



Nancy
Hanks
Lincoln
Public
Library

Journal of the

Ohio Archaeological and Historical Quarterly

Vol. XXX.

January-1921

No. 1

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
Assassination of Abraham Lincoln. By James R. Morris.....	1
The Battle of Picardy.....	6
Legislature of the Northwestern Territory, 1795.....	13
Early Journeys to Ohio. By B. F. Prince.....	54
The Indian's Head. By Henry Bannon.....	71
Reviews, Notes and Comments.....	75

PUBLISHED QUARTERLY BY THE SOCIETY

OFFICE: MUSEUM AND LIBRARY BUILDING,
CORNER 15TH AVE. AND HIGH ST., O. S. U. GROUNDS

PRICE, 50 CENTS PER COPY

YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION (FOUR NUMBERS) \$2.00
VOLUMES I-XXVIII, BOUND IN CLOTH, \$3.00 PER VOLUME

Entered as second-class matter at the Postoffice at Columbus, Ohio.

OHIO

Archaeological and Historical PUBLICATIONS

ASSASSINATION OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN

BY HONORABLE JAMES R. MORRIS.

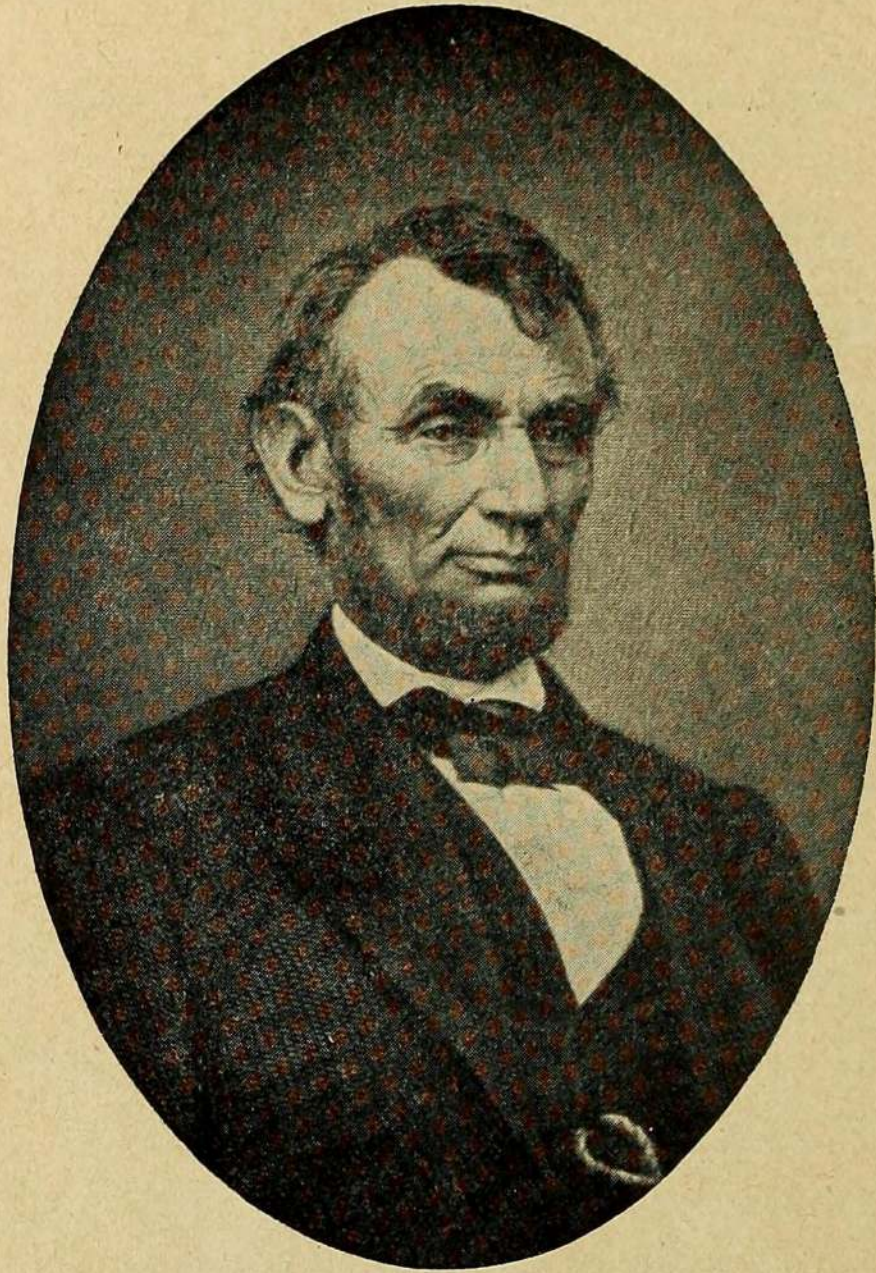
[Some years ago Judge James R. Morris, at the request of Honorable M. B. Archer, now serving his second term in the Ohio State Senate, wrote on parchment his recollections of the assassination of Abraham Lincoln. This manuscript, appropriately framed, Senator Archer later presented to the Ohio State Archæological and Historical Society, in whose museum and library building it is now on exhibition. It is believed that the readers of the QUARTERLY will be interested in the account of that tragic event from the pen of one who was an eye witness and former congressman from Ohio. — EDITOR.]

WOODSFIELD, OHIO, July 26, 1897.

HON. M. B. ARCHER — DEAR SIR: — In compliance with your request I herewith give you my personal recollections of that astounding and ever memorable tragedy, the assassination of Abraham Lincoln, — one of the most remarkable men of this, or any other age, or country — a tragedy that shocked and amazed the civilized world.

I was not, on the 14th of April, 1865, a member of Congress as you have thought. My second term, as a member of that body, expired on the fourth day of the preceding month. I had gone to Washington with a friend, Captain W. M. Kerr, on some business of his connected with his service in the army. On Friday, April 14th, we had successfully concluded the business of our trip and decided to visit Ford's theater.

We were not aware that the President was to be present. As soon as I saw the President and Mrs. Lincoln enter the box in the balcony tier, I called Captain Kerr's attention to the fact. He had never seen the President before and was, naturally, much gratified at



ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

this opportunity of seeing him. Another lady and gentleman accompanied the President, who I afterward learned were a daughter of Senator Harris, of New York, and a Major Rathbone.

Laura Keene and her company were playing "Our American Cousin," and the house was packed, as it was

her benefit night. The play had progressed for some time, the curtain had just been rolled up for another act, and almost immediately thereafter the audience were startled by the report of a fire arm. I looked up to see if I could discover from whence the sound came.

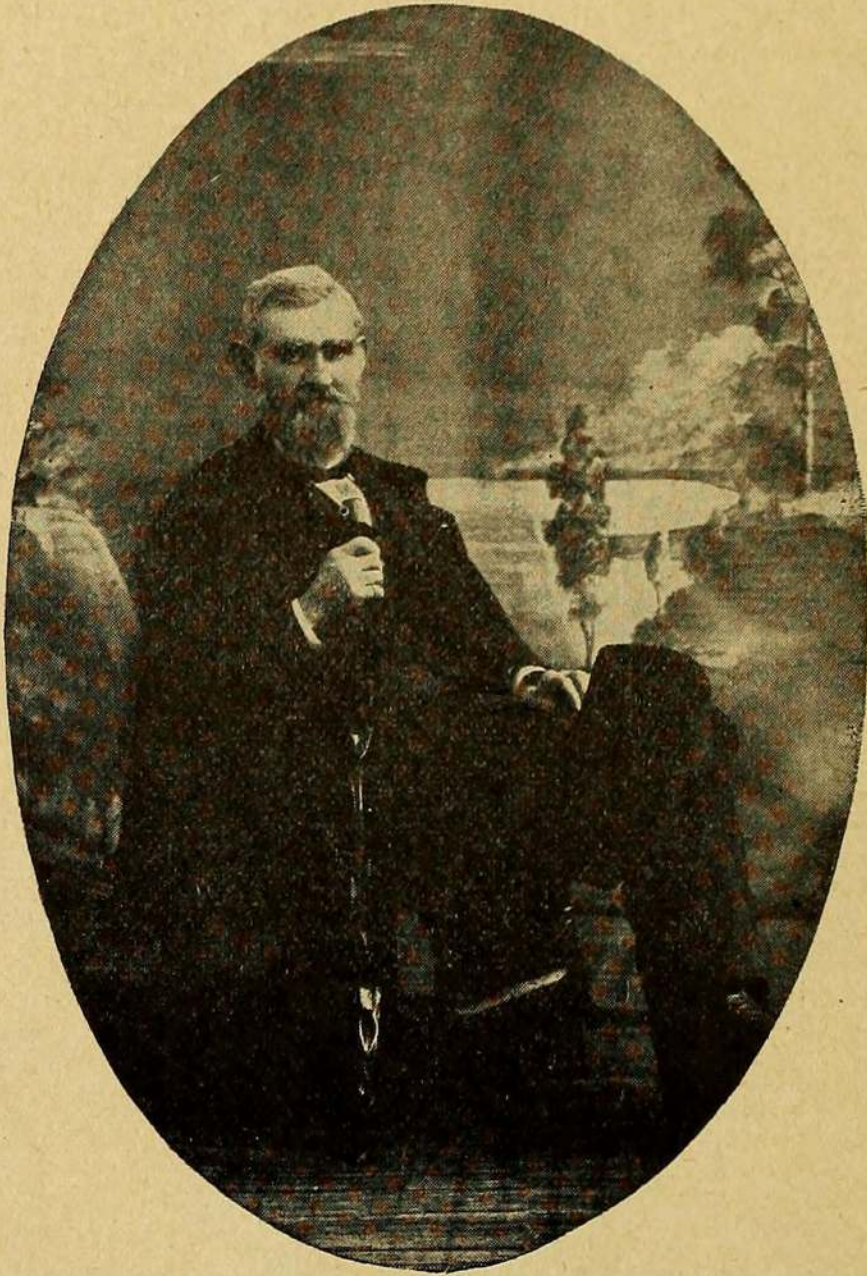
I saw the assassin, as he proved to be, in the President's box making for the front. When he had reached it he placed his hand on the banister and cried out: "*Sic semper tyrannis*," and, leaping over, alighted on the stage, bringing down with him some of the drapery surrounding the box. When he lit he sank nearly to his knees, as one naturally would in lighting on a solid floor from a height of eight or ten feet. He soon straightened up and ran diagonally across the stage and disappeared behind the wings or scenery and thus escaped.

Captain Kerr asked me: "Did you notice how deathly pale he looked?" and I answered affirmatively. When I first saw the assassin in the President's box after hearing the report of the pistol, I realized what he had done, especially so after hearing the words he uttered. I cannot describe the scene that followed. There was a dead silence for a few moments. The President fell or leaned forward, and I think his head rested on the bannister front. Mrs. Lincoln rose partly to her feet — extending her arms forward and upward, and uttering some mournful cries or words that I did not understand.

I jumped up on my chair and cried: "Hang the _____ scoundrel!" (Using some expletives not very creditable to myself.) I did not then think he had had time to make his escape, but that he could or would be arrested by some of the troupe. As I saw no one on the stage when the assassin landed on it, it is not probable that any member of the company really knew what had happened until the assassin had left the theater; and this I have since seen stated in the public prints is really the fact, although one or two of them saw him running across the stage and had heard the

shot, but did not know until too late, that the President had been assassinated.

About this time Major Rathbone, (if I have the name accurately), rose in the President's box and called out: "Is there any surgeon in the house?" Then numbers



CONGRESSMAN JAMES B. MORRIS.

were rushing for the stage — many getting upon it. Right before me was a gentleman, whom I took to be an army surgeon, and a lady. He started forward; the lady clung to his arm, exclaiming, "Oh, what will become of me!" I tried to pacify her, telling her to let the doctor go — that there was no danger now. Then

the police came rushing in and commanded all to leave the theater. I called to one of them to take charge of the lady, which he did. Two persons were hoisted over the heads of those who were on the stage into the President's box — whether the gentleman who had been seated in front of me was one of them I do not know.

The audience seemed to linger as if to learn if the President had been fatally wounded, but the police insisted on clearing the house. I went out with the crowd, but remained on the sidewalk until the President was carried down and across the street to the house where he died. I then made my way to the police office, and, being acquainted with the chief, I told him where I had been. He said: "Morris, it is reduced to a dot that the assassin is Wilkes Booth, but say nothing about it until you hear it from other sources." This was the first intimation I had who the assassin was. While in the chief's office other detectives came hurriedly in and told the chief that Secretary Seward had been assassinated. I left the chief and made my way back to the square where the tragedy occurred, but no one was permitted to pass the place.

Early next morning I went to inquire if the President still lived, and was told that he was still living but failing fast. On the early morning train my friend and I started for home, and when we reached the Relay House, nine miles from Baltimore, the train stopped and we were not permitted to leave there until 4 o'clock in the afternoon. The President had died after we left Washington and before our arrival at the Relay House.

Very Respectfully Yours,

JAS. R. MORRIS.



Nancy
Hanks
Lincoln
Public
Library