

Ford's Theobroma

Drawer 13

WHEATLAND IN SEATTLE

71.2004 OXS. P.340



# Washington, D.C.

## Ford's Theatre

Excerpts from newspapers and other sources

From the files of the  
Lincoln Financial Foundation Collection

The Sunday Star  
Washington, D. C.  
February 8, 1959

## Park Service To Restore Ford Theater

By WILLIAM MacDOUGALL  
Star Staff Writer

Ford's Theater—a monument to madness—is slated for restoration in 1965, the National Park Service has disclosed.

The decision is a postlude to tragedy which struck the ill-starred theater on April 14,

1865. On that night, in a setting of theatrical comedy, a mad actor named John Wilkes Booth assassinated President Lincoln.

The Nation was plunged into grief, but sorrow soon yielded to anger only briefly appeased by the killing of Booth in a Virginia barn on April 26.

A victim of that passion, according to Federal historians, was John T. Ford, who had built the structure in 1863. A previous theater he had recon-verted from a church was destroyed by fire in 1862.

The War Department, reacting swiftly to public clamor, ordered the theater closed, its performances canceled. Not until June was the building restored to Mr. Ford who set plans for reopening in motion.

Be he had reckoned without

public opinion. Confronted with threats against the theater, Mr. Ford backed down.

The Government again took charge of the building and prohibited its use as a theater.

In August, 1865, four months after the assassination, the Government remodeled the building into a fireproof records center. The woodwork was removed, the building divided into three stories and all vestiges of a theater were banished from the site.

Tragedy, nonetheless, continued to haunt the structure. In 1893, three floors of the building—then occupied by the War Department—collapsed during some basement alterations, and 22 clerks were killed. The building was restored the following year and became a museum in 1932.

### Tourists Interested

Tempers have cooled in the 94 years since the death of Lincoln, but the public has not forgotten Ford's Theater. Nearly 200,000 tourists paraded through the museum last year, and their verdict was virtually unanimous, according to Stanley W. McClure, assistant chief historian of the National Capital Parks.

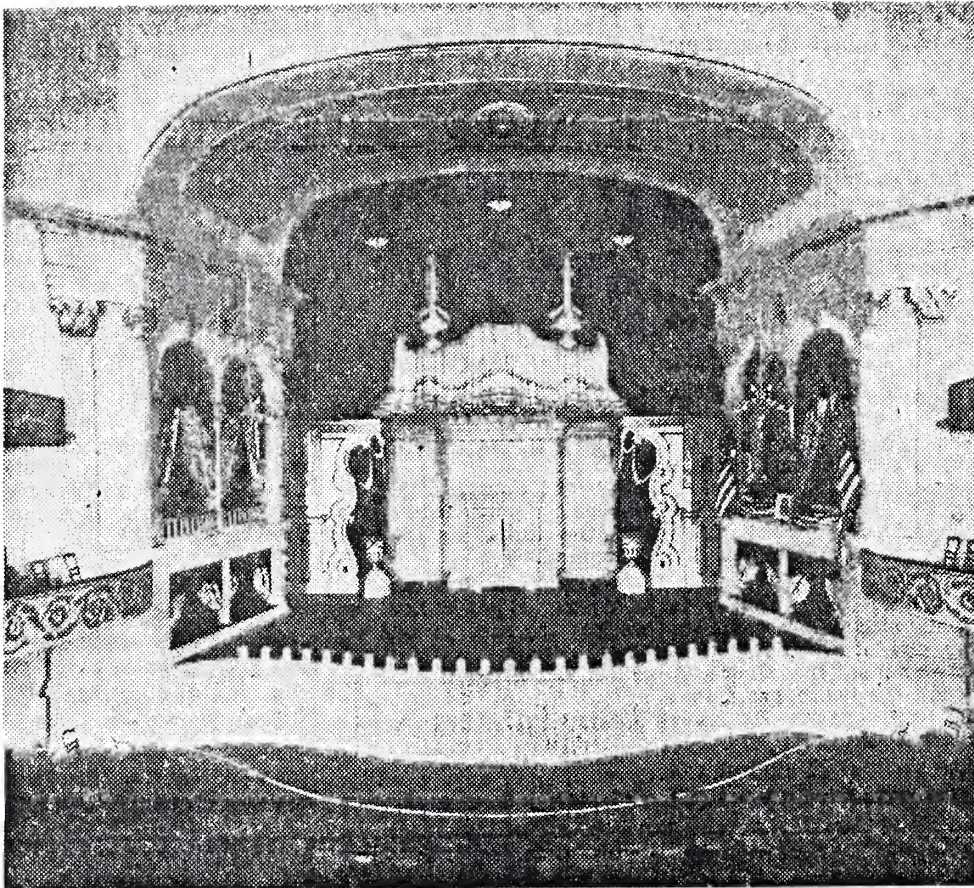
"They're always disappointed," he admitted. "Where's the theater?" they usually ask."

Until now, embarrassed museum officials have had no adequate answer. A valuable collection of Lincolniana is on display, but the cases are old and the setting gloomy.

The situation, however, is improving. National park officials, prodded by the Civil War centennial and a persistent senator, have tentatively budgeted \$1,750,000 for restoration of the theater, including stage, seats and boxes—with sufficient space remaining for displays and offices.

"I think it could be one of the most important and historic spots in Washington," declared Senator Young, Republican of North Dakota, who has campaigned for renovation since 1946. "People all over the United States are deeply concerned that practically nothing has been done to restore it."

He said he would introduce an amendment to the Department of Interior budget providing about \$500,000 to begin the project next year. Other funds necessary, according to park officials, would be provided in the Mission 66 budget for 1964. Such expense is required because the aged building must be rebuilt from top to bottom, a park spokesman said.



**FORD THEATER TO BE REMODELED**—This is how Ford's Theater, on Tenth between E and F streets, will look after it is restored in 1965. The building has been a museum with a valuable collection of Lincolniana since 1932.—National Park Service Photo.

Heine - Int. 2081



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
INFORMATION SERVICE

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

For Release SEPTEMBER 24, 1959

THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR RECEIVES ORIGINAL SOFA AND  
ENGRAVING FROM PRESIDENT LINCOLN'S BOX FOR THE LINCOLN MUSEUM

The Victorian sofa and the framed engraving of George Washington, which were in the Presidential box at Ford's Theater when Abraham Lincoln was assassinated, will be accepted on behalf of the United States by Under Secretary of the Interior Elmer F. Bennett from the donor, Addison H. Reese, Charlotte, North Carolina, at 2 p.m. Friday, September 25, at the Lincoln Museum, 511 - 10th Street, NW.

President and Mrs. Lincoln, accompanied by Major Henry R. Rathbone and his fiancée, Miss Clara Harris, attended the comedy of "Our American Cousin" at Ford's Theater on the evening of April 14, 1865. In preparation for the occasion, Acting Manager Harry C. Ford superintended the decorations of the State box. The sofa and a rocking chair, upholstered in red damask, and part of a stage set were placed in the box for the convenience of the Presidential party.

President Lincoln sat in the rocking chair now in the Henry Ford Museum, Dearborn, Michigan, Major Rathbone was on the sofa and the ladies were seated on smaller chairs at the front of the box. Two American flags were placed at either side of the box, two others were draped on the balustrades, and the blue regimental flag of the U. S. Treasury Guards was suspended on its staff at the center pillar. The engraving of George Washington was hung in front of the pillar as an added touch to the decorative scheme.

Quietly entering the President's unguarded box, John Wilkes Booth fired the small Deringer pistol at close range in back of Lincoln's head. Instantly, Major Rathbone sprang from the sofa and struggled with the assassin.

As Booth vaulted over the railing of the box the toe of his right boot struck the framed engraving of Washington, turning it completely over. The spur on this

boot caught in the fringe of the Treasury Guards flag, tearing a strip with it. These obstacles caused Booth to lose his balance and to fall ~~backwardly~~ on the stage. Landing in a kneeling position, the large bone in his left leg was fractured about two inches above the ankle.

The sofa and engraving of Washington have remained in possession of members of the Ford family more than 94 years. Addison H. Reese, the great grandson of John T. Ford, the Civil War owner of Ford's Theater, who is presenting the two priceless items associated with the assassination, is a prominent and public spirited citizen of Charlotte, North Carolina; is President of the American Commercial Bank of that city.

A special display area has been arranged for the exhibit of the sofa and engraving in the alcove near the other exhibits which describe the assassination of Lincoln and the flight of the assassin Booth. The sofa, refinished and reupholstered in red damask similar to the original, will be placed on a platform and viewed by visitors from behind the newly installed railing. The engraving of Washington will be hung on the side wall with the Treasury Guards flag placed immediately in back of the sofa. Ultimately, these Museum relics will be placed in the Presidential box at such time as the historic Ford Theater building is restored.

The restoration project for the Ford Theater building is included in the Department of the Interior's National Park Service MISSION 66 program. It is a MISSION 66 objective to complete the restoration by the 100th anniversary of the assassination, on April 14, 1965.

X X X

COPY

625 Pembroke Ave.  
Norfolk  
Va.

Ulysses S. Grant 3rd

Dear Sir:

Reading in the paper that you intend to make a museum of Ford's Theatre in Washington I believe it will interest you to know that when my grandmother, Mrs. John T. Ford died a few years ago and the old home in Baltimore broken up, I bought from the estate the sofa that had occupied the box where Lincoln was shot and also the picture of Geo. Washington that hung in front of the box and over which the flag was draped. One of my aunts, now living in Atlee Virginia had the door, of the box, which has a knot hole in it through which Booth peeped before entering the box - These things are absolutely authentic and if you should be interested I would be glad to hear from you.

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cat. 232

J-9

Very truly

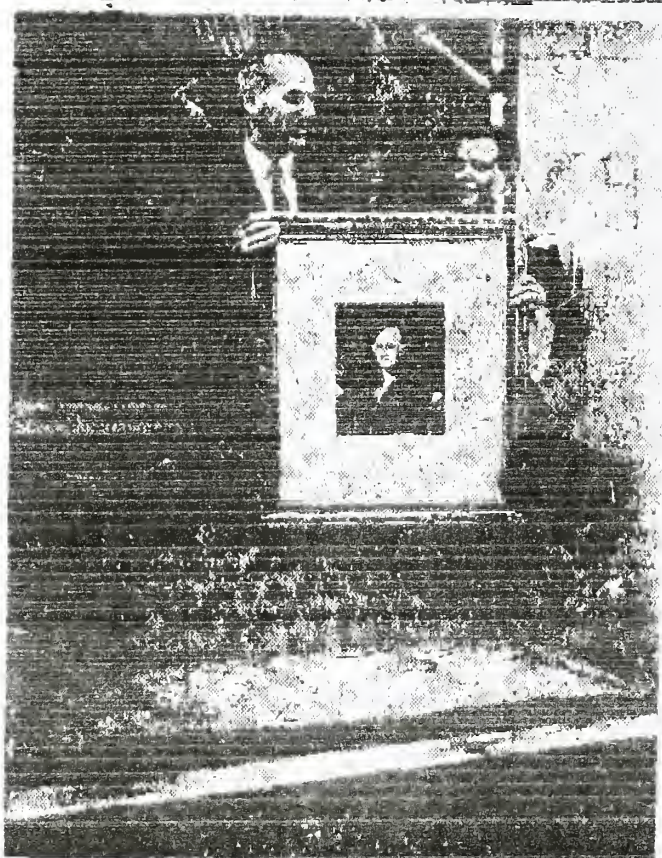
Edith Ford Mitchell

(Mrs. Walter P. Mitchell)

March twenty fifth, 1951.

A 2 Saturday, Sept. 26, 1959 THE WASHINGTON POST

## FOR THE MUSEUM



By Henry Rowland, Staff Photographer

### Relics of Lincoln's Death

The red damask sofa and the engraved portrait of George Washington, which were in the Ford's Theater box occupied by President Lincoln when he was assassinated, were returned to the theater yesterday as part of the museum exhibit there. Cherished by the Ford family for 94 years, the items were donated by Addison H. Reese, of Charlotte, N. C., a great-grandson of John T. Ford, the Civil War theater owner, to Interior Under Secretary Elmer F. Bennett, left above, in a brief ceremony at the museum, 511 10th St. N.W., now administered by the Department of the Interior.





## OLD FORD'S THEATER TO OPEN IN JANUARY

The reconverted Ford's Theater in Washington, where Lincoln was assassinated, will be dedicated in January. Walter Pozen, assistant to Secretary of the Interior Stewart L. Udall, said in a telephone interview from Washington.

The theater will be used for the presentation of plays about Lincoln and the projection of a sound-and-light program.

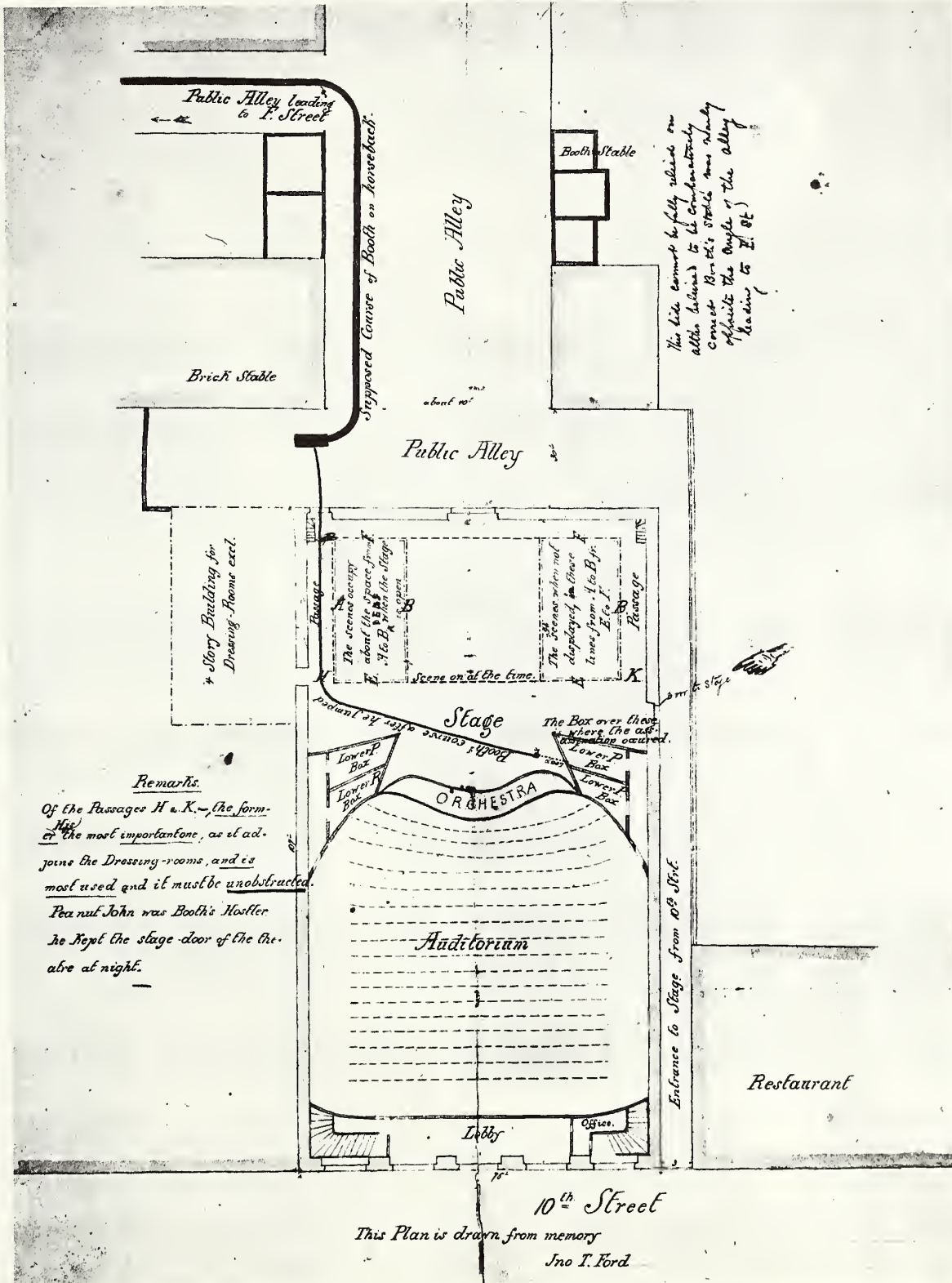
The restoration is to be completed in November, according to an official of the National Park Service, which is responsible for the reconversion. The aim is to give the building the same appearance it had on Good Friday night, April 14, 1865, when Lincoln was shot.

Congress appropriated \$2,073,600 to complete the job. To that sum, \$400,000 was added for the installation of a sound-and-light project that will en-

able viewers to see a graphic presentation of historic events and action with the aid of recorded voices, music and multi-colored floodlights.

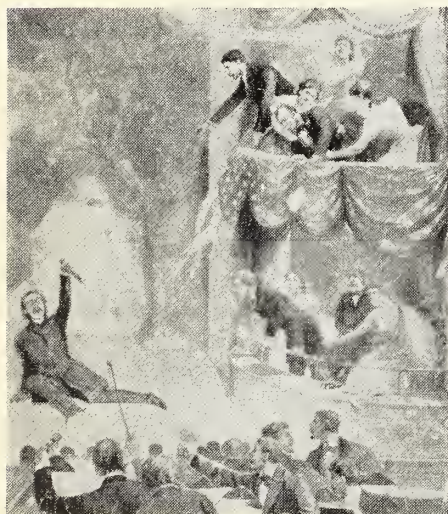
An independent foundation will be set up to finance the plays, which have not been specified. The Columbia Broadcasting System is considering a 90-minute special television program that is expected to bring in \$250,000.

NEW YORK TIMES, FRIDAY, JUNE 23, 1967



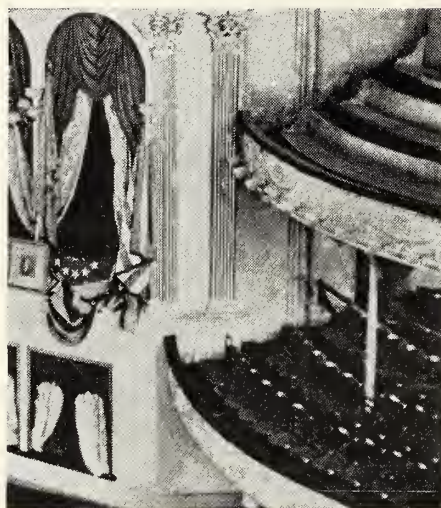


Brady's photograph of Ford's Theater after the assassination



Pictorial Parade

Booth's leap to the stage



Matthew Brady

Lincoln's box

## Where Lincoln Was Shot

The night Lincoln was shot was the last night of Ford's Theater in Washington. Secretary of War Stanton immediately ordered the building seized and held under armed guard. When the owner, John T. Ford, tried to reopen it three months later, threatening letters and a hostile crowd outside the theater forced him to reconsider. Subsequently the government bought the theater for \$100,000, gutted the magnificent white-and-gold interior, turned it into an office building, and it sank slowly into decrepitude. In 1893, a section of it collapsed, killing 22 government workers. Finally in 1932 it was converted into a Lincoln museum, a dark, dusty repository for musty artifacts. But by the end of 1967, Ford's Theater will reopen, and even the gaslights will reflicker. Not only will it be a nearly exact duplicate of the original structure, but plans are underway to make it a living theater, with a

permanent, year-round repertory company in residence.

The original plan, for which Congress appropriated \$2,076,300 last year, was merely to restore the red-brick building into a theater-museum, with the stage set, as it was at the time of the assassination, for Act III, Scene 2 of Tom Taylor's play "Our American Cousins." For the past six years historian George J. Olszewski has been tracking down clues to the design and décor of Ford's Theater, no easy task considering that souvenir collectors had long since stripped the theater bare. Olszewski has had to rely mostly on memories, which can be faulty, and records, which are sometimes contradictory. His best source was the great Civil War photographer Matthew Brady, who soon after the assassination spent two days photographing the interior. From microscopic examination of the Brady photographs, Olszewski was able to confirm that the boxes were draped in heavy brocade, the curtains

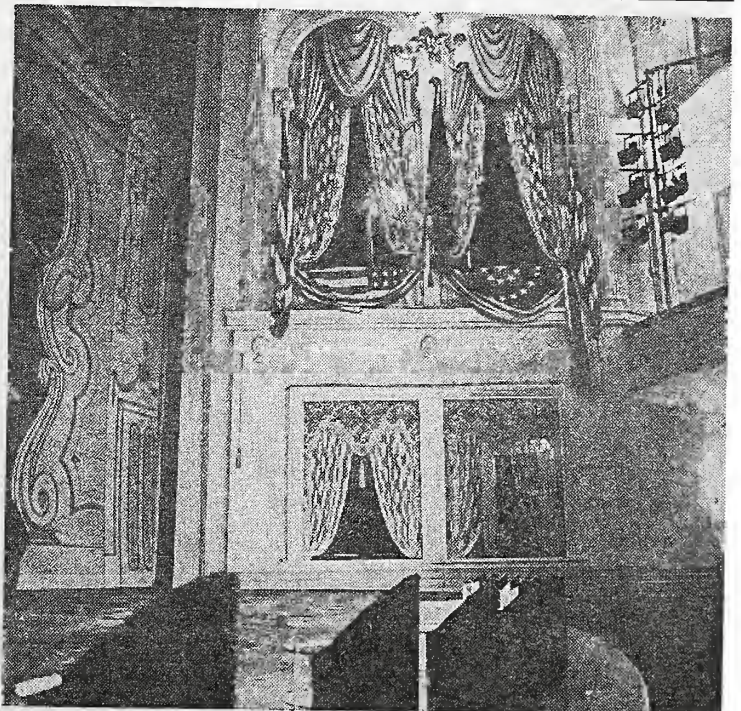
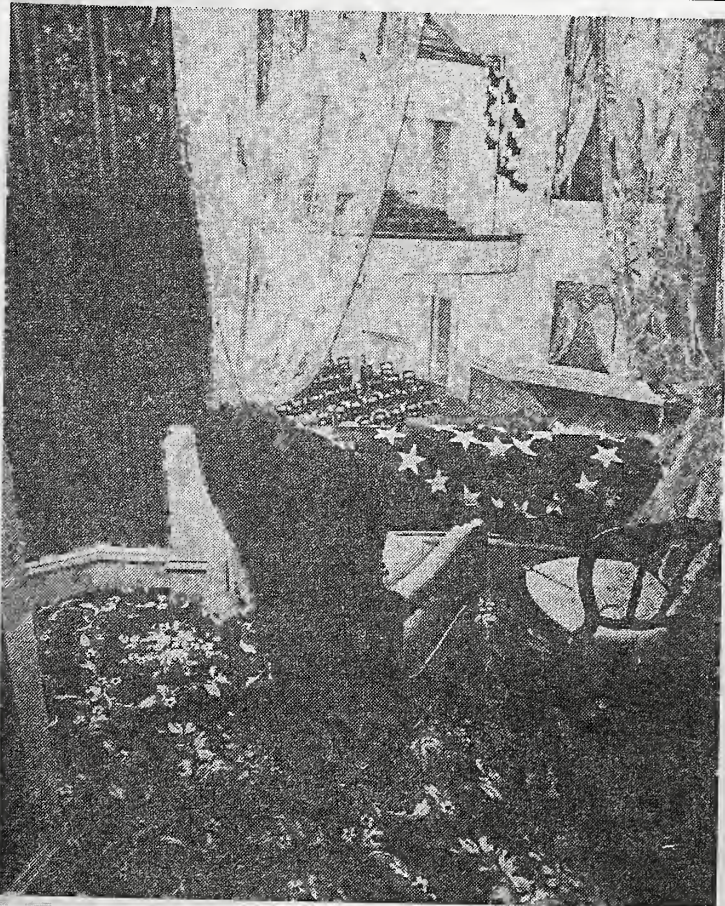
were of Nottingham lace, and many of the chairs were spindle-back Windsor.

Olszewski has solicited, and has been receiving, contributions of the original materials—two pieces of maroon drapery from the daughter of a man employed in the theater at the time, the tufted silk sofa from Lincoln's box from descendants of the Ford family, who also supplied the engraving of George Washington that was nicked by Booth's spur as he leaped to the stage. Olszewski is unflagging in his regard for detail. "Every other person in the country considers himself a Lincoln expert," he says. "We can't make a mistake."

**Actors' Equity:** As restoration plans proceeded, several bizarre proposals were made. One was to re-enact the assassination, shot, jump and all. Another was to restore the saloon where Booth took a nip just before he did his deed. Then Actors' Equity brought forward the suggestion to put on real live theater at Ford's. Theater groups all over the country took up this idea and offered their services.

The Washington Shakespeare Summer Festival, the Helen Hayes Repertory Company, a group of Texas high-school students, and even a German bund singing society (founded during the Civil War) have volunteered to play there. Last week representatives of Actors Equity, ANTA and the National Repertory Theatre met in Washington to discuss a joint proposal to be submitted to Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall (who last year gave general approval to a program of live theater). Under the proposal NRT would present an "appropriate" repertory, consisting of period productions of plays that were once performed there, such as Shakespeare (Lincoln saw several Shakespeare plays at Ford's, including one starring John Wilkes Booth) and modern plays of special relevance, such as Mark Van Doren's "The Last Days of Lincoln."

**Authentic:** But even if the proposal is accepted, many technical problems will remain. Room must be found for modern theatrical equipment and adequate backstage and rehearsal space, and money must be forthcoming from the foundations and the government. But just as George Olszewski is committed to a revival of the building, NRT is committed to a revival of theater in it. Last week, with Ford's new roof already in place, Michael Dewell, founder of NRT, said: "We would be creating something that has never existed before—living museum theater. It is terribly, terribly exciting . . . The theater will be absolutely authentic from the detail of the moldings to the scale of the gas lamps. And when the curtain goes up on a production done exactly as it was then, the person in the audience will literally be a theatergoer of 1865."



—Star Staff

### LINCOLN BOX OPENED AT FORD'S

The Presidential Box where Lincoln sat when he was assassinated has been opened to the public at the restored Ford's Theater by the Interior Department. As seen from the stage, the box is flag draped at the upper left. The theater is now in the middle of a series of productions by New York's Circle in the Square Theater, sponsored by the Ford's Theater Society.

# Everybody on Stage Felt a Little Tearful

By ANNE CHRISTMAS  
Star Staff Writer

In the setting where President Lincoln was fatally wounded over a century ago, actress Susan Hufford (who plays the role of Abe's first sweetheart, Ann Rutledge) confessed yesterday: "We all felt a little tearful."

The tiny brunette, who dies during the course of the play, added:

"It is a real thrill to be in this particular show, here in Ford's Theater. I felt a certain awe in the opening moments; I didn't think I'd make it through my first song, in which some of the words are,

'He freed all men who are slaves....'

"It wasn't just nerves; it was as if I was hearing the song for the first time. I think all of us were affected by the same emotions."

The script for "Young Abe Lincoln," repeated by its cast in scores of cities, held new meaning for all of them yesterday, in the historic setting of Ford's Theater, as 500 fifth and sixth graders from Washington area schools witnessed the first of 26 performances.

Tall and lanky Bob Larsen, in the title role, bears such a strong resemblance to the young Lincoln that he mistook a copy of a portrait of Abe at 20 or so for a picture of himself.

"I felt sure it was a picture that I couldn't remember having posed for," Larsen said.

Mrs. Walter J. Hickel, wife of the Interior secretary, and Mrs. Robert Finch, whose husband is secretary of health, education and welfare, greeted the children in yesterday's first performance presented by the National Park Service as part of its "parks for all seasons" program.

In conjunction with Ford's Theater Society, approximately 17,000 youngsters from area elementary schools will see the 60-minute play, which recounts Lincoln's life from his grocery store in New Salem,

THE EVENING STAR  
Washington, D. C.  
Tuesday, February 17, 1970



—Star Photographer Joseph Silverman

Mrs. Walter J. Hickel greets 500 children at Ford's Theater to see the opening of the National Park Service's show, "Young Abe Lincoln."

## Tears at Ford's

Continued on Page C-3

Ill., in 1833, to the Illinois legislature.

It is one of a number of the Performing Arts Repertory Foundation of New York's "Prelude to Greatness" plays for children about prominent figures.

Among the others are Thomas Jefferson, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Thomas Edison and Mozart.

The touring company of nine is a versatile group. Any one member of the cast is able to play a number of roles; actor Alan Easterby commented that "we sometimes have to glance down at our costume to see what words we're supposed to be saying."

The youthful guests, for whom admission and bus transportation are free, were enchanted, insofar as could be ascertained from a sampling of outgoing children.

"It was great!" said Amy Carter, 11, of Horace Mann Elementary School.

"I just loved it," sighed Mercedes Clark, 11, of Woodlawn Elementary.

"It was so interesting, it seemed short," agreed her classmate, Ann Casey, also 11.

"Lincoln sounds just like the guy on Huntley-Brinkley!" observed a young man dashing for his bus.

There will be no public performances of "Young Abe," which will be played for school audiences through March 6.

(Duplicate)

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MARCH 1970

# NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

## KANSAI

JAPAN'S HISTORIC HEARTLAND  
HOSTS EXPO '70

THOMAS J. ABERCROMBIE 295

## STARFISH THREATEN PACIFIC REEFS

JAMES A. SUGAR 340

## INDIAN SHANGRI-LA OF THE GRAND CANYON

JAY JOHNSTON, TERRY EILER 355

## THROUGH THE NORTHWEST

PASSAGE FOR OIL 374

BERN KEATING, TOMAS SENNETT

## FORD'S THEATRE REBORN IN MEMORY OF LINCOLN

LONNELLE AIKMAN 392

## PANAMA, LINK BETWEEN OCEANS AND CONTINENTS

JULES B. BILLARD 402

BRUCE DALE

# THE LIGHTS ARE UP AT FORD'S THEATRE

By LONNELLE AIKMAN  
National Geographic Senior Staff





LIVE PERFORMANCES RETURN to the playhouse where Abraham Lincoln was shot. Darkened by tragedy 105 years ago, the theater was recently restored by the National Park Service. Here a cast of the Circle in the Square company takes a bow after presenting Eugene O'Neill's *A Moon for the Misbegotten*. But eyes often stray to the upper right-hand box where John Wilkes Booth, carrying gun and knife, fatally wounded the President and slashed the upraised arm of a Lincoln guest. In a mighty leap to the stage, the assassin broke his leg, but managed to rush off and escape on horseback.

EKTACHROME BY NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC PHOTOGRAPHER JAMES E. RUSSELL © N.G.S.



**F**ORD'S THEATRE. Those two words will forever haunt the American consciousness, evoking a sense of loss and bittersweet thoughts of the gentle, sorrowing man who led this Nation through four years of fratricidal war.

The building where Abraham Lincoln was shot stands at 511 Tenth Street Northwest, in the busy heart of Washington, D. C. Today, after more than a century of blackout, Ford's stage lights are up again. Once more audiences applaud actors as in the days when President Lincoln found respite there from the problems and heartbreak of the Civil War.

Stage and house, inside and out, have been restored by the Federal Government to look as they did on April 14, 1865, when John Wilkes Booth fired the fatal bullet in Box 7.

The return of John Ford's old playhouse to its original role gives the Nation's Capital a unique and fitting monument to Abe Lincoln, who loved drama and the theater.

It also offers modern playgoers a new and needed stage for the performing arts. And for good measure, it contains a handsome museum displaying intimate and graphic mementos of the man "of laughter and tears," as poet-biographer Carl Sandburg called him.



**A**CTOR-ASSASSIN at age 26. John Wilkes Booth, the youngest performer in a family famous for Shakespearean roles, brought a melodramatic, often savage, intensity to the stage. He once said that killing Lincoln would give a man "a glorious opportunity . . . to immortalize himself."



**“**LET IT STAND FOR YEARS TO COME . . . silent, gloomy, forlorn.” So spoke Lincoln's pastor about Ford's Theatre, center, in a passionate sermon following the murder of April 14, 1865. Sidewalk poster advertises *The Octoroon*, a drama on slavery scheduled to follow *Our American Cousin*, the English comedy Lincoln was watching when Booth struck. Here the black crape of mourning

Growing up in Washington, I often passed the blank face of Ford's when it was a Government storehouse. After the National Park Service made it into a museum for priceless Lincolnia, I roamed its aisles between relics and records that traced the life of the prairie boy who became our martyred President.

#### Actors Find Ford's Stage Exciting

Since the rebirth of Ford's Theatre with a series of brilliant black-tie events for Capital dignitaries in January 1968, I have seen almost every play presented. These have ranged from the Shakespearean works that Lincoln

loved to Eugene O'Neill's recapturing of a vanished America.

Meeting cast members backstage, I asked a question:

"How does it feel," I wondered, "to act a part under that symbolically empty box and its forever empty chair?"

Their answers, though phrased in different ways, sounded curiously alike.

"Once we got over our awe of the place," bit players and stars agreed, "it was an inspiring, marvelous, exciting experience."

"It's the most beautiful and professionally satisfying theater in America," said Ted Mann,

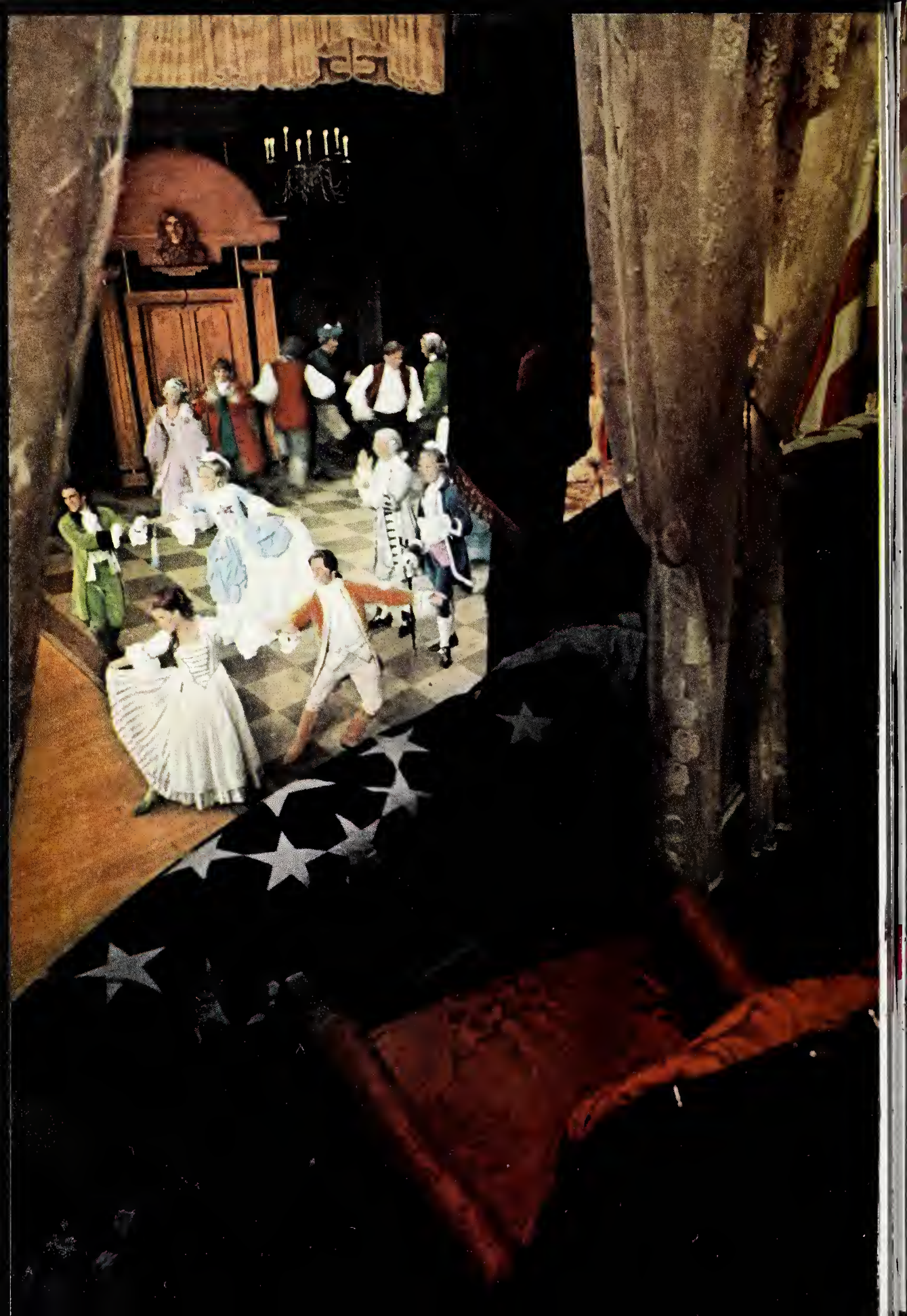
LINCOLN PORTRAIT BY ALEXANDER GARDNER, 1865, ALL PICTURES FROM LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



drapes a street recently bright with decorations celebrating Union victory after four years of Civil War; soldiers stand guard at the theater. Feeling ran so high against both the building and the acting profession that owner John Ford could never reopen his playhouse. The Government leased, then bought it for offices and storage, converting it into a Lincoln Museum in 1932.



**M**ARTYRED PRESIDENT: Peace had come and Lincoln smiled again for this photograph, made only four days before his death. A superb storyteller, the man "so bony and sad, so quizzical and comic," as poet Carl Sandburg wrote, had a feeling for drama onstage or off.



artistic director of the Circle in the Square company, which next month completes its second season there. "Though small, it gives an effect of space and light, and its old-fashioned stage apron brings actors and mood close to the audience."

### "I Laugh Because I Must Not Weep"

To Abraham Lincoln, the make-believe of the stage gave more than entertainment. It was necessary relief from the pressures of military decisions, office seekers, and emotion-charged pleas by wives and mothers of fighting men.

"Some think I do wrong to go to the opera and the theater," he once said, "but it rests me." His "earbones ached to hear a good peal of honest laughter," he told a visiting Union officer. And to a woman writer for *Putnam's Magazine* he said, "I go to amusements very much against my inclinations. . . . I laugh because I must not weep. . . ."

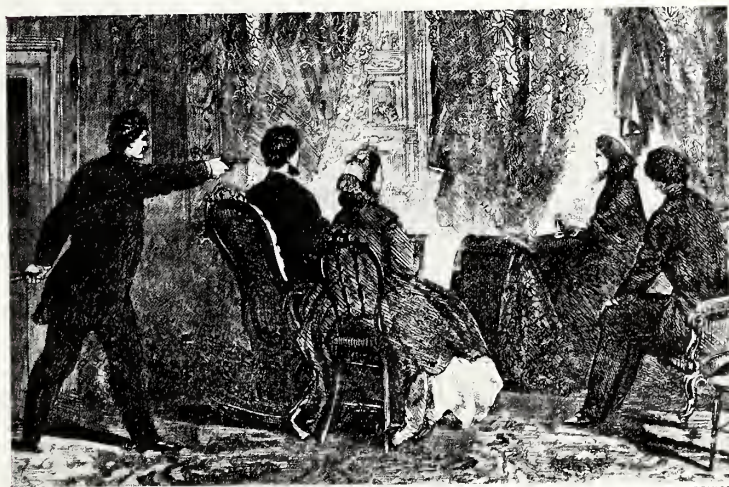
During the first year of the war, however, the hectic little city by the Potomac offered few theatrical diversions to anyone. From the beginning, Washington's social life had revolved about official and personal entertaining, rather than the theater or opera. Then suddenly the Union capital was jammed with soldiers and war contractors seeking pleasure. Money flowed freely.

In the spring of 1862, two ambitious young businessmen, John T. Ford and Leonard Grover, opened rival theaters.

Ford's Atheneum, converted from an old Baptist church on the site of the present building, burned down the following December—as if to bear out a church member's prophecy that no good would come of such wicked use.

But the Atheneum had been a success, with the President himself present at one performance. From its ashes Ford raised a handsome new theater and opened it on August 27, 1863.

Lincoln patronized both Ford's Theatre, as it was called, and



EKTACHROME BY JAMES L. STANFIELD © N.G.S.; DRAWING BY A. BERGHAUS, COURTESY NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**E**MPTY CHAIR AND UNION FLAG re-create the setting in which Booth (above) shot the President as he sat with his wife and guests Maj. Henry Rathbone and Clara Harris. Onstage here, students of the North Carolina School of the Arts present *She Stoops to Conquer* by Oliver Goldsmith, a classic comedy that Ford staged in Lincoln's time. Professional productions also appear through cooperation of the National Park Service and Ford's Theatre Society, a nonprofit group formed to make this house "a living memorial."



Grover's New National, on E Street four blocks west. He went to Ford's at least eight times, and oftener to the National, which is still a leading Washington theater.

In his choice of entertainment, Lincoln sampled such fare as minstrel shows, comedies, and revues; but his mind and heart went out to the Shakespearean dramas that he had read voraciously for thirty years. He so admired the veteran actor James H. Hackett that he attended Ford's two nights in a row to see Hackett play Falstaff in *Henry IV*, and returned the same week to applaud him in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*.

Lincoln's interest in the theater sometimes

led to personal meetings with players he esteemed, either on visits to his box at the theater or at the White House.

Whether he ever met his future murderer, as some have claimed, remains a tantalizing mystery. It was quite possible. John Wilkes Booth, youngest of the gifted actors fathered by the erratic tragedian Junius Brutus Booth, came often to the wartime Capital and played many roles in both Ford's and Grover's houses (page 394). And on November 9, 1863, Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln saw John Wilkes Booth perform at Ford's in a melodrama called *The Marble Heart*.

By a strange coincidence, Lincoln became

## IN THE LINCOLN MUSEUM

**L**INCOLN'S FACE AND HANDS—from casts made in 1860 by Leonard Volk—gleam in the spotlighted center of a specially designed circular hall below the theater.

Sitting for the mask in Volk's Chicago studio, Lincoln had to breathe through quills in his nostrils while his face was covered by plaster. Arriving on a Sunday morning, he told the sculptor he had chosen to pose rather than accept an invitation to church. "I don't like to hear cut-and-dried sermons," he explained. "When I hear a man preach, I like to see him act as if he were fighting bees."

Other cases display relics from Lincoln's youth, his middle years in law and politics, his wartime Presidency, and his funeral.



KODACHROMES BY WINFIELD PARKS (FAR LEFT AND BELOW) AND GORDON W. GAHAN © N.G.S.

**A** BLACK CHAPTER in history lives on in the pistol, knife, and compass used by Booth during his crime and flight. After shooting the President, the assassin dropped his small derringer, here resting on a contemporary newspaper account of the tragedy. Waving the knife wildly, to stab anyone who might try to stop him, he cleared the way to his horse in the alley behind Ford's Theatre. The compass came in handy when Booth and fellow conspirator David Herold crossed the Potomac from Maryland into Virginia, where, 12 days after the assassination, the killer met death and his companion capture.

These exhibits, with others linked to the tragedy, are arranged in a separate alcove under grim wall-to-wall enlargements of a photograph that depicts the hanging of four of Booth's convicted associates.



an ardent fan of John Wilkes's less flamboyant but more successful brother Edwin. He probably attended more performances by Edwin Booth than by any other actor.

### A Booth Saves a Lincoln's Life

The Lincolns also had personal reason to favor Edwin. Early in the war, their son Robert, then a student at Harvard, was waiting to board a train at Jersey City. Pressed by the crowd, he slipped between the platform and the moving car; a bystander hauled him back. The rescuer was Edwin Booth.

To me, this chance incident underlines the gulf between the Booth brothers. A Northern

sympathizer, Edwin twice voted for Lincoln. John Wilkes proclaimed his loathing for the man waging "war upon Southern rights..."

In his hatred, John dreamed of playing Brutus to Lincoln's Caesar; his diary set the date—"April 13-14 Friday the Ides."

April 14, 1865, was Good Friday. That night Booth slipped into the Presidential box at a chosen moment in the play, *Our American Cousin*. He shot Lincoln in the back of the head, leaped to the stage, and escaped on horseback (page 397).

Entering Box 7 today, you feel a spine-tingling chill at the carefully reconstructed setting of that fearful night. You walk on a

carpet of the same red-and-white design, between walls covered by dark-red Victorian paper. Here stands the original red-damask sofa, with a copy of Mrs. Lincoln's chair and other guest furniture. In place is a replica of the carved walnut rocker where Lincoln slumped silently (page 396).

"They maneuvered his long body into this cramped hallway," said Park Service Historian John Lissimore, as we followed the same route. "They took him up this aisle, holding back the frenzied crowd, then down these side steps and across to the Petersen House [right]. He died there at 7:22 the next morning, without regaining consciousness."

The War Department closed John Ford's theater the night of the assassination; public outcry prevented its reopening. The Government first leased, then bought the property, remodeling it for storage and office use.

Another catastrophe blackened the building's history in 1893. Overloaded floors collapsed and fell 30 feet, killing 22 Government employees and injuring 65.

For the next four decades the old theater was used only for storage. Then its ground floor was turned into the Lincoln Museum that so charmed a generation of visitors like myself.

It was thus a logical and happy conclusion when in 1954 Congress began to vote funds—ultimately more than three million dollars—that would restore to the American people this charming 19th-century theater.

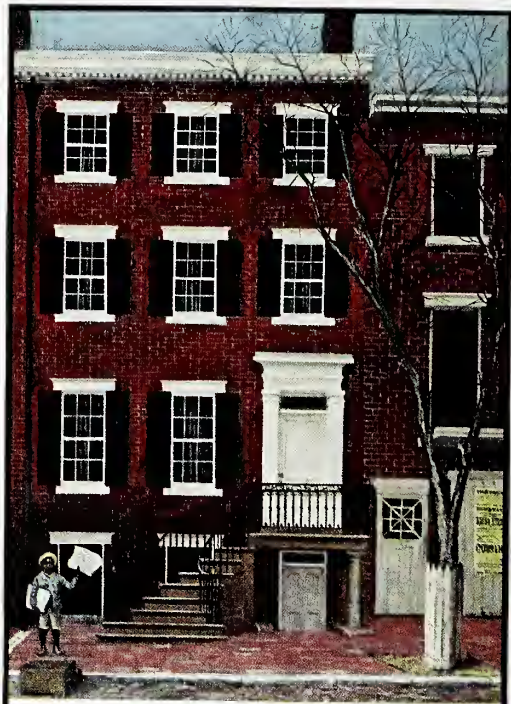
#### Brady Photographs Aided Reconstruction

"We had all kinds of building problems," said William M. Haussmann, the project's design and construction chief, as we stood on the restored stage looking down on sightseers moving up and down the aisles.

"The whole interior had to be gutted. We dug a new basement and rebuilt a complete theater inside walls that would have crumbled into the hole without special shoring.

"Because we could never find the original plans, scholars had to track down details from old records, pictures, and sketches of this and other theaters of the time. Our best information came from photographs made by the great Civil War photographer Mathew Brady right after the assassination.

"A few modern changes were necessary," Mr. Haussmann added. "People are bigger now, so the cane-bottom chairs for the audience had to be bigger. The present theater seats only about 700. Ford squeezed in more than twice that many. We also had to provide



**I**NTO A BACK BEDROOM of the Petersen House, across from Ford's, men carried the unconscious Lincoln. Death came nine hours later as his son Robert stood by. Mrs. Lincoln, inconsolable, lay in the front parlor. This recent painting shows a newsboy hawking accounts of the murder; the poster at right announces Ford's play at the time.

**R**EOPENED January 21, 1968, after a three-million-dollar restoration, Ford's Theatre brings Washington a needed new stage. Though the builder's plans have never been found, researchers gleaned essential details from old pictures and documents. Today's box office, next door at right, was the Star Saloon, where Booth downed a last drink before invading the President's box.

electricity instead of gas in footlights and wall globes. But Ford and Lincoln would both recognize this theater as you see it."

When I walked into the large circular hall created below for the new Lincoln Museum, I felt that the man from Illinois would also recognize much on display.

Long, curved cases hold copies of works young Lincoln read—*Pilgrim's Progress* and Parson Weems's *Life of George Washington*. You see the cradle in which his children slept, and models of his inventions to improve wagon steering and to refloat grounded boats. Lawbooks and campaign cartoons recall his legal and political careers.





KODACHROME BY GORDON W. GAHAN © N.G.S.; PAINTING (OPPOSITE) BY ROBERT SIVARD, COURTESY NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

"To arms! To arms!" reads a wartime poster. Nearby lies the woolen shawl the President used on frequent trips to the War Office. And beyond, reflecting Lincoln's full height of six-foot-four, you find the long frock coat he wore to the theater on April 14.

The grim relics of the murder itself rest in a side alcove (page 399). They include the little derringer that killed the man who held the Union together, and the guns and diary Booth carried when he was dragged dying from a burning Virginia barn 12 days later.

Sightseers in Ford's Theatre will find something new this summer when the National Park Service begins its Sound and Light pro-

gram, to go on continuously during exhibit hours. In the darkened theater, disembodied voices and moving spotlights will dramatize the events of that tragic long-ago night.

Nor is this all. In addition to winter performances by the resident company, the American College Theatre Festival, in which contest-winning student players participated last spring, will again enliven this historic stage (page 396).

Such productions will help make the new Ford's a truly national theater, dedicated not just to the commemoration of a great man's passing but to the living American stage so loved by President Lincoln. THE END

*Ford's Theatre*  
*Washington, D.C*

*Mrs. Rosalynn Carter*  
*Honorary Chairman*

*and*

*Mrs. Thomas P. O'Neill, Jr.*  
*General Chairman*

*Welcome you to*

*The Tenth Anniversary*

*of the reopening of*

*Historic Ford's Theatre*

*January 29, 1978*



"... I am for those means which will give the greatest good to the greatest number."

*A. Lincoln*

W  
A  
R  
4



The Lincoln National Life Insurance Company - Fort Wayne, Indiana

# A Celebration of Theatre

Joseph Cates and Gilbert Cates  
Executive Producers

Peter Dohanos  
Producer

Frankie Hewitt  
Producer for Ford's Theatre

Gilbert Cates  
Director

Frank Slocum and Chet Hagan  
Writers

Bill Siegler  
Associate Producer

Bill Walker  
Musical Director

Peter Dohanos  
Art Director

Fred McKinnon  
Lighting Director

Evelyn Thompson  
Costume Coordinator

Jill Weitzner  
Associate Director

Nancy B. Dodds  
Production Coordinator

Wendy Cornell  
Assistant to the Producer

Kevin Bright  
Unit Manager

JAN - 12 957THB 15 28 FORD'S THEATRE NBS

TBL 202 416 1845

P. 005

# Lights! Action! Lassos! And Ruffled Feathers

Ford's Theatre Celebrates Its 10th Anniversary

By Judy Bachrach  
and Jacqueline Trescott

At first it looked like kiddy-time at the White House. Lorne Greene strolled in with his girl-child, shook hands with the president, with Mrs. Carter, with the Tip O'Neills, and then addressed his 9-year-old:

"Gillian dear—we've got to go up."

Gillian-dear nodded politely. She was going to bypass the 500 people milling about the East Room, the salutations and congratulations honoring the 10th anniversary of the re-opening of Ford's Theatre, the hot lights, stars, and politicians. She was going "up" to see Amy Carter. And she wasn't the only one.

Actor Cliff Robertson walked in next, and watched as his 9-year-old received a presidential embrace.

"The first thing Heather said to me," reported Robertson after the hug was concluded, "was, 'Do you think I could see Amy?' And the second thing was, 'Do you think we both could watch 'The Hardy Boys' on TV?'"

Robertson smiled paternally, looking not at all like a man who has lately been pointing the accusing finger at alleged financial im-

proprieties within the movie industry. "I keep looking up," said Robertson, "and saying, 'Why ME, God? Why me?' But you have to do these things . . ."

But on to happier subjects. Pearl Bailey was there greeting Bennetta Washington and husband, the mayor, and wearing a black robe embellished with gold brocade that "the Empress of Iran had made for me," Lorne Greene, who was host for the special on Ford's Theatre that was taped last night and is scheduled to be shown on NBC Thursday night ("the holy host," is how he describes himself), just signed up for another two years of dogfood commercials. Tycoon Armand Hammer was there because, "I have a seat in the theater with my name on it."

Jimmy Carter told Eartha Kitt, "I'm glad you're back," which is sort of interesting since Kitt hasn't been back to the White House since 1968 when she denounced the Vietnam war to Lady Bird Johnson.

Kitt, currently starring in "Timbuktu!" at the Kennedy Center, said she didn't feel totally comfortable in the White House last night—but not really uncomfortable, either. "I'm not sure of the personality of the nation at this time," is how she put it.

See FORD'S, C2, Col. 1

JAN 30, 1978

WASHINGTON POST C-1

Actor Vincent Price wasn't totally comfortable, either. "I'm always paralyzed with fright at the White House," said Price, who's been coming there since FDR's time.

And Frankie Hewitt, the executive producer of Ford's Theatre arrived ushered and tremulous with actor Hugh O'Brian ("an old friend of too many years' standing").

"I'm trying to calm down," said Hewitt. "I'm trying to calm down and take a deep breath and pretend it's all over." She looked around at all the guests—guests, like Henry Fonda, who later discussed the origins of Ford's Theatre on the TV special, and Jane Alexander ("I'm just here as an observer"), and the Tip O'Neills (because she was general chairman of the gala), and Billy Dee Williams (who, asked if Ford's production of "I Have a Dream," in which he starred, had helped his career, replied: "No. Not really.") and Linda Hopkins, swathed in white chiffon (who, asked if her "Me and Bessie" at Ford's had helped her career, said yes, it had).

"It's like"—Frankie Hewitt flashed a big smile—"It's like the whole world is here."

President Carter stood before the assembled, and beamed his praise down on Frankie Hewitt. He called the re-opening of Ford's after its 1968 restoration, "a tribute to Abraham Lincoln who was killed there . . .

"It wasn't in the character of Lincoln," Carter continued, "to have a source of tragedy, wit and humor to be closed, to be kept from our people.

"A unique occurrence is being recognized tonight . . . when a national historical site was opened not as a museum, a closed and dead thing . . . but as an open and alive thing . . .

"As a southerner and a president I'd like to say I'm very proud of all of you for helping to unify the consciousness of a nation . . ."

But not everyone present seemed to be in such good spirits. Actors James Whitmore and Dennis Patrick, for instance, both looked very disgruntled.

"Originally," said Patrick, "this party was to have been for 100 people. And then somehow it grew to 500. And we never got to shake the president's hand"

By the time everyone bundled into his fur coat and traveled the seven-block distance to Ford's Theatre by jitney or limousine for the taping, any ruffled feathers had been smoothed. Backstage at the 115-year-old theater, the presidential guests became all-American television stars. Whitmore, a lasso in his hand, glanced at the number of cowboy outfits around him and said, "I think we have them outnumbered"

The producers, Joseph and Gilbert Cates, ("Fifty Years of Country Music" and "Women of the Year Awards," among many award-winning credits) were in the truck in the alley. Their executive crew walked around

the narrow hallway, backstage, checked on the stars' whereabouts, and order of appearances, and, generally joshed around.

Only one crisis, a temporary one, occurred when Linda Hopkins, who had just finished a rousing "A Good Man Is Hard to Find," came off stage, tears streaming down her face and unable to talk. It turned out her jaws had locked.

"This is less a show-business operation than a protocol and society bit," observed Evelyn Thompson, the costume coordinator. "So my problem has been making sure the colors aren't duplicated. Delores Hall (the Tony Award-winner from "Your Arms Too Short to Box with God") and I went to buy her dress at Rompallo's Rosalynn Carter's favorite designer.

There were more pauses on the stage than backstage. President and Mrs. Carter, who sat in the front row with the O'Neills, Hewitt and actor Hugh O'Brian, seemed amused at the scurrying around on the stage between numbers. During the taping, Carter initiated a standing ovation for Billy Dee Williams, who did Martin Luther King's "I have a dream" speech from the 1978 Ford's production of the same title.

"A Celebration of Theater," as the whole shabang was called, raised close to \$300,000 through the sale of chairs from \$500 to \$5,000.

After the taping at Ford's Theatre, the Carters left in their cream-colored Lincoln to return to the White House and the rest of the guests attended a supper and dance at the Pan American Union Building. Backstage, Clark Morrow, a sound man, was breaking up his equipment and heading back to Baltimore. One of his stagehands,

humming an upbeat number from the show said, "I hope it's a good party. I hope we're not in for Lester Lanin"

No, it turned out to be The Michael Carney Orchestra of New York

Meanwhile, over at the Pan American Union, a line-up of limousines not too often seen in Washington these days decked the streets where the post-theater supper was hosted by Secretary General of the Organization of American States Alejandro Orfila and his wife, Helga

Some 80 candle-lit tables for 10 filled the massive hall where guests dined on a buffet of salmon mousse, chicken crepes in white wine sauce, a cooked vegetable salad, and lemon mousse for dessert.

The table wine, Vezelay, came from the Argentine vineyards owned by the Orfila family.

If anything, the evening featured a higher turnout of White House staffers than normal—Carter Special Consultant Peter Bourne and his wife, Mary King, ACTION deputy director; Projects Director Greg Schneiders and his wife, Maria, electronic media adviser Barry Jagoda, and Press Secretary Jody Powell and his wife, Nan.

"Now listen," said Powell in his most irreverent tones, "if you don't think we go out, I just want to tell you my schedule for this week. I not only attended the Washington Press Club dinner, I also hit the reception for the Coalition for the Democratic Majority, another reception for John White, plus a dinner party at Pat and Bob Schiffer's. And last night, we went to dinner at Greg and Maria Schneiders', where we got drunk as a cootie. Tonight I went to the reception and met Lorne Greene and told him how much I admired him. Then

sent my wife over to the performance so I could go to the White House and work on the press conference for two hours. And here I am now. So as you can see, there has been no slip-up in my social activities."

Most guests, however, expressed disappointment in the program seen earlier at Ford's Theatre, agreeing with John Brademas (D-Ind.) who said "the program was rather like going, expecting dinner and getting nothing but hors d'oeuvres. For instance the dancing—I think people would have liked to have seen more of that."

Jagoda echoed the sentiment. "I have always had a lot of respect for Frankie Hewitt and her imagination. But I was disappointed with all the interruptions they made in the program supposedly for TV. They weren't necessary. We don't have that problem over at the White House."

Hewitt, who said the evening had gone "far beyond my wildest expectations," defended her program by saying that "if we had started out just to entertain those 700 people, we would not have had that kind of snow. But the fact is we did it as a TV special. So perhaps it did come out in bits and pieces. But when you put it all together on the air, I think it was a miracle that we had to do as little interrupting as we did."

Meanwhile, Orfila was obviously thrilled at the turnout. "Anything that involves the president, Tip O'Neill, and the United States government is very important to the OAS. It is very important to bring people to this building. That is what I consider the important catalyst of being social—particularly here in Washington."

Staff writer Nancy Collins also contributed to this story.

JAN 30, 1978  
WASHINGTON POST  
C-1

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AN EVENING WITH PRESIDENT

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L I N C O L N

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*A. Lincoln*

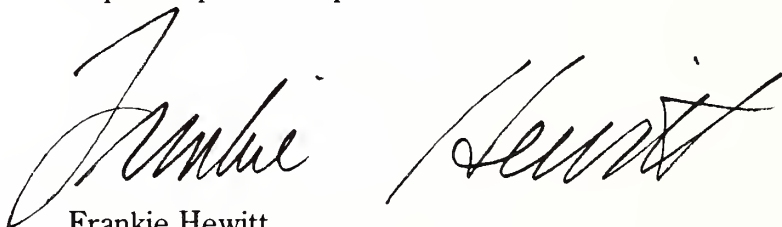
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FORD'S THEATRE FEBRUARY 2, 1981

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It is a particular pleasure for those of us associated with Ford's Theatre to be able to join with The Lincoln National Life Insurance Company in commemorating the birth and preserving the heritage of Abraham Lincoln with this splendid production.

In a very real sense, Lincoln National Life made possible the beginning of live theatre at Ford's by generously sponsoring the theatre's inaugural season in 1968. Lincoln National Life was our first major sponsor and has remained our loyal friend. The company is to be congratulated for its continued vision and commitment to corporate partnership with the arts.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Frankie Hewitt". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Frankie Hewitt  
Executive Producer  
Ford's Theatre Society



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# P R O G R A M

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## WELCOME

Mrs. Richard G. Lugar

Mrs. Dan Quayle

---

## PRESENTATION OF DONATION

Ian M. Rolland

President

The Lincoln National  
Life Insurance Company

Edward C. Merrill, Jr.

President

Gallaudet College

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## THE LINCOLN CHORALIERS

Helen Donnell

Director of Music

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## "AN EVENING WITH PRESIDENT LINCOLN"

Richard Blake

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## CHAMPAGNE RECEPTION

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Richard Blake, a versatile actor with many credits, is a man who has virtually been consumed by his role as Abraham Lincoln. As one Lincoln scholar said, "People who have seen Richard Blake's portrayals of the great president feel they have seen and heard Abraham Lincoln himself."

This merging of actor and role is not accidental. Blake is a Lincoln scholar who has spent the bulk of his life in the land of Lincoln. His gaunt, 6'4" frame matches that of Lincoln. His intonation and accent are an authentic recreation of the inflections of frontier America during the mid-19th Century. During the Bicentennial celebration, Blake and an actor portraying Stephen A. Douglas reenacted the famous Lincoln-Douglas debates in the cities in which they were originally held.

For the last two-and-a-half years Blake has been touring the United States under the sponsorship of The Lincoln National Life Insurance Company of Fort Wayne, Indiana. Blake's performances have reached over fifty-five million people across the nation.

The Lincoln National Life Insurance Company, founded in 1905, was given permission by Robert Todd Lincoln to use his father's name in the company title, and was also presented with a photograph of President Lincoln to use on the company's first letterhead — the famous Brady photograph from which the engraving on the \$5 bill was made.

The Lincoln National Life Insurance Company, one of the nation's largest insurance companies, has felt committed, since its founding, to the principles of integrity, honesty and straightforwardness that guided the life and characterized the presidency of Abraham Lincoln. The performance tonight by Richard Blake in Ford's Theatre whose opening season in 1968 after renovation was funded by a grant from Lincoln National Life is part of the Company's effort to bring to the American people a reminder of the imperishable heritage of Abraham Lincoln.

# Ford's—Yesterday and Today

## Despite the theatre's tragic history, the show goes on

BY MARY FARRELL

**A**pril 14, 1865. Five days had passed since General Robert E. Lee surrendered at Appomattox and the city of Washington was celebrating a Union victory.

More than 1700 people were crowded into Ford's Theatre that night to watch the British production "Our American Cousin". As musicians struck up "Hail to the Chief", they cheered Abraham Lincoln, seated stage right in the Presidential box. Beside Lincoln in the box—regally decked with wine-colored drapes and the 36-star American flag—were his wife Mary Todd, Clara Harris, daughter of New York Senator Ira Harris and her fiancé Major Henry Rathbone.

It was a few minutes past ten. Before the curtain closed on the third act, a young actor named John Wilkes Booth entered the box. There was no guard at the door to stop him. Booth drew a derringer from his pocket—a single .44 caliber bullet was lodged in the chamber—and cocked it behind the President's head. The bullet tore through Lincoln's skull behind the left ear and up through his right eye. Lincoln slumped forward into his wife's lap.

Dropping the derringer, Booth drew a dagger from his belt, lunged toward Rathbone, slashing his elbow, then jumped from the balcony to the stage 11 feet below. Although his leg was broken in the fall, legend recounts that Booth strode center stage and spoke three words: Sic Semper Tyrannis. So end all tyrants. Before a shocked audience, he ran from the theatre, mounted a waiting horse and fled the city crossing the Anacostia River into Maryland.

With three army surgeons in attendance, Lincoln was carried across the street to the home of a Swedish immigrant tailor. He died there the following morning. That same day the doors of Ford's Theatre were closed and they would not reopen for more than a century.

On January 30, 1968, Helen Hayes, the grandame of the American theatre, stepped out on the stage of the newly restored Ford's Theatre and launched a new era of live stage productions on the historic site. The first play to open at the recreated theatre was "John Brown's Body", the story of the abolitionist who led bloody raids to free the slaves and was finally hung at nearby Harpers Ferry. It was the first of many original works produced by Ford's in an effort to chronicle the American experience. Ever conscious of its historic significance, executive producer Frankie Hewitt is dedicated to making Ford's a people's theatre, a theatre relevant and accessible to ethnically and economically diverse audiences.

Just as it had been in Lincoln's day, Lincoln himself loved the theatre and saw many productions there in the short two years it was open. John Wilkes Booth per-



President Lincoln's Life Mask and Hands in the basement museum of Ford's Theatre

formed on the stage before him. In a city, which had swelled from 40,000 to 100,000 people as soldiers, freed slaves and other war refugees crowded the nation's capital, Ford's became Lincoln's USO, helping to relieve the tensions of a war that pitted Americans against each other.

In 1863, as the Civil War entered its second year, the Ford brothers, theatre operators from Baltimore, built Ford's Theatre on the site of the First Baptist Church of Washington. Baptist parishioners had fled the neighborhood before an influx of German immigrants.

The theatre was elegantly furnished with wine red carpeting, crystal wall sconces and cane chairs covered with gold velvet cushions. The Ford brothers hoped to make it the showcase of Washington, but with Lincoln's assassination, their dream came to an end.

"They couldn't sell tickets. This place was spooked," explains Wally Shaw, a National Park Service representative who now escorts visitors through the restored theatre and basement museum. For the visitor willing to linger and with a taste for historic and dramatic detail, Shaw has an endless repertoire of stories about Lincoln, Booth and the events of the day. According to Shaw, no one in the Presidential box that night met a happy end. Mary Todd was committed to an asylum in Batavia, New York by her son Robert, and upon her release spent the rest of her life sitting in widow's weeds in a darkened room. Major Rathbone married Clara Harris, murdered her and later died in an asylum for the criminally insane.

"It was not exactly a happy box. I guess Lincoln figured he'd better get out then

to avoid the rush," quips Shaw. A book of jokes about Abraham Lincoln sits on his desk.

Shaw began his career with the Park Service working at Ford's Theatre during the restoration years in the mid '60's. The restoration was the dream child of Senator Milton R. Young of North Dakota. For decades the building had housed government offices after the federal government bought it from the Ford Brothers for \$100,000. Finally, in 1946, Sen. Young introduced a bill to restore the theatre on its original site. It took Young 18 years to see his bill and a \$2.3 million appropriation pass Congress.

With the aid of period sketches and photos of 19th century photojournalist Matthew Brady, the interior of the theatre and its furnishings have been recreated just as they were the night Lincoln was shot. Theatre goers watch live stage productions seated on chairs with cane seats and velvet cushions, just as audiences did on that historic night. But the chairs are built three inches wider, "like most of our people are built today," Shaw quips.

In the basement of the restored theatre is a museum, which, with the help of memorabilia and a 20-minute tape recording, traces Lincoln's life from his boyhood in Kentucky and Illinois through his years as prairie farmhand, ferry operator, postmaster, wrestler, lawyer, politician and 16th president of the United States.

Visitors view simple artifacts from Lincoln's life which emphasize the humanness of this most popular American president. The cradle where Mary Todd rocked their three sons. The

chair from Lincoln's first law office. A letter from 11-year-old Grace Bedele, urging Lincoln to grow a beard because "your face is too thin." He followed her advice before entering the White House. And documents signed by Lincoln commuting the death sentences of deserters from the Union forces. "You do not know how difficult it is to let a man die when a stroke of your pen will save him," the tape recalls Lincoln's words.

Also in the basement are grim reminders of the assassination and the deaths of Booth and his co-conspirators. The clothes Lincoln wore the night he died. The derringer that killed him. Sketches of Booth shot to death in a burning barn near Fredricksburg, Virginia. Photographs of three men and one woman—dresses in black, hands and feet tied, hoods covering their faces—hanged by a military tribunal for their alleged role in the assassination plot. And Booth's last words recorded in his diary.

"I hoped for no gain. I knew no private wrong. I struck for my country and that alone. So ends all. For my country I have given up all that makes life sweet and Holy, brought misery upon my family, and I am sure there is no pardon in the Heaven for me since man condemns me so."

According to Shaw, many Washingtonians are unaware of the historic importance of Ford's. "Most of us are more interested in far-away places than what's under our nose," he says. Still, because of the interest of school groups and many out-of-towners, Ford's museum can have up to 400 visitors a day in the height of the tourist season," says Shaw.

It was Frankie Hewitt who lobbied Congress to assure that Ford's would be restored not only as a museum but also as a living theatre. In the past twelve years since the restoration, Ford's has introduced many new works to the American public, works which have often gone on to Broadway success and national tours. Many of these plays deal with historical themes, such as "Will Roger, USA"; "Give 'Em Hell, Harry," the life of President Harry Truman, and, of course "Mister Lincoln."

Conscious of Lincoln's historic connection with the Black community and of its inner city location, the theatre has sought to produce plays relevant to the Black experience, such as, "I Have A Dream," the life of slain civil rights leader Martin Luther King. "Don't Bother Me I Can't Cope" and "Your Arms Too Short to Box with God." "I'm always alert for shows that will appeal to both a black and white audience," says Hewitt.

Ford's also tries to bring the theatre to groups who would not otherwise be exposed to it. Through its Operation Discovery program, it allows young people from area youth centers and churches to attend plays for \$1.00 or less. Senior citizens can attend Thursday and Sunday matinees at greatly reduced prices.

"We probably make a much bigger effort at this than most area theatres," says Hewitt. Because it is located on a national historic site, Hewitt says Ford's has a "special responsibility" to make itself available to all kinds of people.

(Not my underscoring - CEF)

**T**HE Awful Event of 1865 is still fascinating. However, stirring the life of Lincoln, National Parks officials who run the Ford's Theatre tourist attraction have decided to give Americans what they want and to revamp the basement museum to emphasize the assassination. "The first thought is that it might be too morbid, too gruesome," said Robert Briggs, chief of visitors services in mid-Washington for the Parks Service. "But then again, that's reality, isn't it?"

Accordingly, historians and museum specialists are planning a new Lincoln display that shows less about his life and times and more about his violent death. Even now, there seems scant shortage of Lincolnian melancholia in simply staring into the Presidential box at the restored theater, or in visiting the Peterson house across the street with the blood-stained bedroom pillow where Lincoln expired. But the tourist questions come so thick and in such detail about the deed that museum officials decided to yield more to the nation's haunting record in this regard. "You'll see less of Lincoln's boyhood," Mr. Briggs said. "The main emphasis will be on the assassination as a fact of American history."

Francis X. Clines  
Phil Gailey

*NY Times 1/7/82  
Washington Briefs*

# The Lincoln legend thrives

By BARBARA REHM

ONLY A small brass plate marks the entrance: "Box No. 8." Ford's Theater is quiet in the late afternoon. In Box No. 8, the tapestry rocking chair sits facing the stage 12 feet below, just as it did on Good Friday night, April 14, 1865, when Abraham Lincoln sat there watching Tom Tyler's celebrated comedy, "Our American Cousin."

The sold-out audience of 1,700 was in a festive mood. Only five days earlier, Gen. Robert E. Lee and the Army of Northern Virginia had surrendered at a southern Virginia crossroads known as Appomattox Court House. The end of the war was at hand. Lincoln himself was rejoicing. His eldest son, Robert, had just returned home after serving on the staff of Gen. U.S. Grant.

At 10:15 p.m., John Wilkes Booth, an actor, slipped into Box No. 8 and stood in the shadows, waiting for actor Harry Hawk to deliver the funniest line in the play: "Well, I guess I know how to turn you inside out—you sockdologizing old mantrap!"

The theater shook with laughter. Booth leaned over and, at point-blank range, shot Lincoln in the back of the head with a small derringer pistol. The President slumped forward in the rocker, never to regain consciousness.

Today, more than 600,000 people a year, 5,500 a day at the height of the spring season, pass through Ford's Theater at 511 10th St. in downtown Washington and peer into the box where the first American President to be murdered was assassinated.

But the theater is more than just a museum of murder. Indeed, it is a living theater, and many of the people who come linger for the Saturday, Sunday and Thursday matinees. Bill Davis' comedy "Mass Appeal," starring Milo O'Shea and Adam Redfield, runs through April 3.

There are also evening performances. Tickets begin at \$12 (a far cry from 1865 when the most expensive seat in the house cost \$1).

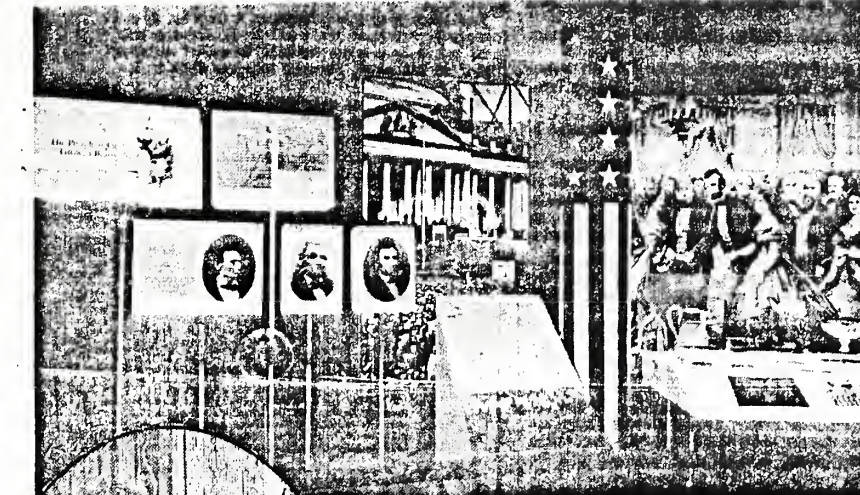
Ford's Theater is open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. every day except Christmas.

With the exception of tickets to the performances, admission to the theater, like most of the nation's museums and monuments, is free.

Kids and American scholars alike love the place. Particularly if they are lucky enough to buttonhole Tom Payton, the tall, red-haired assistant manager at the theater, who can make goose bumps rise on the back of your neck when he describes that night and the curse of the box.

"They all came to ruination," Payton says with a sad, slow shake of his head, speaking of the fate of the other three members of the Lincoln party in the box that night. "His wife, Mary, went insane and died in an asylum. Maj. Henry Rathbone and Clara Harris, the daughter of Sen. Ira Harris of New York, were married after the tragedy. But Rathbone later killed her and tried to commit suicide. He failed, and he too ended up in an asylum. They all came to ruination."

Payton points out the nick in the portrait of George Washington which,



In the basement of the Ford Theater is the Lincoln Museum (above), which features an engraving depicting the President's murder (left). From an upstairs window (below), you can see the Petersen House.

along with three flags, decorated the front of the presidential box that night. In his escape, Booth slashed Rathbone's arm, then jumped from the box onto the stage below. But one of his spurs caught on a flag and nicked the gilt picture frame. The flag is hung stretched across a wall downstairs in the theater in the Lincoln Museum. The rip from the spur is clear.

The museum itself, located in the theater's basement, is a wonderful place. In the darkened corners it is a surprise to come across Booth's silver spur, his derringer and the playbill for the night of the murder.

**I**N A TALL CASE are the clothes the President wore the night of the assassination: black overcoat, frock coat, vest, trousers, a black silk cravat and a pair of worn, high country boots, a surprising contrast to the elegant evening clothes. Another case holds the 36-star flag that draped Lincoln's coffin and the drum that beat out the sad tattoo of the funeral march.

The assassination, the escape and subsequent death of Booth and the execution of four of his co-conspirators are fully described in newspapers and photographs of the day in the O.H. Oldroyd Collection at the museum.

Oldroyd, a Union Army veteran and a great admirer of Lincoln, began the collection in 1860 and added to it over the years. He died in 1930. The collection includes several books from Lincoln's law library, his well-worn copy

of Parson Weems' "Life of Washington," the old family Bible, Lincoln's shaving mug, a number of his walking sticks and the faded old shawl he wore on his nightly walks from the White House to the War Department telegraph office to get news of the Army fighting to the south of Washington.

Among the more interesting political exhibits are some songs, campaign buttons and newspaper cartoons of the 1864 election.

Just across the street from Ford's Theater is Petersen House, the red brick home to which Lincoln, mortally wounded, was carried. Doctors feared he would not live through the ride over the rough streets of Washington to the White House or to a hospital.

Lincoln died in the tiny back bedroom of the Petersen's home at 7:22 a.m.—nine hours and seven minutes after he was shot.

At the less crowded hours of the day—early morning or around noon—you may find the door to the house

shut. But the house is open to visitors at no charge from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. every day but Christmas. Just walk in or ring the bell, and you will be met by either a National Park Service ranger or by Frank Hebblethwaite, the gentle curator. He stands aside and allows visitors to wander freely through the place, into the front parlor where Mary Lincoln kept a lonely vigil through the night and into the adjoining room where Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton held an emergency Cabinet session and drafted a full account of the assassination.

**I**F PRESSED, Hebblethwaite will tell you all about William Petersen, the owner of the house, who was a tailor of Swedish birth. His house was open to boarders and was popular with soldiers of the Union Army. Lincoln, in fact, died in the bed of one of the boarders, Willie Clark, a clerk at the War Department.

But at the threshold of the back bedroom, the realization of Lincoln's death is most painful. The room is warm, intimate—and strangely unsettling. You'll feel like an intruder.

The room is almost exactly as it was the night Lincoln was carried there to die. On the oak rack on the back wall hang three jackets and a simple vest. A pair of worn boots lies at the edge of the bed. Handmade white curtains rustle gently in the breeze. On the dark wooden bureau is a tumbler, probably used by the attending physicians, and the original water pitcher and bowl are on the marble-top stand at the foot of the bed.

A lithograph of Rosa Bonheur's "Horse Fair" and an engraving of Herring's "The Village Blacksmith" hang above the bed, testimony to the permanence of inanimate things. The bed itself is a copy of the original four-

(Continued on page 10)

Daily News, Sunday, February 6, 1983

Near the theater...

FORD'S THEATER and the Petersen House lie just one long block away from the Mall, the large expanse of lawn that stretches from the Capitol past the Washington Monument to the Lincoln Memorial. The walk down 10th St. passes the FBI building and the Justice Department.

The Mall, particularly splendid in spring, is flanked by the National Gallery and the other Smithsonian museums: Air and Space (a particular favorite, jammed with everything from Lindbergh's "Spirit of St. Louis" to the Apollo moon-landing craft); American History (which shows the first half-hour television news broadcast); Natural History; and the special Centennial Exhibit (that's right, a recreation of the 1876 show) housed in the famous old red brick Smithsonian "Castle."

Take the long walk up the Mall to the Capitol and look up your senators. Daniel Patrick Moynihan, the Democrat, is in Room 464 of the Russell Senate Office Building on First and C Sts. Alfonse D'Amato, the Republican, is in the same building in room 440.

Ford's Theater is also just one block from Metro Center, the hub of Washington's subway system, and a real must for anyone who has survived the IRT. For a mere 65 cents (more during the rush hour) the subway will take you with dazzling efficiency almost anywhere in the city—and beyond. To the National Zoo or across the Potomac River to Arlington National Cemetery.

Every public place and many events, from museums to parks, from zoos to outdoor concerts by the Air Force Band, are free. The subway is a delight to ride. The cars are clean (somebody even washes the windows) and the system is simple to master.

—Barbara Rehm



The solemn Lincoln Memorial.

# Lincoln legend thrives

Continued from page 3

poster walnut one that was sold at auction after Petersen died of a drug overdose in 1871.

On the bed lies one of the pillows that cradled Lincoln's head throughout the night 118 years ago. A faded blood stain spreads across the linen cover.

A high-back rocking chair is placed near the foot of the bed, where Secretary of the Navy Gideon Wells kept an anguished vigil throughout the night. The room was much the size of the log cabin where Lincoln was born. He was 56 when he died.

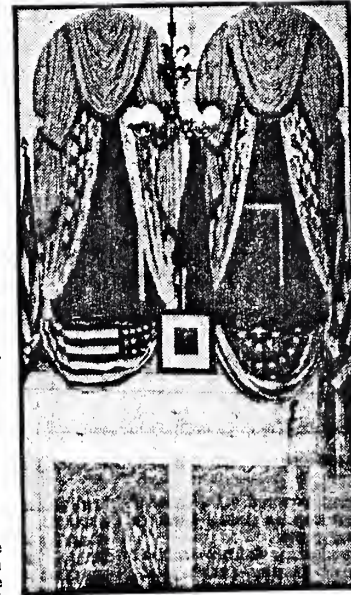
A short subway ride away, or a long walk down along the grassy Mall, lies the temple-like Lincoln Memorial, built of Colorado white marble, dedicated on Memorial Day 1922 and far and away the most popular tourist attraction in the capital.

**T**HE MEMORIAL almost was built elsewhere. When Congress set up the Lincoln Memorial Commission in 1911, House Speaker Joseph (Uncle Joe) Cannon recommended a site near the Capitol, contending that if the monument were built in then-awampy West Potomac Park, "the building would shake itself down with loneliness and age." Commission members agreed with Cannon, but finally settled on the park as the only possible compromise.

In any season and at any time of day, the place is quiet and moving. The face of Lincoln in Daniel Chester French's massive sculpture looks pensively across the Reflecting Pool toward the Washington Monument and the Capitol. From one side of the monument, looking out across the Potomac, Arlington Cemetery is visible.

There is an aura of sadness and yet of noble strength. More than two million persons a year stop at the inner walls to read Lincoln's address at Gettysburg and these words from his second inaugural address:

*With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us*



Flags drape box where Lincoln was shot.

*to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in, to bind up the nation's wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow and his orphan, to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations.*

Barbara Rehm is a reporter in The News Washington Bureau.



John Wilkes Booth and the derringer he used to shoot Lincoln.

Chronicles

# The Ghosts of Mr. Lincoln

## Ford's Revamped Museum Focuses on Assassination

By Sarah Booth Conroy  
Washington Post Staff Writer

Every so often, an actor on the stage at Ford's Theatre suddenly feels a presence behind him. Or looks up at the Presidential Box and sees curtains twitch or a shadowy outline of someone who should not be there.

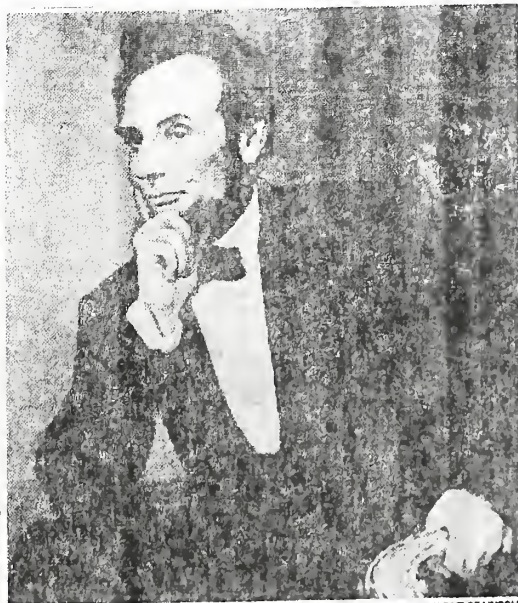
The legendary ghosts of Abraham Lincoln and especially John Wilkes Booth may well be if not appeased at least pleased by the Ford's Theatre Museum that reopened last week after two years of remodeling and exhibit and curatorial work.

For the first time, the museum tries to answer the question, "Why did John Wilkes Booth shoot Lincoln?" "The new museum tells

the story of the assassination, the events which led up to it, and the events which came after," said James M. Ridenour, National Park Service director, at the reopening. "After all, the assassination *did* take place here, and Lincoln's sudden death *did* have a dramatic and profound effect on the future of this country."

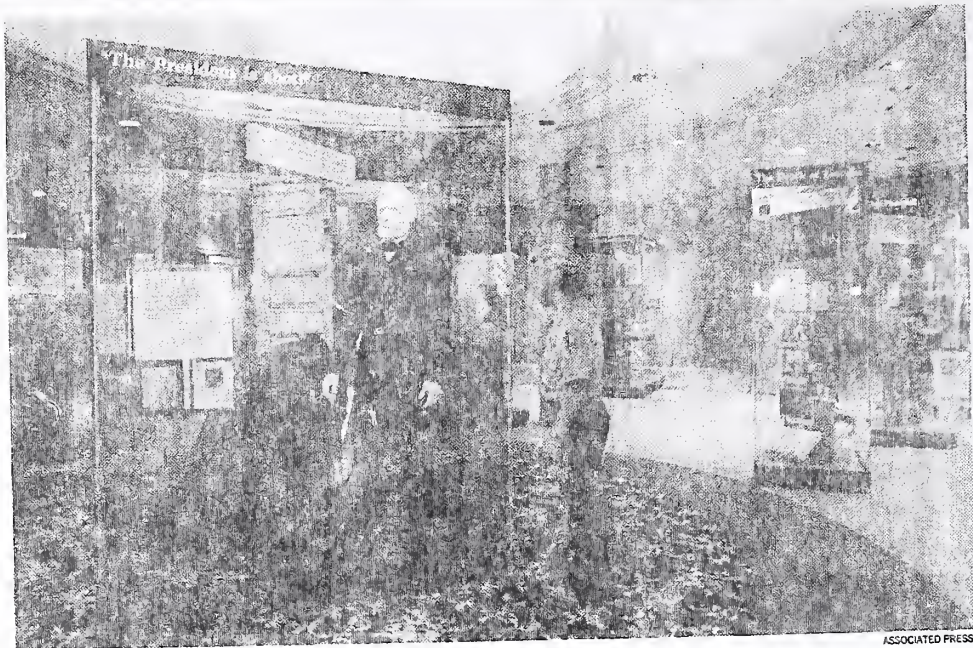
The museum's 1968 installation, respecting the sensibilities arising from the Kennedy assassinations, focused more on Lincoln's life than on his death. "Nowhere in the museum was the story of Lincoln's last hours told," Ridenour said. But visitors—800,000 a year to the theater performances and tours—wanted to know more specifically about the events in the theater 125 years ago on April 14, a great

See CHRONICLES, FS, Col. 1.



DETAIL FROM THE HEALY PORTRAIT OF LINCOLN

Washington Post  
April 17 1990



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Museum technician Frank Hebblethwaite puts finishing touches on the exhibits area of Ford's Theatre.

F8 SUNDAY, JUNE 17, 1990

# Ford's Theatre Museum

CHRONICLES, From F1

pivot point in the history of the United States.

Ghosts are not amenable to being encased and presented in the newly remodeled Ford's Theatre Museum nor can the precise times of their performances be reliably booked. But the shades of the past are otherwise well evoked by more than 400 original artifacts in the new glass exhibit cases built at the National Park Service Design Center at Harpers Ferry. Some of the 6,700 objects in storage will appear in later exhibits.

John Wilkes Booth (no relation to the Chronicler) is here portrayed as a handsome, swashbuckling actor. The memorabilia includes a poster for the play "Apostate"—his last performance, by coincidence, was on March 18, 1865, at Ford's Theatre; and photographs of five young women, including his fiancée, found in his pocket at his death. The exhibit also shows him as a man with a passion to live the heroic role and as a fervent Southern patriot who blamed Lincoln for initiating the war. He was not alone. "The Temper of the Times," a slide show, describes the way some blamed Lincoln for the burning and sacking of the villages and cities of the Confederate states, fatherless children on both sides and destruction of life and livelihoods.

Political cartoons of the era help to explain the the nation's ambiguous feelings about Lincoln during his first election campaign in 1860. In one Lincoln, who was 6 feet 4 inches tall, is shown with elongated legs leaping over his opponents at a run. Another pokes fun at him for sneaking into town before his first inauguration in 1861—threats had been made even then to assassinate him, and he switched trains.

The exhibit relates the abortive conspiracy to kidnap Lincoln and hold him hostage until Confederate prisoners were freed. After Gen. Robert E. Lee surrendered on April 9, 1865, Booth decided that only Lincoln's death would avenge the deaths and destruction. In his diary, shown in the exhibit, he wrote, "Our country owed all her troubles to him, and God simply made me the instrument of His punishment."

In one of the many coincidences attending the tragedy, Booth was at the theater that April afternoon when the first report came that Lincoln would attend the performance of "Our American Cousin" that night.

Whatever Booth's motives, however deluded and confused he might have been, most agree that he strode into the Presidential Box, shot Lincoln and daringly jumped to the stage shouting, "Sic Semper Tyrannis" ("thus shall it ever be for tyrants"), the state motto of Virginia.

Booth escaped on horseback. He was reportedly shot 12 days later by the 16th New York Cavalry, which also set fire to the tobacco barn near Port Royal, Va., where he was hiding. Reports proliferated that Booth escaped and theories arose saying Lincoln Cabinet members were part of the conspiracy.

Lincoln was taken across 10th Street to the Petersen boarding house on the orders of doctors who were in the theater at the time. He died nine hours later.

The deed becomes real when the visitor sees the exhibits of small, humble objects stained with his life's blood: a pillow, his coat sleeve and bits of towel removed by souvenir hunters, and even the shirt cuff of Charles A. Leale, the first doctor to

reach the Presidential Box. There's the piece of lace said to have been torn from Mrs. Lincoln's dress as she hurried into the Petersen House.



Even the smoking gun is here—the .44-caliber, single-shot derringer pocket pistol, manufactured by Henry Deringer, found in the Presidential Box some hours after Lincoln had been shot. The door to the theater box has a peephole, said to have been gouged by Booth to observe the president. Here's the wood bar he used to jam the outer door. The dagger displayed with its sheath was identified as the one Booth used to stab Maj. Henry Reed Rathbone, also in the box. Hoods that for their first days in jail were pulled over the heads of the accused co-conspirators (all except Mary Surratt and Dr. Samuel Mudd) stand in cases with photographs of the six. Frank Heblethwaite, museum technician, says the hoods, from the Smithsonian, are so fragile they will be on display only for six months before they are replaced with copies.

Lincoln's fanciful matted beaver wool greatcoat, custom made as a gift from Brooks Brothers, is spread open in the case to show the elaborate lining with its quilted and hand-stitched silk design of shields with stars and stripes, scallops and a spread-winged American eagle holding a ribbon inscribed "One Country, One Destiny." His frock coat, black silk tie, waistcoat and trousers and size 14 boots measure the man in the visitor's mind. At his death, he was put in a coffin naked and wrapped in an American flag.

"Passion and repression swept the country as murder made a martyr" of the first president to be assassinated, the exhibit says. The grieving is represented by the black crepe muffling the snare drum that beat on the streets to proclaim the death of the president, memento mori—mourning badges, prints and eulogies—from the 20-day funeral procession that extended along the train route from Washington to Springfield, Ill, where his body was buried. And thus begins the last section, the "Legacy of Lincoln," which traces his apotheosis to savior of the Union and emancipator of the slaves.

The history of Ford's Theatre is explained in one exhibit—including, eerily, the collapse of the building June 9, 1893, on the day of the funeral of actor Edwin Booth, John Wilkes Booth's brother.

*The National Park Service, National Capital Region, administers Ford's Theatre, at 511 10th St. NW, its museum and the Petersen house where Lincoln died. The museum is open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., daily except Christmas. There is no admission charge.*



BY WILLIAM CLARK—NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

An exhibited cartoon of Lincoln and his opponents.



BY DARCY PADILLA—THE WASHINGTON POST

Tom Peyton, site manager at the museum, compares his height and Lincoln's.

# THE WASHINGTON PULSE

## MUSEUMS

### At Ford's Theatre, Answers To Some Fateful Questions

The Lincoln assassination is brought to life

By Sarah Booth Conroy  
Washington Post Staff Writer

Every so often, an actor on the stage at Ford's Theatre suddenly feels a presence behind him. Or looks up at the Presidential Box and sees curtains twitch or a shadowy outline of someone who should not be there.

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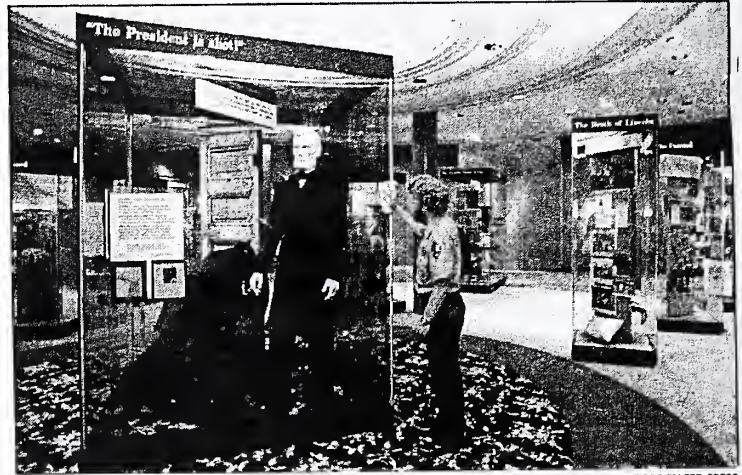
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ASSOCIATED PRESS

Frank Hebblethwaite adds a final touch to exhibits at Ford's Theatre.

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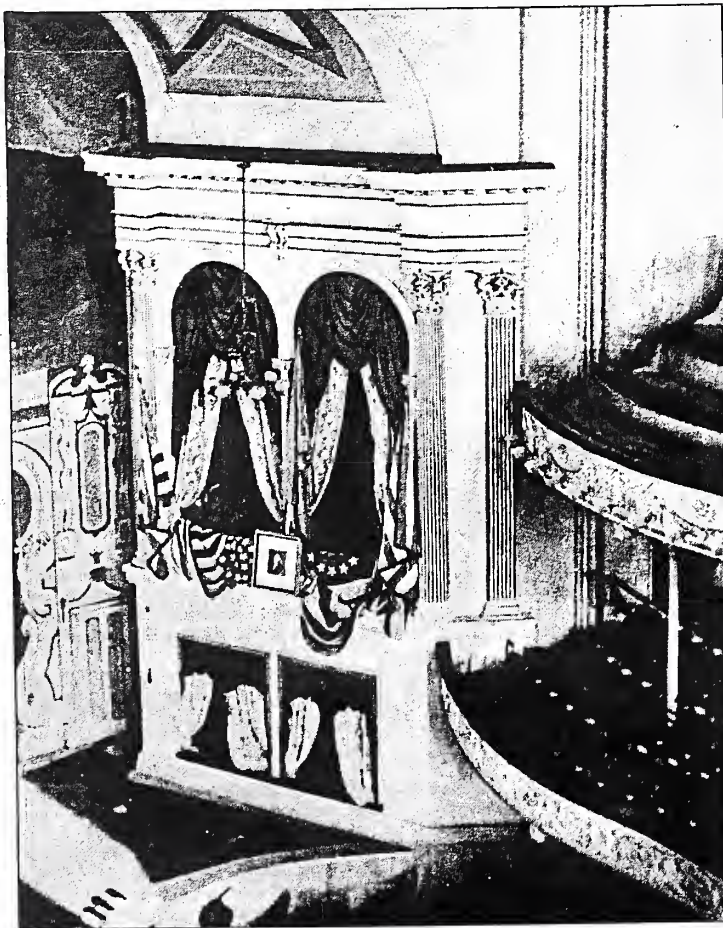
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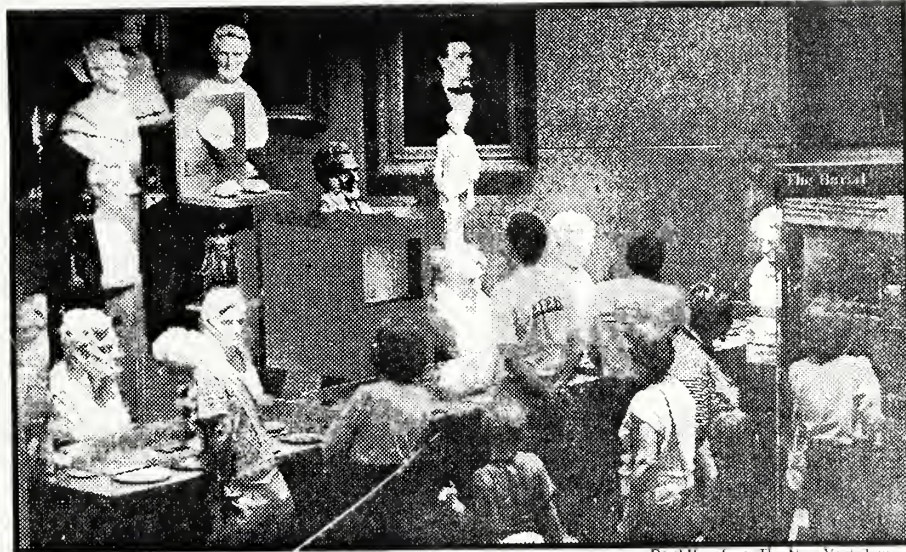
Mathew Brady's photograph of Lincoln's box at Ford's Theatre two days after the shooting.

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## Ford's Theater Museum Open



Paul Heselros/The New York Times

One corner of the museum is dedicated to busts of Lincoln.

WASHINGTON  
After a two-year renovation, the museum at Ford's Theater, where President Abraham Lincoln was shot, has reopened to the public. The exhibits in the museum, which is run by the National Park Service in the basement of the theater at 511 10th Street, N.W., have been revamped and now focus on the conspiracy and acts involved in Lincoln's assassination. Previously the museum housed a general display depicting Lincoln's life and presidency. The new focus, said Park Service officials, was in response to the fascination visitors show about the assassination.

Among the artifacts is the single-shot derringer used by John Wilkes Booth to shoot the President as he watched the play "Our American Cousin" the night of April 14, 1865, and a lifesize model of Lincoln in the clothes he was wearing. Also on display is Booth's diary, the shackles and

hoods worn by Booth's coconspirators when they were hanged and a framed fragment of towel stained with Lincoln's blood. A new eight-minute video supplies historical background.

"After 20 years of accommodating more than a half million visitors annually, the museum was ready for a change," said Robert G. Stanton, National Park Service regional director.

The museum is open daily from 9 A.M. to 5 P.M., except Christmas, and admission is free. In the evening Ford's Theater becomes a living museum with a series of theatrical offerings. Cloris Leachman is appearing in "Grandma Moses" through July 8. A musical drama, "Sheila's Day," opens July 11 and continues through Aug. 5. The basement exhibit area is open evenings to theater patrons. The phone number is 202-426-6924.

BARBARA GAMAREKIAN

## THEATER

## Struggling to Hear the Shot That Killed Lincoln

Earlier this month in Washington, Ford's Theater celebrated its 25th birthday as a resident theater. The restored building and auditorium — a 130-year-old National Historic Site — are dedicated to Abraham Lincoln's love of the performing arts. Among those present on Feb. 2 was Ken Burns, the producer of the epic "Civil War" documentary series for television. In the opening moments of his speech to the audience, Mr. Burns tread the hours preceding the night of April 14, 1865, and its immediate aftermath.

On that evening, President Lincoln and his wife had gone to Ford's to see a comedy, "Our American Cousin." Five days after the end of the Civil War, the actor John Wilkes Booth crept into the Presidential box after the play began. During a burst of laughter from the audience, Booth fired his pistol, fatally injuring Lincoln. This article is adapted from the remainder of Mr. Burns's talk.

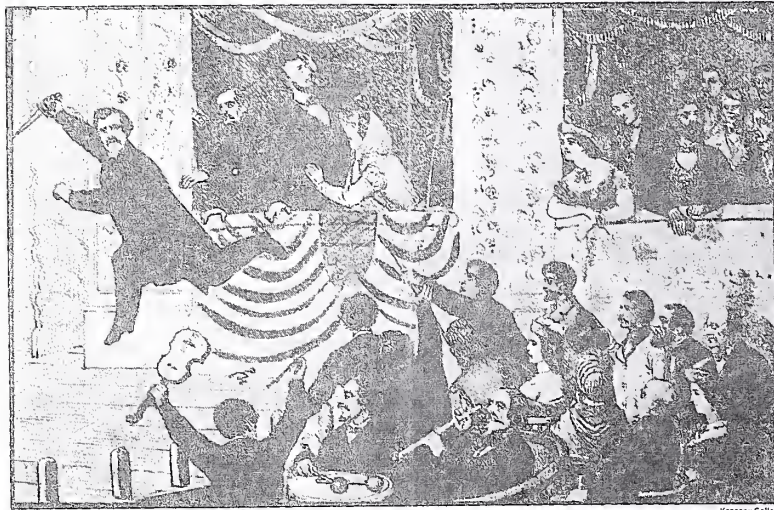
By KEN BURNS

**STAND BEFORE YOU SOMETHING** of a phony. I was asked to speak today on Lincoln and his love of the theater, this theater and its bright as well as tragic past, and the sense of historical moment that preservation engenders in our common purpose. But I cannot.

For more than five years, longer than it took to fight the war, I struggled to produce a documentary film on the history of the Civil War for public television. I practically lived in Washington during the early days of the production, visited more than 160 archives and went to dozens of critical and, for me, quite painful and emotional Civil War sites. But I could never bring myself to come here. I have never even been on this block, so great was my aversion to this sorrowful place.

Like Gettysburg, like Dealey Plaza, like the Lorraine Motel in Memphis, like Calvary, this spot is a vale of tears. And as my love and respect for Lincoln grew, it became harder and harder to even approach this place. I dispatched crews to film and do research, but not until a few moments ago did I cross the threshold of this building. I do so today out of respect for your efforts in restoration and preservation, do so with my oldest daughter Sarah — my glimpse at immortality — and do so with a profound sense of how we might interpret the pain of the past and transform it into betterness for ourselves and posterity.

Toward the end of the making of "The Civil War," I received a remarkable letter from the historian Shelby Foote. It was filled with his usual and, for me, now expected wisdom about how to fix scenes that were denying our touch, how to blend a concern for the ordinary soldier — what we came to call the bottom-up version of history — with the more



A 19th-century depiction of the assassination of President Lincoln at Ford's Theater in Washington on April 14, 1865.

familiar history of generals and Presidents.

But his letter closed with this stunning paragraph: "Remember," he said, "that God is the greatest dramatist. Whenever the story seems about to sag, along comes God (or History) and provides the extra kick, the ultimate turn of the screw. Best example: Just as the whole damned thing is winding down, not with a bang but a whimper, along comes Booth and shoots Lincoln and the story takes its biggest jump of all. Hooray for Booth! Hooray for God!"

For a moment, I was shocked. It sounded so cold and heartless. How could we possibly rejoice in Lincoln's killing? I knew that Shelby thought that Lincoln was the one truly great man to emerge from the war, indeed, one of the greatest Americans who ever lived, so what was going on here?

Gradually, my understanding began to change. On one practical level, Shelby's advice helped us make a better film. God was the greatest dramatist. We jettisoned the arty flashbacks and stuck to chronology — God's drama — finally realizing that so much

of history is destroyed by our present-day imposition of new ideas and structures and literary license. In short, we don't need to do anything to history to make it better, sexier, happier, safer, more relevant. We need only listen to it, accept it, even in its seemingly unbearable moments, and trust in its lessons.

And that is what I have begun, very slowly, to do. For Lincoln and the terrible war that tore us in two in order to make us one, that journey begins here, at Ford's Theater.

He knew where the real threat would come from. He knew it as a young man in Springfield, Ill., when he made this startling comment: "At what point shall we expect the approach of danger? ... Shall we expect some trans-Atlantic military giant to step the ocean and crush us at a blow? Never! All the armies of Europe, Asia and Africa combined, with all the treasure of the earth — could not by force take a drink from the Ohio or make a track on the Blue Ridge, in a trial of a thousand years. ... If destruction be our lot,

we must ourselves be its author and finisher. As a nation of free men, we must live through all time, or die by suicide."

He knew, too, as he gave his first inaugural address a few weeks before the start of the war, knowing he would order the resupply of the surrounded Fort Sumter, knowing that that action would start the war, he knew that to fix his beloved Union, he would have to oversee its near destruction.

At that first inaugural, surveying the many Southerners in his audience, Lincoln spoke to that hope of rebirth and reconciliation. Appealing to the glorious Revolutionary past that both the North and South shared, he began the last few sentences of his magnificent speech: "We are not enemies, but friends," he said. "We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained, it must not break our bonds of affection. The mystic chords of memory stretching from every battlefield and patriot grave, to every living heart and hearthstone, all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union, when again touched, as surely they will be, by

### A visit to Ford's Theater evokes the pain and joy of chronicling history.

the better angels of our nature."

And yet I still resist the truth of Shelby's letter, still resist the taking from us of that better angel, Abraham Lincoln, in this theater so many performances ago.

I tried once to abolish this anguish during the mixing of the soundtrack for the series. I tried to somehow arrest his death. As the sound engineer was finishing, having laid down the absurd background noise of the Victorian play, the tiny orchestral music, the audience laughter, the narrator's inexorable march to that final fatal moment, he still had not put in the sound of the gunshot.

Now, he backed up the film and its dozens of sound-effects tracks, now he was heading toward the moment the gun would go off, now we were almost there, murderers again, like Booth. Just as the pistol was about to ring out in the studio, I looked at my editor, who had tears in his eyes, and I yelled "Stop!" The engineer hit the panic button and the rolls of film and tape came to a halt just a fraction of a second before the sound of the gunshot.

For many moments we stood silent, as it must have been here that night, only we were saving him, we were keeping him alive. We looked at each other and realized then even more the awful work we had ahead of us, the awful work we needed to complete. Silent, I nodded to the engineer, he started up again, we killed Abraham Lincoln, finished our film and went home in time for Christmas.

Now I see things differently. He survives and lives today precisely in his martyrdom. Shelby is right. It had to happen, and there is a kind of glorious pain in embracing that which cannot be avoided.

Somehow the tape of those horrible events runs both backward and forward in my mind. So now I see a tormented and talented actor racing out of the Maryland countryside into the city of Washington, coming through the backstage door of this theater, bursting onto the stage and somehow taking on himself the hatred, the vitriolic hatred, that had possessed his countrymen for so long in one long bloodcurdling scream. Now he leaps to the box where the President slumps and now somehow pulls out the bullet that has lodged itself in Abraham Lincoln's brain. Now the actor bisects the play continue, now he quietly takes the gun and tiptoes out the back of the box, returning later to make sure it is locked and secure so that no one will ever again be able to hurt the President.

# REOPENING



FORD'S THEATRE, WASHINGTON

A host of the great stars  
of American theatre entertain  
at the brilliant reopening  
of an historic shrine.

## INCOGNITO ENTERTAINING

W. C. B. S. TV  
**TONIGHT**  
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# Charleston Daily Mail

## Ford Theatre closing for modernizations

The Washington Post

Friday June 01, 2007

WASHINGTON -- Ford's Theatre, the hallowed site of President Abraham Lincoln's assassination and one of Washington's premier tourist stops, will close today for an 18-month renovation, the National Park Service said.

The theater will get an \$8.5 million upgrade that will include its first elevator, new restrooms, and renovations to its heating and air conditioning and lighting and sound systems, the park service said late Thursday.

It will be the biggest renovation to the 144-year-old theater since it underwent restoration in the 1960s, said park service spokesman Bill Line, and is being done to improve access for the handicapped and to enhance and modernize the theater for everyone.

Although the closing was announced with little public forewarning, Line said the park service has alerted tour operators that Ford's was to be closed. He noted the Peterson House, the home where Lincoln died across the street, would still be open to tourists.

The park service hopes the theater will reopen in November of 2008.

Lincoln was shot in the back of the head on the evening of April 14, 1865 as he sat with his wife in a private box watching the comedy, "Our American Cousin."

The assassin was the well-known actor John Wilkes Booth, a Confederate sympathizer who was enraged over the South's defeat in the Civil War. The main Confederate army had surrendered five days before. Booth crept into Lincoln's box and shot him with a derringer. Lincoln was carried to the Peterson house and died the next morning at 7:22 a.m.

In addition to being an historic site, Ford's also is a working theater. Four shows are produced annually during the September-to-June theater season, said Hannah Olanoff, marketing and communications director for the Ford's Theatre Society, which puts on the performances.

"We're going to improve overall the visitors' experience," she said.

She said the society has "cleared" its calendar for the upcoming season, except for its annual holiday production of "A Christmas Carol."

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*Producing Director*

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[pault@fordstheatre.org](mailto:pault@fordstheatre.org)

511 Tenth Street NW  
Washington, DC 20004  
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**FORD'S**  
THEATRE

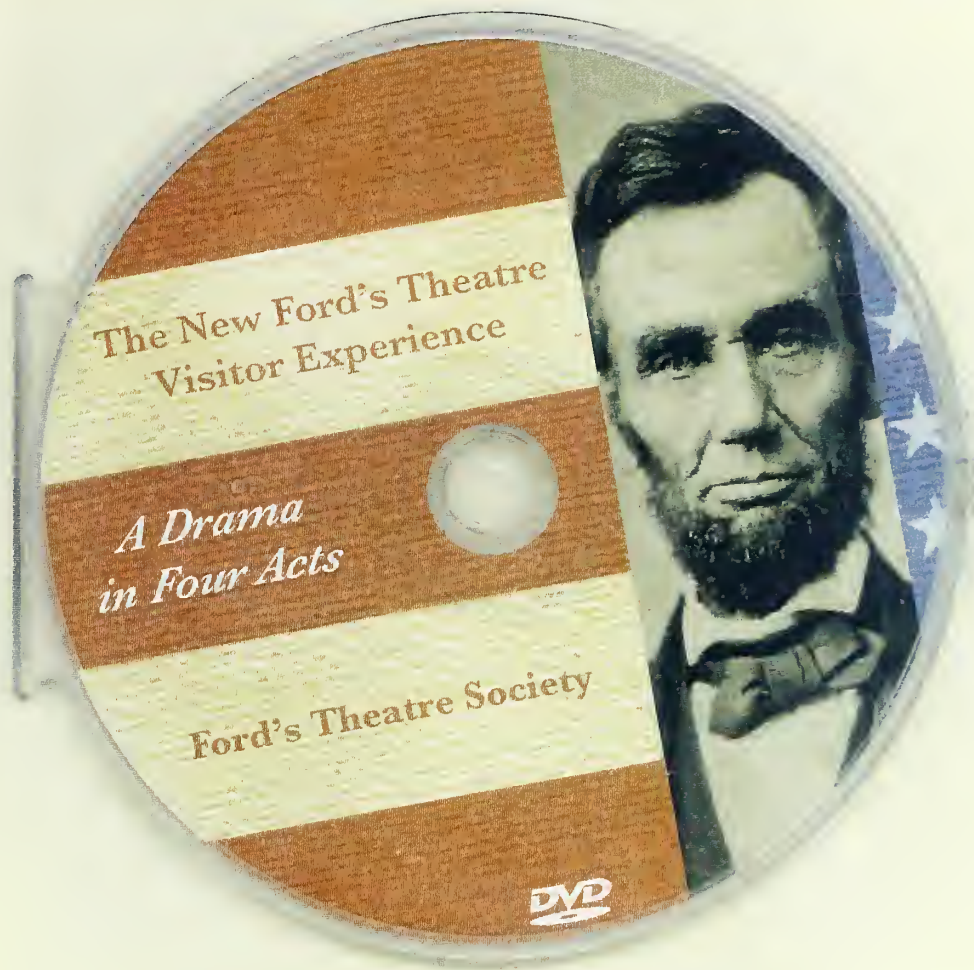
*Abraham Lincoln*

THE ABRAHAM LINCOLN  
BICENTENNIAL CAMPAIGN

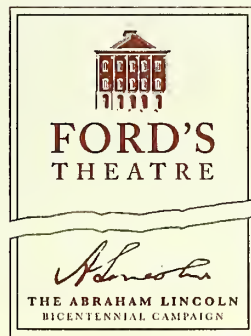
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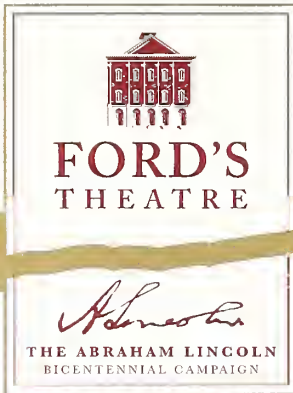




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511 TENTH STREET NW, WASHINGTON, DC 20004 | 202.638.2941 | FORDSTHEATRE.ORG

October 19, 2007

Ms. Joan L. Flinspach  
President and CEO  
The Lincoln Museum of Fort Wayne, IN  
200 East Berry Street  
Fort Wayne, IN 46802

Dear Ms. Flinspach:

On **Friday, October 26, 2007** Ford's Theatre will publicly launch The Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Campaign to support a major renovation and expansion of this historic landmark.

As you know, looking toward the bicentennial of Lincoln's birth in 2009, a transformation will take place at Ford's Theatre which will provide visitors of all ages an even deeper connection to Lincoln's presidency and legacy through an enhanced facility, expanded museum and dynamic new Center for Education and Leadership.

Enclosed for your advance review: an official Press Release regarding the Campaign Launch, Campaign Fact Sheet, Educational Programming Synopsis, a DVD and concept design brochure highlighting the exciting transformation of the Ford's Theatre Museum and creation of The Center for Education and Leadership. These items will give you a well-rounded glimpse of this historical project. Please note, the materials are embargoed until the public announcement on Friday, October 26<sup>th</sup>.

As a respected member of the Ford's community, we would very much like your participation on this exciting day as we celebrate a new chapter in Ford's Theatre's history. Following the public Campaign announcement at the Theatre, there will be a private luncheon at the Willard Hotel.

In the meantime, if members of the media contact you regarding The Ford's Theatre Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Campaign, you will have the most accurate and current information at your fingertips. Also, within the next week, I will be sending you a series of four questions via email, regarding Ford's Theatre. It is our hope to seek responses from you to use in our marketing, publicity and press efforts, to help others understand the importance and relevance of the Theatre's renovation and site expansion.

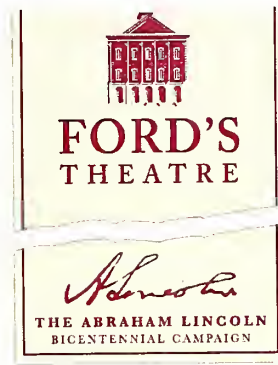
As always, please feel free to contact me directly at (202) 434-9540 with any comments or questions you may have. I look forward to seeing you on the 26<sup>th</sup>.

Best regards,

  
Paul R. Tetreault  
*Producing Director*

Enclosures

*A Living Memorial to our 16<sup>th</sup> President*



***Embargoed until Friday, Oct. 26th at 11am ET***

*MEDIA CONTACT: Tara Greco, [tgreco@apcoworldwide.com](mailto:tgreco@apcoworldwide.com), ph 202.478.3736*

**FORD'S THEATRE "TENTH STREET CAMPUS" WILL BRING  
LINCOLN'S LEGACY TO LIFE**

*New Education Center and Museum Anchor Enhancements*

WASHINGTON, D.C., October 26, 2007 – Ford's Theatre Society today launched a \$40 million dollar capital campaign to support a multi-year major renovation and expansion of the 144-year old Ford's Theatre.

Funds raised from the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Campaign will be used to transform the current facilities into a "campus" along Tenth Street NW in downtown Washington, D.C. The campus will feature a renovated theatre with a new lobby, a re-imagined museum, the Petersen House (where President Lincoln died) and a new Center for Education and Leadership focused on the life and legacy of President Lincoln.

"The campaign and the new facilities it will fund will enable Ford's Theatre Society to pursue its mission to celebrate the legacy of President Lincoln and explore the American experience through theatre and education," said Rex Tillerson, CEO, ExxonMobil Corporation and campaign chairman, during a capital campaign kick-off event this morning.

Tillerson was joined by Washington D.C. Mayor Adrian Fenty and U.S. Secretary of the Interior Dirk Kempthorne.

"As we approach the bicentennial of President Lincoln's birth in 2009, this campaign will enlist people here and around the world to live and celebrate his legacy of leadership, learning, education and love of the performing arts," said Tillerson.

Ford's Theatre is a National Historic Site managed by the National Park Service and draws nearly one million visitors per year. It also has the support of The Capital Campaign Leadership Honorary Committee, which consists of all the living Presidents and most of their spouses.

The re-imagined museum and new Center for Education and Leadership will enhance the theatre's unique historical perspective by expanding educational opportunities available to visitors. The new museum will feature interactive self-guided exhibits that portray a social and political picture of Washington, D.C. and the United States in the 1860s. The new building will also include classroom and work spaces, designed specifically for use by visiting students and families, as well as support facilities.

The theatre and museum, which closed on August 26, will re-open in February 2009, in time for the bicentennial of Lincoln's birth. The renovations will enhance the museum exhibit space and make the theatre more audience-friendly and compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Renovations will include upgraded seating, improved heating and air conditioning systems, renovated restrooms, enhanced accessibility with elevators to the various levels, a spacious new lobby, a new conference room for special events and updated stage capabilities for the cast and crew.

The Center for Education and Leadership will open shortly after the museum, featuring exhibitions and interactive displays that explore Lincoln's life and legacy, as well as workshops and seminars for students of all ages. Permanent installations will bring to life the immediate aftermath of Lincoln's assassination and illustrate the lasting effects of his presidency on the United States. Several rotating exhibits will ensure that visitors are met with fresh experiences each time they return to the Ford's Theatre campus.

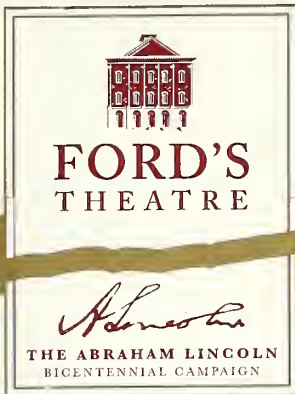
Progress of the renovation can be followed by visiting the dynamic new, more interactive Ford's Theatre Web site: [www.fords.org](http://www.fords.org). The Web site will also allow visitors to take a "virtual tour" of the new facility and access information about Ford's Theatre Society's educational and theatrical extension programs while the theatre is closed. Students and inquirers around the world can use the site to deepen their understanding of Lincoln's presidency and Civil War Washington through a wide range of multi-media lessons and learning opportunities, including interviews with eminent Lincoln historians and world leaders. The Web site also has an on-line contribution capability that will allow individuals to become a part of history by generously supporting the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Campaign.

The Ford's Theatre renovation and expansion project has been made possible primarily through donations from private parties, foundations and corporations, and an \$8.3 million grant from the federal government. As the lead corporate donor, ExxonMobil has awarded the campaign a \$5 million Leadership Circle grant. In addition, the following corporations and foundations have generously provided early gifts to this project: American Airlines, AT&T, BAE Systems, General Dynamics, Marriott International, Inc., Raytheon Company, Sunoco, Inc., and The Freed Foundation.

#### **About Ford's Theatre Society**

Ford's Theatre Society is a not-for-profit corporation created to produce live entertainment on Ford's historic stage and offer educational opportunities for the general public. In 2006, the theatre and neighboring Petersen House welcomed nearly one million visitors. It is the mission of the Ford's Theatre Society to celebrate the legacy of President Lincoln and explore the American experience through theatre and education. For more information, log on to [www.fords.org](http://www.fords.org).

###



## Campaign Fact Sheet

511 TENTH STREET NW, WASHINGTON, DC 20004 | 202.638.2941 | FORDSTHEATRE.ORG

**Looking Back:** On the evening of April 14, 1865, during the third act of *Our American Cousin*, John Wilkes Booth stepped into the Presidential Box at Ford's Theatre and fatally shot Abraham Lincoln, plunging the nation into mourning. Remaining in darkness for over 100 years, Ford's Theatre reopened in 1968 as both a historic site and a working theatre. Today, Ford's Theatre is one of Washington, D.C.'s most popular destinations, with close to one million visitors per year, who come to share an unmatched connection to our 16<sup>th</sup> President and to learn more about Abraham Lincoln's revered ideals of leadership, humanity, wisdom and eloquence.

**Enriching the Visitor Experience:** You are invited to contribute to Lincoln's legacy by supporting the most exciting renovation and expansion in the Theatre's long history as we begin *The Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Campaign – A Living Memorial to our 16<sup>th</sup> President*. Through this Campaign, Ford's Theatre will become a venue where people can come to study – and be inspired by – great lessons in leadership and American history. The scope of Ford's traditional mission as a nationally recognized producer of American Theatre will be significantly increased through educational and historical programming, an innovative Web site and off-site extension programming, expanding Lincoln's legacy into classrooms throughout the nation. A newly created Tenth Street campus will be comprised of the renovated Theatre building, its new adjoining Lobby space, an expanded museum exhibit space, the Petersen House and a soon-to-be purchased property, across from the Theatre (514 Tenth Street, NW), which will be celebrated as The Center for Education and Leadership.

**Timeline:** *The Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Campaign* will commence in October 2007 with a series of public and private launch events. The grand reopening season is planned for 2009, including a full dedication of the Ford's Theatre Campus on the 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of President Lincoln's birth.

**Preserving the Legacy:** With your support, we can create a meaningful tribute to Abraham Lincoln's leadership and love of the arts – a campus that will engage, educate and inspire people of all ages:

|                |   |
|----------------|---|
| \$ 22 million  | Renovating current federal properties and incorporating the Atlantic Building Lobby space |
| \$ 13 million  | Purchasing and establishing The Center for Education and Leadership at 514 Tenth Street   |
| \$ 2.5 million | Establishing an endowment fund to ensure the future vitality of our education initiatives |
| \$ 2 million   | Upgrading and expanding the museum exhibit space  |
| \$ 500,000     | Upgrading technology, including Ford's Theatre website                                    |

**\$40 MILLION**

**TOTAL CAMPAIGN GOAL**

**Campaign Leadership:**

**Honorary Committee:**

The Honorable George H.W. Bush and Mrs. Bush  
 The Honorable Jimmy Carter and Mrs. Carter  
 The Honorable William Jefferson Clinton  
 Mrs. Nancy Reagan

**Campaign Chairman:**

Rex W. Tillerson, Chairman and CEO, ExxonMobil

**Corporate Challenge Chairman:**

Nicholas D. Chabraja, Chairman and CEO, General Dynamics

**Chairman, Board of Trustees:**

Wayne R. Reynolds

**Producing Director:**

Paul R. Tetreault

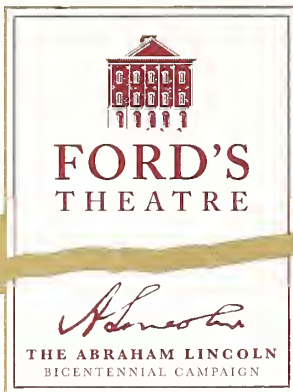
**Chair, Steering Committee:**

Cecile B. Tauzin

**Steering Committee Members:**

Robert S. Aiken, Arne L. Christenson, Frank M. Conner III,  
 Greg Farmer, Karyn McLaughlin Frist, Jack Krumholtz, The Honorable  
 Timothy J. McBride, Robert M. McGee, Timothy P. McKone, The Honorable  
 William F. McSweeney, The Honorable Jane DeGraff Sloat, Betty Ann Tanner

*A Living Memorial to our 16<sup>th</sup> President*



## ***Building a World Class Education Program*** *The Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Campaign*

511 TENTH STREET NW, WASHINGTON, DC 20004 | 202.638.2941 | FORDSTHEATRE.ORG

Through the education initiatives at Ford's Theatre, we strive to **enhance the visitor experience** both on- and offline, extend our services and resources to **underserved students in our local community**, Washington, DC, and provide a **comprehensive resource for the study of Lincoln's presidency, assassination and legacy**.

A newly-created Tenth Street campus will house the education programs. The new **Center for Education and Leadership** will be located at the heart of this campus, in a soon-to-be purchased building at 514 Tenth Street. Additionally, through **innovative Web site and off-site extension programming**, Ford's Theatre will expand its reach into classrooms across the nation and around the world.


**The dramatic arts and engaging teaching techniques** will deepen visitors' knowledge and understanding of **Abraham Lincoln's presidency, the significance of his death and the legacy he left our nation**. Regardless of where our educational programs are administered—on campus, off campus or online—or whether they take place in school or out of school, students, teachers, families and adult learners will be equipped with tools for exploring the life and legacy of Abraham Lincoln.

Initial plans include:

- Social studies learning experiences for middle and high school students using primary source documents and artifacts from the museum collection at Ford's Theatre.
- A school-based workshop series using the speeches of Lincoln and other Civil War era figures to strengthen high school students' understanding of American life during this time period.
- On-site and traveling performances of *One Destiny*, a two-man, one-act play that recounts the events surrounding the assassination of President Lincoln, followed by learning activities using themes drawn from the play.
- Learning partnerships with select Washington, DC public schools to develop and administer a curriculum focused on teaching history, leadership and citizenship to middle and high school students using theatre, speech and storytelling.
- An annual speech contest for middle and high school students nationwide that will culminate in a visit to the Tenth Street campus.
- Distance-learning opportunities and Web-cast programming for middle and high school social studies classrooms throughout the United States.
- Professional development opportunities and externships for social studies teachers from every state.
- The *Portraits of Lincoln* speaker series featuring historians and scholars. All interviews and speeches will be archived on the Web site for viewing by students of all ages.
- Seminars, performances and presentations for adult learners that focus on Lincoln, his legacy and Civil War Washington.
- An upgraded and enhanced museum experience, with interactive exhibits and artifacts from Lincoln's assassination and Civil War Washington.
- Walking tours with period-costumed interpreters, to provide a "living history" experience.

Ford's Theatre is currently pursuing affiliations with the Gilder-Lehrman Institute for American History, the National Council for the Social Studies, the National Council for Teachers of History, The History Channel, the DC Collaborative for Arts and Humanities, the DC Council for Arts & Humanities, the Arts Education Partnership, the Humanities Council of Washington, DC, and the Museum Educators Roundtable.

*A Living Memorial to our 16<sup>th</sup> President*



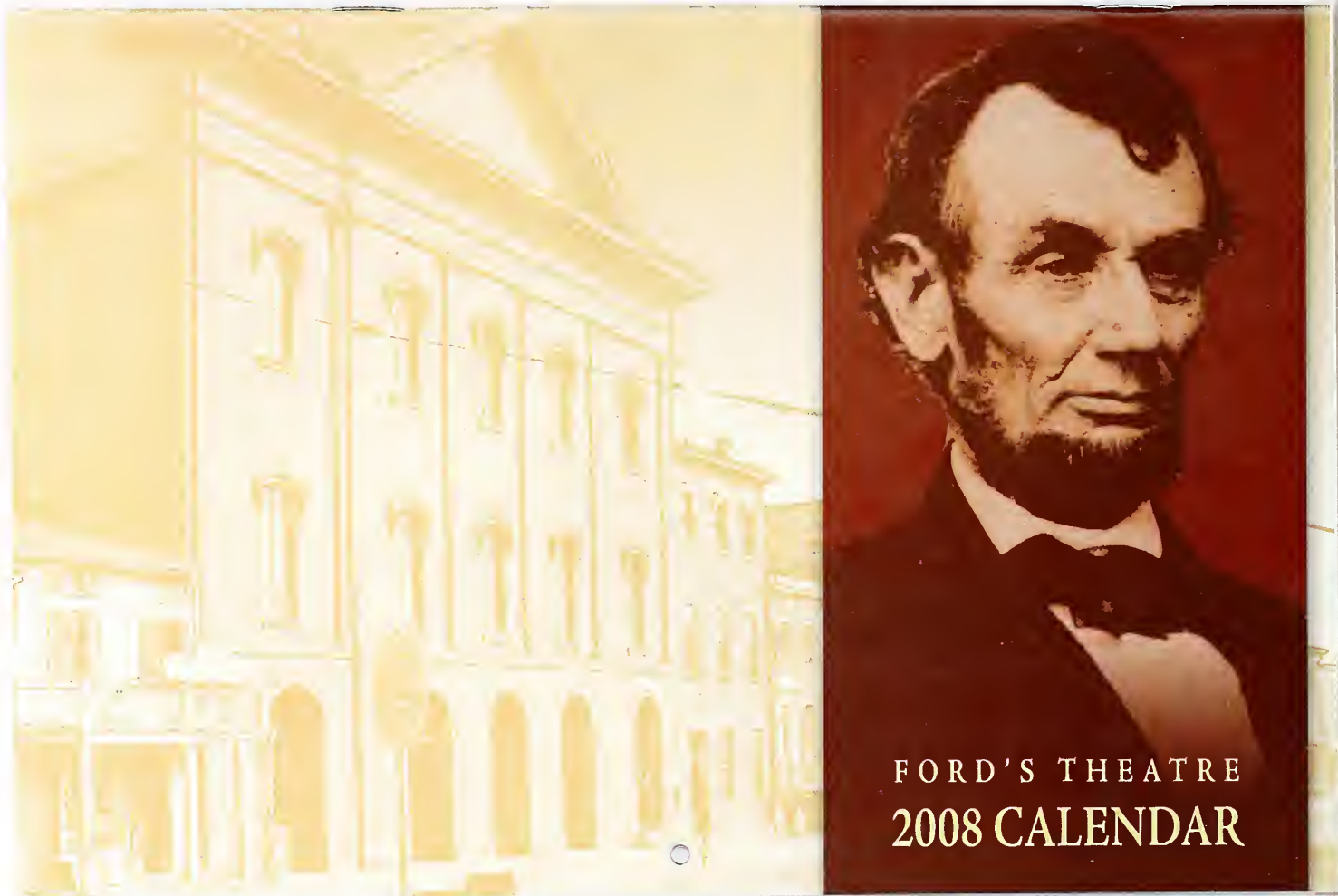
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FORD'S THEATRE  
2008 CALENDAR



# The Washington Post

## Ford's Theatre education center to bring President Lincoln's last days to life

By Michael E. Ruane  
Washington Post Staff Writer  
Tuesday, June 22, 2010; B05

On the night of April 14, 1865, as President Abraham Lincoln was about to go out for the evening, two men stopped at the White House to request passes to go to Richmond and Petersburg. Lincoln paused, took pen to paper, and, probably with some pleasure, wrote a two-sentence note stating that passes were no longer necessary.

The main Confederate Army had just surrendered. The Civil War was over. "People go and return just as they did before the war," the president wrote, signing his name, "A Lincoln." Then he got into his carriage and rode to Ford's Theatre.

The simple document, believed to be the last thing he wrote before his assassination, will be part of the display at a new, \$25 million Lincoln-themed Center for Education and Leadership, whose design was unveiled Monday during a briefing at the theater.

Planned for an existing 10-story building at 514 10th St. NW, across the street from the theater, the center will exhibit such things as the tools used to construct Lincoln's coffin, a handle from the coffin, what is thought to be a lock of Lincoln's hair, and the set of keys found in the pockets of his killer, John Wilkes Booth.

The center will have four floors of museum, exhibit and retail space, a giant image of Lincoln on the facade and a three-story sculpture in the lobby representing the roughly 16,000 books written about him since 1865.

The center, a project of the Ford's Theatre Society and the National Park Service, will become part of a Lincoln "campus" on 10th Street, along with the newly renovated and expanded theater and the new museum in the theater's basement. The theater and the museum reopened last year.

The entire enterprise will cost about \$60 million, Ford's Theatre Society Director Paul Tetreault said Monday. He said that almost \$53 million has been raised.

"We're excited," he said in the theater's board room. "We're very excited to get this started."

Work on the center is scheduled to begin next month, with opening expected in 2012.

Booth shot Lincoln in the head as the president and his wife were watching a comedy in the theater. Lincoln's body was carried across the street to the Petersen boarding house, where he died in a back bedroom the next morning.

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The theater is one of Washington's most hallowed tourist sites, with almost a million visitors a year, the park service said. Some, said project adviser and presidential historian Richard Norton Smith, are "people for whom this is a shrine." Others are seeking "an experience," he said, "a kind of credible immersion in another time and another place, and, in this case, another life."

The project aims to do just that, leading visitors from the theater across the street, through the Petersen House and into the education center. There, visitors will encounter a simulated Washington street scene on the day of Lincoln's death, with the sound of news criers and tolling church bells in the background. They will enter a simulated funeral train car, bearing a flag-draped coffin. And they will be able to peer through the slats of the "burning" tobacco barn as the fleeing Booth is smoked out by his pursuers.

During the briefing Monday, officials displayed rare artifacts that they said would also be on view in the center. Along with Booth's keys were an ornate tassel used to decorate Lincoln's coffin; an official form allowing the president's body to be moved to Springfield, Ill., from New York, where it was on public view; and the note for the pass-seekers. Attached to the latter was the small, curled lock of brown hair.

"It's an incredible story," Smith said, as tourists streamed into the theater below the board room. "This story trumps, with all due respect, anything that is ever likely to appear on that stage, for sheer drama [and] controversy."

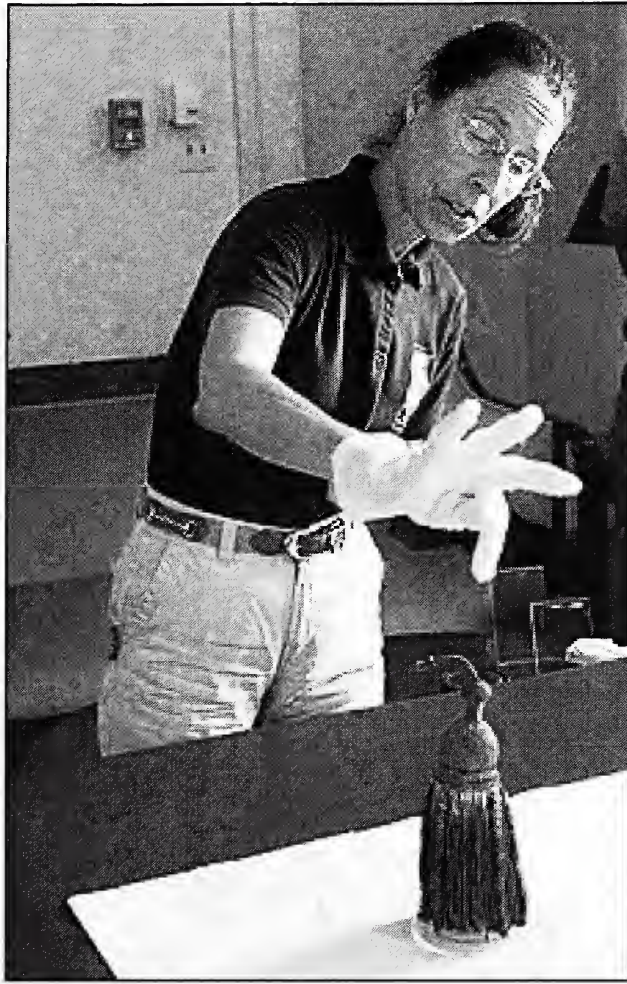
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National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

Ford's Theater National Historic Site  
Washington D.C.



## The President is Killed



Historic view of Ford's Theater where President Abraham Lincoln was shot on the night of April 14, 1865.

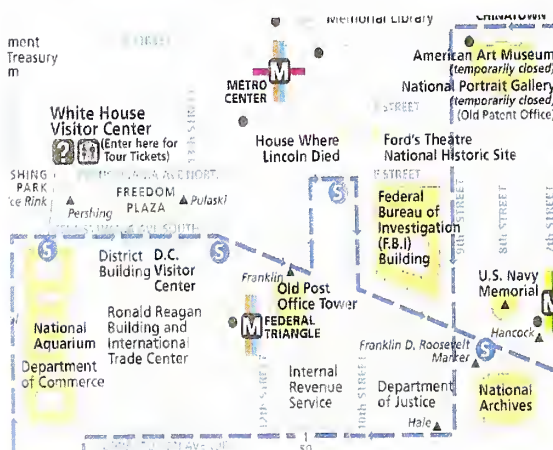
America's transfer from civil war to peace was made more difficult on April 14, 1865, when Abraham Lincoln was shot and killed, just five days after General Lee's surrender at Appomattox Court House. A well-known actor, John Wilkes Booth, desperate to aid the dying Confederacy, stepped into the president's box. Booth's decision to pull the trigger altered the nation's power to reconstruct after the war. Booth escaped into the night as Abraham Lincoln was carried to the Petersen boarding house across the street. It was there that President Lincoln died early the next morning, and became the first American president to be assassinated.

National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior



Ford's Theatre National Historic Site  
Washington D.C.

## The President is Killed



### Operating Hours & Seasons

Daily: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.; closed December 25.

Ford's Theatre is an active theatre and may close temporarily with little notice, especially just before and after productions for rehearsals and set changes. The theatre will also be closed during matinees. The Lincoln Museum and the Petersen House will remain open for tours during matinees and rehearsals.

### Getting There

#### Plane

BWI, Dulles, and National Airports serve the Washington, DC metro area. National Airport is the closest and is served by Metrorail.

#### Car

Parking is severely limited in the downtown area. Ford's Theatre is located near the intersection of 10th and E Streets in the northwest section of the city. It is a block north of the FBI building on Pennsylvania Avenue.

#### Public Transportation

Metro buses and rail service the area. The closest Metro Rail station is Metro Center at 11th and G Streets. Taxi service is also available.

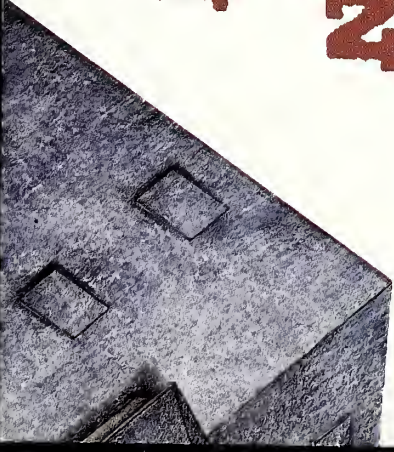
# Ford's Theatre

and The House Where Lincoln Died

Official Park Guide

## ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT LINCOLN

The President Shot at Theatre Last Evening.



# Ford's Theatre

and The House Where Lincoln Died

Official Park Guide

## ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT LINCOLN

~~~~~  
The President Shot at Theatre Last Evening.





Ford's Theatre  
National Historic Site  
Washington DC

National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

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### The Events of April 14-15, 1865

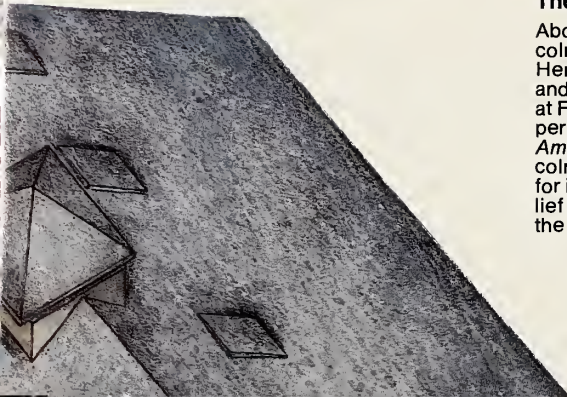
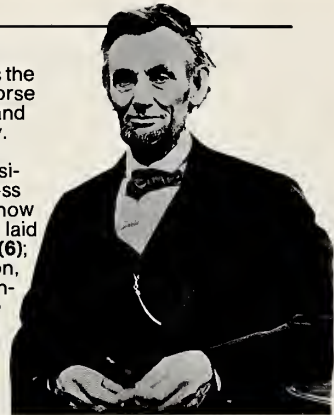
About 8:30 p.m. the Lincolns and guests, Maj. Henry Reed Rathbone and Clara Harris, arrived at Ford's Theatre to see a performance of *Our American Cousin*. Lincoln enjoyed the theatre, for it gave him some relief from the burdens of the Presidency.

At approximately 10:15 p.m. when only one actor, Harry Hawk, was on stage and the audience was laughing, John Wilkes Booth entered the Presidential box (1) and shot Lincoln. After stabbing Major Rathbone in the left arm, Booth made good his escape by jumping (2) to the stage. As he jumped, Booth got entangled in the decorations for the Presidential box and landed off balance on the stage and broke a small bone in his left leg.

He hobbled (3) across the stage, mounted his horse in the back alley (4), and escaped from the city.

The unconscious President was carried across the street (5) to 453 (now 516) Tenth Street and laid in the back bedroom (6); his wife, Mary, and son, Capt. Robert Todd Lincoln, waited (7) in the front room.

Lincoln died at 7:22 a.m., April 15, 1865.



# ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT LINCOLN

## The President Shot at Theatre Last Evening.

On the night of April 14, 1865, President Abraham Lincoln was shot in Ford's Theatre by John Wilkes Booth. He died in the early hours of April 15 in the small back bedroom of a boarding house across the street. Lincoln, who had struggled through the Civil War to preserve the Union, lived long enough to see it maintained but not long enough to help in healing the wounds left by the war. This gentle man, who abhorred violence, had presided over four years

of civil war and now, ironically, became a victim of violence himself. The theatre where Lincoln was shot and the house where he died are preserved today as Ford's Theatre National Historic Site to tell us of these events, to remind us of the troubling times this Nation passed through, and to encourage us to perpetuate the aspirations, the hopes and the ideals that Lincoln held for the United States.



John Wilkes Booth

surrounded them. After Herold surrendered, Booth was shot and killed while still in the barn, which had been set on fire by the soldiers in an effort to force Booth out. The other conspirators were soon arrested, their

trial began May 10 and ended June 23, 1865. Atzerodt, Herold, Powell, and Mrs. Surratt received death sentences and were hanged July 7, 1865. Dr. Mudd and Dr. Laughlin, who were involved in the initial kidnaping conspiracy, were given life sentences, as was Dr. Mudd. Dr. SARGENT, a stage hand at Ford who held Booth's horse, received six years of hard labor. All four were sent to Fort Jefferson in Florida to serve their sentences. Dr. Laughlin died of yellow fever in 1867 and President Andrew Johnson pardoned the others in 1869.

Library of Congress photo

### The Conspirators

JOHN WILKES BOOTH, a well-known actor, was a Southern sympathizer who saw Lincoln as the source of the South's problems. In late 1864 he began to lay plans for kidnaping Lincoln. An early recruit was John Surratt. His mother, MARY SURRATT, ran a boardinghouse where most of the conspirators' meetings took place. By 1865 DAVID HEROLD, GEORGE ATZERODT, and LEWIS POWELL (alias Payne, Payne, Rev. Wood) had joined Booth's band. An attempt to seize Lincoln on March 17 failed. John Surratt re-considered and left the area. Alton Lee's sur- render Booth put together

his final desperate plan. Powell would kill Secretary of State William Henry Seward. Atzerodt would shoot Vice President Andrew Johnson, and Booth would assassinate Lincoln. Only Booth was successful. Amidst the chaos after the shooting at Ford's, Booth rode through the city and fled into Maryland with Herold. The pain from his left leg, broken when he leaped from the box, became intense, and he rode to the home of Dr. SAMUEL MURDO to have it set. On April 26 while Booth and Herold hid in a tobacco barn near Port Royal, Va., pursuing Union troops



Mary Surratt



George Atzerodt



Lewis Powell



David Herold



Edman Spangler



Samuel Mudd

### Events of April 9-14, 1865

**APRIL 9, 1865** Gen. Robert E. Lee surrendered to Gen. U. S. Grant at Appomattox Court House. Va. Lincoln returned from Richmond, Va., to Washington, D. C., visited Secretary Seward, who had been injured in a fall from his carriage.

**APRIL 10, 1865** Crowds serenaded the White House throughout the day. Lincoln troupe and then he would make a speech the next day and finish by asking the band to play "Dixie," saying that it was "one of the best tunes I ever heard."

**APRIL 11, 1865** Lincoln conferred with various officials concerning his Reconstruction plans. He told the crowd on the White House lawn of his post-war plans and of his hopes to grant suffrage to black Americans, and explained that for him Reconstruction only meant restoring the rebellious Union.

**APRIL 12, 1865** Lincoln worked out the problems of a proposed meeting of the Virginia General Assembly for the express purpose of withdrawing Virginia troops and other support from the resistance to the General Government.

**APRIL 13, 1865** The President spent the day in administrative work, and then rode out to the Soldiers' Home.

**APRIL 14, 1865** Capl Robert Todd Lincoln arrived from Appomattox Court House, Va., in time for breakfast with his father, Lincoln and his wife, Mary, went for a drive around the city in the late afternoon, and arrived at Ford's Theatre about 8:30 p.m.

### Washington in 1865

From 1861 to 1865, Washington, D. C., underwent great changes as the city became the center of the Federal Government's effort to prosecute the war and maintain the Union. The 1860 population of 75,000 mushroomed as businessmen came look-

ing for government work, clerks arrived to fill the new jobs, and thousands of escaped slaves came to start new lives as freedmen. D. C. visited Secretary Seward, who had been injured in a fall from his carriage.

up to care for the wounded who were brought here from the nearby battlefields and adding to the crush of people. The city's primitive facilities were soon overtaxed. Few streets were paved, and in rainy weather they became almost impassable. Many wells were contaminated

because of the lack of sewage facilities. The creeks and canals in the city were little more than open sewers. Washington was undergoing growing pains that would only be dealt with in the decade after 1865.



National Archives photo

### The Events of April 14-15, 1865

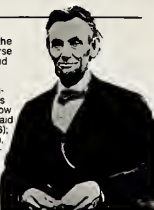
About 8:30 p.m. the Lincolns and guests, Maj. Henry Reed Rathbone and Clara Harris, arrived at Ford's Theatre to see a performance of *Dur American Cousin*. Lincoln enjoyed the theatre, for it gave him some relief from the burdens of the Presidency.

At approximately 10:15 p.m. when only one actor, Harry Hawk, was on stage and the audience was laughing, John Wilkes Booth entered the Presidential box (1) and shot Lincoln. After stabbing Major Rathbone in the left arm, Booth made good his escape by tumbling (2) to the stage. As he jumped, Booth got entangled in the decorations to the Presidential box and landed off balance on the stage and broke a small bone in his left leg.

He hobbled (3) across the stage, mounted his horse in the back alley (4), and escaped from the city.

The unconscious President was carried across the street (5) to #3 (now 518) 18th Street and laid in the back bedroom (6); his wife, Mary, and son, Capl Robert Todd Lincoln, waited (7) in the front room.

Lincoln died at 7:22 a.m., April 15, 1865.



### The Occupants of the Presidential Box

In keeping with the joyousness of the celebrations going on in Washington, the Lincolns decided to attend a performance of *Dur American Cousin* at Ford's Theatre starring the famous actress Laura Keane. The Lincolns initially invited Lt. Gen. and Mrs. U. S. Grant, but they left Washington in mid-afternoon. All the late minute the Lincolns invited Clara Harris, daughter

of New York Sen. Ira Harris, and her fiancé, Maj. Henry Reed Rathbone, who worked for provost marshal Brig. Gen. James B. Fry. Tragically followed these people Clara Harris Rathbone was shot by her uncle in 1883. And Rathbone died in an insane asylum in Hanover, Germany, in 1911.

National Archives photos

### The President's Widow

Neither the judgment of history nor the events she lived through were kind to Mary Todd Lincoln. Three of her four sons died during her lifetime. Her husband was shot in her presence. Criticism stalked her public actions and did not abate in the aftermath of Lincoln's assassination. In 1875 she was judged to be insane and admitted to a sanitarium for several months. She died in her sister's home in Springfield, Illinois, July 10, 1922.

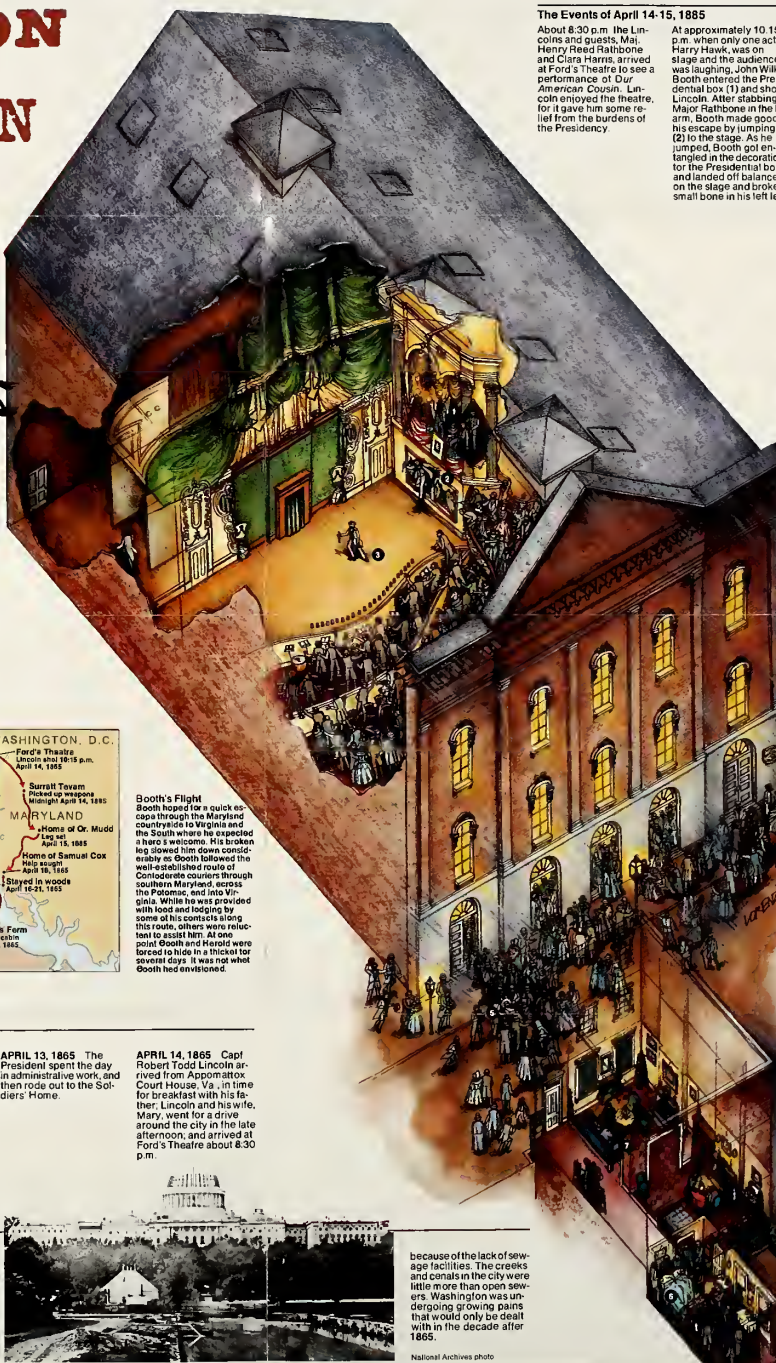


Library of Congress photo

This illustration is akin to a movie, for it shows the activity from the time Lincoln was shot to his escape across the street and placed on the bed in the back bedroom of the Pelegrin House, Study 1, generally. The Illustrator is Al Lorenz.

### The Thent Street Neighborhood

Ford's Theatre lay north of two of the worst neighborhoods in Washington, South of Pennsylvania Avenue, just a block and a half away, was what locals called "Hooker's Division," a center for crime and vice, named after the commander of troops stationed in the area. Gen. Joseph Hooker. Nearby was Murder Bay, one of the city's worst slums. As the city's population swelled with the influx of soldiers, so did the numbers of gamblers, hustlers, pickpockets, bootleggers, and prostitutes. Unwary soldiers were frequently relieved of what little money they had



# Ford's: Yesterday and Today

Ford's Theatre National Historic Site is a unit of the National Park System, which consists of more than 340 parks representing important examples of our country's natural and cultural inheritance.



## A History of Ford's Theatre and Petersen House

John T. Ford was an extremely successful theatrical entrepreneur from Baltimore, Md., where he managed the Holiday Street Theatre. In the fall of 1861, he decided to expand his operations to Washington, and upon his arrival in the city he leased the First Baptist Church. He immediately set about turning the church into a music hall, and only three days after signing the lease he opened with a 2½-month run of the Christy Minstrels. This and subsequent productions proved financially rewarding, and Ford was poised for what looked like a long run of successes in the capital when fire destroyed the

building on December 30, 1862. Undaunted, he raised money for new construction. The cornerstone was laid February 28, 1863, and the first performance in Ford's "New Theatre" took place August 27, 1863. From then until the theatre closed in the aftermath of Lincoln's assassination, 495 performances were staged. The success was generally attributed to Ford's dedication to quality in the construction of his new building, to the up-to-date equipment that he employed, to the first-rate actors whom he hired, and to the engaging productions that he mounted. The theatre was closed by the Federal Gov-

ernment during the investigation of the shooting and the trial of the conspirators. After their sentencing and hanging, Ford was given permission to reopen. Ford received threats that the building would be burned down, if he reopened it, and so once again the War Department closed it. In August 1865 the department started leasing the building from Ford and began its conversion into a three-story office building. Finally in 1866 the theatre was bought from Ford for \$100,000 by the Federal Government.



First Baptist Church

### Ford's Theatre in its Various Stages

The first building on this site was the First Baptist Church, sometimes called the Tenth Street Baptist Church, built in 1833. In 1859 this congregation merged with that of the Fourth Baptist Church. In 1861 the congregation leased it to John T. Ford who later bought it and turned it into a theatre. After the theatre was bought from Ford in 1866, it was used as a office space

by the Federal Government. On June 9, 1893, all three floors collapsed killing 22 workers and injuring 68. From then until 1931 the building was used for storage. On February 12, 1932, the Lincoln Museum opened on the first floor of the old Ford's Theatre building. One year later it was transferred to the National Park Service.



Taken shortly after the assassination, the theatre and nearby buildings are draped in black. Note the unpaved and still muddy street.

### Renovation and Restoration

The Ford's Theatre that we know today is the result of two separate strands coming together. The first is the Lincoln Museum. Its initial collection of Lincoln items was assembled by Caborn Oldroyd and brought to Washington in 1893. The collection was purchased by the Federal Government in 1936 and was installed in Ford's Theatre in 1932. The museum focused attention on the structure, and after World War II public interest developed in restoring the theatre to its 1865 appearance. Funds

for research and an architectural study were approved in 1960. Four years later Congress approved the full restoration of the building. Responding to the research unearthed by architectural historians, the work proceeded slowly and care-



After the collapse of June 9, 1893

fully. The furnishings correspond to those that were in Ford's Theatre in 1865. The items in the Presidential box are reproductions of the original pieces except for the red damask sofa where Major Rathbone was sitting, which is original. The

engraving of Washington is the one that hung on the front of the box the night of April 14, 1865. The restored theatre and the newly constructed museum opened to the public February 13, 1968



A new generation of theatregoers.



### The Living Theatre

Besides being a memorial to Abraham Lincoln, Ford's is also an active, legitimate theatre, putting on a full schedule of plays during the year. The Ford's Theatre Society is responsible for the theatrical productions, and over the years it has turned Ford's into a center for contemporary American theatre. Its productions have looked at the wide range of American cultural and ethnic diversity and sought to produce the best examples available from this diverse heritage. The Society has made Ford's Theatre a vibrant cultural force in the Nation's Capital—a worthy heir to John T. Ford's legacy of quality productions. For box office information, call 202-347-4833; for group rates for plays, call 202-638-2368.

"A Christmas Carol" is only one of the many productions mounted by the Ford's Theatre Society.

These photos courtesy: Bob Merck



Ford's Theatre National Historic Site, which includes the theatre at 511 10th Street, NW, and the House Where Lincoln Died at 516 10th Street, NW, is administered by the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. For more information, address inquiries to: Superintendent, National Capital Parks—Central, 900 Ohio Drive, SW, Washington, DC 20242. The park is open daily from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. except December 25. The theatre is closed to tours when rehearsals or matinees are in progress, generally held on Thursday, Saturday, and Sunday. However, the Lincoln Museum in the theatre's basement and the House Where Lincoln Died remain open. For more information on Ford's Theatre National Historic Site, call 202-426-6924 or TDD 202-426-1749.

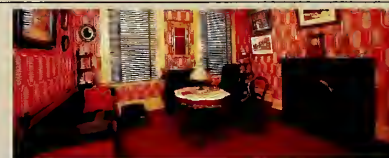
### Events at the Petersen House

The first person to enter the Presidential box, once the audience realized that Lincoln had been shot was Charles Augustus Leale, a 23-year-old doctor who had completed his medical studies only a few weeks earlier. Together with Dr. Charles Sabin Taft, he treated the stricken Lincoln and had him carried out of the theatre and across the street where they found a place in

the back bedroom in the home of William Petersen, a tailor. Throughout the night Leale, Taft, and close to a dozen other doctors tended Lincoln attempting to make him comfortable, for from the first they had known that his wound was mortal. At 7:22 a.m. the next morning Abraham Lincoln died.

**FRONT PARLOR** This is where Mary Todd Lincoln spent most of the night of April 14-15. Her eldest son, Capt. Robert Todd Lincoln, came from the White House and spent the night trying to comfort her. The room has been furnished in a manner that corresponds to its 1865 appearance, but none of the furniture is

original to the house. At the time of Lincoln's assassination, folding doors opened to the Back Parlor



1 Hugh McCulloch  
Secretary of the Treasury

3 Andrew Johnson  
Vice President of the United States

4 Sen. Charles Sumner

6 Henry Halleck  
U.S. Army Chief of Staff

2 Gideon Welles  
Secretary of the Navy

5 Mary Todd Lincoln

7 Edwin Stanton  
Secretary of War



Many pictures were drawn of the scene in the back bedroom at the time of Lincoln's death. Most, like this painting by John Littlefield, paid little attention to the physical limitations of the room and included some people, such as Mary Todd Lincoln, who actually were not in the room at the time of Lincoln's death. Courtesy Smithsonian Institution

**BACK PARLOR** Here Secretary of War Edwin McMasters Stanton began his investigation into the events surrounding Lincoln's assassination. Stanton, aided by Charles A. Dana, questioned eyewitnesses, sent out orders for the arrest of Booth, passed the news of the events on to the country, and began the preliminary

steps that would lead to the trial of the conspirators. Cpt. James Tanner sat at a similar center table and took shorthand notes of the interviews



**BACK BEDROOM** The original bed in this room, similar to the bed now on display, was not long enough to accommodate Lincoln, and he had to be laid diagonally across it. Throughout the night Dr. Leale held Lincoln's hand, for he knew that if Lincoln did regain consciousness he would be blind. Leale wanted him to know that

a tallow human being was nearby. The pillow and the bloodstained pillow cases are some of the ones used for Lincoln that night.





The following is a list of the names of the persons who have been appointed to the various positions in the office of the Secretary of the State of New York, for the term ending on the 31st day of December, 1891.

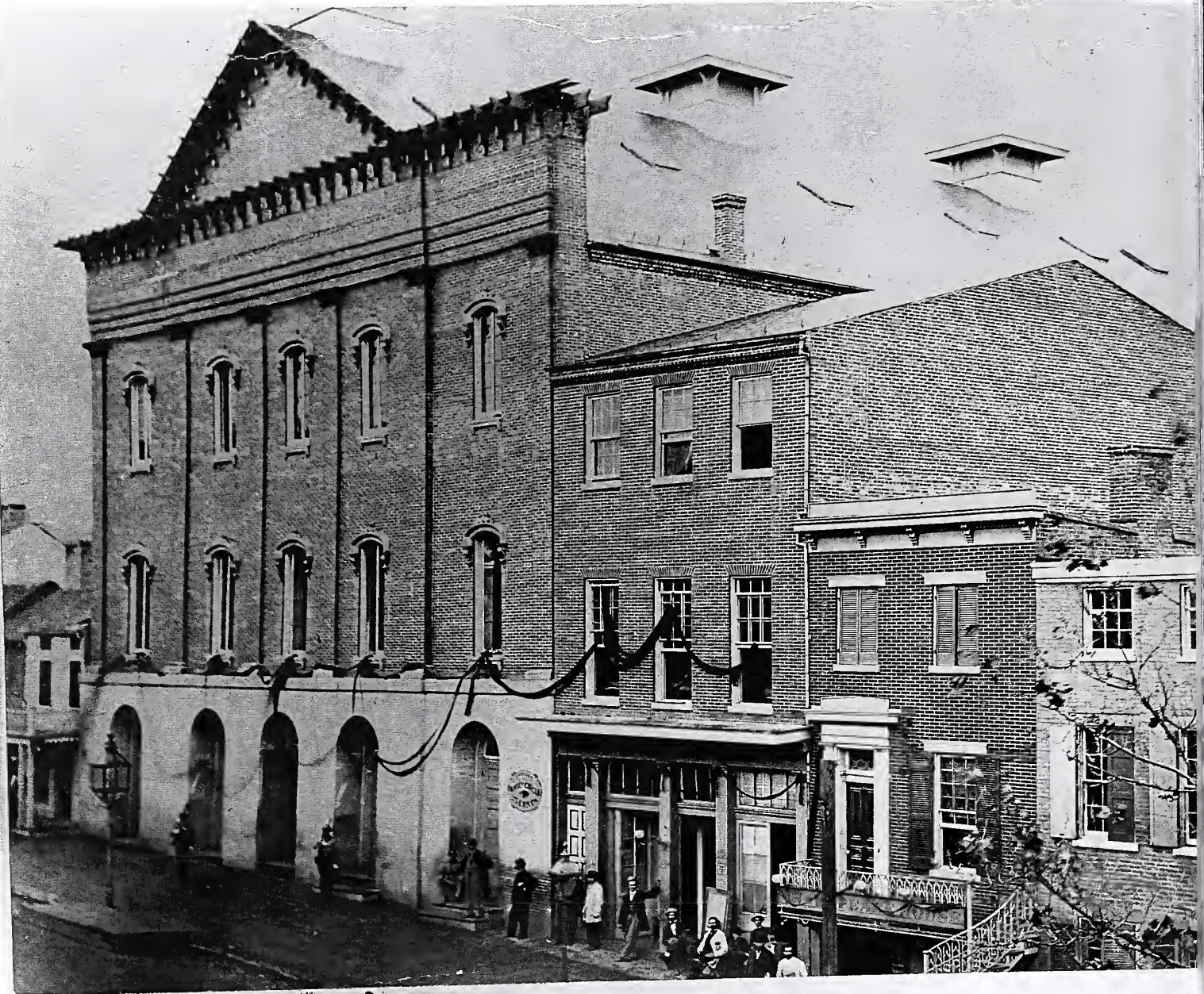
Secretary of State: William C. Cullen.

Comptroller: William C. Cullen.

Attorney General: William C. Cullen.

Register of the Land Office: William C. Cullen.

Register of the Marine Office: William C. Cullen.



SEARLES & THOMAS, PUBLISHERS,

*Ford's Old Theatre.*



1202. Old Theater Where Lincoln Was Assassinated,  
Washington, D. C.



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FORT WAYNE, INDIANA

*From: - Colored Stereo.*







