

## Laura H. Freudenthal

Location: Dress circle, front row

Washington Star, Louis A. Warren Lincoln Library

February 13, 1908

*Laura Freudenthal was unusual in claiming that the shot occurred during intermission. Also, Mrs. Lincoln was sitting directly to the president's right so it is unlikely that she would have had to clamber over the chairs. Freudenthal was eighty-seven years old when she recalled the event.*

"You know my sister was visiting us from New York," Mrs. Freudenthal will begin. She wanted to see the President and the papers said he'd be at that show—it was 'Our American Cousins,' you know—so we thought that would be a good time to see him well, and thats how we came to be there that night."

"There was my husband and my sister and I and we were in the first row of the first balcony where we were right across from the President's box and we could see him perfectly."

"They had turned down the gas—you know they used that for illumination then—and everybody was waiting for the second act to begin," she recalls.

"Suddenly we heard a pistol shot but everybody thought at first it was part of the play. Then I saw Booth jump out of the President's box. There was a big flag draped about the box, though, and Booth's foot caught in it and he fell down to the stage. He recovered himself quickly there, and before a soul could move he stood down there in the dim light—he was really handsome, I thought then—and he cried 'Sic semper tyrannis.'"

"You know he had a great big knife in his hand and after he shouted from the stage he turned to run off and he swirled that knife around in front of him and if anybody had gotten in his way they'd have gotten it. Then somebody cried out 'the President is shot!' and oh it seemed awful. Everybody was frightened and surprised and for a minute they didn't move. Then I saw Mrs. Lincoln clambering over chairs to reach Mr. Lincoln and by that time the people in the audience were milling about excitedly. And then—they took him out of the theater."

"We all felt we needed something to quiet our nerves; we just couldn't go home like that for we were nearly frantic, so we walked down to Harvey's—you know that place was famed for its steamed oysters and a glass of wine.

When we had quieted down a bit, we went outdoors again to go home and I never saw such a sight as long as I've lived.

Everybody seemed to be out; soldiers were milling about and the excitement was something terrible to behold! But we went right home to our house over on Capitol Hill."

Memory.

## RECALLS FATAL NIGHT AT FORD'S THEATER.

*Mrs. Robert Struthers of Montclair, N. J., is Only Surviving Member of "Our American Cousin" Company and Vividly Describes Booth's Attack on President and His Escape from the Stage.*

[BY DIRECT WIRE—EXCLUSIVE DISPATCH.]

NEW YORK BUREAU OF THE TIMES, Feb. 11.—Mrs. Robert Struthers of Montclair, N. J., where she now lives with her daughter, is the only surviving woman member of Laura Keane's "Our American Cousin" company, which was playing at Ford's Theater, Washington, on the night of Lincoln's assassination.

Mrs. Struthers played the character of Mary Meredith, an important part in the play, and one of her scenes with Asa Trenchard had always proved very absorbing to the audience. Mrs. Struthers said that she had always believed that Booth, being cognizant of the deep concentration of the audience at this point in the play, selected it as the most propitious time to make his way to Mr. Lincoln's box.

"When I came on the stage for the scene," said Mrs. Struthers, "I saw Booth standing in the lobby of the theater, which was lighted. He was so pale that I thought he was ill. He had just entered the theater from the street and stood with his hat in his hand. At the close of the scene I looked out over the multitude of spectators and saw that Booth had disappeared from the lobby. It was during my scene that he proceeded to the vicinity of Mr. Lincoln's box and prepared to shoot the President."

Mrs. Struthers, after leaving the stage, stopped to talk to William Withers, Jr., leader of the orchestra, who had just left the pit to discuss with the stage manager a song that was to have been sung that night in honor of Mr. Lincoln's presence in the theater.

"We were together only a minute," Mrs. Struthers continued, "when I saw Booth coming toward us, waving a great knife in his hand. The blade of the knife appeared to be about a foot long. Booth dashed between us toward the rear entrance of the building, thrusting me aside and slashing at Mr. Withers with the knife. The onslaught was so sudden and so astounding that we could not comprehend its meaning, but we both thought the man had gone mad. We had heard the report of the shot and the subsequent tumult in the theater, but in the remote regions at the back of the stage we thought the noise was occasioned by the introduction of some new feature of the evening's entertainment. The next moment, however, one of my brothers came running in from the audience crying to me that Booth had shot Lincoln. There was great confusion. My father went to the President's box and, with other men, carried Mr. Lincoln across the street, to the house in which he died."

Mrs. Struthers never played in Washington after the night Mr. Lincoln was slain.

N.Y. Sun, Feb. 6, 1916.

## LINCOLN'S DEATH DESCRIBED BY ACTRESS WHO SAW IT

MONTCLAIR, N. J., Feb. 5.—The only surviving woman member of the company that played "Our American Cousin" in Ford's Theatre on the night Abraham Lincoln was assassinated lives in Montclair. She is Mrs. Robert Struthers, who played *Mary Meredith* in the comedy drama. Mrs. Struthers, whose maiden name was Jeannie Gourlay, lives with her daughter, Mrs. Richard E. Humbert, in St. Luke's place. Curiously enough Laura Keene, who was the star in "Our American Cousin," was buried in the cemetery of the Immaculate Conception parish in Montclair. Some years later her body was removed to a cemetery on Long Island. The only other surviving members of the company are Harry Hawk, W. J. Ferguson, who is now playing in "Treasure Island" in New York, and E. A. Emerson. Although nearly fifty years have elapsed since she last saw Mr. Ferguson Mrs. Struthers recognized him one evening recently when she saw him in a motion picture drama at a Montclair theatre. Mr. Emerson is now in business in Washington, not far from the site of the old Ford Theatre.

On the night that Lincoln was killed Mrs. Struthers was one of five members of her family in the theatre, and she narrowly escaped injury at the hands of John Wilkes Booth as he fled from the playhouse. The other members of Mrs. Struthers's family who were present when Booth shot President Lincoln were her father, Thomas C. Gourlay, and sister, Miss Margaret Gourlay, also members of the Keene company, and her two brothers, Thomas C. Gourlay, Jr., and Robert Gourlay, who were in the audience. It was one of Mrs. Struthers's brothers who gave the War Department official news of the assassination.

### Mistake in the Programme.

She has a theatre programme dated April 14, 1865, and it is one of the originals and not a copy printed from a photographic plate. The facsimiles have been printed by the thousands and are frequently seen. Mrs. Struthers called attention to the fact that on the programme her role was given as *Mary Trenchard*, whereas it really was *Mary Meredith*.

In "Our American Cousin" Mrs. Struthers had an important scene with *Asa Trenchard*, and she said yesterday that she has always believed that Booth, being cognizant of the deep concentration of the audience at this point in the play, selected it as the propitious time to make his way to the box occupied by the Presidential party.

"When I came on for the scene," said Mrs. Struthers, "I saw Booth in the theatre. He was so pale I thought he was ill. He had just entered from the street, and stood with his hat in hand. *Asa Trenchard* and I brought our seats

down to the front of the stage, and *Asa*, as the part required, asked permission to light a cigar. When he struck the match he took a paper from his pocket and ignited it. The burned paper, it develops, was the will which bequeathed to him the property he regarded as rightfully belonging to *Mary*. The pretty sentiment of the scene always held the audience in silence. At the close of the dialogue I looked out over the footlights and saw that Booth had disappeared. It was during my scene with *Asa* that he proceeded quietly to the vicinity of Mr. Lincoln's box.

"After the curtain fell on the act I was speaking to William Withers, Jr., the leader of the orchestra, who had left his desk to discuss with the stage manager a song that was to have been sung that night in honor of Mr. Lincoln's presence.

### Mob Threatens Company.

"We were together only a minute when I saw Booth come toward us waving a great knife. He dashed between us toward the stage door, thrusting me aside with one hand and slashing at Mr. Withers with the knife. The onslaught was so sudden we thought the man had gone mad. We had heard the report of the shot and the subsequent tumult in the audience. The next moment one of my brothers came running in from the front crying that Booth had shot Mr. Lincoln. There was great confusion. My father escorted Miss Keene through a side entrance to Mr. Lincoln's box, and Miss Keene took the stricken President in her arms. Those in the box did not know where Mr. Lincoln had been wounded, but when his head rested on Miss Keene's bosom the blood from the bullet hole in his head left a mark that was quickly noticed. My father and another man carried Mr. Lincoln across the street to the house in which he died.

"For a while the lives of the members of the company were in grave peril. A great, frenzied crowd gathered in the street, and because of the rumors that some members of the company were conspirators with Booth some of the more excited ones proposed that they burn the theatre and cremate the alleged offenders. This peril was acute until the military got the situation in hand and cleared the streets. My father took us home and Mr. Withers came with us. When we got home we found that Booth's knife had slashed Mr. Withers's coat in two places.

"The authorities seized our costumes and the theatre was closed. A few weeks after the shooting of President Lincoln the entire company was ordered to assemble and go through 'Our American Cousin' exactly as they had done on the night the President was slain. As the costumes were not available the play was given in street clothes. The only audience was a group of men from the secret service, who sought, through the action of the play, to determine if any of the members of the company could have contributed to the execution of Booth's plan. The inquisitors, however, were unable to implicate anybody but Ned Spangler, a scene shifter, in the assassination plot."

Mrs. Struthers never played in Washington after the night Mr. Lincoln was slain. "The Octoroon" was to have been given as a benefit for her shortly after, according to the announcement on the programme, but the death of the President prevented. Mrs. Struthers afterward played with Edwin Booth.

# ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S ASSASSINATION IN FORD'S THEATER RECALLED BY ONE OF THE ORIGINAL COMPANY'S MEMBERS

INTERESTING, indeed, on the eve of Lincoln's birth anniversary, is resurrection of a letter bearing on one or two heretofore obscure details attendant immediately after President Lincoln's assassination in Ford's Theater, April 14, 1865. This letter, written by Jeannie Gourlay, later Mrs. Struthers, who was supporting Laura Keene on that fateful night, is now in possession of Anton Heitmuller, of the Heitmuller Art Company, on Fourteenth street, who prizes it along with a collection of some almost priceless Lincoln mementos.

As everyone knows, the play that drew Lincoln to the President's box at Ford Theater that night was "Our American Cousin." It was the custom in those days to dedicate various nights to the benefit of members of the company, the receipts on these nights supplementing the salary of the favored actor or actress.

April 14 was benefit night for Laura Keene, authoress and actress, who was starred in the play. By reason of her great popularity in Washington, she

drew a crowded and distinguished house. This night marked Miss Keene's approach to the thousand mark in American performances of the play. The complete cast was as follows:

- Florence Trenchard.....Laura Keene
- Abel Murcott.....John Dyott
- Asa Trenchard.....Harry Hawk
- Sir Edward Trenchard.. T. C. Gourlay
- Lord Dundreary.....E. A. Emerson
- Mr. Coyle.....J. Mathews
- Lieutenant Vernon.....W. J. Ferguson
- Captain De Boots.....C. Byrnes
- Binney.....G. G. Spear
- Buddlecomb.....J. H. Evans
- John Whicker.....J. H. de Bonay
- Rasper.....
- Bailiffs...G. A. Parkhurst, I. Johnson
- Mary Meredith.....Miss J. Gourlay
- Mrs. Mountchessington..Mrs. H. Muzzy
- Augusta.....Miss H. Trueman
- Georgiana.....Miss M. Hart
- Sharpe.....Mrs. J. H. Evans
- Skillet.....Miss M. Gourlay

The following is Miss Gourlay's letter, in part, written some years ago:

"There were five members of our family in the theater that night; two brothers and a Mr. Williamson in the orchestra seats. Mr. Williamson's father was tutor to Tad Lincoln, and was in Grover's Theater that night with the boy. My brothers knew Booth, recognized him and climbed to the stage (after the shooting) with the others. I knew Booth very well, and have always said he took a particular scene of mine to work his way to the President's box.

"It was a scene between Asa and Mary Meredith. Trenchard was a mistake for Meredith in the Washington program. The bill of 'Our American Cousin' was not the same in those days. Then it was made up of scenes, now it is divided into acts.

"I think the scene I refer to was called the dairy scene. In it, Asa burns a will, by so doing giving money to Mary left by his grandfather to him. The audience knew that, but Mary does not.

During that part you could hear a pin drop in the theater.

"At the beginning of this scene I saw Booth standing at the back of the parquet and remarked to myself how strange he looked. Before my scene was over I looked again, and he was gone. At the conclusion of it I went up to the back and the scene was closed in on me. Ned Spangler was one of the scene shifters. He had just come from holding Booth's horse in the alley. I spoke to him and passed to the entrance, not a great distance from the door leading to the alley. I was talking with one of the company when I heard a pistol shot and a great noise. I had no idea of what happened.

"A few minutes after Booth came rushing up from the first entrance with knife in his hand, pushed me once against the scene and made his exit through the door to the alley. I then went to the first entrance and found that the President had been shot.

"A call from the box was made for water. Laura Keene went to the box to take it and give what help she could. She took the President's head in her arms and it was then discovered that the wound was in the head by the blood running down her dress. They thought he was shot in the body and were stripping him to find the wound. The last I saw was when they were carrying him from the box to leave the theater, the saddest sight I have ever seen.

"In 'The Life of Laura Kenne,' by John Creahan, you will find mention made of this instance."

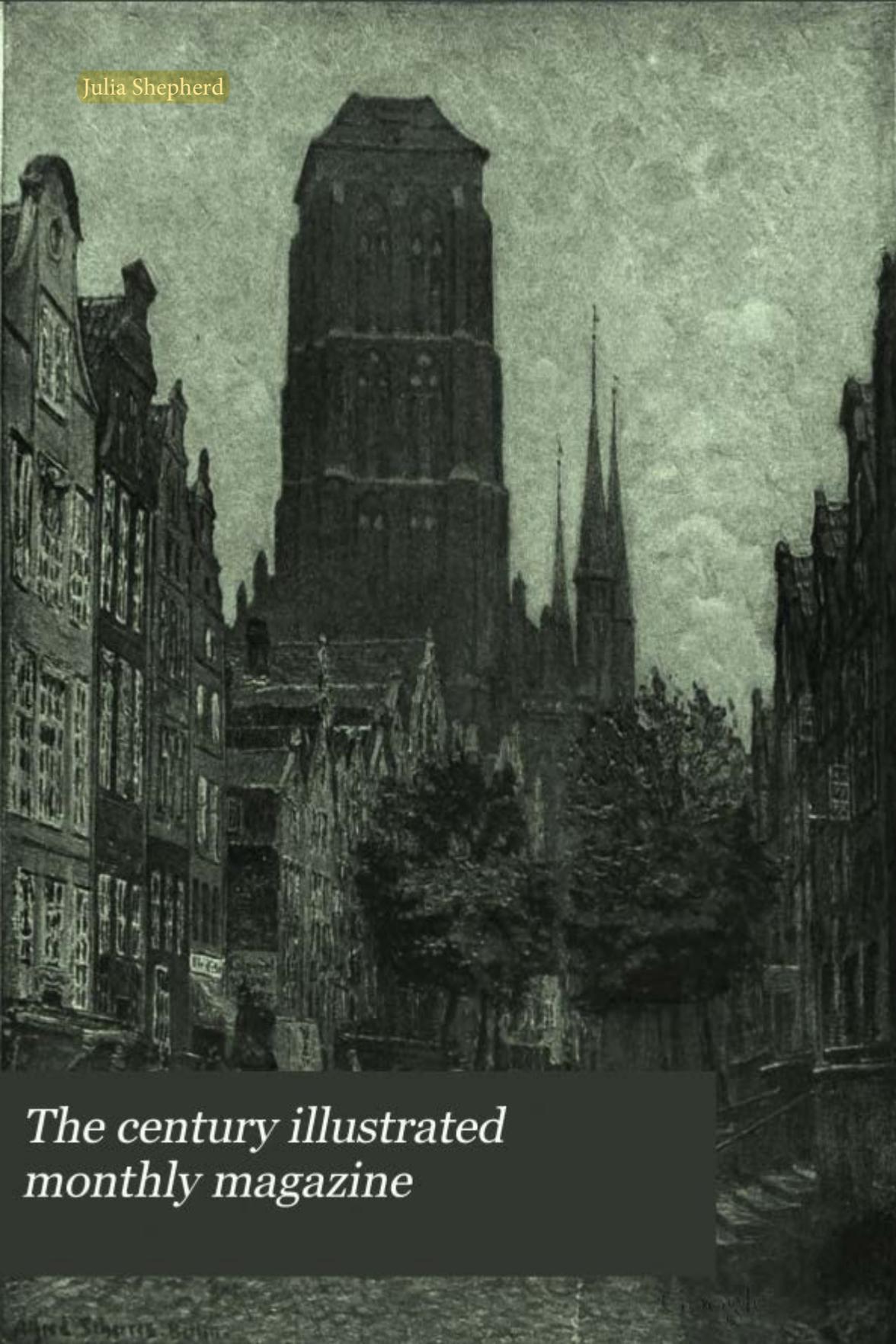
(Signed)—  
JEANNIE GOURLAY STRUTHERS.

The night following the assas-

ination was to have been Miss Gourlay's benefit night. "The Octoroon" was the vehicle. Miss Gourlay never enjoyed her benefit, of course, the pall spreading over the Nation blinding all desire for amusement. Furthermore, the theater was immediately closed.

A short time later Ford made an attempt to reopen the theater, importing a company and making all arrangements, even to the extent of distributing handbills announcing the date. A squad of armed soldiers was dispatched from the War Department to the theater on the night in question, giving ominous backing to the War Department's mandate that the theater would not reopen.

Turn to the March of Events section of today's Times-Herald and read Viktor Flambeau's story of the Lincoln memorials in Washington, and on page 7, same section, the interesting story of Henry Polkinhorn, Washington man, who as a lad of twelve years was in Ford's Theater when Lincoln was shot. Interesting pictures with both stories.



Julia Shepherd

*The century illustrated  
monthly magazine*



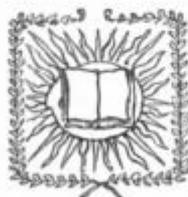
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# LINCOLN'S ASSASSINATION

TOLD BY AN EYE-WITNESS

THE letter which follows was written on the date given, by Miss Julia Adelaide Shepard, now living in Ogdensburg, New York. Miss Shepard is an aunt of the artist, Mr. Charles S. Chapman, through whose good offices we are enabled to make it public for the first time.—THE EDITOR.

*"Hopeton" near Washington,  
April 16th, 1865.*

**D**EAR FATHER:—It is Friday night and we are at the theatre. Cousin Julia has just told me that the President is in yonder upper right hand private box so handsomely decked with silken flags festooned over a picture of Washington. The young and lovely daughter of Senator Harris is the only one of the party we can see, as the flags hide the rest. But we know that "Father Abraham" is there; like a father watching what interests his children, for their pleasure rather than his own. It has been announced in the papers he would be there. How sociable it seems, like one family sitting around their parlor fire. How different this from the pomp and show of monarchical Europe. Every one has been so jubilant for days, since the surrender of Lee, that they laugh and shout at every clownish witticism. One of the actresses, whose part is that of a very delicate young lady, talks of wishing to avoid the draft, when her lover tells her "not to be alarmed for there is no more draft," at which the applause is long and loud. The American cousin has just been making love to a young lady, who says she will never marry but for love, yet when her mother and herself find he has lost his property they retreat in disgust at the left of the stage, while the American cousin goes out at the right. We are waiting for the next scene.

The report of a pistol is heard. . . . Is it all in the play? A man leaps from the President's box, some ten feet, on to the stage. The truth flashes upon me. Brandishing a dagger he shrieks out "The South is avenged," and rushes through the

scenery. No one stirs. "Did you hear what he said, Julia? I believe he has killed the President." Miss Harris is wringing her hands and calling for water. Another instant and the stage is crowded—officers, policemen, actors and citizens. "Is there a surgeon in the house?" they say. Several rush forward and with superhuman efforts climb up to the box. Minutes are hours, but see! they are bringing him out. A score of strong arms bear Lincoln's loved form along. A glimpse of a ghastly face is all as they pass along. . . . Major Rathbone, who was of their party, springs forward to support [Mrs. Lincoln], but cannot. What is it? Yes, he too has been stabbed. Somebody says "Clear the house," so every one else repeats "Yes, clear the house." So slowly one party after another steals out. There is no need to hurry. On the stairs we stop aghast and with shuddering lips—"Yes, see, it is our President's blood" all down the stairs and out upon the pavement. It seemed sacrilege to step near. We are in the street now. They have taken the President into the house opposite. He is alive, but mortally wounded. What are those people saying. "Secretary Seward and his son have had their throats cut in their own house." Is it so? Yes, and the murderer of our President has escaped through a back alley where a swift horse stood awaiting him. Cavalry come dashing up the street and stand with drawn swords before yon house. Too late! too late! What mockery armed men are now. Weary with the weight of woe the moments drag along and for hours delicate women stand clinging to the arms of their protectors, and strong men throw their arms around each

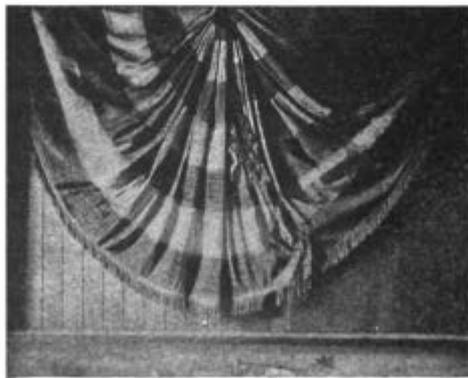
other's necks and cry like children, and passing up and down enquire in low agonized voices "Can he live? Is there no hope?" They are putting out the street lamps now. "What a shame! not now! not to-night!" There they are lit again. Now the guard with drawn swords forces the crowd backward. Great, strong Cousin Ed says "This unnerves me; let 's go up to Cousin Joe's." We leave Julia and her escort there and at brother Joe's gather together in an upper room and talk and talk with Dr. Webb and his wife who were at the theatre. Dr. W. was one of the surgeons who answered the call. He says "I asked Dr. — when I went in what it was, and putting his hand on mine he said, 'There!' I looked and it was 'brains.'"

After a while Julia and Mr. W. came in and still we talked and listened to the cavalry rushing through the echoing street. Joe was determined to go out, but his wife could n't endure the thought of any one going out of the house. It was only in the early hours of the dawn that the gentlemen went to lie down, but Julia sat up in a rocking chair and I lay down on the outside of the bed beside Cousin Ginny for the rest of the night, while Cousin Joe and his wife's young brother sat nodding in their chairs opposite. There were rooms waiting for us but it seemed safer to be together. He was still living when we came out to Hopeton, but we had scarcely choked down our breakfast next morning when the tolling bells announced the terrible truth.

Last Thursday evening we drove to the

city, and all along our route the city was one blaze of glorious light. From the humble cabin of the contraband to the brilliant White House light answered light down the broad avenue. The sky was ablaze with bursting rockets. Calcium lights shone from afar on the public buildings. Bonfires blazed in the streets and every device that human Yankee ingenuity could suggest in the way of mottoes and decoration made noon of midnight. Then as the candles burned low and the rockets ceased, we drove home through the balmy air and it seemed as though Heaven smiled upon the rejoicings, and Nature took up the illumination with a glory of moonlight that transcended all art.

To-day I have been to church through the same streets and the suburbs with the humble cottages that were so bright that night shone through the murky morning, heavy with black hangings, and on and on, down the streets only the blackness of darkness. The show of mourning was as universal as the glorying had been, and when we were surrounded by the solemn and awe-stricken congregation in the church, it seemed as though my heart had stopped beating. I feel like a frightened child. I wish I could go home and have a good cry. I can't bear to be alone. You will hear all this from the papers, but I can't help writing it for things seen are mightier than things heard. It seems hard to write now. I dare not speak of our great loss. Sleeping or waking, that terrible scene is before me.



THE FLAG THAT WAS DRAPED IN FRONT OF THE THEATER BOX IN WHICH LINCOLN WAS SHOT

The rent in the flag was made by the spurs on the riding-boots of the assassin, which caught in this flag as he jumped from the box to the stage.

Q. When did you see this horse last, before to-day?

A. I saw him about, I should think, the 4th or 5th of April; the time he brought it there to sell it, — about that time. I do not recollect the date exactly.

Q. Have you seen that horse in the possession of Atzerodt since, between to-day and that time when you saw him, that you just mentioned?

A. Not since the day he brought them there to sell.

**JOE SIMMS** (colored),

a witness called for the prosecution, being duly sworn, testified as follows: —

By the JUDGE ADVOCATE:

Q. Do you live in this city?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. What connection have you had with Ford's Theatre?

A. I worked there two years. I came there when I first came to Washington.

Q. Were you there on the night the President was assassinated?

A. I was up on the flies to wind up the curtain.

Q. Did you see Booth there that evening?

A. I saw Mr. Booth that evening between five and six o'clock.

Q. State where you saw him, and what he did and said.

A. When I saw him, he came in on the back part of the stage, and went through to the front of the house. I was in front of the house; and Mr. Booth came out there, and went out and into one of the restaurants by the side of the theatre. I saw him no more that night until the performance was. During the performance I heard the fire of a pistol, and looked immediately to see where it was. When I looked, I saw him jumping out of the private box down on to the stage, with a bowie-knife in his hand, and then making his escape across the stage. I saw no more of him.

Q. Did you hear any thing that he said?

A. No, sir: not a word.

Q. Who was with him when he went out to drink?

A. There was nobody with him then; but one of the men, a

man named Spangler, was sitting out in front, and he invited him to take a drink.

Q. Is that the man who is here?

A. That is the man [pointing to Edward Spangler].

Q. Did you hear a word said between them?

A. Not a word. They went into the restaurant and took a drink: that was all I saw or heard.

Q. Did you see or hear Booth when he came up to the back of the theatre with his horse?

A. I did not hear him myself, neither did I see him; but the other colored man that works with me saw him.

Q. Is he here?

A. He is here.

Q. You know Mr. Spangler very well?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Were he and Booth very intimate?

A. They were quite intimate together; but I know not of any thing between them.

Q. You only saw them often together?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Drinking together?

A. Yes, sir.

Cross-examined by Mr. EWING:

Q. Did Mr. Spangler have any thing to do with Booth's horses?

A. No more than he used to have them attended to while Mr. Booth was away.

Q. He had charge of the horses?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Saw to their being fed and watered?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Was he hired by Mr. Booth?

A. Mr. Spangler was not; but there was a young man hired by Mr. Booth. I suppose Mr. Booth thought this young man might not do right by his horses; and he got Mr. Spangler to see that it should be done right when he was not there.

Q. What position had Mr. Spangler in the theatre?

A. Mr. Spangler was one of the stage-managers ; one that shoved the scenes at night, and worked on the stage all day.

Q. On what side of the stage was his usual position in the theatre ?

A. On the back part of the stage ; there was his particular place.

Q. On which side ?

A. On the right-hand side of the stage.

Q. As you face it from the audience ?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. That was the side of the President's box, was it ? or was it not ?

A. No, sir : the President's box was on the left-hand side.

Q. The left-hand side looking out from the stage ?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Mr. Spangler's place, you say, was on the other side ?

A. Yes : next to the back-door leading out to the alley.

Q. Where was your position ?

A. Right on the flies, where we wind the curtain up, on the third story.

Q. Did you see Mr. Spangler that night after five o'clock ?

A. Oh, yes ! Mr. Spangler was there on the stage, attending to his business as usual.

Q. At what time did you see him ?

A. In the early part of the night ; I cannot tell exactly when : I never inquired to know the particular time. We had no time up there where we were. Only two men worked up there.

Q. How long did you see him before the President was shot ?

A. I did not see Mr. Spangler at all before the President was shot. I myself was not thinking about any thing like that going on. I was busy looking at the performance until I heard the report of a pistol.

Q. Did you not see Mr. Spangler during the play that night ?

A. Yes, sir : he was there. He was on the stage during the play : he was obliged to be there.

Q. Did you see him in the first act ?

A. Yes : he was there in the first act. I saw him then.

Q. Did you see him in the second act ?

A. I do not remember seeing him in the second act.

Q. Were you down off the flies ?

A. I was not off the flies. I could see him very well from the flies, on the opposite side of the stage, next to the side where the President was sitting in his box. I could see from my side over to that side of the stage.

Q. Were you on the side that the President's box was on ?

A. No : I was on the other side.

Q. And Mr. Spangler's place was on the opposite side below ?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. You say you did not see him during the second act ?

A. I did not see him during the second act.

Q. Were you looking for him ?

A. No, sir : I was not looking for him during the second act.

Q. Was he a sort of assistant stage-manager ?

A. Yes, sir : he was one of the regular stage-managers to shift the scenes at nights.

Q. From where you were, could you see into the President's box ?

A. I could. From where I was, I could see him plain.

Q. And could you see also where Mr. Spangler was in the habit of being ?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Both of them were on the opposite side of the theatre from you ?

A. Yes, sir : on the opposite side.

Q. Both of them, then, were on the same side with each other ?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. What time in the first act did you see Spangler ?

A. In the first act, I saw him walking around the stage, looking at the performance.

Q. Did he have his hat on ?

A. Yes : he always had his hat on in the back entries.

Q. How was he dressed ?

A. I cannot tell exactly what kind of clothes he had on, but just a common suit.

Q. Did he look as he does now ?

A. Oh, no, sir ! he did not look as he looks now.

Q. How was his face ?

A. It is just as natural now as it was then.

Q. Did you ever see Mr. Spangler wear a mustache ?

A. No, sir : I never did.

Q. From where you were up on the flies, you could sometimes see him where he was ; and sometimes, when he would change his position, you would not see him ?

A. I could not see him then.

Q. You just saw him occasionally ; and his position generally was around on the side opposite to that where you were ?

A. Yes, sir.

JOHN MILES (colored),

a witness called for the prosecution, being duly sworn, testified as follows : —

By the JUDGE ADVOCATE :

Q. Do you belong to Ford's Theatre ? and have you been working there ?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Were you there on the night of the assassination of the President ?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Did you see J. Wilkes Booth there ?

A. I saw him when he came there.

Q. What hour did he come ? Tell us all you saw.

A. He came there, I think, between nine and ten o'clock ; and he brought a horse from the stable, and came to the back door and called " Ned Spangler " three times out of the theatre. Ned Spangler went across the stage to him. After that I did not see what became of Booth, and never noticed him any more until I heard the pistol go off. I then went up in sight of the President's box. The man up with me said some one had shot the President. The President had then gone out of sight. I could not see him. I went in a minute or two to the window ; and I heard the sound of horses' feet going out the alley.

Q. Did you see anybody holding the horse out there ?

Q. How was his face ?

A. It is just as natural now as it was then.

Q. Did you ever see Mr. Spangler wear a mustache ?

A. No, sir : I never did.

Q. From where you were up on the flies, you could sometimes see him where he was ; and sometimes, when he would change his position, you would not see him ?

A. I could not see him then.

Q. You just saw him occasionally ; and his position generally was around on the side opposite to that where you were ?

A. Yes, sir.

**JOHN MILES** (colored),

a witness called for the prosecution, being duly sworn, testified as follows : —

By the JUDGE ADVOCATE :

Q. Do you belong to Ford's Theatre ? and have you been working there ?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Were you there on the night of the assassination of the President ?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Did you see J. Wilkes Booth there ?

A. I saw him when he came there.

Q. What hour did he come ? Tell us all you saw.

A. He came there, I think, between nine and ten o'clock ; and he brought a horse from the stable, and came to the back door and called " Ned Spangler " three times out of the theatre. Ned Spangler went across the stage to him. After that I did not see what became of Booth, and never noticed him any more until I heard the pistol go off. I then went up in sight of the President's box. The man up with me said some one had shot the President. The President had then gone out of sight. I could not see him. I went in a minute or two to the window ; and I heard the sound of horses' feet going out the alley.

Q. Did you see anybody holding the horse out there ?

A. I saw the boy holding the horse there : from the time I saw him, he held him fifteen minutes.

Q. Was that after he called for Spangler ?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. You mean Spangler the prisoner here ?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. You do not know what was said between them ?

A. No, sir : I do not know any thing about what was said between them. I did not understand a word. I only heard him call " Ned."

Q. You say he came up to the door with his horse between nine and ten o'clock. Do you know at what hour he put his horse in the little stable back of the theatre ?

A. He had put his horse in the stable when I came over there. He and Ned Spangler and Jim Maddox came up from the stable in the evening, I think, about three o'clock. I judge it was about that time. I did not notice the time particularly. It was the time he came right through the theatre.

Q. How far is the little stable in which he kept the horse from the theatre ?

A. Not more than fifty yards, if that.

Cross-examined by MR. EWING :

Q. Was the play going on when Booth rode up and called for Spangler ?

A. They had just closed a scene, and were getting ready to take off that scene at the time he called for Spangler. Spangler was at the second groove then, and pushed a scene across. Booth called him three times.

Q. Where were you then ?

A. Up on the flies ; about three and one-half stories from the stage.

Q. Was that in the third act ?

A. I think it was in the third act.

Q. How long was it before the President was shot ?

A. The President came in during the first act ; and I think it was in the third act he was shot.

Q. About how long do you think it was from the time Booth came up there until the President was shot?

A. From the time he brought the horse there until the President was shot, I think was about three-quarters of an hour. I saw Booth when he brought the horse from the stable to the door; and from that time until the President was shot, I think, was three-quarters of an hour.

Q. Do you know who held the horse?

A. John Peanuts held him: he was lying on a bench holding the horse when I noticed him. I was at the window pretty nearly all the time from the time Booth brought the horse until he went away. Every time I looked out the window, John Peanuts was lying on the bench, holding the horse. I did not see any one else hold him.

Q. Was John Peanuts there when Booth came up?

A. I do not know: he was at the theatre; but I do not know whether he was at the door.

Q. Did you look out to see who was there?

A. There was nobody there when Booth came up, that I saw, because I was looking out of the window.

Q. Did Spangler go out?

A. He went to Booth. I supposed Booth was at the door.

Q. Spangler went to him?

A. He ran across the stage when Booth called him. Some person told him that Booth called him; and he ran across the stage to him.

Q. Do you know whether he went out of the door?

A. I do not know whether he did or not. I did not see him go out.

Q. Do you know how long Spangler staid there?

A. No: because, when I looked out again, his boy was holding the horse.

Q. How long was that after he called Spangler?

A. Not more than ten or fifteen minutes.

Q. Do you know what Spangler had to do with Booth?

A. No, sir: only I saw him appear to be familiar with him, and keeping his company and so on when he was round about there.

Q. Did Booth treat him?

A. I do not know: I never saw him treat him.

Q. Did Spangler have any thing to do with Booth's horses, — hitch them up, or saddle them, or hold them?

A. Yes, sir: I have seen him hold them down at the stable.

Q. Did you know any thing about his hitching Booth's horse, or saddling him up?

A. I never saw him hitch any up there; but I have seen him hold the horse there at the stable-door. John Peanuts always attended to the horses. I never saw Spangler put any gear on any of them.

Q. Do you know what place on the stage Spangler generally occupied?

A. He worked on the right-hand side, — the side next to E Street.

Q. The side the President's box was on?

A. Yes, sir: on that side.

Q. Could you see from where you were up in the flies?

A. I could see right straight down through the scenes on that side of the stage; and I always saw him work on that side.

Q. Was he on that side when Booth called him?

A. Yes, sir: he was.

Q. What was Spangler's business on that side? What kept him on that side?

A. He shoved the scenes at night on that side.

Q. Was there another man shoving from the other side?

A. Yes, sir: there was another man opposite to him.

Q. Did you see Spangler after you saw that Peanut John was holding Booth's horse?

A. I never saw him any more until I came down. I came down the stairs after the President was shot, and Spangler was out there at the door.

Q. At what door?

A. At the same door Booth went out when I came down stairs.

Q. Were there others out there?

A. Yes; there were some more men out there: I did not notice who they were, but some more besides him.

Q. More men of the theatre?

A. That were at the theatre that night: there were some strangers out there then, I believe; because every person had got over the stage then that wanted to go over.

Q. How many men were out at the back door at that time?

A. Not more than two or three out of the door when I came down, because I came down in a very short time after I understood what it was; and Spangler came out, and I asked him who it was that held the horse; and he told me, "Hush! not to say nothing;" and I did not say any more, though I knew who it was, because I saw the boy who was holding the horse. I knew that the person who brought the horse there rode him away again.

Q. You could not see Spangler all the time when he was on the stage, could you, from where you were?

A. When he was working on that side, I could see him all the while if I looked for him.

Q. Did you look for him that night?

A. No: I did not notice him particularly that night more than usual. I would not have noticed him when I did, only I heard Booth call him; and I noticed where he was when he went to Booth.

Q. He might have been on that side all night without your noticing it?

A. He might.

Q. You do not know, then, whether he was on that side or not?

A. He was on that side when I saw him before then, and he was on that side then.

Q. But you did not look for him after that?

A. I did not look for him at all.

Q. What was it you asked Spangler when you came down?

A. I asked him who it was holding the horse at the door of the theatre.

Q. What did he say?

A. He told me to hush; not to say any thing at all to him; and I never said no more to him.

Q. Was he excited?

A. He appeared to be.

Q. Was everybody excited?

A. Every person appeared to be very much excited.

Q. When you asked him who it was who was holding the horse, he said, "Hush! don't say any thing to me"?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. And you say, "Hush! don't say any thing to me"?

A. I mean the same thing, to hush, not say any thing about it. That was the word. Not thinking at the time, I said, "Do not say any thing to me;" but he said, "Don't say any thing about it." That was the word; that was what he said, "Don't say any thing about it."

Q. Do you know Spangler well?

A. Oh, yes! at least, I know him when I see him.

Q. Did you ever see him wear a mustache?

A. No, sir: I do not think I ever saw him wear a mustache.

By the JUDGE ADVOCATE:

Q. This remark he made to you, "Hush! don't say any thing about it," was immediately after the killing of the President, was it?

A. Yes, sir: right at the door when I went out doors.

Q. Did he make any other remark as a reason why you should not say any thing about it?

A. No, sir: not a word to me.

Q. He made no other remark?

A. No, sir: not a word to me.

Q. Did you see Booth go out of the door?

A. No, sir: I did not see him go out of the door; but I heard his horse when it went out of the alley. Whether it went right or left, I cannot tell; but I heard the rapping of his feet on the ground.

Q. Was the door left open at that time when Booth was gone? or was it shut?

A. It was open when I came down stairs. I do not know whether it was left open from the time he came in and went out, or not; but it was open when I got down stairs. I had to go down three and a half stories before I got down on the stage; and when I got down it was open.

# Actress, Who Played Before Lincoln on Fateful Night, Tells of Horror---Saw Lincoln Weep

"We nodded cordially back stage—

"A shot!

"Dead silence—

"Then Mrs. Lincoln's blood-curdling shriek—"

An actress who played in "Our American Cousin" before President Lincoln the evening he was shot to death by J. Wilkes Booth, namely, Mrs. Frank Wynkoop of Los Angeles, here tells of how kind the martyred President had been to her, and paints a thrilling picture of the fatal night.

One of the most interesting of the living witnesses of Abraham Lincoln's assassination, discovered by the Rockett-Lincoln Film research department, is Mrs. Frank Wynkoop of Los Angeles, whose stage name was Helen Truman as it appeared on the programme of Ford's Theatre in Washington, D. C., the night President Lincoln was shot.

Miss Truman, whose real name was Helen Coleman, was born in Norfolk, Virginia, of an old Southern family. Her people cast their fortunes with the Confederacy.

She first saw President Lincoln at the White House, Sept. 3, 1864, where she went with her mother to intercede for the life of her brother, who had been condemned to death for attempting to run the blockade of the port of Norfolk.

"The President received us most kindly," said Mrs. Wynkoop, looking back with clear vision through the 58 years intervening, "and his great sympathy quite overcame my poor mother and myself. It was terribly hot, but the President gave no evidence of discomfort, and quite made us forget it. He heard our sad story, asked a few questions, and said:

"Go home, make yourselves comfortable, and do not worry. I will see what can be done, but I think I can assure you now that, if the facts are as you state them, this boy will not be executed. Return here in ten days."

## "Tears Were in Lincoln's Sad Eyes"

"After the long, hot 10 days, full of anxiety and alarms, we returned to the White House and, after an hour's wait, were called into the President's office, where we saw at once by the expression of his face that he had good news for us. He explained that my brother's case had been complicated by a charge of spying, but that he had been found not guilty of that charge, and President Lincoln himself had pardoned him of the other. We both fell on our knees to thank him, and there were tears in his sad eyes when he showed us to the door. Since that I have always adored him and my mother never ceased to bless him.

"We had sacrificed more than \$20,000 worth of family jewels and heirlooms for lawyers before we appealed to President Lincoln, and I was forced to seek a theatrical engagement to earn a living for mother and me. John T. Ford, of Ford's Theatre, Washington, gave me a chance, and my first appearance with Mr. and Mrs. Billy Florence, in 'Dombey & Son,' Sept. 22, 1864.

"In those days it was the practice for established stars to travel from one theatre to another alone, or, in rare cases, with one or two leading people, the theatre's stock company supplying the rest of the cast. The itinerant star usually provided the play and in some cases the scenery, costumes and props, but ordinarily these were supplied by the theatre.

## Lincoln Visited Theatre Often

"From Sept. 22 to the night of the assassination, April 14, 1865, President Lincoln attended the theatre as often as affairs of state would permit, and I took note of the plays he liked, for I was inexpressibly grateful to him and on the nights he came to see us I tried to be at my best and, insofar as my opportunities admitted, I watched every movement of the President and his parties."

"For example, I noticed that he never applauded with his hands, but he laughed heartily on occasion, and his face spoke plainly of his approval. On the other hand, Mrs. Lincoln always attested her appreciation by clapping her hands and sending us flowers and, like all real women, she seemed to enjoy a good cry when the play turned to pathos.

"President and Mrs. Lincoln never came to the theatre together except on the night of the assassination, and when they appeared together that night we were all surprised and remarked about it.

"During the time I was a member of the Ford stock company President Lincoln came to see Laura Keene, with Harry Hawk and John Dyott, in 'The Workmen of Washington' and 'Our American Cousin.'

"Miss Keene's last appearance was Friday, April 14, 1865, and as it had been announced that both the President and General Grant were to be present the attendance was the best of the season. The house was packed to the walls, there being no fire restriction in those days."

"I saw the presidential party when they arrived and was near enough to note how Mrs. Lincoln was dressed. She did not wear an evening gown, but a new spring silk dress, light gray in color, and with a black plumed check, and bonnet to match. Ordinarily she wore an evening gown with a head-dress of flowers.

## Mrs. Lincoln a Distinguished Woman

"Mrs. Lincoln was not beautiful, but good-looking, animated, dignified. She had a million dollars' worth of that wonderful thing called personality and she would have been distinguished in any company.

"I first met J. Wilkes Booth at a dinner given by Mr. Ford to our company on Christmas night, 1864. Booth was not a member of our company, but he was a great friend of Mr. E. A. Emerson, leading man of our stock company, and he came to the theatre often to see Emerson.

"We all respected Booth because he was a good actor, was courteous and kindly, but none of us except Mr. Emerson felt very friendly toward him because he was cold, taciturn, aloof and at times seemed almost arrogant.

"The night of the assassination I saw him back stage near the passage to the boxes just a few minutes before he fired the fatal shot, and we nodded cordially. A minute later I was called

on scene down front, and did not think anything of Booth being there.

I had just finished with the words: 'Good evening, Mr. Trenchard,' and made my exit in number two across the stage from the President's box, when I turned to speak to our leading lady, Miss Gourley, and Mr. Withers, leader of the orchestra, who were standing near.

I started into my dressing room, and had not taken more than three steps when I heard the shot that killed the President. Meantime the front scene had been taken down and the stage was full set.

## Booth Goes Mad

"The sudden sound alarmed me. I knew there was no shooting in our play, and it sounded close by. Instantly there was dead silence—then Mrs. Lincoln's blood-curdling shriek. I turned about just in time to see Booth fall upon the stage from the President's box.

"Shouting, 'Sic semper tyrannis,' he ran limping across the stage directly toward me. Then I saw he brandished a knife, but I was too amazed to move.

"He ran into number three dressing-room and struck at Miss Gourley and Mr. Withers as he passed, cutting Miss Gourley's dress, but not wounding her.

"I want to say a word here in behalf of Ned Spangler, who was charged with being Booth's accomplice. I never knew a finer boy and I'm sure he had nothing to do with Booth's unspeakable crime.

"Mrs. Lincoln's screams turned the house into an inferno of noise. The shouts, groans, curses, smashing of seats, screams of women, shuffling of feet and cries of terror created a pandemonium that must have been more terrible to hear than that attending the assassination of Caesar. Through all the ages it will stand out in my memory as the hell of hells.

"Miss Keene, with towels and cologne, was the first to reach the President, but, of course, she could do no good. Our entire company was arrested, but was released in a few hours and placed under surveillance of the Secret Service.

"None of us, even Mr. Emerson, could ever understand Booth's act. We ascribed it to fanaticism gone mad, and aggravated, possibly, by exaggerated ego.

"To me, of course, because of his saving my brother, Lincoln was the great man of all time. But as a child of the stage, I love to think of him as a sincere lover of the drama and a friend of its exponents. His own life and death proved to be one of the greatest dramas of history.

**An Exceedingly Interesting Incident.**

LOS ANGELES, Feb. 12.—[To the Editor of The Times:] In your paper of today there is an article from your New York correspondent about Mrs. Struthers—"Jennie Gourley"—which claims that she is the only surviving woman member of the company that played at Ford's Theater on the night that Abraham Lincoln was assassinated.

Permit me to state that the writer is still alive and was a regular member of the company at Ford's Theater, and played that night the part of Georgina. I had just left the stage to go to my dressing-room to change my dress for my next scene when I heard a shot, and, knowing there was no shooting in the play, I hastened back to the first entrance and heard the screaming and other sounds of voices, and saw President Lincoln fall over from his chair. I had noticed Booth previously, as he had bowed to me as I went on for my scene, from where he was standing back of the President's box, and wondered what he was doing there; but dismissed the thought, as Booth had the run of the theater, front and back, and was acquainted with all the company.

Miss Laura Keene, the star that week, was the first one to reach the box from back of the stage, and knelt down and raised up the President's head.

Harry Hawk, one of the company, claimed for a few years before he died to be the only surviving one, and then W. H. Ferguson (Blely) who was the prompter that night, was "the only one," and now Mrs. Struthers is "the only one."

I don't want to be killed off so young, as I am still able to come up smiling, and don't want to be "the only one," although there are not many left, either. But I have not cared for the notoriety of it, as I had always wished it had never occurred as it was a terrible tragedy to go through.

I have lived in Los Angeles for the past fourteen years, and wrote to Jennie Gourley a year ago, when I read the article you had in The Times magazine about her being alive, and residing in Milford, Pa., but have had no reply. Jennie Gourley left the company at that time to be married to Mr. William Withers, the leader of the orchestra. The remainder of the company played at the National Theater, as we were not allowed to leave Washington, being subject to the supervision of the War Department, under Gen. Burnett, until after the trial of the assassin.

Yours respectfully,

HELEN TRUMAN,  
(at that time)

No. 1182 West Thirty-first street.

1182

**J. R. ANDERSON**

(7:383-84)

*F-76*

Letter from Anderson  
 Sunday Night

My dear Sir,

Should you find an opportunity to send a small package from Baltimore, do me the favor to send for Mrs. S. some gloves;

Say, 6 pairs black size 6 ½

4 pairs purple 6 ½

2 pairs brown 6 ¼

2 pairs brown 6

Good luck to you

Yours truly

J. R. Anderson

Company prevented my getting to see you tonight. I will look anxiously to hear from you.

**MARY JANE ANDERSON**(3:488-92, PW, Poore  
I:235, Pitman 75)

"A" 527 (JAO) 1865

Anderson, Mary Jane

Mary Jane Anderson, (colored), being duly sworn, says she lives in the brick cottage at the rear of Ford's Theater.

I know J. Wilkes Booth; have seen him about in Alley of Ford's Theater for about three months. About that time back, Ned Spangler<sup>1</sup> built a small stable for him on the alley & he kept a horse & buggy there. He & Spangler & Maddox<sup>2</sup> were all very intimate together. They used to have good deal of private conversation together and seemed to have a good deal of business with each other that they did not want other people to know. I think they are all a lot of great rascals.

On the day of the President's murder, I saw him down by his stable about midday. Two or three hours later I saw him standing in the small back door of the theater talking to a pretty young lady who had on a black silk coat & dress & white bonnet. They were engaged in earnest conversation. He seemed to be pointing up & down the alley & to the right & left as if explaining to her something about the locality. She also pointed toward F Street and in other directions, as if she understood what he was telling her. They staid there about 20 minutes, then went into the theater together. She was a stranger to me. Never saw her before.

<sup>1</sup> Edman Spangler worked as a carpenter and sceneshifter for John Ford. Spangler had worked on the construction of the Booth home, named Tudor Hall, near Bel Air, Maryland, in 1852.

<sup>2</sup> John Ford employed James Maddox as property manager.

About 7 or 8 o'clock in the evening<sup>1</sup> I saw Booth lead a horse up to the stage door & heard him call in a loud voice, "Ned!" three or four times. John Myers, a colored man employed at the theater looked out of the window & called into the theater, "Mr. Ned, Mr. Booth wants you." Ned Spangler, the assistant carpenter, then came down to the door, & I heard Booth say in a low voice, "Tell, Maddox to come here." Maddox came & Booth took the horse from Booth. He led him up & down, as the horse appeared restless & stamped on the ground whenever he let him stand still. A little time afterwards, Maddox gave the horse to some other person who came out and then went into the theater. The horse was standing there altogether about an hour & a half. ~~I was at the window all the while~~ At the end of this time I was looking through the open door & noticing the people moving about behind the scenes from time to time, when all of a sudden I saw Booth burst into the passage as if coming from the stage, & rush to the back door like lightning. He had his right arm up above his head and held something in his hand that glittered in the gaslight. His other arm seemed to be held out back of him. He had no hat on. As he came out of the door to his horse, I saw him strike at somebody<sup>2</sup> & then leap on his horse & gallop down the alley. I thought the horse had run away with him. There was immediately a great excitement and people ran out into the alley.

I saw Maddox come out of the theater, looking as if he was scared to death. Spangler, too, but Maddox did not come outside. I went up to Spangler & said to him, "Mr. Ned, you know Mr. Booth called you out." He said, "No he didn't" in a sneaking sort of way as if he didn't want anybody to hear what he said. I said, "Yes he did & there's no use of you saying so, for I heard him & you must know something about this." He said nothing then but sneaked away down the alley putting on his coat and looking as guilty as he could.

X

Mary Jane Anderson

## MARY ANDERSON

(3:545-47)

"H" 538 (JAO) 1865

Mary Anderson

May 11, 1865

Mary Anderson testifies as follows:

I reside at 28 Church Street, on the hill, Baltimore. I have been living with a woman by the name of Mrs. Rosin; she lives at No. 134 Fayette Street. There is a young man by the name of Edward Small who is an associate of Mrs. Rosin's son, George; he lives on Fayette Street, but I cannot give the number; he left Baltimore the week before the assassination of the President, and came to Washington. I don't know where he stopped. He came back to our house in Baltimore

<sup>1</sup> Booth rode up to the rear of the theater a little after 9:00 P.M.

<sup>2</sup> John "Peanut" Burroughs, an employee of John Ford. Burroughs did odd jobs around the theater, including guarding the stage door.