TO GRANT

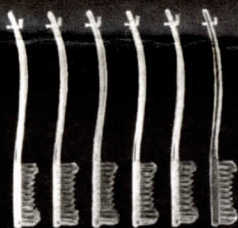
(Continued from Page 20)



Made in U. S. A.

Only the OWENS is made for you, personally

The Owens Staple tied Tooth Brush comes to you protected from careless, unsanitary handling. Each one is packed in a clean, transparent glass container. People can see it without thumbing or fingering.



There is a colored handle for you—personally. Six different colors in all—white, red, blue, purple, amber and green. Every member of your family may own an Owens. The colored handles make each one personal and easy to identify.

The Owens Tooth Brush cleans your teeth—completely. Its design is not only approved by dentists—but is declared by many to be the best ever devised.



Each bristle tuft is permanently tied into the handle by a hidden staple, thus preventing the danger of bristles coming out in your mouth.

Improved in every way, and sold in the glass container, the Owens costs only 30, 40 and 50 cents each in child's, youth's, and adult's sizes. See it at your druggist's.

OWENS
Staple tied TOOTH BRUSH
THE OWENS BOTTLE COMPANY, TOLEDO

through the courtesy of Maj. Gen. Robert C. Davis, Adjutant General of the War Department, Mr. Jesse H. Powell was instructed to search the files of 1867 and after, but no reference to the letter to General Grant could be found; but Mr. Powell did find a copy of a letter written by Edwin Booth to President Andrew Johnson February 10, 1869, as follows:

NEW YORK,
February 10, 1869.
ANDREW JOHNSON, ESQ.,
PRESIDENT UNITED STATES,
Dear Sir: May I not now ask your kind consideration of my poor Mother's request in relation to her son's remains? The bearer of this—Mr. John Weaver—is Sexton of Christ Church, Baltimore, who will observe the strictest secrecy

*Received by Mr. Johnson
February 15th 1869
File with 112
The Honorable the Secretary of War will cause to be delivered to Mr. John Weaver, Sexton of Christ Church, Baltimore, the remains of John Wilkes Booth, for the purposes mentioned in the within communication.
Andrew Johnson*

Washington Arsenal,
Washington, D. C. July 16th 1869.
My. Gen. E. D. Townsend
Adj. Adjt. General William
Washington D. C.
Sir,
I have the honor to report that the body of John Wilkes Booth, was on Monday afternoon the 15th inst. delivered to the person designated in the order of the President of the United States of the same date.
I am, Sir,
Very respectfully,
Your Obedt. Servt.
Geo. D. Ramsey
Brevet Major General
Commanding

in this matter—and you may rest assured that none of my family desire its publicity.
Unable to visit Washington, I have deputed Mr. Weaver, in whom I have the fullest confidence, and I beg that you will not delay in ordering the body to be given to his care.
He will retain it—placing it in his vault—until such time as we can remove other members of our family to the Baltimore Cemetery and thus prevent any special notice of it.
There is also—I am told—a trunk of his at the National Hotel which I once applied for but was refused—it being under seal of the War Department; it may contain relics of the poor misguided boy—which would be dear to his sorrowing Mother and of no use to anyone. Your Excellency would greatly lessen a crushing weight of grief that is hurrying my Mother to

Sir: I have the honor to report that the body of John Wilkes Booth was on Monday afternoon, the 15th inst., delivered to the person designated in the order of the President of the United States of the same date. I am, sir,
Very respectfully,
Your Obedt. Servant,
GEO. D. RAMSEY,
BREVET MAJOR GENERAL,
U. S. ARMY, COMMANDING.
Sexton Weaver conveyed Booth's body, wrapped in an army blanket and placed in a pine box, to a Washington undertaker, where it was put in a casket and carried to the Booth family burial lot in Green Mount Cemetery, Baltimore. I visited the cemetery and was told that under a plain marker of marble about sixteen by eighteen inches in a far corner of the lot, with no lettering of any kind on it, was the last resting place of John Wilkes Booth.

the grave by giving immediate orders for the safe delivery of the remains of John Wilkes Booth to Mr. Weaver, and gain the lasting gratitude of
Yr. obt. servt.,
(Sgd) EDWIN BOOTH.

February fifteenth, President Johnson gave the Secretary of War, General Schofield, an order directing him to surrender Booth's body. Maj. Gen. E. D. Townsend, Assistant Adjutant General, wrote the same day:

BREVET MAJ. GEN.
GEORGE D. RAMSEY,
COMMANDING WASHINGTON ARSENAL.
Sir: The President directs that the body of John Wilkes Booth, interred at the Washington Arsenal, be delivered to Mr. John Weaver, Sexton of Christ Church, Baltimore, Md., for the purpose of having it removed and properly interred. Please report the execution of this order.
I am, &c.,
E. D. T.,
A. A. G.

General Ramsey replied as follows:
MAJ. GEN. E. D. TOWNSEND,
ASSISTANT ADJUTANT GENERAL, U. S. ARMY, WASHINGTON, D. C.

*St. N. February 10th 1869
Andrew Johnson Esq
President United States
Dear Sir
May I not now ask your kind consideration of my poor Mother's request in relation to her son's remains?
The bearer of this (Mr. John Weaver) is sexton of Christ Church, Baltimore, who will observe the strictest secrecy in this matter—and you may rest assured that none of my family desire its publicity.
Unable to visit Washington I have deputed Mr. Weaver—in whom I have the fullest confidence, and I beg that you will not delay in ordering the body to be given to his care.
He will retain it (placing it in his vault) until such time as we can remove other members of our family to the Baltimore Cemetery, and thus prevent any special notice of it.
There is also (I am told) a trunk of his at the National Hotel—which I once applied for but was refused—it being under seal of the War Dept., it may contain relics of the poor misguided boy—which would be dear to his sorrowing Mother, and of no use to anyone. Your Excellency would greatly lessen the crushing weight of grief that is hurrying my Mother to the grave by giving immediate orders for the safe delivery of the remains of John Wilkes Booth to Mr. Weaver, and gain the lasting gratitude of
Yr. obt. servt.
(Sgd) Edwin Booth*