EDWIN BOOTH'S ORDEAL.

HIS TRIP TO WASHINGTON AFTER LINCOLN'S ASSASSINATION.

The Story of His Arrest Known to Few Persons—Ivory M. Blood Tells How He Took Him to Washington to Be Questioned About His Knowledge of the Crime

Very few persons are aware of the fact that after John Wilkes Booth shot President Lincoln Edwin Booth was practically taken into custody by agents of the Government. He was released as soon as an examination showed that he knew nothing of the conspiracy. This story of the affair is related by Ivory M. Blood:

"At that time, Mr. Booth resided on East Fourteenth street, near Broadway. I was in the United States secret service of the War Department, and had been detailed by Chief Baker to take Mr. Booth into custody. It was after the assassination of President Lincoln, and Mr. Booth's brother, John Wilkes Booth, the assassin, had been apprehended by Baker's men, and mortally wounded by Sergeant Boston Corbett, in Mr. Garrett's barn, in Virginia.

"Secretary of War Stanton and Judge Advocate-General Holt, under whose instructions I acted, wished to question Mr. Booth in regard to his knowledge, if any, of the movements and conversations of his brother, John Wilkes Booth. Upon my going to Mr. Booth's residence, the door bell was answered by a colored servant. I told him that I wished to see Mr. Booth. He went up stairs and upon returning said that Mr. Booth wished to know if I would not tell him the nature of my business.

"'No,' I replied, 'I must see him in person,' and I sent up my card.

"The servant returned to Mr. Booth's room, and shortly afterward that gentleman came down and invited me into the parlor. I shall never forget his appearance. He was pale and haggard, greatly agitated and trembling from head to foot. He had apparently an intuition that something serious was to happen to him. When seated, I opened the conversation by saying to Mr. Booth:

"'You see by my card that I am in the secret service, and am obliged to take you to Washington, D. C. If you wish to see any other authority I have my papers in my pocket."

"With a tremulous voice he replied: 'No, I do not care about seeing them.' Several times during our conversation he said: 'It is an awful thing.' 'It has distressed me greatly.' 'I feel as if I was going to die.' 'I cannot understand why my brother did the terrible deed.'

"Mr. Booth wished to know if he could give bonds, and I replied in the negative. Then he asked if he could consult counsel, and I told him he could under the following conditions: That he must not leave my presence; that he could not have any conversation with any person, including his counsel, except in my hearing, and that all such conversation would be strictly confidential on my part, giving him as a reason that the Habeas Corpus act was then suspended and that the Government did not allow any private conversation where parties were under arrest.

"Mr. Booth at the time had on his dressing gown. He returned to his room and came down wearing a black suit and silk hat, and said he was ready to accompany me to his lawyer on Wall street, whose name I do not at present recollect. Before leaving the house I said to him that I would not, as was customary, put the handcuffs on him, and that no one on the street would know that he was under arrest, adding, 'You cannot get away from me, because I am armed.'

"'I pledge myself as a gentleman,' replied Mr. Booth, 'that I will not try to get away.'

"I asked him if he had a pistol, and he answered,

"'I have not.'

"The servant was despatched for a carriage, and upon its arrival we were driven to the office of Mr. Booth's counsel, on Wall street. Mr. Booth asked me if there was much excitement in Washington, what I thought they would do with him, and if any one thought that he had any connection whatever with the tragedy.

"'I would rather die than go to Washington,' he said.

"I replied that I knew of no one who had intimated in the least that he had been in any way connected with the affair.

"On introducing me to his counsel he said to him:

"'Mr. Blood will tell you his business with me.'

"I told the lawyer that I was going to take Mr. Booth to Washington, by order of the Washington authorities.

"The lawyer declared that I had no right to take Mr. Booth from the city, and if there were any charges against him he ought to be tried by the United States court here.

"'The Government has authority,' I replied, 'to send any person to Washington, and Mr. Booth is not the first person that I have taken there.'

"'I don't care what you have done with other people,' the lawyer exclaimed in an angry tone, punctuated with an occasional oath. 'I am here to defend the rights of Mr. Booth.'

"'No one objects to you doing that,' I responded, 'but I shall obey the orders of the Government.'

"'I want,' continued the lawyer, 'to see Mr. Booth alone.'

"'You cannot do it,' was my answer.

"'What are the charges against, and what does the Government want with him?' asked the lawyer.

"'To examine him as to when he saw his brother last, and if his brother had ever intimated to him anything about the assassination. The Government is not going to spare any pains or expense to get at the bottom facts of the affair.'

"'If I should set forth Mr. Booth's rights as a citizen under the Constitution you could not take him to Washington,' said the lawyer, with much asperity of language and a show of impudence in his manner.

"I replied that I would take Mr. Booth, and the lawyer, too, if he interfered with the orders of the Government, if it took all the soldiers at Governor's Island to do it.

"'Well, Mr. Booth,' said the irate counsel, turning to him as he sat in a chair in the office, without taking part whatever in the foregoing dialogue, 'you had better go with this man to Washington, and if you need my services you can telegraph me.'

"On being driven back to Mr. Booth's residence, luncheon was served to us, after which he changed his costume and had some things put into a satchel. We went in the carriage direct to Desbrosses street ferry, and took a train for Washington.

"Upon arriving in Washington early the next morning I turned Mr. Booth over to Col. Baker, after we had breakfasted at an all-night restaurant, and after we had waited several hours at Willard's Hotel. He was put through a course of examination by Col. Baker and afterward taken before the Judge Advocate-General. There were no discrepancies in his two statements. After he had been examined by the Judge Advocate-General he was discharged. There was nothing whatever in his statements to show that he knew anything at all about his brother's terrible act before it had been perpetrated."

EDWIN BOOTH.

The Killing of President Lincoln and Its Effect Upon the Actor's Life.

For the next year I saw him constantly, either in Philadelphia or in New York, where he was then playing at the Winter Garden, writes William Bispham in the Century, in those marvelous revivals of Shakespeare's plays which made his fame as a stage manager only second to his fame as an actor. Then came the horror of the event of Good Friday night of 1865, and Edwin Booth was stricken to the ground. Nothing but the love that was poured out for him by his friends saved him from madness. For days his sanity hung in the balance, and we all were fearful for the result, but nature and friendship gained the victory, and though his very soul was torn with anguish, his clear, strong brain reasserted itself and he was himself again. For nearly a year he withdrew from the stage, and it was only when the call of the public for his return became too strong to longer be withstood that he consented to play again. During the time that he was in retirement it was my great privilege to pass nearly every evening with him. I had come to New York to live in the spring of 1865, and being alone here could follow my own inclinations in being with him as much as he desired. We used to sit in his library on the first floor of the house he occupied in Nineteenth street, east of Broadway, where his mother, his sister Rosalie, and his little daughter Edwina were with him. Often we would talk so late that when we were ready to go to bed (we were never ready to stop talking), it was too late for me to go to my lodgings, and he would insist on my turning in with him, which I would do, sharing his room and bed. Often in the evening we would stroll through the dark streets, for it was only at this time that he would venture out, hardly knowing what kind of a reception would be his if he were recognized, for, to its eternal infamy be it said, one of the leading (?) papers of New York had denounced him in the most bitter manner, and said that neither he nor any of his name would ever again be permitted to appear upon the stage of any theater in the United States. It is a singular comment on this that the only vote ever cast by Edwin Booth for president of the United States was for Abraham Lincoln in 1864, and that he saved the life of one of Abraham Lincoln's sons. Booth himself told me of this occurrence. He had started for Philadelphia from New York, and while he was standing on the platform of a car, still in the Pennsylvania railroad station at Jersey City, and just as the train was about to move, a young lad, going from one car to another, stumbled and would have fallen between them, had not Edwin caught him by the collar of the coat and landed him in safety by his side. The boy, whom Edwin had never seen before, evidently recognized him, and holding out his hand said to him: "That was a narrow escape, Mr. Booth," and thanked him warmly. Two weeks later Edwin received a letter from General Adam Badeau in which the latter mentioned that Robert Lincoln had told him that it was his life that had thus been saved.