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EDWIN BOOTH: THEATRE MANAGER

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ABSTRACT

EDWIN BOOTH: THEATRE MANAGER

By

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The purpose of this study is to trace the history of Edwin Booth's theatre management career, to examine the nature of his managerial involvement, and to analyze his management intentions and practices. This study of his management career, which occurred between 1863 and 1873, also increases our knowledge and understanding of the American theatre manager's role during the third quarter of the nineteenth century.

Based on account books from each of the theatres he managed, numerous personal letters, and the business correspondence of his business manager, the study examines Booth's management of four major first-class theatres--the Walnut Street Theatre in Philadelphia, the Boston Theatre in Boston and the Winter Garden Theatre and Booth's Theatre in New York. This includes an examination of a series of significant productions at both the Winter Garden Theatre and Booth's Theatre. In addition, the economic, cultural, and theatrical conditions of the period are surveyed to better understand the relationship between Booth's management career and the theatre of his time.

Booth co-managed the Walnut Street Theatre and the Boston Theatre with his brother-in-law, John S. Clarke. The theatres were organized as star-stock theatres and earned large profits during Booth's management. Booth's duties consisted of hiring an acting company, hiring a staff, and the scheduling and booking of touring stars.

The Winter Garden Theatre and later Booth's Theatre served as a forum from which Booth attempted to establish the legitimate drama in America. Booth concentrated on artistic affairs as a producer and star performer and modeled his artistic management on the historically accurate style of Charles Kean at the Princess Theatre. He also demanded the highest production standards, and the critical acclaim accorded his productions established Booth as a "producer with vision" in the tradition of the great English actor-managers.

Booth's Theatre was a financial fiasco. His incompetence as a financier doomed the enterprise to failure despite the considerable profits earned during his tenure as manager. This financial fiasco also obscured his contributions in artistic management. His commitment to historical accuracy led to the design and installation of a mechanized rise-and sink system of scene changing in Booth's Theatre which allowed him to instantaneously change massive settings. He presented Shakespeare with continuous action, foreshadowing the work of William Poel. Booth also maintained high production standards and made the concept of production unity a reality years before it became common practice. His artistic management contributed to the rise of the modern director.

Finally, Edwin Booth's management career marked the end of an era. His attempt to combine the business and artistic functions of theatre management was out of step with the realities of his age, for managing had become too complex for any one man who was both an actor and a manager. And, although his artistic management had made him a worthy successor to the great English actor-managers of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Edwin Booth's retirement from theatre management in 1873 signaled the end of the golden age of the actor-manager in America.

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Four people, however, deserve special recognition, and to them I extend my genuine appreciation. Professor Georg Schuttler of Michigan State University guided this study from beginning to end. Professor Charles H. Shattuck of The University of Illinois graciously welcomed me to the unofficial "Edwin Booth Society," provided valuable advice, and gave me the use of his personal collection of Booth material. Mr. Louis Rachow, curator and librarian of the Walter Hampden-Edwin Booth Theatre Collection and Library, was particularly helpful in locating primary source material and this kind gentleman spent hours copying valuable documents essential to the study. Finally, I thank my wife, Sherry, for her perseverence, encouragement and willingness to do more than her share in the caring of our two sons, Brian and Craig.

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INTRODUCTION

This is a study of Edwin Booth's theatre management career. Between 1863 and 1873, he managed four major or first-class theatres in America: the Walnut Street Theatre in Philadelphia, the Boston Theatre in Boston, and the Winter Garden Theatre and Booth's Theatre in New York. This study will trace the history of his management career and examine the nature of his managerial involvement. An examination of Edwin Booth's financial records and his managerial intentions and practices will also add to our knowledge and understanding of the American theatre manager during the third quarter of the nineteenth century.

Several previous studies have probed Edwin Booth's management career, but none has examined thoroughly his function as a theatre manager or the nature of his management. In addition, previous studies have dismissed as unimportant Booth's management of the Walnut Street Theatre and the Boston Theatre. Charles H. Shattuck's essay, "The Theatrical Management of Edwin Booth" in The Theatrical Manager in England and America, chronicles in detail Booth's management of the Winter Garden Theatre and Booth's Theatre, and has been helpful in this study. However, Shattuck's essay offers only a passing reference to Booth's management of the Walnut Street Theatre and the Boston Theatre and does not attempt to evaluate Booth's management within the context of the economic, cultural, and theatrical conditions of the period. Richard

Lockridge's Darling of Misfortune Edwin Booth: 1833-1893 contains a valuable account of Booth's financial management of Booth's Theatre and his later bankruptcy, but neglects to fully explore the nature of his management or the management of the other three theatres. Other biographies useful to this study were: William Winter's Life and Art of Edwin Booth, Asia Booth Clarke's The Elder and the Younger Booth, and Stanley Kimmer's The Mad Booths of Maryland. Edwin Booth: Recollections by His Daughter by Edwina Booth Grossman also supplied several important letters between her parents pertaining to her father's managerial intentions.

Gerald Leon Honaker's Ph.D. thesis, "Edwin Booth, Producer--A Study of Four Productions at Booth's Theatre," gave valuable insights into Booth's artistic management of Booth's Theatre and Charles H. Shattuck's, The Hamlet of Edwin Booth examined Booth's productions of the play at the Winter Garden Theatre and Booth's Theatre.

The most important primary source materials used in this study were Edwin Booth's Account Books from each of the theatres he managed which are preserved in the Walter Hampton-Edwin Booth Theatre Collection and Library at The Players in New York. Some of the Account Books are, however, incomplete and inconsistent.

The Walnut Street Theatre Account Books contain the weekly expense, gross receipt, and share accounts for the five and a half years that Booth actively managed that theatre. From these accounts, it has been possible to compute a relatively accurate record of the theatre's profits.[1] A record of mortgage payments is also contained in these account books. The financial records of Booth's one season at the Boston Theatre are intact. The account book contains daily and

weekly gross receipts, weekly expenses, and a weekly profit statement. The weekly salaries of the company and the share of the profits paid to visiting stars are also included.

The Winter Garden Theatre Account Book is incomplete. Partial records exist for gross receipts (August 1865-1 September 1866), profits (September 1865-2 March 1866), and for numerous other less important accounts. Fortunately, the Share Account which records the distribution of profit between Booth and his partners is complete. It seems reasonable to speculate that the missing records were destroyed in a 23 March 1867 fire which burned the Winter Garden Theatre. The Booth's Theatre Account Books are inconsistent. Complete records are available for total expenses and gross receipts, but other accounts appear sporadically. For example, a Production Expense Account exists but has entries only from February 1869 to 1 October 1869. These inconsistencies have made it difficult to determine accurately production expenses at Booth's Theatre. Nevertheless, the Account Books from the four theatres have been crucial in the study of Edwin Booth's management career.

The Walter Hampden-Edwin Booth Theatre Collection and Library also contains personal scrapbooks, playbills, and numerous letters related to Booth's management. A collection of letters written by J. Henry Magonigle, the business manager at Booth's Theatre, was especially helpful in understanding the organizational structure of that theatre. Other important correspondence is found in Between Actor and Critic: Selected Letters of Edwin Booth and William Winter, edited by Daniel J. Watermeier. Some of these letters are preserved at The Players with the majority available at The Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, D.C. Additional scrapbooks, newspaper criticisms, letters, playbills, and

magazine articles are located at the Library and Museum of the Performing Arts at Lincoln Center, the Theatre Collection of the Free Library of Philadelphia, The Folger Shakespeare Library, and the Theatre Collection at Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Major newspapers in Boston, Philadelphia, and New York were utilized for reviews of those plays produced by Booth and of the acting companies at each of the four theatres. Various histories of each city and studies of their cultural and economic environment were consulted to determine the conditions under which Booth managed.

The first chapter of this study will establish the background of Edwin Booth's management career. The chapter examines the reasons behind Booth's decision to enter theatre management and what he hoped to accomplish as a theatre manager. It also will analyze the organizational structure of the nineteenth-century American theatre, and survey the economic and cultural conditions which may have effected Booth's management.

Booth's management of the Walnut Street Theatre and the Boston Theatre are the subject of the second chapter which discusses the history of the two theatres, the nature of Booth's management, the theatres' organization and staff, and a financial summary of each theatre.

Chapter three focuses on Booth's management of the Winter Garden Theatre. The chapter will examine his intentions in managing a first-class New York theatre, the relationship between Booth and his two partners, the nature of his management, and the critical and public response to this venture.

Booth's Theatre, the most significant enterprise of Edwin Booth's managerial career, will be the subject of the final two chapters. The fourth chapter discusses his role in the financing and construction of the theatre, his managerial intentions, and his duties in the operation of the theatre. A season-by-season review of Booth's management of Booth's Theatre is contained in the fifth chapter. It will examine his decisions regarding the selection of stars, plays, and acting company, and will devote extensive discussion to those productions planned and supervised by Booth. The chapter will conclude with an evaluation of his management of Booth's Theatre.

Finally, the conclusion of this study will summarize Edwin Booth's management career and discuss his contributions to the development of the legitimate theatre in America.

Appendix A is a season-by-season listing of gross receipts and profit totals for the Walnut Street Theatre and the Boston Theatre. Appendix B contains records from the Winter Garden Theatre. In addition to the season-by-season listing of gross receipts and profit totals, these records also include financial and profit summaries. Appendix C has a season-by-season listing of gross receipt totals, a gross receipt summary, and a profit summary for Booth's Theatre.

FOOTNOTES

[1]The computed profit figure is close to the total profit indicated in the Share Account. For more information see Appendix A, Tables 1-7 and Chapter two, Table 1, p. 46.

CHAPTER I

EDWIN BOOTH AND THE ECONOMIC, CULTURAL AND THEATRICAL CONDITIONS OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

Although Edwin Booth's theatre management career spanned only ten of his forty-two years in the theatre, these years represent the most significant of his career. At the Winter Garden Theatre and later at Booth's Theatre, he received nearly unanimous praise for a series of magnificently mounted, historically accurate productions unparalleled at that time. The artistic success of these productions was severely tempered, however, by a devastating bankruptcy from which the sensitive Booth may never have fully recovered.

Edwin Booth began his managerial career in October 1863, just five weeks short of his thirtieth birthday. He was a mature young man who had already weathered several misfortunes. At fourteen, Edwin was forced to forsake his education to accompany his brilliant but erratic father, Junius Brutus Booth, on his starring tours. Edwin was not his father's favorite son, but he was able to calm and sooth the elder Booth's troubled disposition. For three years Edwin toured with his father, attempting to control or moderate the eccentricities and alcoholism which often prevented the actor from fulfilling his engagements.[1]

He accompanied his father to California in 1852 and after his father returned to the East later that year, Edwin remained in the

West to pursue his acting career.[2] His days there were not always carefree; as a struggling young actor he knew poverty and hunger and, like his father, developed a drinking problem.[3] Booth stayed four years in the West and in September 1856 he returned home to Maryland for a short rest. In the autumn of 1856, he began a series of successful starring tours in the South and on the East coast, achieving his greatest acclaim as Sir Giles Overreach in Massinger's A New Way to Pay Old Debts and in the title role of Bulwer-Lytton's Richelieu.[4] Booth had not envisioned a career as a touring star. After several seasons of touring, he hoped to secure a position as a leading actor in a New York stock company. However, the success of his tours fired his ambition and Booth decided to continue as a touring star.[5]

During his first tour in 1856, Booth met and fell in love with a young actress named Mary Devlin. The couple courted for several years and were married 7 July 1860. Mary devoted herself to his career and believed that she had a sacred mission to fulfill as his wife.

> This morning, in my walk, I was thinking of the being God had given me to influence and cherish. . . . This I can account for only by believing that a mission has been given me to fulfil, and that I shall be rewarded by seeing you rise to be great and happy.[6]

Mary Devlin influenced Booth greatly. She advised him to break from the operatic or "ranting" style of acting, as exemplified by his father, and to adopt a more "conversational" style.[7] With Mary's encouragement, he made a conscious effort to eliminate the remaining traits of his father's acting style and to develop his own more subdued method.[8] Booth was greatly attached to his young wife and her death after only two and a half years of marriage in 1863 was a devastating blow. As a widower with a young daughter, he conquered his alcohol

problem, and upon his return to work demonstrated "a concentration and seriousness of purpose which had not been evinced earlier and which remained throughout his long career."[9]

By the time Edwin Booth was thirty years old, he had endured his father's eccentric behavior, conquered a serious alcohol problem, and lost a beloved wife. During his last thirty years, he would lose one theatre in a fire, suffer disgrace from his brother's assassination of Lincoln, lose another theatre for financial reasons, go bankrupt, narrowly miss assassination by a lunatic, and, finally, endure his second wife's long illness, insanity, and death.[10] It was little wonder that Booth noticed a parallel between his stage life and his personal life, "I almost nightly find the actual sufferings of my real life rehearsed."[11]

Booth, a small man only five feet seven inches tall, was the most celebrated and beloved actor of his generation.[12] Few people became intimate friends with Booth, however, and the public had little understanding of him. An abnormally shy person, he detested social functions and rarely made public appearances outside of his acting engagements. A contributing factor to Booth's shyness among strangers was his lack of formal education. Forced to quit school at an early age, he was always conscious and sensitive about this lack of education. In a letter to his daughter, Edwina, he expounded upon the delights of a collegiate education and reflected on his father's failure to provide him with one.[13] Although Booth lacked formal education, he had studied on his own English theatre history and English actors from Betterton to Charles Kean. In addition, he had read many of the dramatic and Shakespearean criticisms of his age.[14] A self-cultured man, he had a major interest in contemporary painting and sculpture, and numbered among his oldest

friends the American sculptor, Launt Thompson.[15]

Booth's critics used his reticence to characterize him as haughty and disinterested in his career.[16] Yet those few who knew him intimately presented a very different portrait of the man. William Winter, dramatic critic, poet, and biographer of Booth, was a close friend for the last twenty-one years of Booth's life and considered Booth a sensitive, intelligent, and imaginative human being.[17] Winter observed that there were two sides to Booth. On one side he had a gloomy temperament and was prone to introspection. Winter explained this side of Booth on the unstable personality of his father and on Edwin's close association as a young boy with the themes of tragedy. The second side of Booth's complex personality, however, contradicted the usual melancholic portrayal of Booth.

> . . . he could be one of the merriest of companions. He never was, in even the least particular, 'self-conceited,' nor was he 'Hamlety' in private life at any time. I have known many players, but I have not known one who possessed a readier faculty and quicker perception of humor, or an ampler capability of its enjoyments than were evinced by Edwin Booth.[18]

According to friends and critics, Booth was temperamentally unsuited for theatre management. William Winter believed that his temperament made him a fine Hamlet but that Hamlet's "propensity to view all things as transitory and immaterial" made Booth unsuitable for the administration of practical affairs.[19] He was also an easy mark for schemers and well-intentioned but incompetent individuals.[20] Booth usually considered any man he liked as thoroughly competent. This blind trust in human nature led him to accept detrimental advice and resulted in several personal entanglements with unscrupulous men. His relationship with these individuals is discussed in chapters three and four.

The most serious charge made against Booth's management was that he lacked "business sense." Booth's friend since the early 1860s, William Bisham, claimed that the lack of a business education forced him "to trust everything to others, and they, to speak very mildly, mismanaged his affairs terribly."[21] Winter contended that Booth had "no head for figures" and was easily confused and impressed by anyone who seemingly understood the world of finance.[22] However, Edwina Booth Grossman contested that characterization of her father.

> Little credit was ever given to him for knowledge of business matters, and many doubtless suppose that he lacked system; but his systematic habits about many things, the final arrangement of all his private papers and documents and his careful preservation of all that would be of value to me hereafter have proved to me how truly he valued the maxim that "order is God's first law."[23]

Doubt about Booth's ability as a theatre manager surfaced only after he left Booth's Theatre in 1873 and after his bankruptcy in 1874. Subsequently, his friends, as well as theatre historians, benefited from hindsight in declaring Booth "a good actor but a bad manager."

The Management Enterprises of Edwin Booth

By the early 1860s, Edwin Booth was one of the brightest young stars of the American theatre. He had made his debut in New York in 1857 at the Broadway Metropolitan Theatre under the management of William Burton; and, although he received mixed critical response, the public flocked to see the young tragedian. Booth's success was largely due to a vigorous advertising campaign by William Burton. The 1856-57 season had been poor financially for Burton and he wanted to cap his season with a large success. Contrary to Booth's wishes, he plastered

the city with billboard-sized posters proclaiming: "Edwin Booth, Hope of the Living Drama" and "Son of the Great Tragedian." In addition, Burton collected numerous favorable reviews and printed them in a booklet which was widely distributed. Burton's vigorous "puffs" created an unusual amount of interest in the appearance of Junius Brutus Booth's twenty-three year old son.[24] One successful New York engagement made Booth a rising young star.

Booth, however, was troubled by his meteoric rise to fame. He knew that if he was content to simply bask in his new found popularity, he would become a slave to fame and to the "almighty dollar." His position as a major tragedian gave him an opportunity to influence the direction of the legitimate theatre.

> Fortune has placed me in (for my years) a high, and, many think, an enviable position, but I feel the ground tremble beneath my feet, and I'm perfectly well aware that unless I aim at a larger circumference than the rim of the "almighty dollar" (which one can't help in America), I'll go down "eye-deep" in the quicksand of popular favor.[25]

Booth's wife, Mary Devlin, saw his good fortune as an affirmation of her belief that Edwin had a sacred mission.

> How glad I am that the branch you were fitted for has not been disgraced, for though unappreciated now, the day will come when "gorgeous tragedy" will have its sway. You are held as its only true representative in this day, and you can, if you will, change the perverted taste of the public by your truth and sublimity. . . .[26]

As early as December 1860, Booth expressed an interest in managing. "Hurry up and make your fortune," he lightheartedly suggested to his friend, Richard Cary, "that we may have a decent theatre."[27] Thirteen years of active life in the American theatre--first as a companion to his father, then as an actor apprenticing in the West, and finally

as a young star--had convinced Booth that he could affect conditions in the theatre only by managing a theatre of his own.

Edwin Booth's management career involved the co-management of the Winter Garden Theatre, New York, the Walnut Street Theatre, Philadelphia, and the Boston Theatre, Boston, as well as the sole management of Booth's Theatre in New York. His management included theatres in the three most "cultured" cities in America.[28]

Negotiations for the leasing of the Winter Garden Theatre in New York City began in late 1862 and were not completed until 1864. The Winter Garden opened under the management of Edwin Booth, his brother-in-law John Sleeper Clarke, and a third partner, William Stuart, on 18 August 1864. William Stuart, a theatrical gadfly who later claimed that his management of the Winter Garden had made Booth a great star, also served as business manager for the triumvirate. Booth remained in the management of this theatre until a fire destroyed the building during the early morning hours of 23 March 1867.

While negotiations for the Winter Garden were taking place, John S. Clarke and Edwin Booth purchased the Walnut Street Theatre in Philadelphia for $100,000 on 5 October 1863. And, although Booth had been a touring star for only six years, he expressed confidence in his and Clarke's abilities to handle the two ventures simultaneously.

> When we (Clarke & I) bought the Walnut--it was about this time I think [purchase of the Winter Garden Theatre]; at all events my popularity and reputation were such that I did not hesitate a moment to enter into what was then a mighty undertaking, $100,000 worth of theatre, feeling perfectly secure I alone could do it, & with Clarke's aid (who was already immensely popular and attractive wherever he had acted) I "went in" without fear.[29]

Booth and Clarke leased out the Walnut Street Theatre for the 1863-64 and 1864-65 seasons and began their active management with the 1865-66 season. The Walnut Street Theatre partnership ended in the spring of 1870 when Booth sold his half-interest to Clarke.

The partners managed a third theatre when the directors of the Boston Theatre agreed to lease the theatre for the 1866-67 season for $16,000. With the leasing of the Boston Theatre, Booth and Clarke had control of major theatres in the three cultural centers of nineteenth-century America. The lease on the Boston Theatre, however, was not renewed after the 1866-67 season.

After the Winter Garden Theatre burned in 1867, Booth soon began planning a major new theatre for New York that he alone would manage. Booth's Theatre, an enterprise of enormous cost, opened in February 1869. It was considered the most technologically advanced American theatre of its time because of numerous innovations in scene-changing and audience comfort.[30] However, Booth's management lasted only four and a half years; box office receipts were unable to overcome the initial cost of the building. He realized that his only chance to wipe out his debt was to return to touring on a full-time basis.[31] Therefore, Booth retired from theatre management in June 1873 and leased the theatre to his brother, Junius. But the Panic of 1873 brought Booth's creditors hungrily to his door and he declared voluntary bankruptcy in January 1874. Booth's Theatre was a financial disaster and Booth never again attempted theatre management.

Edwin Booth and the Actor-Manager Tradition

When Edwin Booth became a theatre manager, he joined the venerable theatrical tradition of actor-managers. And while the actor-manager tradition may be traced to the touring Thespis in ancient Greece, the actor-manager of the nineteenth century emulated either of two models. The first model was that of the famous English actor-managers of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. These actor-managers, David Garrick, Charles Kemble, William Charles Macready, Charles Kean, and Henry Irving, shared two important characteristics. First, each earned his fame while managing his own theatre in London. Often the name of the actor-manager and his theatre became permanently fused in the mind of the theatre-going public, as, for example, Charles Kean and the Princess Theatre. Second, each actor-manager earned a substantial reputation and was considered a major figure in the theatre. The actor-manager's fame may have rested on his acting prowess, as with David Garrick, or on the high quality of his productions, as with Charles Kean, but, nevertheless, each of the famous English actor-managers was recognized as a dominant force in the theatre of his generation.

The second actor-manager model developed in America and this model was more compatible with conditions in the American theatre. The origins of this model can be traced to the 1780s and the American Company which was at that time under the management of Lewis Hallam, Jr.[32] This "American" model differed from the "English" model in two important ways. First, the early American actor-manager and his company lived a nomadic existence while the English actor-manager and his company were permanently located. Lewis Hallam, Jr. and other actor-managers in America

toured to survive financially. Prior to the 1820s the major American cities lacked the population base necessary for the support of a full-time resident company. Thus American actor-managers were unable to establish an identity with a specific theatre in a specific city in the manner of their English counterparts. Even the two famous actor-managers of the Chestnut Street Theatre in Philadelphia, William Warren and William B. Wood, had to spend part of their seasons in Baltimore and Washington as Philadelphia could not financially support a full season. Second, the American actor-managers of the nineteenth century failed to achieve the reputation or influence in the American theatre that the English actor-managers had in the English theatre. Even after 1820 when permanent companies were established in major American cities, no actor-manager achieved the fame of a Garrick or Kean. Not until Edwin Booth began his management of the Winter Garden Theatre in 1864 had an American actor been in a position to emulate the great English actor-managers.

> Born into the star system, he (Booth) had earned the position of "A-number-1", and having achieved such eminence it would have been suicidal to abandon it. When he turned manager, he was actor-manager, in the tradition of Garrick and Kemble, Macready and Charles Kean--the leading performer in his own establishment.[33]

In order to establish a proper perspective and background for analyzing the management career of Edwin Booth, it is necessary to examine several factors which directly or indirectly influenced his management. These factors are the organizational structure of the nineteenth-century American theatre and the economic, cultural and theatrical conditions of the period.

Changes in the Organizational Structure of the Nineteenth-Century American Theatre

The organizational structure of the American theatre changed in three distinct phases during the nineteenth century. The first phase was the formation of stock companies. Prior to the beginning of the nineteenth century, theatre companies were organized on a profit-sharing system in which actors received a share of the profits. By 1800, however, the profit-sharing system was replaced by the stock system and actors received salaries.

At the beginning of the century, the stock companies were by necessity nomadic. Cities, even as large as New York, Philadelphia and Boston, lacked the population base to support a resident theatre for a full season. In addition, churches and municipal governments in many cities opposed the theatre in any form.

These nomadic stock companies were managed by the company's lead actor or by an actor-manager. The lead actor or actor-manager had an almost dictatorial control and determined the company's itinerary, planned the repertory, instructed the actors, owned the stock scenery, and occasionally supervised the construction of temporary theatre buildings. The nomadic stock company was flexible, self-sufficient and able to function effectively in its environment.

The establishment of resident stock companies characterized the second phase in the development of the organizational structure during the nineteenth century. As cities grew in population, the stock companies located more permanently, and by the 1820s the nomadic stock company was disappearing. By 1825 there were perhaps twenty cities with resident companies and this figure grew to more than fifty by

1860.[34] After 1825, the theatre was a residentiary industry with economic consequences for its community. The resident stock system, "a complex of fairly permanent companies, each a continuous producing unit, each independent, functionally, from all others, and each attached to a specific theatre which it controlled and at which it played for a major part of each season,"[35] remained the dominant organizational mode of the American theatre until the 1870s.

Two significant changes in the American theatre resulted from the establishment of the resident stock system. First, the resident stock company manager no longer needed to be an actor in the company. A non-acting manager could still engage a company, plan the repertory, own the scenery, build or lease the theatre and make the same decisions as an actor-manager. This change is significant because for the first time in the history of the organizational structure of the American theatre the artistic and business functions were slowly being separated. And, although the nineteenth century was considered the golden age of the American actor-manager, during the twenties and thirties the business function was already in the process of becoming a separate and independent function. This separation or division of functions was to have important consequences during the last thirty years of the nineteenth century.

A second change, which had a more immediate effect, was the acceptance and popularity of the visiting star. William B. Wood dated the origin of the visiting star to 1768 with the arrival of Mrs. Henry, wife of the manager, John Henry; and William Winter dated the star system to James Fennell's first appearance in 1794.[36] But it was the arrival of George Frederick Cooke in the fall of 1810, the first major

English star to tour in America, that firmly entrenched the star system in America and led to the brilliant tours of Edmund Kean (1820), Junius Brutus Booth (1821), Charles Mathews (1822), and William Charles Macready (1826). The establishment of resident stock companies enabled the star actor to tour easily because the local companies provided supporting actors, stock scenery and the necessary publicity to attract audiences.

The star system began as a boon for audiences and resident companies, but later became the single most important factor in the destruction of the resident stock system. At the beginning of the star period in the 1820s, visiting stars were rare. However, from 1820 to 1870, the audience demand for touring stars led many stock actors to leave their companies and take to the road in pursuit of fortune and fame as star actors. This resulted in a surplus of stars, a qualitative reduction in the resident stock companies, and audience disinterest in the local stock companies when the companies performed without a star. Managers found that the only financially feasible way to operate was to schedule as many stars as possible during the season and use the stock company to play between star engagements.

The popularity of the visiting stars caused an important change in the duties of local stock company managers and also added impetus to the increasing separation of the artistic and business functions. With a larger and larger portion of a season filled with star engagements, local managers devoted an increased amount of time to business duties such as scheduling, planning and booking. In addition, local managers found their artistic responsibilities reduced and actor-managers had fewer opportunities to star with their resident companies. The increased importance of the business function, coupled with the

reduction in artistic responsibilities, resulted in a more complex organizational structure than most actor-managers were prepared to handle.

During the 1860s and early 1870s, a new organizational mode evolved that revolutionized the American theatre.[37] The combination system, the third phase in the development of the organizational structure, eventually led to the complete separation of the artistic and business functions and the demise of the actor-managers.

In his pioneering theatre management study, The Business of the Theatre, Alfred L. Bernheim provides a clear description of the combination system.

> The traveling combination system is composed of temporary producing units, each organized for one play only, none organically connected with any specific theatre, and the great majority without control over the theatre in which they happen to be playing. Combination companies, instead of being localized as were the stock companies, are organized in a producing center, generally New York City, where they remain while they can attract profitable audiences, after which they visit the available theatres throughout the country.[38]

The actual beginning of the combination system is unknown. Dion Boucicault may have sent out a combination as early as 1860. Odell thought the opening wedge for the combinations occurred in the mid-1860s when stars began touring with one or two leading players.[39] Nevertheless, by the early seventies the traveling combination had been established. According to the New York Dramatic Mirror, in 1876-77 there were nearly one hundred combinations on the road while resident stock companies were reduced from fifty in 1871-72 to not more than twenty in 1877-78.[40]

While the star system was the single most important factor in the decline of resident stock companies, other conditions aided the

rise of traveling combinations. The American railroad system grew from less than six thousand miles of track in 1849 to an astounding thirty thousand miles or more by 1860.[41] Although slowed by the Civil War, the railroads continued to expand rapidly when peace returned. This expansion of the railroads made the transportation of traveling combinations feasible. Not only were large cities which supported resident stock theatres accessible, but also cities too small for a resident company were now reached by the railroads. Traveling combinations became practical and profitable because of the railroads.

Another condition affecting the growth of the traveling combinations after the Civil War was the increased sophistication of audiences outside metropolitan areas. The railroads not only simplified transportation, but also encouraged trade which resulted in less isolated and more prosperous communities. With appetites whetted by years of visiting stars, audiences demanded and received recent New York successes.

Producers and other defenders of the combination system argued that artistic justifications as well as economic reasons caused the decline of the stock system. The major artistic justification for the combinations was the assurance of a quality production. Three reasons supported this contention. First, as mentioned previously, the popularity of the star system led to an increase in the number of stars. These "stars" often were former stock company leading men and leading ladies whose departure seriously weakened their companies. This deterioration of resident stock companies is often considered a major reason why individual stars began touring with one or two supporting players in the mid-sixties. A second reason is that the combinations allowed for a more thorough rehearsal period. With more rehearsal time,

productions had a stronger ensemble and were of better quality.[42] Finally, and most importantly, supporters of the combination system argue that the centralization of artistic control greatly increased production quality. The combination originated at a central location, usually New York, and rehearsed together under the artistic direction of a single individual. The concept of a unified production and the emergence of the director as an independent artist received an impetus under the combination system that was not possible under the stock company system.[43]

The revolution in the organizational structure brought on by the use of the combination system had serious ramifications for the local stock company manager. The process of separating the artistic and business functions of theatre management begun under the star system reached completion with the combination system as local managers lost all control over production. The only remaining contacts a manager had with the artistic function were the occasional plays produced by the stock company which filled the gaps between combinations. As the number of combinations increased in the late seventies, the stock company became too expensive to maintain and companies began folding. The resident stock company era, outside of New York City, ended in 1893 with the conversion of the Boston Museum from a stock to a combination house.[44] In New York, Daniel Frohman's company, the last of the city's stock companies, managed to survive until 1903.[45]

The demise of the resident stock companies completed the separation of the artistic and business functions.

> The previously unicellular structure of the theatre [resident stock company] has divided itself into two cells, the function of one of which is to produce a

> play and of the other to own and manage the theatre in which the play is presented.[46]

The local manager, without a resident stock company, was little more than a real estate agent arranging terms with the traveling combinations. Most significantly, the functions of the local manager could now be more adequately handled by a businessman with little if any knowledge of theatre. Consequently, the businessman became an active participant in the American theatre.

Although guilty of over-romanticizing, long-time theatre manager M. B. Leavitt points to an important difference in the concerns of managers in the fifties and sixties and of managers in the seventies.

> How different were the days of the middle Fifties and Sixties in the business direction of the theatres. Then managers as a rule were impressed with their duty to their patrons and qualified their performances so as to fully satisfy the elevated public taste of that period by presenting perfectly competent, well-trained actors in plays that rarely offended the public. In these efforts managers stood by each other and with rare exceptions their uniformity, courteous and dignified bearing commanded general respect.[47]

The managers in the 1870s were primarily concerned with profits and the manager-audience relationship became impersonal. The old-time managers were usually men <u>of</u> the theatre and the new managers were often businessmen who came <u>to</u> the theatre. The late 1860s and 1870s began an age of commercialism in the theatre when "success was measured in terms of profits."[48]

Developments during the last twenty-five years of the nineteenth century continued a trend toward centralization. Local managers lost control of such managerial functions as scheduling with the development of touring circuits and booking offices. This trend toward centralization culminated in the founding of the Theatrical Syndicate in 1896.

A partnership of theatre producers, booking agents, and businessmen, the Theatrical Syndicate controlled most first-class theatres in America by 1900.

Edwin Booth began his acting career in 1849 when the star-stock system was at its height.[49] When he made his final appearance on the stage, forty-two years later, the stock companies were nearly extinct and the combination system was the dominant organizational mode. However, during Booth's managerial years, from 1863 to 1873, the changing of the organizational structure was actually occurring. In 1863 the star-stock system was strong, but by 1873 it had begun its decline and the combination companies were becoming numerous.[50] Edwin Booth, a product of the star-stock era, became a theatre manager at a chaotic and transitional time.

Economic Review 1863 to 1874

Despite two recessions, the period from 1863 to the early 1870s was generally prosperous in America.[51] The end of the Civil War brought a new national interest in developing the West, especially by the railroads, which made long-term investment prospects very promising. With favorable conditions such as a rapidly growing population, government subsidized railroad construction, and an expanding free enterprise system, investments rose steadily through the early seventies.[52] The economy, because of the two recessions, did not follow the continuous upward trends of investments, but followed a more erratic path. The first recession, caused by the readjustments necessary for the conversion from a wartime to a peacetime economy, lasted until the end of 1867. Another recession, from unknown causes, occurred in 1869 and

lasted through 1870. Eventually the economy did reflect the rising investments and the country experienced an economic boom in 1872-73.[53] Some economic historians date the boom from 1869 rather than 1872 and consider this period one of the most prosperous in American history.

> Nowhere is a period of prosperity more suddenly and surely exhibited in the lives of the people. During these years when the losses by the war had been replaced and the whole nation thought itself on the full flow of continuous improvement, everybody was making money and nearly everybody was spending it.[54]

In the midst of the economic boom, some serious symptoms of an approaching panic were evident. These included numerous get-rich-quick enterprises and schemes, a rapid rise in the price of land, growing investment speculation and excessive expenditures brought on by a taste for luxury which caused concern among some businessmen. George Templeton Strong, a banker who also held a mortgage on Booth's Theatre, noted in his diary a fear of panic as early as 1871. On 9 October, after receiving news of the Chicago Fire, Strong wrote, "They will have to call in loans and investments, and the shrinkage will be seriously felt. This may well prove the entering wedge for the panic and crisis which people predict, and which must come before long."[55]

The fears of George Templeton Strong and others were almost two years premature. The Panic of 1873 officially started on 18 September when several banks suspended payments and the prestigious banking firm of Jay Cooke and Company failed. Stocks plummeted, the number of banking failures rapidly increased and on 20 September the New York Stock Exchange was forced to close. The banking panic lasted only until 29 September 1873, but the effect on the economy lasted until 1879 and some economists believe effects persisted well into the 1880s.[56] An

examination of the Panic's effect on various societal groups reveals more clearly the economic conditions which the theatre of that time had to deal.

The misery of the wage earning class in 1873-74 is obvious in the fact that mills and factories of every kind in the East and West closed, workers in the iron and steel, as well as the coal mining industries, were dismissed, and the stoppage of railroad construction threw men out of work by the tens of thousands all over the country. One contemporary estimate claimed that in the Eastern states one third to one half of all workers were unemployed. Mass unemployment resulted in incidences of civil unrest and violence. According to economic historian, Irwin Unger, "Here and there violence flared as jobless men gathered to protest conditions, frightening the middle class and the police into hasty acts of repression."[57]

High unemployment also meant a staggering reduction in sales and receipts and resulted in bankruptcy for many businesses. The propertied classes felt the Panic primarily through declining values. The number of bankruptcies doubled between 1873 and 1878.[58] One such casualty was Edwin Booth who declared voluntary bankruptcy in 1874.

A precise relationship between the economy and the financial state of the theatre is difficult to establish. Theatre historians avoid the subject and even Alfred Bernheim's The Business of the Theatre fails to investigate the subject. Nevertheless, the economy was another factor which directly or indirectly effected the management of Edwin Booth.

Nineteenth-Century American Culture and Theatre Audiences

In his study of the post-Civil War American culture entitled The Age of Energy, H. Mumford Jones states that culture "tended to live on one of three planes."[59] Although he applies his scheme to a specific period, 1865-1915, the divisions are a valuable tool in examining the characteristics of and the changes in theatre audiences during the nineteenth century as well as the audience's influence on the development of that theatre.

According to Jones, the first plane of American culture is popular culture. Popular culture means those forms of entertainment which appeal to the masses, such as television today. The nineteenth century equivalents of today's popular media were dime novels, magazines or newspapers intended for easy reading and quick emotional responses, comic journalism, band concerts, and other romantic and sentimental entertainments. The masses of the unskilled, unschooled and unsophisticated are usually cited as the major devotees to popular culture. The second plane, found at the opposite end of the spectrum from popular culture, is high culture. High culture is the expression of a society's most humanistic ideals. Poetry, painting, sculpture, and "classical" music are generally considered to be examples of high culture. Traditionally, high culture has been the domain of the genteel, the wealthy, and the educated. The third level is much broader in scope than the two extremes and can be called the culture of the middle class. Jones described middle class values and tastes as follows.

> The middle class, however stratified or defined, set up no goals opposed to the genteel tradition, on the whole supported its general aim, and tended to

> disparage a good many expressions of popular culture while covertly enjoying them. Their patronage sustained the best sellers (but the best sellers were not all mediocre or sentimental). Middle-class patrons furnished the bulk of the theatre audiences and the bulk of the newspaper readers, and were the public for magazines of wide circulation, domestic amenities, the serialization of 'good' fiction, and intelligent but cautious discussions of the issues of the day. . . .[61]

During the first half of the nineteenth century, the theatre became popular entertainment.[62] This role was reflected in its repertory. Although Shakespeare was the primary vehicle of the touring stars, the theatre's real stock in trade were second-rate comedies, farces, blood and thunder melodramas, hastily dramatized dime novels, musical extravaganzas, and burlesques. Audiences demanded variety; specialty acts such as farces, popular music, juggling, acrobatic acts, and even trained animals were presented before, after, and even between the acts of the evening's featured play.[63] The actor, William Davidge, lamented that the popular culture audiences, "afford no opportunity for the cultivation of the arts."[64]

The American theatre reached its widest acceptance around 1852 with the melodrama Uncle Tom's Cabin which brought a new audience into the theatre.[65] The moral indignation that many deeply religious northern Americans felt toward the evils of slavery received concrete form in the play's highly-charged scenes. People who had never set foot in a theatre before flocked to see Uncle Tom's Cabin.

> Among the audience, we recognized many people who have been taught to look on the stage and all that belongs to it with horror and contempt; and, not the least conspicuous among the rare faces, was that of a Quaker gentleman whose drab, shad-belly coat and remarkably broad brimmed beaver, gave him a commanding aspect. . . . There were also recognized among the mass who occupied and crowded the theatre,

> Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, and Congregationalists of the straight-laced school, beside a variety of other religionists whose creeds are not accounted absolutely orthodox.
>
> The gallery was filled with a heroic class of people, many of them in red woolen shirts, with countenances as hardy and rugged as the implements of industry employed by them in the pursuit of their vocation. There was also a very considerable array of beauty and fashion sprinkled among the parquette and boxes.[66]

In the 1840s, popular theatre slowly started to change. The various specialties, which had been merely appendages to the principal play, soon "emerged as a distinctive type of entertainment housed in theatres of their own."[67] Vaudeville was probably the first specialty to become independent and by the 1850s numerous cities had regular vaudeville theatres.[68] Burlesque, minstrel shows, and other forms of popular entertainment quickly followed. In reality, the "across the cultural board" appeal of Uncle Tom's Cabin in 1852 was the last gasp of a popular culture theatre in America.

By 1865, the middle class, although smaller in number than the popular culture masses, became the "bulk" of the legitimate theatre audience.[69] Theatre managers recognized that specialization offered a greater chance of survival than did a mixed theatrical fare and, therefore, opted to follow either the popular entertainment masses or the smaller legitimate theatre audience. Those managers who chose the legitimate theatre found it possible and even necessary, "to pay more attention to the cultural standards of their comparatively limited and sophisticated audience."[70] The legitimate theatre managers had discovered the need to reach the middle class and, to a lesser degree, the high culture advocates. Daniel Frohman, who began his theatre career at the time Edwin Booth was managing Booth's Theatre, advised, "You have

got to reach the large middle class of theatregoers. From this class the interest radiates to all classes."[71]

The middle class displayed a wide variety of tastes. Beginning in the 1860s, the legitimate theatre's repertory showed a significant degree of variety, while not attempting to cater to the popular culture tastes.

> There were revivals of Shakespeare and other classic writers; well-staged productions of serious contemporary drama, both American and foreign; and comedies and light operas which bore little resemblance to the blood-and-thunder melodramas and questionable burlesque that ruled at the people's theatre.[72]

Edwin Booth first appeared on the stage in 1849 when the theatre began the slow transition toward specialization. His rise as a star in the late fifties and early sixties paralleled the divorce of popular entertainment from the legitimate stage. From 1863 to 1873, when Booth managed, the middle class had become the dominate theatre audience. Booth probably did not recognize this shift in audience characteristics and, like many critics of his time, lamented the rise of specialized popular entertainments.

> Forgetting the slapstick and circus stunts with which it [the theatre] had been so heavily cluttered, they looked back nostalgically to the theatre of an earlier day and remembered only Shakespeare. They could not understand how a public which had once seemed to enjoy the drama so much had shifted its allegiance to vaudeville and burlesque.[73]

Booth and others failed to realize that the divorce of popular entertainment from the legitimate theatre gave the legitimate drama a chance to grow without having to cater to the popular culture masses.[74]

Edwin Booth entered theatre management with a simple plan and objective. He intended to elevate the legitimate drama by emulating

the great English actor-managers of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. His management career spanned a ten year period characterized by a changing of the theatre's organizational structure, a continuation of the trend toward a complete separation of the theatre manager's function, a generally prosperous economy, and a legitimate theatre audience with middle class taste and values. The changing of the theatre's organizational structure from the resident-stock company system to the combination system made the decade a period of transition. In addition, the trend toward the complete separation of the theatre manager's function cast a cloud of uncertainty over the role of the theatre manager.

The Walnut Street Theatre and the Boston Theatre were two typical star-stock theatres of the type which dominated prior to the rise of the combination system. A study of their organization can provide insight into the role of Booth as a theatre manager during the period 1863-1873.

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CHAPTER II

EDWIN BOOTH'S MANAGEMENT OF THE WALNUT STREET THEATRE AND THE BOSTON THEATRE

Edwin Booth's management of the Walnut Street Theatre and the Boston Theatre has generally been considered of minor importance in evaluating his management career.[1] However, those managerial positions constitute an integral link in Booth's theatre management career.

Philadelphia Theatrical Scene 1865-1870

During the 1860s, Philadelphia maintained the status of a major cultural center and featured an array of museums, concert halls, commercial shops, and the Walnut Street Theatre.[2]

Theatrical activity in Philadelphia between 1865 and 1870 included the presentations of three major or first-class theatres: the Walnut Street Theatre, the Chestnut Street Theatre, and the Arch Street Theatre. Each theatre had its own stock company and often featured visiting stars. The Chestnut Street Theatre, which opened in 1863, was the third theatre building to be constructed on its site. Between 1865 and 1870 the Chestnut Street Theatre changed its emphasis from visiting legitimate stars to burlesque, minstrels, and other forms of popular entertainment. Throughout that period the Chestnut retained its stock company and, except for occasional appearances by performers like Joseph Jefferson, visiting stars were generally second-rate.

The Arch Street Theatre, considered by many theatre historians to be the most significant theatre in Philadelphia in the 1860s, was managed by Mrs. John Drew.[3] From 1861 to 1869, she presented a stock company famed for its talent and discipline.[4] Nevertheless, to survive financially, Mrs. Drew also featured stars such as E. L. Davenport, Joseph Jefferson, J. W. Wallack, John Brougham and Lotta Crabtree.

Booth and Clarke's Purchase of the Walnut Street Theatre

At both the Walnut Street Theatre and the Boston Theatre, Booth co-managed with his brother-in-law, John S. Clarke. They were boyhood friends in Belair, Maryland, and formed their first partnership during the summer of 1850 when, as seventeen year old would-be actors, they presented a program of dramatic readings, "coon songs," and banjo tunes for the local residents.[5]

Clarke studied law as a young man, but abandoned his studies and in 1851 made his professional acting debut in Boston. The young comedian rose quickly and in 1854 became the leading comedian at the Front Street Theatre, Baltimore. In 1859 Clarke began his career as a touring star and married Edwin Booth's sister, Asia.[6]

The idea to purchase the Walnut Street Theatre originated with Clarke.[7] He wanted Booth as a financial partner and handled the negotiations for the purchase of the property[8] as documented in the Walnut Street Theatre Account Book.

> We have this 5th October 1863 purchased of Henry G. Freeman the property Situate on the north east corner of Ninth and Walnut Streets Philadelphia and known as the "Walnut St. Theatre" for the sum of One hundred-$\underline{s}$ thousand Doll$\underline{s}$ as follows--Cash Twenty thousand Doll$\underline{s}$ and Bond and Mortgage for Eighty thousand Doll$\underline{s}$ drawing Interest at Rate of Six pr. ct per annum.[9]

With the Civil War still raging in 1863, the purchase represented a considerable financial risk. In her book, The Elder and Younger Booth, Asia Booth Clarke indicated that the partners recognized the risk and did not expect to complete payments on the theatre for thirteen years.[10] While the Civil War was a negative factor, Philadelphia's history and status as a cultural center and the Walnut Street Theatre's reputation as a first-class legitimate theatre made the investment somewhat secure.

Booth entered the partnership for two reasons. The death of his first wife, Mary Devlin, in February 1863, left Booth disinterested in his career. By the summer of 1863, however, Booth was ready to resume his career. "I feel the need," he wrote to his friend Adam Badeau in September 1863, "the absolute necessity of something practical--something to draw me out of myself. . . ."[11] A second and more significant reason was the long term profit potential for the Walnut. As a widower with a young daughter, he felt compelled to provide for her future. "I am withal a landowner in Philadelphia and expect to reap a fortune for Edwina out of the Walnut Street Theatre before I die."[12] Booth approached the enterprise primarily as a long-term commercial investment. There is no evidence to suggest that Booth and Clarke envisioned the Walnut as a theatre to "elevate the legitimate drama" in America.

History of the Walnut Street Theatre

When Edwin Booth and John S. Clarke purchased the Walnut Street Theatre in 1863, the theatre already possessed an illustrious history. In addition to the appearances of stars such as Edmund Kean, Junius Brutus Booth, Edwin Forrest, James Murdoch, Tyrone Power, Charles Kean, and Edwin Booth, the Walnut had also been the scene of a wide variety

of entertainments ranging from negro minstrels to grand opera.

Constructed by two talented equestrians, Victor Pepin and John Breschard, the building opened 2 February 1809 as the New Circus or the Walnut Street Amphitheatre. The owners, who billed themselves as "Professors of the Art of Horsemanship and Agility," wanted their riding circus to fill a void that had existed since Rickett's Amphitheatre burned in 1799.[13] However, by 1811, interest for equestrian shows waned and a stage was constructed for dramatic performances.[14] Renamed the Olympic Theatre, the building opened on 1 January 1812 with Sheridan's The Rivals, O'Keefe's The Poor Soldier and several equestrian acts.

From 1812 to 1820, the building was advertised for auction on at least two occasions and had little financial success as it fluctuated between circus and dramatic presentations. The first significant period in its history began on 20 April 1820 when the Chestnut Street Theatre burned, forcing its managers, William Warren and William B. Wood, to relocate while a new theatre was constructed. Warren and Wood leased the vacant Olympic Theatre for two years, renamed it the Walnut Street Theatre, and during 1820 and 1821 the Walnut was the site of two significant historical events. On 27 November 1820, Edwin Forrest made his first appearance on a major or first-class stage as Young Norval in John Home's tragedy, Douglas, or The Noble Shepherd. On 9 April 1821, Edmund Kean made his first American appearance outside of New York. During his sixteen nights at the Walnut, Kean appeared as Richard III, Othello, Hamlet, Brutus, Lear, Macbeth and Shylock. The public was indifferent to the debut of the fourteen year old Forrest, but the renowned Kean drew crowds "among the largest ever known in the theatres of Philadelphia."[15]

From 1822 to 1834 the theatre changed management at least seven times, its name twice (Walnut to Olympic to Walnut), while offering a variety of entertainments. Finally, in 1834 the theatre was leased to the distinguished English actor-manager, Francis C. Wemyss. Wemyss changed its name to The American Theatre. During a notable six year reign, he featured a good acting company, the engagement of major stars such as William E. Burton, Edwin Forrest, and Junius Brutus Booth, while "the management of his stage, as regards scenery and the details of spectacular production, was thought to be unsurpassed."[16] After a number of disagreements with the theatre's Board of Agents, he resigned in 1840 and managed the Arch Street Theatre.[17]

Ethelbert A. Marshall and William Dinneford succeeded Wemyss in 1840 and renamed the theatre, the Walnut Street Theatre. E. A. Marshall managed the theatre from 1840 to December 1857. Although he had at least two co-lessees and several co-managers during his seventeen-year tenure, Marshall maintained the Walnut's reputation as one of the major theatres in Philadelphia.

Two women lessees and managers, Mrs. D. P. Bowers and Mrs. M. A. Garrettson, managed the theatre from 1857 to 1865. Mrs. D. P. Bowers, a prominent actress, decided after the death of her husband in 1857 to become a theatre manager. Long familiar to Philadelphia audiences as an actress with the Arch Street Theatre stock company during the 1850s, Mrs. Bowers leased the Walnut in December 1857 and managed the theatre until January 1859. Mrs. M. A. Garrettson, of whom little is known, leased the Walnut from 1859 to June 1865. During her final two seasons, Mrs. Garrettson leased the theatre from its new owners, Edwin Booth and John S. Clarke, who had purchased the theatre in October 1863. Finally,

in June 1865, Edwin Booth and John S. Clarke began their four and a half year active management at the Walnut Street Theatre.

The reason Mrs. Garrettson's lease was not renewed after the 1864-65 season is unknown. One possible explanation is that the partners believed they could increase the Walnut's profits by assuming a more active role in the theatre's management. After the 1863-64 season, the partners had retired $30,000 of the $80,000 mortgage. However, after the 1864-65 season, Mrs. Garrettson's last as the manager, only $5,000 more had been retired.[18] Charles H. Shattuck suggests that the reduced mortgage payment after the 1864-65 season was due to the financial difficulties both men experienced following Lincoln's assassination.[19] The assassination forced Booth into a short-lived retirement and Clarke suffered the loss of some engagements because, as a relative of Booth, he was placed under a cloud of suspicion. The partners needed the Walnut Street Theatre's profits for living expenses and, therefore, little was left for mortgage payments. The first season of Booth and Clarke's active management was so successful, they paid the remaining $45,000 of the mortgage.

The Walnut Street Theatre partnership of Booth and Clarke lasted almost six and a half years, from 5 October 1863 to March 1870, and included four and a half years of active management. By 1870 Edwin Booth was heavily involved in the management of his new Booth's Theatre. He deferred to the advice of his financier friend, William Bispham, and sold his interest in the Walnut in order to transfer the capital to his new venture.[20] Booth sold his half-share to Clarke despite the fact that the Walnut Street Theatre had earned a profit every year of their partnership.

Organization and Staff

During the Booth-Clarke years, the Walnut Street Theatre was a star-stock company theatre. Like others in the 1860s, it had a resident stock company and depended upon touring stars for its financial survival.[21] As a typical co-manager of a star-stock theatre, Booth had no connection with the artistic or production functions of the Walnut, except when he himself acted at the theatre. Booth's duties as co-manager concerned only the business management.

Edwin Booth's duties included hiring the staff and the stock company, and engaging and scheduling touring stars. Augustus Pitou, an actor at the Walnut and later a theatre manager himself, claimed that Booth personally hired him as well as other actors in the company.[22]

Actors were hired on a seasonal basis and according to clearly defined lines of business. The usual lines of business for men were: leading man, juvenile or light comedian, heavy man, low comedian, a few walking gentlemen, and general utility men; for women: leading lady, heavy woman, juvenile woman or second lady, walking lady, soubrette, old woman, and utility women.[23] An actor was not hired solely on ability, but also on how well the individual fit a general type of role and the requirements of the season's repertory.

Booth's success in hiring a quality acting company is difficult to determine. Philadelphia newspapers between 1865 and 1870 did not review productions regularly but often "reported" only that a production had been presented.[24] When a production was reviewed, the acting company usually received only a one-line comment such as, "The cast of the whole play is excellent,"[25] or "The piece . . . was admirably

placed upon the stage, and capitally acted."[26] Generally, the acting company received favorable "one-liners" and the critic for The Press suggested that the Walnut stock company was "better perhaps than could be furnished in most theatres."[27]

The Walnut Street Theatre acting company featured several actors who later performed with some of New York City's most reputable stock companies. Leading lady Annie Graham, who spent four seasons at the Walnut, and comic actor Owen Fawcett, who performed under Booth's management at the Winter Garden and the Walnut, both became members of Augustin Daly's Fifth Avenue Theatre. Charles Wolcot, Jr. became a member of Daniel Frohman's Lyceum Theatre after spending five years at the Walnut and one year at the Winter Garden. And Miss Effie Germon, a member of the famed Jefferson family, became the leading lady at Wallack's Theatre following the death of Mary Gannon in 1869.

Letters reveal that Booth and Clarke negotiated and scheduled touring stars. In a letter to a manager named Ford about an engagement for Mrs. D. P. Bowers, Clarke wrote, "Please acquaint Mrs. Bowers that we shall announce her opening for Sep. 11th. . . ."[28] Booth wrote to his friend, Launt Thompson, "I wanted old Forest [sic] to play at the Walnut and got John McCullach [sic][29] to see him or rather Clarke did."[30] Although Forrest declined this particular invitation, Booth and Clarke succeeded in booking such stars as John Brougham, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Kean, Joseph Jefferson, E. L. Davenport, Mrs. Bowers, and Charles Fechter. Several years later Forrest reconsidered and during the last three years of the Booth-Clarke management, he appeared once a season.

The Walnut Street Theatre had two major staff positions, business manager and stage manager. The individuals hired for these two

positions by Booth and Clarke either had a strong background in the Philadelphia theatre or experience and knowledge of the star-stock company system or both. Thomas J. Hemphill, business manager of the theatre from 1865 to 1870, had managed and leased theatres in Philadelphia for a number of years. One of the theatres he managed in the early fifties was the Arch Street Theatre, a star-stock company theatre.[31] Hemphill, as business manager, was responsible for the day-to-day operations of the Walnut while the stage managers were responsible for the artistic and production decisions.

Between 1865 and 1870 the Walnut had three different stage managers: W. S. Fredericks 1865-66, J. B. Roberts 1866-67, 1867-68, and William A. Chapman 1868-69 and 1869-70. W. S. Fredericks, a veteran actor of the Philadelphia theatrical scene, had been a regular member of the Walnut Street Theatre's stock company in the early forties, and he also spent one season as acting-manager of the Chestnut Street Theatre in 1851. J. B. Roberts, the second stage manager, remained for two seasons, 1866-67 and 1867-68. Although forgotten today, J. B. Roberts was a touring star in the late 1850s and early 1860s. His repertoire included a number of Shakespearian roles such as Romeo and Richard III, but during the 1860s he performed in primarily two plays, the spectacular Faust and Marguerite by Dion Boucicault and Kotzebue's Pizarro. William A. Chapman succeeded J. B. Roberts for the last three seasons of the Booth-Clarke management. Chapman had been a member of the Walnut's company for two seasons and acted character roles such as Polonius in Hamlet and Bottom in A Midsummer Night's Dream. After Booth sold his interest in the Walnut, Chapman retained his position under Clarke.

The selection of the staff and the division of duties lead to two conclusions about the management of the Walnut Street Theatre. First, that by hiring a qualified and experienced staff, Booth and Clarke were able to free themselves of the theatre's day-to-day operations. Although their management included hiring actors and engaging stars, their role was essentially supervisory. In this way Booth and Clarke were able to continue touring as star actors while managing the Walnut Street Theatre. Second, Booth and Clarke's hiring of a separate business manager and stage manager was indicative of the trend toward a complete separation of the business and artistic functions under the star-stock format of organization.

Walnut Street Theatre: Financial Summary

As a long-term commercial investment, the Walnut Street Theatre proved highly profitable for Booth and Clarke. As Table 1 indicates, the Walnut Street Theatre earned $129,734.20 or an average of $25,946.84 per season for the five seasons from 1865 to 1870.[32] The Walnut Street Theatre Account Book's share account (Table 2) indicates that Booth received $64,199.25 for his share of the theatre's profit from the beginning of the 1865-66 season to 5 March 1870. In addition, he earned $40,703.67 for his appearances as a star actor.[33] Thus, in four and a half seasons Booth received a total of $104,902.92.

The early and continued financial success of the Walnut Street Theatre venture must have surprised the partners, given them new confidence in their executive ability,[34] and whetted their managerial appetite.

TABLE 1

WALNUT STREET THEATRE FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Season	Weeks	Perfor-mances	Gross Receipts	Expenses	Profit
1865-66	52	324	185,827.64	152,459.60	33,368.04
1866-67	39	241	122,651.25	106,334.57	16,334.57
Summer 67	5	29	11,942.50	11,426.92	515.58
1867-68	46	287	168,955.25	147,462.70	21,492.55
Summer 68	7	48	22,020.25	16,535.28	5,484.97
1868-69	40	255	144,534.25	122,202.47	22,331.78
1869-70	45	315	175,078.50	144,853.90	30,224.60
Total			831,009.64	701,275.44	129,734.20

Source: Walnut Street Theatre Account Books.

Boston and the Boston Theatre

Edwin Booth and John S. Clarke reached the zenith of their managerial activities when they obtained a lease on the Boston Theatre for the 1866-67 season. The partners were already leasing the Winter Garden Theatre in New York City and owned the Walnut Street Theatre in Philadelphia. Leasing the Boston Theatre gave Booth and Clarke managerial control of a first-class theatre in each of the three cultural centers in the country.

It is important to note, however, that only Booth managed the three theatres throughout the 1866-67 season. Clarke's involvement in

TABLE 2

WALNUT STREET THEATRE SHARE ACCOUNT

Entry Date	Share to Edwin Booth	Share to John S. Clarke	Total Share
1 June 1866[a]	$7,809.94	$7,809.95	$15,619.89
2 March 1867	6,772.64	6,772.65	13,545.29
1 June 1867	1,557.75	1,557.75	3,115.50
30 Nov. 1867	4,832.73	4,832.72	9,665.45
29 Feb. 1868	4,634.85	4,634.85	9,269.70
30 May 1868	5,230.87	5,230.87	10,461.74
28 Nov. 1868	6,181.97	6,181.98	12,363.95
27 Feb. 1869	6,351.23	6,351.24	12,702.47
29 May 1869	2,763.57	2,763.57	5,527.14
4 Dec. 1869	11,085.78	11,085.76	22,171.54
5 March 1870	6,977.92	6,977.92	13,955.84
Total	64,199.25	64,199.26	128,398.51

Source: Walnut Street Theatre Account Books.

[a]Includes profit from 8 September 1865 to 1 June 1866.

the three theatres lasted for only about two months, from the opening of the Boston Theatre on 1 August 1866 to the selling of his one-third interest in the Winter Garden Theatre before its season opened on 8 October 1866. Since the exact date that Clarke sold his share in the Winter Garden cannot be determined, there is the possibility that Clarke never actually co-managed the Boston Theatre, the Walnut Street

Theatre, and the Winter Garden Theatre simultaneously.

The Boston Theatre, like the Walnut Street Theatre, was a star-stock company theatre[35] which Booth and Clarke leased solely for its commercial value.[36] The selection of the Boston Theatre was probably determined by three factors: the reputation of Boston as a cultural center, the reputation of the Boston Theatre as one of the most magnificent playhouses in America,[37] and the availability of the theatre.

Although Boston had a smaller population (250,526 in 1870) than either Philadelphia or New York, it was "reputed to have in proportion to its size the largest population of theatregoers in the United States."[38] Yet the theatre in Boston, a stronghold of Puritanism, had a difficult time during the eighteenth century as church clergy condemned the stage and the local government passed laws prohibiting the production of plays. The theatre began to make inroads at the end of the century and by the 1850s had become thoroughly established in Boston.

In 1852, the destruction of the famous Federal Street Theatre (also called the Boston Theatre) and the sale earlier of the Tremont Street Theatre to a church group left Boston audiences with only one first-class theatre in the city, the Boston Museum. The need for another first-class theatre led a group of prominent Bostonians to form the Boston Theatre Company. The company incorporated on 15 May 1852 and quickly selected a site, solicited subscriptions, and began a competition for the new theatre's design. H. Noury won the prize of five hundred dollars and the theatre was constructed according to his design. The new Boston Theatre opened 11 September 1854 with Sheridan's _The Rivals_ and J. R. Planche's musical farce entitled _Loan of a Lover_.[39]

The theatre had an auditorium that was almost circular in shape and featured a huge, cut-glass chandelier that illuminated and brought a stunning touch of elegance to the interior.[40] Other features of the theatre included spacious lobbies, impressive marble staircases, and a magnificent dome above the auditorium engineered so no vertical supports interfered with the audience's sightlines. The only major alteration during the theatre's seventy-one years of existence occurred in 1888 when the stage apron was reduced by ten feet allowing the audience to sit closer to the stage. This alteration increased the seating capacity from about 3000 to 3140.[41]

Despite the magnificent building and the growing theatrical audience in Boston during the fifties and early sixties, the Boston Theatre did not earn any considerable profits for its managers during this period.[42] The end of the Civil War, however, signaled the beginning of a new period for culture in Boston. Post-war Boston exhibited a cultural vitality unmatched in most other American cities.

> Yet there was a general feeling that if Washington was the political capital of the United States, if New York was its financial capital, then Boston was its cultural capital, or at least that culture was at once more solid and more rarified in Boston than anywhere else.[43]

Coinciding with the cultural revitalization of post-war Boston was the appearance of Benjamin W. Thayer and Orlando Tompkins at the Boston Theatre. Thayer and Tompkins joined the theatre's administrative staff in 1864 and ushered in a period of unusual prosperity. According to Eugene Tompkins, son of Orlando, and Quincy Kilby, the authors of the History of the Boston Theatre 1854-1901, Thayer and Tompkins were the real managers of the theatre beginning with the

1864-65 season although their names did not appear at the head of the playbills until 1873. Benjamin W. Thayer sold his interest in the theatre in 1876 and Orlando Tompkins remained until 1878 when he was succeeded by his son, Eugene, who managed the theatre until his retirement in 1901. It is notable that from 1864 to 1901 the theatre never experienced a losing season.[44]

The Leasing and Management of the Boston Theatre

Asia Booth Clarke dates the beginning of the Booth-Clarke management of the Boston Theatre as January 1866,[45] and in his biography of the Booth family, The Mad Booths of Maryland (p. 274), Stanley Kimmer states that by the spring of 1866 the partners were operating three theatres. Tompkins and Kilby, however, indicate that the actual management of Booth and Clarke began with opening of the 1866-67 season on 30 July 1866.[46]

The apparent confusion probably stemmed from the time lag between the acceptance of the Booth-Clarke offer by the directors of the Boston Theatre and the actual effective date of the lease. A letter written by Booth on Valentine's Day, 14 February 1866, supports Asia Booth Clarke's position that the lease was obtained in January 1866: "I hope I may be as successful in the management of the Boston Theatre."[47] The letter, while not pinpointing the exact date on which the lease was signed, does indicate that Booth knew by Valentine's Day 1866 that he was going to be involved in the management of the Boston Theatre.[48]

The final evidence regarding the beginning of the Booth-Clarke management at the Boston Theatre is the theatre's account book. The Boston Theatre Account Book refutes Kimmer's contention that the

management began in the spring of 1866 as the entries do not begin until 1 August 1866.[49]

Edwin Booth and John S. Clarke leased the Boston Theatre for one year at a rent of sixteen thousand dollars.[50] The season proved to be exceptionally profitable as the theatre earned $40,465.54.[51] Yet despite this financial success, the partners or the theatre owners decided not to renew the lease.

Two factors may have persuaded Booth and Clarke to withdraw from the Boston Theatre management. First, during the summer of 1867, John S. Clarke left America and emigrated to England. While he maintained his co-ownership in the Walnut Street Theatre, he sold his one-third interest in the Winter Garden Theatre in an apparent effort to reduce his business commitments in America. Clarke may have decided against renewing the Boston Theatre's lease for the same reason. Second, after the Winter Garden burned in March 1867, Booth immediately set to work on plans for a new theatre. By not renewing the lease on the Boston Theatre, he was able to devote more time and energy to planning and financing his new theatre. Nevertheless, the Boston Theatre stayed in the Booth family when Edwin's brother, Junius, became the new lessee and manager for the 1867-68 season. Junius remained with the Boston Theatre until 1873 when he left to assume the management of Booth's Theatre in New York.

Edwin Booth's Management of the Boston Theatre

There is a dearth of material about the role of Booth and Clarke in the management of the Boston Theatre. No letters, memos, or other materials exist which give a clear indication of their managerial duties.

If Benjamin W. Thayer and Orlando Tompkins were "the powers behind the throne," as claimed by Eugene Tompkins and Quincy Kilby,[52] then Booth and Clarke were little more than figureheads in the theatre's management. However, four factors indicate that Booth and Clarke played a more involved role.

First, Booth was concerned that the pressures of touring, of managing the Winter Garden and Walnut Street Theatres, and the added responsibility of managing the Boston Theatre would prove too great a burden. In the previously quoted "Valentine's Day" letter he wrote, "I really fear I have too much on my hands to do justice to all." If Booth was to be no more than a figurehead, it is unlikely that he would have expressed so much concern. Second, of the twenty-five member acting company during the 1866-67 season, only five had been employed by the previous manager, Henry C. Jarrett. This dramatic change in the acting company personnel indicates not only a change in management, but also that the new managers were hiring their <u>own</u> acting company. Third, the selection of Junius Brutus Booth, Jr. as stage manager illustrates that Booth and Clarke also had significant input into the hiring of the theatre's staff. And fourth, since both the Boston Theatre and the Walnut Street Theatre were organized as star-stock company theatres, it is plausible that Booth and Clarke's duties at both theatres would be similar. It is also important to note that the Boston Theatre staff reflected the trend of separating the artistic and business functions. Junius Brutus Booth, as stage manager, had responsibility for the artistic function and Thayer and Tompkins supervised the business affairs.

Booth's success in hiring a quality acting company was simpler to determine for the Boston Theatre than for the Walnut Street Theatre.

Boston newspapers reviewed many of the Boston Theatre's productions.[53] Typical of the critics' reactions to the acting company were the reviews for a production of Bulwer's Money. According to the Boston Advertiser (21 August 1866), the performance "was in some respects a very good though on the whole a very unequal one." The Boston Post (22 August 1866) was more positive; "With a superior company, a fine orchestra and luxurious seats, no wonder our citizens regard the establishment with pride." Finally, the Boston Daily Journal (21 August 1866) remarked, "The company has talents of superiority which cannot fail to make the mark." Judging from the theatre's highly successful financial results, Boston theatregoers also admired the acting company.

The highlight of Booth's management of the Boston Theatre was a series of historically accurate productions with scenery and costumes supervised by Booth. During an unusually long six week engagement, from 3 September to 13 October 1866, he presented and acted in Othello, Romeo and Juliet, The Merchant of Venice, Richard III, Hamlet, and Richelieu.[54] The most significant production of the series was Hamlet. Boston critics, like their counterparts in New York and other cities, generally praised Booth's Hamlet. They especially complimented the supporting cast and the detailed, historically accurate scenery. Speaking for the majority of the Boston critics, the Boston Daily Journal commented, "Mr. Booth's surroundings in 'Hamlet' are generally very excellent--magnificent scenery and appointments, and a good cast."[55]

Boston playgoers, aware of Booth's magnificently mounted productions at the Winter Garden Theatre the previous season, crowded the Boston Theatre throughout the six week run.[56] The financial success of this engagement suggests that Booth had accurately gauged the taste

of his Boston audience. Ironically, this engagement was also the only time in Booth's management career that he supervised the mounting of historically accurate productions outside of New York City.

The Walnut Street Theatre and the Boston Theatre were remarkably similar. Both theatres were commercial ventures, were organized as star-stock companies, had separate business and artistic staffs, and succeeded financially. Booth's role in the management of the two theatres was also similar. His duties were generally limited to hiring an acting company, hiring a staff, and the scheduling and booking of touring stars. He depended on the stage manager to supervise play production and on a qualified staff to handle the day-by-day business operations. Booth gained valuable management experience at the Walnut Street Theatre and the Boston Theatre and it was this background that he brought to his later management of Booth's Theatre.

CHAPTER II FOOTNOTES

[1]The only major work on Edwin Booth's career as a theatre manager is Charles H. Shattuck's essay, "The Theatrical Management of Edwin Booth," in The Theatrical Manager in England and America, ed. Joseph W. Donohue (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton Univ. Press, 1971). The essay briefly discusses Booth's managerial involvement in the Walnut Street Theatre and Boston Theatre but focuses on his artistic management at the Winter Garden Theatre and Booth's Theatre.

[2]Dennis Clark, Philadelphia: 1776-2076 (Port Washington: Kennikat Press, 1975), p. 47.

[3]Glenn Hughes, A History of the American Theatre 1700-1950 (New York: Samuel French, 1951), p. 210; Garff Wilson, Three Hundred Years of American Drama and Theatre (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1973), p. 148; and Arthur Hornblow, A History of the Theatre in America (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1919), II, 85.

[4]Hughes, p. 210.

[5]Richard Lockridge, Darling of Misfortune Edwin Booth: 1833-1893 (New York: Benjamin Blom, Inc., 1932), p. 44.

[6]William Winter, The Wallet of Time (New York: Moffat, Yard and Company, 1913), I, 278, 279.

[7]Shattuck, p. 144.

[8]John S. Clarke, Letter to Edwin Booth, 11 October [1862], The Walter Hampden-Edwin Booth Theatre Collection and Library, The Players, New York.

[9]Walnut Street Theatre Account Books, Vol. I located at The Walter Hampden-Edwin Booth Theatre Collection and Library, The Players, New York.

[10]Asia Booth Clarke, The Elder and the Younger Booth (Boston: James R. Osgood and Company, 1882), p. 158.

[11]"To Adam Badeau," 26 September 1863, Shattuck, p. 144.

[12]"To Miss Emma F. Cary," 15 October 1864, Edwina Booth Grossman, Edwin Booth: Recollections by His Daughter and Letters to His Friends (New York: Century, 1894), p. 166.

[13]John B. Ricketts was a circus man and expert horseman who built circus amphitheatres in New York and Philadelphia during the 1790s.

[14]Thomas Scharf and Thomas Westcott, History of Philadelphia 1609-1884 (Philadelphia: L. H. Everts & Co., 1884), II, 972.

[15]George M. Emery, "Passing of America's Oldest Playhouse," Theatre Magazine, June 1920, p. 507.

[16]Emery, p. 508.

[17]Mary W. Helps, "The Walnut Street Theatre: A Brief History," The Free Library of Philadelphia, Theatre Collection, TS, p. 15.

[18]All statistics regarding the Walnut Street Theatre are taken or computed from the Walnut Street Theatre Account Books unless otherwise noted.

[19]Shattuck, p. 145.

[20]Shattuck, p. 145.

[21]See Appendix A, Tables 1-7, for a season-by-season listing of the touring stars who appeared at the Walnut Street Theatre between 1865 and 1870. The tables also include a financial summary of each star's engagement.

[22]Augustus Pitou, Masters of the Show (New York: The Neale Publishing Company, 1914), pp. 12, 32.

[23]Edward William Mammen, The Old Stock Company School of Acting (Boston: Boston Public Library, 1945), p. 20.

[24]For this study five major Philadelphia daily newspapers were surveyed for reviews on fifteen different productions between 1865 and 1870. Newspapers consulted were: The Press, the North-American, the Philadelphia Evening Bulletin, the Ledger, and the Philadelphia Inquirer.

[25]Philadelphia Evening Bulletin, 13 March 1867.

[26]Philadelphia Inquirer, 16 August 1869.

[27]The Press, 5 November 1867.

[28]John S. Clarke, Letter to Ford, 24 August 1865, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.

[29]Actor John McCullough played second lead to Edwin Forrest from 1861 to 1866.

[30]Edwin Booth, Letter to Launt Thompson, n.d., Library and Museum of the Performing Arts, New York.

[31]Arthur Herman Wilson, A History of the Philadelphia Theatre 1835 to 1855 (1935; rpt. New York: Greenwood Press, 1968), p. 44.

[32]This profit figure was the amount left after the star's salary, company salaries, and other production expenses were deducted from the gross receipts. The profit was then transferred to a profit/loss

account from which such expenses as utilities, stock lumber, miscellaneous props, state licenses, city taxes, and other sundry expenses were deducted. The remaining amount was then divided between Booth and Clarke and placed in their individual share accounts.

[33]These figures were computed from an account in the Walnut Street Theatre Account Books entitled, "Edwin Booth (Theatre Acct.)."

[34]Lockridge, p. 129.

[35]See Appendix A, Table 8, for a listing of the touring stars who appeared at the Boston Theatre during the 1866-67 season. The table also includes a financial summary of each star's engagement.

[36]Shattuck, p. 145.

[37]Hughes, p. 212.

[38]Henry Cabot Lodge, Historic Towns: Boston (Cambridge, Ma.: University Press, 1891), p. 212.

[39]Eugene Tompkins and Quincy Kilby, The History of the Boston Theatre 1854-1901 (Cambridge, Ma.: The Riverside Press, 1908), p. 67.

[40]Tompkins and Kilby, pp. 8-10.

[41]Hughes, p. 212 and Tompkins and Kilby, p. 9.

[42]Tompkins and Kilby, p. 2.

[43]Howard Mumford Jones, The Age of Energy (New York: The Viking Press, 1971), p. 192.

[44]Tompkins and Kilby, pp. 111, 233, 254.

[45]Asia Booth Clarke, p. 166.

[46]Tompkins and Kilby, pp. 127-28.

[47]"To Mrs. Cary," n.d., Grossman, p. 158.

[48]The Valentine's Day letter has no "year" actually indicated on the letter, but a reference to Booth's production of Richelieu which opened 1 January 1866 at the Winter Garden Theatre clearly establishes the date of the letter as Valentine's Day 1866.

[49]Boston Theatre Account Book located at the Walter Hampden-Edwin Booth Theatre Collection and Library, The Players, New York.

[50]Asia Booth Clarke, p. 166.

[51]Computation based on the Boston Theatre Account Book.

[52]Tompkins and Kilby, p. 127.

[53]Six major daily newspapers were surveyed for reviews on five separate productions of the 1866-67 season. The newspapers surveyed were: the Boston Daily Advertiser, the Boston Daily Evening Traveler, the Boston Herald, the Boston Daily Journal, the Boston Post, and the Boston Transcript. The Advertiser, Post, and Journal consistently reviewed productions, while the other newspapers contributed occasional reviews.

[54]Gerald Leon Honaker, "Edwin Booth, Producer: A Study of Four Productions at Booth's Theatre," Diss. Indiana 1969, p. 80.

[55]Boston Daily Journal, 12 April 1867.

[56]The six week engagement earned gross receipts of $44,205.15 and netted a profit of $13,488.37 (see Appendix I, Table 8).

CHAPTER III

EDWIN BOOTH'S MANAGEMENT OF THE WINTER GARDEN THEATRE

Edwin Booth managed the Walnut Street Theatre, Philadelphia, and the Boston Theatre, Boston, primarily to earn money. This money was to enable Booth and Clarke "to elevate the tone" of their art in New York.

> Our [Booth and Clarke] object was solely to elevate the tone of our art, without even 1/2 an eye to the dollar, for we well knew there were not 'millions in it'; no, we would take our chances at making money outside of New York and be satisfied with the glory of the good work we would accomplish there.[1]

The Winter Garden Theatre and later Booth's Theatre were to serve as a forum from which Booth hoped "to establish the pure, legitimate drama in New York and by my example to incite others, actors and managers to continue the good work."[2]

To better understand Booth's management of the Winter Garden Theatre and Booth's Theatre, it will be helpful to briefly examine the conditions surrounding New York City's rise as the theatrical capital of America, and to survey the theatrical climate in New York during the years of Booth's management career.

New York City: Capital of the American Theatre

Booth and Clarke obviously decided to locate their "showplace" in New York because the Empire City was the theatrical center of America. Cities like Boston and Philadelphia, despite the existence of

excellent stock theatres, trailed New York in their ability to influence the direction of the theatre.[3] New York's emergence as the theatre capital occurred in the 1850s and the city's ability to maintain its position was due to several significant factors.

By 1850, New York had both the largest total population and the largest ethnic population of any city in America.[4] The ethnic population was important to the theatre's growth because many were European immigrants from countries with a tradition of state and private support of the arts, and they did not have the Puritan-Quaker distrust of cultural, leisure-time activities. The numerous ethnic theatres and the popularity of English, German, French, and Italian players in the 1860s and 1870s demonstrated the immigrants' interest in theatre.

Between 1850 and 1870, business activity expanded so rapidly that New York became the business, banking and financial capital of America.[5] In addition, the city's excellent harbor and central location made it the nation's leading port as well as the country's transportation and manufacturing center. The theatre's growth in the 1850s and the proximity of the business community made investment capital for theatre construction readily accessible.

As the financial and theatrical capital of the country, New York also drew a large tourist trade. In the late 1860s and early 1870s an estimated ten to fifteen million tourists visited the city annually for business and pleasure.[6] With most of the tourist industry located on or near Broadway, the city offered an almost limitless variety of amusements. In addition to the various types of drama offered in the legitimate theatres, there were burlesques, minstrel shows, concerts, lectures,

the circus, and a new popular entertainment called the concert saloon.[7] The development of tourism as a major business in New York provided substantial revenue for theatres, restaurants, hotels, and other related businesses.

The final and most important factor in New York's development as America's theatre center was the emergence of Broadway as the theatre's permanent home. Between 1850 and 1870, the majority of the city's new theatres were constructed on Broadway between Chambers Street and Fourteenth Street; theatres built more than a few blocks from Broadway often led a precarious financial existence.[8] During the 1860s, however, theatre builders began constructing theatres north (uptown) of Fourteenth Street. This uptown movement along Broadway of the theatre district continued throughout the remainder of the nineteenth century.[9]

A growing general and ethnic population, the city's position as the business center of America, a booming tourist industry, and Broadway's emergence as the theatre's permanent home were all major factors in New York City's becoming the theatre capital of America. By the mid-1860s, right or wrong, New York and Broadway were synonymous with what was best and most important in the American theatre.

Theatrical Climate 1864-1873

Between 1864 and 1873 at least fifteen to twenty theatres were operating in New York City. A much smaller number, however, specialized in the legitimate drama or presented occasional productions similar to those produced at the Winter Garden Theatre and Booth's Theatre. Three of these theatres, Niblo's Garden, the Olympic Theatre, and Wallack's Theatre, are surveyed to provide a better understanding of the New York

theatrical scene during Edwin Booth's management years.

Niblo's Garden, located on lower Broadway, operated for sixty-six years--from 1829 to 1895.[10] During the early years of Booth's management career, Niblo's was organized as a star-stock theatre with an emphasis on legitimate drama. However, after the amazing success of the famous musical extravaganza, The Black Crook in 1866, Niblo's placed a new emphasis on musical spectacles. Among the spectacles which followed at Niblo's were The White Fawn, a less successful sequel to The Black Crook which still ran for over 150 performances in 1868,[11] and The Forty Thieves, a musical burlesque starring Lydia Thompson and the British Blondes, which played seventeen weeks in 1869.[12]

A change in public taste during the post-Civil War period was apparent with the amazing success of the musical extravaganza, The Black Crook. This forerunner of the modern musical comedy opened at Niblo's Garden on 12 September 1866 and ran for an unprecedented 475 performances. Mark Twain attended a performance of The Black Crook and provided this description:

> The scenic effects--the waterfalls, cascades fountains, oceans, fairies, devils, hells, heavens, angels--are gorgeous beyond anything ever witnessed in America, perhaps, and these things attract the women and the girls. Then the endless ballets and splendid tableaux, with seventy beauties arrayed in dazzling half-costumes; and displaying all possible compromises between nakedness and decency, capture the men and boys--and so Niblo's has taken in twenty-four hundred dollars a night. . . . It is claimed that a multitude equal to the entire population of the State of California, Chinamen included, have visited this play.[13]

Although The Black Crook never attained the overwhelming public acceptance accorded Uncle Tom's Cabin in the 1850s,[14] The Black Crook drew audiences from across the cultural board. A significant shift in

public taste had occurred. The public of the mid-1860s preferred briefly clad ballet girls to moral "lectures" such as Uncle Tom's Cabin. One critic expressed surprise at the respectability of the audience that attended The Black Crook which "exhibited a veritable forest of ladies' limbs."[15]

> The latter [audience] I expected to find made up of coarse and flashy people; but, on the contrary, it was notable in the main, for simple and almost homely respectability. Comfortable, middle-aged women from the suburbs, and from the remoter country, their daughters, groups of children, a few professional men, bearing their quality in their faces, some sober farmer-looking folk, a clergyman or two, apparently, the usual proportion of non-descripts, among which were not many young men, composed an audience less fashionable than that I had seen in Fourteenth street but at least as respectable.[16]

The public's interest in "leg-shows" and burlesque prompted Mark Twain to advise Booth that, "he [Booth] will have to make a little change by-and-by and peel some women. Nothing else can chain the public taste, the way things are going now."[17]

Another theatre which experienced a change in format with the shift in public taste was the Olympic Theatre. Famous as the home of Laura Keene's "The Varieties" from 1856 to 1863, it was also a star-stock theatre during the years of Edwin Booth's management career. However, the phenomenal success of George L. Fox's pantomime, Humpty Dumpty,[18] in 1868, caused the theatre's manager, John A. Duff, to change from an emphasis on the legitimate drama to a reliance on musical and variety acts.[19]

The Olympic, like Niblo's Garden, continued to maintain a stock company, presented stars, and occasionally produced plays from the legitimate repertoire, but public taste prompted the shift to musical

entertainments. However, some legitimate theatres, such as Wallack's Theatre, did not bend to public taste and prospered.

The most famous theatre in New York City between 1864 and 1873 was Wallack's Theatre. For nearly thirty years, under the management of James W. Wallack (1852-1864) and later under his son, Lester (1864-1887), it dominated the other stock companies in the city. Known for its excellent acting company and its "English-flavored" repertoire, Wallack's Theatre was a social institution for New York's fashionable citizens.[20]

Wallack's Theatre featured the classic comedies of Goldsmith and Sheridan; however, by the late 1860s the repertoire also reflected the changing taste of the legitimate theatre audiences. Most significant was the addition of T. W. Robertson's "modern and natural" plays. These so-called "cup and saucer" dramas intrigued the audiences of the late sixties with natural dialogue, contemporary subjects, and "cozy, charming interior settings."[21] Ours, Robertson's first successful production at Wallack's Theatre, opened on 11 December 1866 and Wallack's soon became associated with Robertson's plays in America as the Bancrofts' Prince of Wales Theatre was in England.[22]

A notable omission from the Wallack's Theatre repertoire between 1864 and 1873 were productions of Shakespeare. Although often presented during his father, James W. Wallack's, management, Lester produced only one of Shakespeare's plays, Much Ado About Nothing, during this period. Audience interest in Robertson's "modern plays" may partially explain Lester Wallack's reluctance.

Wallack's Theatre had a loyal audience composed almost exclusively of New Yorkers.[23] Therefore, the unpredictable tourist trade

had little effect on the theatre's business and Wallack's could afford to experiment with new plays in its repertoire. During the period of Edwin Booth's management career, Wallack's Theatre was the most popular and respected legitimate theatre in New York City.

History of the Winter Garden Theatre

When Edwin Booth began managing the Winter Garden Theatre in the fall of 1864, there were four major legitimate theatres in New York--Wallack's, the Olympic, Niblo's Garden, and the Winter Garden. Originally constructed as a music hall, the Winter Garden had been a legitimate theatre since the mid-1850s.

First named Tripler Hall, the Winter Garden was specifically built for the American debut of Jenny Lind in 1850.[24] The hall was either not finished in time or burned before her arrival and subsequently the debut concert was moved to another location. Immediately rebuilt (or finished), the hall was renamed the Metropolitan Theatre and featured a stock company with Julia Dean as star. The theatre burned in 1854 but was quickly rebuilt and leased to Laura Keene and her "Varieties" in December 1855.

Meanwhile, William E. Burton, who was highly successful in his small Chambers Street Theatre, decided to follow the movement of the theatre district uptown. Burton wanted to lease the Metropolitan Theatre but Laura Keene was reluctant to leave. However, Burton eventually won out and Laura Keene moved her "Vanities" to the Olympic Theatre where she achieved her greatest success. Burton renamed the theatre, Burton's Metropolitan Theatre, which opened in the fall of 1856. Burton never succeeded financially in his new home. Critics

considered the theatre a "country barn" and Burton avoided large financial losses only because of successful star engagements which included Edwin Booth, Charlotte Cushman, John Brougham, and E. L. Davenport. However, the Panic of 1857 hastened the end of Burton's management and he retired from management in the autumn of 1858.

The 1859-60 season ushered in a new era for the old music hall. The building was leased to Dion Boucicault and William S. Stuart who undertook a major renovation and renamed the theatre "The Winter Garden, a Conservatory of the Arts." The auditorium seating was reduced by half and made more comfortable, lobbies, ante-rooms and boxes were added, and the stage was altered. But it was the theatre's new name that became a topic of interest and curiosity among the New York theatregoing public. According to Joseph Jefferson, a member of the Winter Garden's stock company in 1859-60, the name was taken from a "place of amusement" in Paris which presented plays in a conservatory filled with plants.[25] Boucicault and Stuart attempted to create a garden atmosphere by placing real and artificial plants and flowers throughout the theatre. Jefferson was not impressed with the management's endeavors:

> The horticulture display was comparatively weak. Some sharp-pointed tropical plants of an inhospitable and sticky character exuded their 'medicinal gums' in the vestibule, and the dress circle was festooned with artificial flowers so rare that they must have been unknown to the science of botany. To give these delicate exotics a sweet and natural odor they were plentifully sprinkled with some perfume resembling closely the sweet scent of hair oil, so that the audience as they were entering could 'nose' them in the lobby.[26]

Notwithstanding his dislike of the garden atmosphere, other deficiencies led Jefferson to brand the building a bust; "Take it altogether, the theatre was a failure; for, added to the meager decorations, the acoustics

were inferior, and the views of the stage from the auditorium unpardonably bad."[27] The Boucicault-Stuart management lasted only one season.

From 1860 to 1864, A. W. "Black Jack" Jackson leased the Winter Garden from owner Louis LaFarge. William Stuart remained at the theatre under Jackson's management but in some unknown capacity.[28] Stuart later claimed that he, and not Jackson, held the lease, but Edwin Booth recollected the Stuart-Jackson relationship differently.

> I and everybody about the theatre regarded [Stuart] as a servant to old 'black Jack,' for that filthy old Judas used to almost kick Stuart--at least he treated him (S. always had hat in hand in J's presence) worse than a decent man would treat a mangy cur.[29]

In the fall of 1864, William Stuart, John S. Clarke, and Edwin Booth became co-managers of the Winter Garden Theatre. Stuart's involvement in the management is a major factor in understanding Edwin Booth's role at the Winter Garden Theatre.[30]

The Leasing and Management of the Booth-Clarke-Stuart Triumvirate

Booth and Clarke wanted to obtain a New York theatre in order to establish themselves in America's most important theatrical city.[31] The partners shared their dream with William Stuart, and he encouraged their scheme as a great boon to the profession. After learning that A. W. Jackson's lease on the Winter Garden Theatre was expiring, Booth suggested to Clarke that the Winter Garden be obtained. Stuart had by this time become a "partner" in the dream and he readily agreed with Booth. Stuart also boasted that since "he was a sort of fixture in the lease and had been since Boucicault and he had split," it would be easy for him to convince the owners to lease the theatre to the triumvirate.

According to historian and Booth scholar Charles H. Shattuck, Stuart was already negotiating for the lease with the owner, Louis LaFarge, and he invited Booth and Clarke to join him.[32]

Whatever the situation, Louis LaFarge had no interest in leasing the Winter Garden to William Stuart. LaFarge probably would have renewed A. W. Jackson's lease if word had not reached him that Booth and Clarke were interested. According to Booth, LaFarge made his feelings toward Stuart clear during lease negotiations. "Boys [Booth and Clarke], are you going to help old Stuart to manage this thing?" LaFarge asked. "He says so, & if it is so why all right, but otherwise he can't have it." The partners accepted LaFarge's condition, and they began planning the 1864-65 season.

The details of the partnership, however, had not been settled. Stuart offered a financial and organizational plan that stunned Booth and Clarke. Stuart's proposal gave him complete control over the theatre's affairs while Booth and Clarke were to be responsible for the rent. In addition, Booth and Clarke would receive a share, after expenses, only when they acted at the Winter Garden. Clarke immediately rejected Stuart's plan and offered his own. Under Clarke's proposal each partner received an equal share of the theatre's profit with Stuart receiving a suite of rooms in the theatre plus an additional $70 per week in salary for his duties as resident manager. Booth and Clarke also were to receive half of the nightly net profit on the evenings they performed. Stuart accepted Clarke's plan, but he vigorously protested that his own plan was financially more lucrative for Booth and Clarke.

Under "Black Jack" Jackson's management the theatre had deteriorated and now needed significant renovation.[33] The partners agreed on

the need for renovation, but Booth alone had to supervise the work. "Now that the theatre here has come into my hands," he wrote to Mrs. Richard Cary, "the other two doing and knowing very little about the matter, I'm kept busy looking after the alterations and decorations of the place."[34] What Booth did not realize at this time was that Stuart and Clarke's lack of interest in the theatre's renovation set the tone for their contributions to the management of the Winter Garden Theatre.

William Winter claimed that Stuart joined the Winter Garden management for two reasons: first, to gain control of the theatre, and second, to obtain the acting services of Booth, who was almost a guarantee of financial success.[35] Stuart apparently believed that if he could control the theatre he could control Booth.

The lease for the theatre was for one year. During this first year Louis LaFarge died, leaving his sons, his widow and an agent named Jones[36] responsible for negotiating a renewal of the lease. Stuart, taking advantage of LaFarge's death, wormed his way into the confidence of Jones and the LaFarge family. When the lease came up for renewal, Stuart was allowed to renew the lease in his own name without informing Booth and Clarke. Eventually, Booth and Clarke asked about the status of the lease and Stuart was forced to admit his dishonesty. Booth and Clarke's immediate reaction to Stuart's deception was unreported and no major changes were made in the partnership. However, at the end of this first season, Booth added his brother-in-law, J. Henry Magonigle, to the Winter Garden staff. Hired over Stuart's objections, Magonigle was assigned to oversee and protect the financial interests of Booth and Clarke.

The manner by which Stuart gained the confidence of the LaFarge family and their agent did not become clear to Booth until after the lease renewal affair. One day at the theatre, Booth accidentally walked in upon a conversation between Stuart and the LaFarge's agent, Jones. Booth immediately turned around and left the room, as the conversation had obviously "dropped" with his entrance, but Stuart caught Booth and urged him to loan Jones money at an exorbitant interest rate of 12 percent. Stuart claimed he himself was short of funds or he would loan the money to Jones, but Booth soon realized that Stuart lacked funds because the theatre's treasury was nearly empty. Stuart had been loaning Jones money from the theatre's treasury and pocketing the interest when Jones repaid the loans. By this scheme, Stuart had gained the confidence of the LaFarge family.[37] Jones was not only the family's agent but also later married the widow LaFarge.

The next major development was Clarke's decision to sell his interest in the Winter Garden Theatre. Sometime during the summer of 1866, Clarke convinced Booth to buy his one-third interest in the Winter Garden. Clarke's "share account" indicates that Clarke ended his association with the Winter Garden on 1 September 1866.[38] With Clarke's departure, Booth just added Clarke's interest to his own and received a two-thirds share of the theatre's profit.

Richard Lockridge suggests that Clarke withdrew from the Winter Garden for personal reasons. His wife, Asia, had still not recovered from the shock of John Wilkes' crime, and other pressing obligations made his involvement inconvenient.[39]

Clarke's decision to emigrate to England stemmed from events which followed Wilkes' assassination of Lincoln. When John Wilkes was

implicated in the crime, all the Booths, their relatives, and friends were immediately suspected of conspiracy. Clarke and Junius were actually arrested, brought to Washington and imprisoned. Later, Clarke was furious when he learned that Edwin had not been arrested and cursed his bad luck of having married a member of the Booth family. Clarke demanded a divorce from Asia, who was now five months pregnant, but he later cooled down and changed his mind.[40] By leaving America, he hoped to escape the stigma of the connection between the names of Clarke and Booth. In her Edwin Booth biography, Eleanor Ruggles states that Clarke sold his Winter Garden interest because "he was leaving for England to make a fresh start in life."[41]

Clarke had earned $12,937.22 during his brief two-year involvement with the Winter Garden management.[42] In addition, the $10,000 from Booth for his one-third interest in the Winter Garden gave Clarke a small "nut" for investing in new theatrical enterprises in England.

The termination of Booth and Clarke's relationship at the Winter Garden resulted in some permanent bad feelings between them. For example, in 1879 Booth declined a proposal from Clarke who had offered to manage Booth's new tour of England. Booth explained his refusal to William Winter: "Much as he would like to manage me in England (and I know he'd do his utmost in my behalf) I think it wd. be safer to deal with strangers in such business. Friendship and trade don't gee [sic] well--as both he and I know to our regret."[43]

Despite the loss of Clarke and his mistrust of Stuart, Booth was determined to continue his work at the Winter Garden Theatre. The 1866-67 season began with a series of losing engagements and on 23 March 1867, the theatre burned. William Winter assessed Booth's situation.

> Clarke had sold his interest in the theatre to Booth, for $10,000, just prior to the disaster, and these losses fell chiefly upon the tragedian, striking his gained success out of his grasp, setting him back in the current of enterprise, and making triumphs that before had been close at hand conditioned now on years of added toil.[44]

Booth's losses from the fire were staggering. His cumulative profit from the theatre at the time of the fire was under $9,000 which was spent when Booth bought Clarke's share for $10,000. The fire destroyed any chance for Booth to recoup his investment. It also destroyed his irreplaceable collection of personal costumes, theatre momentos, and several articles of stage dress belonging to his father, Junius Brutus Booth. According to the New York Times of 24 March 1867, "This wardrobe was considered to be the most expensive and valuable one in the possession of any single actor on this continent, and was valued at $60,000, upon which it is understood Mr. Booth had not a dollar of insurance."

Stuart barely escaped the blaze with his life,[45] and he lost his library and other personal property which had been located in his room. Stuart's losses, however, were of considerably less financial and historical value than Booth's. John S. Clarke was the only one who avoided any loss when the Winter Garden Theatre burned.

The fire did accomplish for Booth what he, himself, had been unable to do--escape from William Stuart. "The burning of the Winter Garden terminated the partnership between Stuart and myself. . . . Being tired of playing Sinbad I had 'longed long' to shake from my shoulders the villainous 'old man'."[46] Relieved of this association, Booth immediately began planning to manage alone a theatre that would allow him to continue his work of establishing the legitimate drama in America.

Booth's Management Intentions at the Winter Garden Theatre

Edwin Booth's management of the Winter Garden Theatre, and later Booth's Theatre, was influenced by his wife, Mary Devlin, and the English actor-manager, Charles Kean. Mary Devlin encouraged Booth in the pursuit of his career, and helped to shape his ambitious plan to establish the legitimate drama.[47] Charles Kean, however, provided Booth with a model for achieving his plan.

From 1851 to 1859 at the Princess Theatre, Charles Kean had dazzled London's fashionable audiences with his lavish and detailed antiquarian productions of Shakespeare. In 1861 Booth acted in London for several months as a visiting star[48] and became particularly impressed with the lingering fame of Kean's management. Kean's reputation and an already published immortalization of his work, Life and Theatrical Times of Charles Kean by J. W. Cole, convinced Booth that Kean was the proper model to emulate if he was to achieve his goal of establishing the legitimate drama in America.[49]

Booth's managerial plan for achieving his goal had two parts. First, he confined himself to act and produce only the legitimate drama. For Booth, the legitimate drama consisted of the works of Shakespeare and a number of other plays which were considered modern masterpieces, such as Bulwer's Richelieu, Payne's Brutus, and Tom Taylor's adaptation of The Fool's Revenge.[50] Booth believed that by producing the legitimate drama he might "restore to health the depraved Gothamite taste for melodrama, farce, minstrelsy, variety shows, French sensation drama, and the likes of Adah Isaacs Menken."[51]

Second, Booth planned to mount his productions, especially Shakespeare's, in a historically accurate manner.[52] Although two earlier attempts made in the 1840s and 1850s to establish the grand style had failed,[53] Booth believed that Kean's approach was correct. The majority of American critics agreed.[54]

> He can do nothing better than revive Shakespeare's dramas, in a manner worthy of Shakespeare. . . . Society demands dignity and purity, and elevation of the stage, and we are rejoiced to see its ministers anxious to attain the noblest mission of the Drama.[55]

Booth's decision to emulate Kean's approach was the most crucial and far-reaching decision of his management career. The decision had as many implications for the business management of the theatre as for the artistic management. This style of production demanded the allocation of large sums of money and a long preparation period for antiquarian research and for the construction of scenery, costumes, and properties.

Of the fifteen different plays Booth appeared in at the Winter Garden,[56] only three were called "Booth Grand Revivals." The title "Booth Grand Revival" was used in the advertisements for the three productions which featured historically accurate settings and costumes. Booth produced only one revival per season. The first, Hamlet, opened on 26 November 1864 and closed 22 March 1865 after one hundred consecutive performances. Booth's Hamlet set a New York theatre record for consecutive performances of a Shakespearean play which stood until John Barrymore's one hundred and one performance Hamlet in 1923. The next season Bulwer-Lytton's Richelieu was produced in the grand style and ran for forty-two, non-consecutive performances between 1 February 1866 and 29 March 1866. The final revival was The Merchant of Venice. This

production opened on 28 January 1867 and closed 16 March 1867 after forty-two performances.

It is difficult to fault Booth for his decision to emulate Charles Kean. Kean's management had been highly acclaimed, the majority of American critics considered Kean's approach to be correct, and Booth's historically accurate productions were in harmony with the nineteenth-century trend toward realism. Historical accuracy, like the rise of the box set, the use of commonplace objects on the stage in melodrama, and Tom Robertson's attempts to introduce scenery of a more "realistic" type, was one of many nineteenth-century tendencies which eventually culminated in the establishment of realism.[57] Edwin Booth's managerial choice of historically accurate settings and costumes reflected the artistic currents and theatrical conditions of his age.

The Management Duties of Stuart, Clarke and Booth

The Winter Garden Theatre organization featured a nearly complete separation of the artistic and business functions. William Stuart, listed in the theatre's programmes as manager, had responsibility for the business affairs of the theatre.[58] John S. Clarke's involvement in either the business or artistic management was negligible except for his appearances as a star performer. Edwin Booth, on the other hand, was deeply involved in the artistic affairs as a producer and star performer.

Stuart was a popular but unscrupulous man[59] whose greatest accomplishments at the Winter Garden Theatre were in promotion. He was an excellent publicity agent. His use of numerous promotional gimmicks, such as a small statuette of Booth (suitable for drawing room tables)

helped to successfully promote Edwin Booth and the Winter Garden Theatre.[60] Stuart later boasted that his ingenious advertising campaign was responsible for the famous one hundred nights of Hamlet without which Booth would never have attained his status as a major star. Stuart's boast that the run had made Booth a major star was absurd; Booth had earned a national reputation long before his association with Stuart.[61] However, Booth admitted that the run would never have lasted if Stuart had not pressured him to continue on, night after night.[62]

Booth was "disappointed in Stuart's utter uselessness" as manager, "for he did nothing but drink and write an [illegible word] puff. . . ."[63] According to Booth, Stuart's incompetence resulted in his "doing all the management, while Stuart 'entertained' in his room. . . ."[64] Even such mundane duties as being responsible for properties was forced on Booth.

> At the theatre I could not (or H[65]. . . rather could not) get so simple a piece of work done as the hanging [of] a bell, nor could he borrow a peculiar chair (antique) from Cypher (next door, nearly) unless I would be responsible--'we can't do anything for Mr. Stuart' was the universal reply.[66]

Stuart remembered the Winter Garden management differently. "Well, while he [Booth] played with me he had no business cares. . . . I do not think during the many years we were together we ever had a word of difference."[67] Stuart's version of the events at the Winter Garden Theatre must be viewed with skepticism. He was a vain, vicious man who often ridiculed Booth to his newspaper cronies.[68] William Winter wrote of Stuart, "All the stock misrepresentations of Booth that have drifted through the American press originated with him."[69] In fairness to Stuart, it must be pointed out that as manager, he was

responsible for all the theatre's business duties, such as advertising, payroll, budget, and supervision of all the front-of-house activities. Booth had little knowledge or interest in these areas and would not have thought to credit Stuart with the performance of these duties.

In addition to his duties as manager, Stuart also promised Booth and Clarke that he would become their "true" critic. "He was to criticize," wrote Booth, "as Hazlitt did Kean, all the performances of both C & myself, without favor or reserve, and to point out defects and guide us as a true critic should do."[70] Stuart never wrote a criticism of either Booth or Clarke at the Winter Garden. He had used this appeal as a ploy to gain their confidence and probably never intended to fulfill this promise.

Despite his problems with Stuart, Booth remained committed to his intention of elevating the legitimate drama. He concentrated on presenting Shakespeare in the grand style and insisted upon a major voice in the one managerial or business decision that was most closely related to the artistic product--the hiring of the acting company.

The Winter Garden Theatre acting company was organized in the traditional stock format and Booth wanted the best available actors for each line of business. Stuart described how the company was chosen: "I selected the company, subject to his approval. He [Booth] went in for the very best actors, those fitted for particular parts, without consideration of the salaries, and he usually had some stars and semi-stars in his support."[71] Booth was solely concerned with the artistic nature of the company, and he left the business aspects to Stuart.

Booth's primary duties at the Winter Garden were artistic and centered upon those plays he produced. Stuart described these duties:

"He designed and directed all these presentations--or revivals, as they were styled--both as to scenery, properties and dresses--all the accessories of art."[72] By nineteenth-century standards, Booth devoted an extraordinary amount of time to planning his productions. He discussed and approved every detail of setting, costumes, and properties. Booth described the long process by which his Hamlet evolved.

> Hamlet was to be the first of the series. The scenes were painted after long and frequent discussions with Withom, whom I had (at Hanly's suggestion) hunted up somewhere in 'fairy-land' (Canada or Nova Scotia, I forget) and the costumes prepared by Mrs. Bohmer, after the crudest suggestions by the 'subscriber' [Stuart], Hanly, Withom, Mrs. Bohmer & myself were hard at it (I forgot Dewell in this). . . .[73]

Booth's concern with detail was evidenced by his introduction of movable or hinged tormentors for his Hamlet. Prior to Booth's innovation, the tormentors were painted to be compatible with the architectural style of the theatre and were never changed from the beginning to the end of a season. The aesthetic effect was deplorable as actors entered a cottage, a castle, or whatever, through doors painted to match the interior of the theatre. Booth had new tormentors for every change of scene. After the rising of the curtain, these "wings" were pushed forward and visually enclosed the scene.[74]

In summary, Edwin Booth's major responsibility was artistic. But Stuart's incompetency and Clarke's lack of involvement, forced Booth to devote time to the business side of the enterprise. Booth soon tired of his multiple tasks and prayed to be rid of Stuart.[75] In an 1876 letter to William Winter, Booth succinctly evaluated the roles of William Stuart and John S. Clarke in the management of the Winter Garden Theatre.

> . . . being now freed from him [Stuart] by the 'ordeal of fire,' I resolved to try alone hereafter that which

> neither he nor Clarke had ever rendered me the least assistance--namely the establishment of a first class legitimate theatre in New York.[76]

The "Booth Grand Revivals": Hamlet, Richelieu and The Merchant of Venice

Edwin Booth planned to open Hamlet, his first revival, early in October 1864,[77] but numerous complications caused a delay. One complication was a benefit performance of Julius Caesar,[78] featuring the three actor sons of Junius Brutus Booth and designed to raise funds for a Shakespeare statue in Central Park. The performance was originally planned for July or August 1864,[79] but problems in getting a firm commitment from John Wilkes, and then later an illness to Edwin, pushed the performance into the fall. Finally, on 25 November 1864, Julius Caesar was presented at the Winter Garden Theatre--the only time Edwin, John Wilkes and Junius appeared on the stage together. Asia Booth Clarke described the memorable evening.

> The theatre was crowded to suffocation, people standing in every available place. The greatest excitement prevailed, and the aged mother of the Booths sat in a private box to witness this performance. The three brothers received and merited the applause of that immense audience, for they acted well, and presented a picture too strikingly historic to be soon forgotten.[80]

The following night, 26 November, theatre history was made again as Edwin Booth opened his first revival, the famous one hundred night Hamlet.[81] Playgoers and critics eagerly awaited Booth's Hamlet and the opening was the theatrical event of the season. Stuart had created much of the excitement that surrounded the event by such schemes as inviting reporters to lunch and then teasing them with a glimpse of scenes in rehearsal.[82]

The opening night performance of Hamlet fulfilled nearly everyone's expectations. Booth's performance as the melancholy Dane received near unanimous approval and reaction to the "grand style" of production was overwhelmingly positive. "The scenic effects have never been equalled in this city for intrinsic beauty or historical accuracy," trumpeted the New York Evening Post, and the New York Tribune wrote that "for the first time 'Hamlet' was produced with due regard to external effect."[83] Response to the acting company was also generally favorable. "The play was in all respects well-acted. It is seldom that we have a cast so substantially good . . ." reported the New York Times.[84] Nevertheless, some reaction was less enthusiastic: "The general representation . . . was efficient" was the verdict of the Tribune.[85]

Despite the overwhelmingly favorable reviews, no one expected the play to run one hundred performances. During the early rehearsals, William Stuart predicted that the show might run six months. Later he revised his prediction to eight weeks, and by opening night felt that even four weeks was a successful run for Hamlet.[86] But the public response was greater than expected and, according to Stuart,

> The first twenty-one of the one hundred nights of 'Hamlet' the receipts were very large. They then suddenly dropped. Booth became uneasy, and wished to withdraw the play, but I coaxed him on, and in the last three weeks the receipts were immense. It paid on the whole very fairly, though I have seen the opposite constantly stated.[87]

Ecstatic with the success of Hamlet, Stuart deployed numerous promotional tactics, some of questionable taste, to keep the play running. For example, during the Christmas season he recommended Hamlet as a family play, perfectly suited to children.[88]

Regardless of Stuart's puffs, Hamlet was a popular and financial success with gross receipts totaling nearly $70,000[89] for the play's seventeen week run. Hamlet alone accounted for 51 percent of the season's total gross receipts. The actual profit earned by Hamlet cannot be accurately computed, but the profit from 1 December 1864 to 1 March 1864 (includes seventy-seven Hamlet performances) accounted for over half of the theatre's profit during the 1864-65 season.[90]

The enormous expenditures for scenery, costumes, and properties needed to produce Hamlet aroused little concern among drama critics. Most, like the critic for the New York Times, believed that "liberality in spending" in pursuit of art was justifiable.[91] However, near the end of the 1864-65 season, the critic for the New York Tribune questioned the spending priorities of the Winter Garden Theatre management.

> The error of the Winter Garden management is that it always wastes its resources in the wrong direction and instead of exhibiting a sufficient liberality and enterprise in all the departments, rushes into detached and incidental extravaganzas, while neglecting the important consideration of large and broad general effect. Thus it was with 'Hamlet,' the scenery--of which was superb, and the acting of which, with one or two notable exceptions was dismally bad. To the judicious spectator, a tolerable cast of characters would have been heartily welcome, even at the expense of a little of the scenic gew-gaw.[92]

Although critics generally responded favorably to the 1864-65 Winter Garden Theatre acting company, this review initiated the cry "good scenery--bad acting" which hounded Booth throughout his management career.

The critical, popular, and financial success of Hamlet gave Booth a powerful incentive to continue his work of elevating the legitimate drama.

> May not those who yearn to see me carry out the ideas we love to think worthy of a life's hard labor, rejoice now to see a step made toward the fulfillment of what is true and beautiful in art? I think they do; and in this belief I begin to realize the usefullness of my labor, and to appreciate that which I once deemed worthless.[93]

By February 1865, Booth was already preparing Richelieu, his second revival, predicting it would be "more superbly done than even 'Hamlet'."[94] However, when Booth began his engagement on 3 January 1866 he chose to open with Hamlet, not Richelieu. Once again, it was a performance of historical importance as Booth made his first appearance since the tragedy of Lincoln's assassination. During the difficult and gloomy days after the assassination, Booth had resolved never to return to the stage. But the family's financial needs and his desire to continue his campaign on behalf of the legitimate drama forced Booth to reconsider his retirement. He explained this decision in a letter to Mrs. Cary, the wife of Richard Cary.

> You have also, doubtless, heard that I will soon appear on the stage. Sincerely, were it not for means, I would not do so, public sympathy notwithstanding; but I have huge debts to pay, a family to care for, a love for the grand and beautiful in art, to boot, to gratify, and hence my sudden resolve to abandon the heavy, aching gloom of my little red room, where I have sat so long chewing my heart in solitude, for the excitement of the only trade for which God has fitted me.[95]

Booth's decision to return to the stage with Hamlet was an intelligent managerial maneuver for three reasons. First, by opening with Hamlet, his most successful role, Booth increased his chances of receiving a favorable public response. Second, by reviving this highly acclaimed production of the previous season, with the same scenery, costumes and properties, he whetted the public's taste for a new grand

revival. And finally, if Booth had opened with Richelieu, the production would have been overshadowed by the excitement surrounding his return to the stage. Booth's decision proved correct. In four weeks, Hamlet grossed an amazing $29,148.40.[96] Booth could have run Hamlet for several more months but chose instead to open Richelieu.

Richelieu opened 1 February 1866 to critical and public acclaim which often exceeded that given Hamlet. "The most beautiful play ever brought out on the American stage" exclaimed the New York Times.[97] More typical of the reaction, however, was the New York Tribune:

> Those who were so fortunate as to be present, last evening, at the Winter Garden--and the house was crowded--witnessed one of the most thrilling efforts in dramatic art that have been made, within the memory of this generation. Mr. Booth's Richelieu is the perfect embodiment of the ideal of the author. . . . But we must not forget to note that those who were so fortunate as to be present at the Winter Garden, last night, also witnessed such a triumph in stage pageantry and scenic art, as has never hitherto been achieved upon the New York stage. . . . The greatest care has been taken to insure perfect accuracy in scenery and costumes.[98]

On 5 February 1866, the critic for the Tribune wrote a second review declaring Richelieu's cast and production style superior to Hamlet.[99]

The public's enthusiasm for Richelieu was evident in the production's financial success. According to Stuart, Richelieu "was a great success in every sense and yielded a large profit."[100] Forty-two performances of Richelieu earned estimated gross receipts of $40,000 or 25 percent of the season's total receipts.[101] Despite large audiences, Richelieu closed on 29 March 1966 to clear the theatre for a previously scheduled engagement. Booth was relieved to stop, knowing that he could successfully revive Richelieu the next season.

The artistic and financial success of Hamlet and Richelieu convinced Booth that his dreams were slowly being realized.

> It really seems that the dreams of my past life--so far as my profession is concerned--are being realized. What Mary and I used to plan for my future, what Richard [Cary] and I used laughingly to promise ourselves in our model theatre, seems to be realized--in these two plays, at least. . . . as I find my hopes being fulfilled, I cannot help but believe that there is a sufficient importance in my art to interest them still; that to a higher influence than the world believes I am moved by I owe the success I have achieved. Assured that all I do in this advance carries, even beyond the range of my little world (the theatre), an elevating and refining influence, while in it the effect is good, I begin to feel really happy in my once uneasy sphere of action. I dare say I shall soon be contented with my lot.[102]

Edwin Booth chose The Merchant of Venice for his third "Booth Grand Revival." Why is unknown; the choice is puzzling since Shylock was not considered one of Booth's best roles. As with his earlier revivals, Booth devoted months to its preparation. However, conditions at the Winter Garden were quite different for this revival. John S. Clarke had opened each of the first two seasons with relatively successful engagements,[103] but by the fall of 1866 he was in London. To replace Clarke, Booth and Stuart engaged two female stars, Jean Davenport Lander and Mrs. D. P. Bowers. They filled the first eight weeks of the 1866-67 season but neither star was successful. Between 1 September and 30 November 1866 the partners absorbed a loss of nearly $11,000.[104]

Booth opened at the Winter Garden on 27 November and, again, held back his newest revival for later in the engagement. Booth presented occasional performances of Hamlet and Richelieu, and a number of other plays from his standard repertoire, such as Tom Taylor's adaptation of

The Fool's Revenge, Othello, Richard Sheil's The Apostate, Brutus, and Romeo and Juliet. Finally, on 28 January 1867, The Merchant of Venice opened.

The critics' response to The Merchant of Venice was mixed, particularly in regard to Booth's Shylock and the performance of the acting company. However, the scenery, costumes, and properties received unanimous praise. The New York Times echoed the sentiments of most critics when it declared, "It has not been our privilege for many years to see a more finely-mounted production."[105] But it was the Tribune which paid the production its highest accolade.

> Perhaps there has never been a play produced in this country with equal perfection of scenic accessories; and we doubt if the best Shakespearian revivals of London have presented a scenic parallel to the present production of 'The Merchant of Venice' at the Winter Garden.[106]

The acting company came under increasing attack in The Merchant of Venice. The critic for the Tribune, who had been persistently negative toward the acting company since the first revival, Hamlet, was especially harsh. "In respect to the acting," he wrote, "there is little need of comment here. Most of it is very bad and probably will not become better."[107] The most scathing attack appeared in The Galaxy after the Winter Garden fire.

> The recently-burned Winter Garden was almost without an actor with the gait, speech or manners of a Christian. The Merchant of Venice, produced with so much lavish pictorial splendor, was never so wretchedly acted upon the metropolitan boards. Of course, this reference is not to Booth.[108]

The public's response to The Merchant of Venice was equally mixed. "'Shylock' was a failure," Stuart later wrote, "but the reproduction of 'Hamlet' and 'Richelieu' in the early months of his engagement yielded

sufficient profit to cover any deficit."[109] The financial records relating to this production are incomplete and many of the records may have burned in the fire. However, the extant "Profit and Loss Account" confirms Stuart's observations.[110] Despite an unenthusiastic public, The Merchant of Venice ran for forty-two consecutive performances and was praised by the Times as "worthy of the establishment that produced 'Hamlet' and 'Richelieu'."[111]

Edwin Booth had been responsible for the artistic direction of three significant, historically accurate productions during his tenure as manager of the Winter Garden Theatre. The greatest flaw of his management, according to some critics, was the failure to secure a first-rate acting company. As noted previously, Booth wanted the best available actors, but there is no evidence clearly establishing whether he got the actors he wanted or had to settle for the actors he could afford. Nevertheless, each production was widely praised for its manner of presentation and only The Merchant of Venice failed to generate enough audience interest to succeed financially.

Summary: Edwin Booth and the Management of the Winter Garden Theatre

As a manager of the Winter Garden Theatre, Edwin Booth made three significant contributions to the development of the American theatre. First, his revivals made historical accuracy the acceptable production style for the legitimate drama in America. And while historical accuracy was simply translated into lavish settings and costumes at other theatres, audiences and critics would never again readily accept the use of tacky and mismatched settings in the major New York theatres. Second,

Booth's attention to detail demonstrated his growing concern with higher production standards. And third, Booth demonstrated in Hamlet and Richelieu that productions done in the grand style were economically viable. However, as The Merchant of Venice indicated, the financial success of a major revival was dependent upon all elements of the production being successful. Lavish, historically accurate settings and costumes were not a guarantee of financial success.

The artistic acclaim accorded the "Booth Grand Revivals" placed Booth squarely in the tradition of the great English actor-managers. No longer just a mere star, he had now distinguished himself as a "producer with vision."[112] Praised by artists, critics, and the public for his "cultivation of public taste for the Shakespearian stage,"[113] Booth was confident of his managerial abilities. The burning of the Winter Garden and the resultant financial loss did not discourage Booth. Instead of searching for another theatre, he decided to build his own theatre and continue his quest to elevate the legitimate drama in America.

CHAPTER III FOOTNOTES

[1]Edwin Booth, Letter to J. Henry Magonigle, 14 Nov. 1874, Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington, D.C. J. Henry Magonigle was Edwin Booth's brother-in-law by his first wife, Mary Devlin. Magonigle supervised the financial interests of Booth and Clarke at the Winter Garden Theatre and later served as business manager of Booth's Theatre.

[2]William Winter, Life and Art of Edwin Booth (1893; rpt. New York: McMillan, 1906), p. 48.

[3]Arthur Hornblow, A History of the Theatre in America (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1919), II, 166 and Glenn Hughes, A History of the American Theatre 1700-1950 (New York: Samuel French, 1951), p. 169.

[4]The first U.S. Census to contain ethnic population information was compiled in 1870 and revealed that almost 83 percent of New York City's population of 942,292 had at least one foreign-born parent. A vast majority (79 percent) had two foreign-born parents, while only 17 percent had two American-born parents.

[5]James D. McCabe, Jr., Sights and Shadows of New York Life (1872; rpt. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1970), p. 442.

[6]McCabe, p. 442.

[7]The concert saloon appeared in the late sixties and quickly became popular because it combined entertainment and liquor. Since no curtain was used to separate the performers from the customers, the saloons were not under the jurisdiction of the strict local ordinances which regulated the sale of alcoholic beverages in the theatres. By 1869 there were an estimated six hundred saloons in New York City.

[8]Mary C. Henderson, The City and the Theatre (Clifton, N.J.: James T. White and Company, 1973), pp. 103, 121.

[9]Henderson, p. 103.

[10]Henderson, p. 74.

[11]George C. D. Odell, Annals of the New York Stage (New York: Columbia University Press, 1931), VIII, 285.

[12]Odell, p. 445. Lydia Thompson was ridiculed by critics but loved by audiences during her engagement at Niblo's Garden in 1869. Lydia's spicy potpourri of songs, gags and impersonations set in the framework of a serious subject was an important step in the development of burlesque. She triumped at Niblo's and then launched a series of highly successful nationwide tours. Garff Wilson, Three Hundred Years of American Drama and Theatre (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1973), pp. 189-190 and Hughes, p. 308.

[13]Mark Twain, Mark Twain's Travels with Mr. Brown, ed. Franklin Walker and G. Ezra Dane (New York: Russell & Russell, 1940), p. 85.

[14]Chapter one, p. 28.

[15]Wilson, p. 189.

[16]Richard Grant White, "The Age of Burlesque," The Galaxy, August 1869, pp. 200-202 as cited by Barnard Hewitt, Theatre U.S.A., 1665 to 1957 (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1959), p. 210.

[17]Twain, p. 87.

[18]A pantomime in name only, Humpty Dumpty was a full-length entertainment with music and dialogue. It opened 10 March 1868 and ran for 483 performances, surpassing the record number of consecutive performances set by The Black Crook just two seasons earlier.

[19]Henderson, p. 117.

[20]Lloyd Morris, Incredible New York (New York: Random House, 1951), pp. 64-65.

[21]Hughes, p. 198.

[22]"Wallack," The Oxford Companion to the Theatre, 1967 ed.

[23]McCabe, p. 475.

[24]This history of the Winter Garden Theatre is from Henderson, pp. 107-109; Hughes, pp. 183, 186; New York Times, 24 March 1867; and Richard Lockridge, Darling of Misfortune Edwin Booth: 1833-1893 (New York: Benjamin Blom, Inc., 1932), pp. 135-36.

[25]Joseph Jefferson, The Autobiography of Joseph Jefferson, ed. Alan S. Downer (1890; rpt. Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 1964), p. 157.

[26]Jefferson, pp. 157-58.

[27]Jefferson, p. 158.

[28]Charles H. Shattuck, "The Theatrical Management of Edwin Booth," in The Theatrical Manager in England and America, ed. Joseph W. Donohue (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1971), p. 148.

[29]Edwin Booth, Letter to J. Henry Magonigle, 14 Nov. 1874.

[30]For biographical information on William Stuart and additional material on his relationship with Edwin Booth, see Winter, pp. 114-19 and Shattuck, "Theatrical Management," pp. 147-51, 163.

[31]On 14 November 1874 Edwin Booth wrote a fourteen-page letter to J. Henry Magonigle concerning his relationship with William Stuart. The letter also traced Booth's recollection of the events which culminated in the leasing of the Winter Garden Theatre. Although the letter was written to Magonigle, the information was to be transferred to William Winter who was compiling a record of the Winter Garden enterprise. This material later became the major source for the Winter Garden portions of Winter's biography on Edwin Booth entitled Life and Art of Edwin Booth. Unless otherwise indicated, the 14 November 1874 letter has served as the basis for this account of the Booth, Clarke, and Stuart management of the Winter Garden Theatre.

[32]Shattuck, "Theatrical Management," pp. 146-147.

[33]Shattuck, "Theatrical Management," p. 150.

[34]"To Mrs. Richard Cary," 12 July 1864, Edwina Booth Grossman, Edwin Booth: Recollections by His Daughter and Letters to His Friends (New York: Century, 1894), p. 160.

[35]Winter, p. 117.

[36]The first name of the agent Jones is unknown.

[37]Edwin Booth, Letter to J. Henry Magonigle, 14 Nov. 1874.

[38]Winter Garden Theatre Account Book located at The Walter Hampden-Edwin Booth Theatre Collection and Library, The Players, New York.

[39]Lockridge, p. 174.

[40]Eleanor Ruggles, Prince of Players: Edwin Booth (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1953), pp. 188, 197.

[41]Ruggles, p. 211.

[42]"Share Account," Winter Garden Theatre Account Book.

[43]"To William Winter," 20 July 1879, Daniel J. Watermeier, Between Actor and Critic: Selected Letters of Edwin Booth and William Winter (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1971), p. 134.

[44]Winter, p. 80.

[45]Asia Booth Clarke, The Elder and the Younger Booth (Boston: James R. Osgood and Company, 1882), p. 159.

[46]Edwin Booth, Letter to William Winter, 6 February 1876, The Walter Hampden-Edwin Booth Theatre Collection and Library, The Players, New York.

[47]Grossman, p. 28.

[48]Booth believed that a starring engagement in London would increase his reputation in America. He also planned on visiting Italy and France "to study art in its native atmosphere," so that he could vivify his "future productions with something of the true and Beautiful." ("To Richard Cary," 1860, Grossman, p. 132.)

[49]Shattuck, "Theatrical Management," p. 157.

[50]Charles H. Shattuck, Shakespeare on the American Stage: From the Hallams to Edwin Booth (Washington, D.C.: Folger Shakespeare Library, 1976), p. 131.

[51]Shattuck, "Theatrical Management," pp. 157-58.

[52]Winter, p. 82.

[53]In 1846 Charles Kean produced Richard III, Two Gentlemen of Verona and King John at the Park Theatre, New York, and introduced America to the principles of historical accuracy. The first American actor-manager to follow Kean's example was the comedian William E. Burton. Between 1853 and 1856, Burton produced a series of Shakespeare's plays done in the grand style at Burton's Theatre on Chambers Street, New Work. For a detailed account of Kean and Burton's productions, see Shattuck, Shakespeare, pp. 106-16.

[54]Charles H. Shattuck, The Hamlet of Edwin Booth (Urbana: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1969), p. 57.

[55]New York Tribune, 29 Jan. 1867.

[56]During his management of the Winter Garden Theatre, Booth appeared in the following productions: Julius Caesar, Hamlet, Othello, Ruy Blas, Richelieu, Don Caesar de Bazan, Katherine and Petruchio, Richard III, The Stranger, the Apostate, Brutus, A New Way to Pay Old Debts, Romeo and Juliet, The Fool's Revenge, and The Merchant of Venice.

[57]Allardyce Nicoll, The Development of the Theatre, 5th ed. (1927; rpt. New York: Harcourt-Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1966), p. 200.

[58]Clarke, p. 159.

[59]Shattuck, Hamlet, p. 54.

[60]Ruggles, p. 163.

[61]Necase, "A Great Artist, But a Bad Manager," n.s., 10 June 1886, n.p.

[62]Edwin Booth, Letter to J. Henry Magonigle, 14 Nov. 1874.

[63]Edwin Booth, Letter to J. Henry Magonigle, 14 Nov. 1874.

[64]Edwin Booth, Letter to J. Henry Magonigle, 14 Nov. 1874.

[65]"H" was probably J. G. Hanley, stage manager at the Winter Garden Theatre during Booth's management.

[66]Edwin Booth, Letter to J. Henry Magonigle, 14 Nov. 1874.

[67]"Howard's Letter" Stories About Booth from Stuart, His Old Manager," n.s., 1893; hereafter cited as "Howard."

[68]Edwin Booth, Letter to J. Henry Magonigle, 14 Nov. 1874. Stuart had at least one defender among the theatre critics of the day. Nym Crinkle in The World (9 June 1893) wrote of Stuart:

> It was very fortunate for Edwin Booth that the working manager who did so much to build up his fame was not the ordinary theatrical hustler, but a man with a diplomatic training, a skilled literateur and a sagacious and politic manipulator of public opinion, who saw clearly all the conditions of public taste and the possibilities of public enthusiasm.

[69]Winter, p. 119.

[70]Edwin Booth, Letter to J. Henry Magonigle, 14 Nov. 1874.

[71]"Howard," n.p.

[72]"Howard," n.p.

[73]Edwin Booth, Letter to J. Henry Magonigle, 14 Nov. 1874. Booth referred to the following members of the Winter Garden Theatre staff in this quote: Charles Witham, scene painter; J. G. Hanley or Hanly, stage manager; Mrs. Bohanan, costumer; and James P. Deuel, properties.

[74]New York Tribune, 28 Nov. 1864.

[75]Winter, p. 119.

[76]Edwin Booth, Letter to J. H. McVicker, Feb. 1876, Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington, D.C.

[77]"To Miss Emma Cary," 26 Aug. 1864, Grossman, p. 164.

[78]Julius Caesar was presented with stock scenery and Booth's only involvement was as an actor.

[79]"To Miss Emma F. Cary," 17 June 1864, Grossman, p. 153.

[80]Clarke, p. 159. Julius Caesar was ignored by the major New York newspaper critics. There are two probable explanations. First, Booth's long-awaited production of Hamlet was opening the following evening and the critics may have decided not to review consecutive performances in the same theatre. Second, most critics chose to attend the opening of an opera on the evening of the Julius Caesar performance.

[81]Hamlet and other Booth "revivals" could be mounted in less than twenty-four hours. Booth often interrupted a run of a revival at both the Winter Garden and Booth's with performances of plays which used stock scenery.

[82]Edwin Booth, Letter to J. Henry Magonigle, 14 Nov. 1874.

[83]New York Evening Post, 28 Nov. 1864 and New York Tribune, 28 Nov. 1864.

[84]New York Times, 28 Nov. 1864.

[85]New York Tribune, 28 Nov. 1864.

[86]Edwin Booth, Letter to J. H. Magonigle, 14 Nov. 1874.

[87]"Howard," n.p.

[88]Shattuck, Hamlet, p. 60.

[89]Computations indicate gross receipts of $71,604.25, but this figure includes the receipts from three other performances which featured the stock company without Booth. All statistics regarding the Winter Garden Theatre are taken or computed from the Winter Garden Theatre Account Book unless otherwise noted.

[90]See Appendix B, Table 13. The profit for this three-month period was $5,870.55.

[91]New York Times, 28 Nov. 1864.

[92]New York Tribune, 17 May 1865.

[93]"To Mrs. Richard Cary," 9 Feb. 1865, Grossman, p. 170.

[94]"To Mrs. Richard Cary," 9 Feb. 1865, Grossman, p. 170.

[95]"To Mrs. Richard F. Cary," 20 Dec. 1865, Grossman, p. 174.

[96]During these four weeks, Hamlet was presented twenty-two times and Ruy Blas three times.

[97]New York Times, 5 Feb. 1866.

[98]New York Tribune, 3 Feb. 1866.

[99]New York Tribune, 5 Feb. 1866.

[100]"Howard," n.p. The Winter Garden Theatre Account Book supports Stuart's claim.

[101]Since the account books provide only the weekly gross receipt totals and Richelieu was not performed consecutively, it is not possible to compute the actual gross receipts for Richelieu.

[102]"To Miss Emma Cary," 14 Feb. 1866, Grossman, p. 157.

[103]See Appendix, Table 13.

[104]"Share Account," Winter Garden Theatre Account Book. The actual loss was $10,935.98 and Booth, with a two-thirds interest in the theatre, absorbed $7,290.65 of the loss.

[105]New York Times, 29 Jan. 1867.

[106]New York Tribune, 1 Feb. 1867.

[107]New York Tribune, 1 Feb. 1867.

[108]"Some of Our Actors," The Galaxy, Jan. 1868, n.p.

[109]"Howard," n.p.

[110]The "Share Account" confirms Stuart. From 1 December 1866 to 28 February 1867, Booth earned a profit of $4,334.21 for the theatre.

[111]New York Times, 29 Jan. 1867.

[112]Lockridge, pp. 180,137.

[113]Edwin Booth, Letter to J. H. McVicker, Feb. 1876.

CHAPTER IV

EDWIN BOOTH'S MANAGEMENT OF BOOTH'S THEATRE

Edwin Booth's management of Booth's Theatre from 1869 to 1873 marked the culmination of his theatre management career. His management of the Walnut Street Theatre, the Boston Theatre, and the Winter Garden Theatre prepared him for the increased duties and responsibilities required in the management of Booth's Theatre.

Booth's involvement with Booth's Theatre consisted of two separate but related roles: first, as a theatre manager and second, as a theatre financier. His previous management experience helped Booth to fulfill the business and artistic duties of a theatre manager but it had not prepared him to function as a theatre financier involved in the planning, financing and construction of a major metropolitan theatre.

Before investigating Booth's performance as a theatre manager and financier, it is important to examine two significant changes in the New York theatrical scene between 1869 and 1873.

New York Theatrical Scene

The first important change in the New York theatrical scene was the appearance of two prominent theatre managers, Augustin Daly and A. M. Palmer.[1] Daly, the first American manager to be clearly identified as a manager-régisseur, carefully supervised every production detail including the gestures, movements and intonations of his actors.[2]

Palmer was a skillful coordinator of theatre artists and created a harmonious and talented organization.[3] The managerial success of Daly, Palmer and subsequent managers, such as Steele Mackaye, David Belasco, and Daniel Frohman, firmly established the manager-régisseur and signaled the decline of the actor-manager in the American theatre.

The second change was a growing sentiment among theatre managers that "Shakespeare spells ruin." This phrase was first used by Mr. Frederick B. Chatterton, the manager of the Drury Lane Theatre, London, in a letter printed in the New York Times on 6 September 1869.

> For seven years I have been the manager of this house, and this is my experience. I have produced the best plays of SHAKESPEARE, BYRON, MILTON and GOETHE . . . I lost money . . . I was stubborn, and pursued this policy for pride's sake during six years. But, Sir, I am neither a literary missionary nor a martyr: I am simply the manager of a theatre, a vendor of intellectual entertainment to the London public, and I found that Shakespeare spelt ruin and Byron bankruptcy.

Mr. Chatterton's concern as to the viability of producing Shakespeare was shared by New York's theatre managers. Between 1869 and 1873, the three leading New York legitimate theatres, excluding Booth's Theatre--Wallack's Theatre, the Union Square Theatre, and Daly's Fifth Avenue Theatre--staged only four different Shakespeare plays.[4] New York theatre historian George Odell claimed that the movement away from Shakespeare as the staple of the legitimate theatre's repertoire was led by Augustin Daly who taught the public "that a great theatre could be run without absolute dependence on old comedy and Shakespeare."[5]

Nevertheless, from the 1860s through the 1880s, Edwin Booth and Henry Irving earned fortunes performing a number of Shakespeare's plays. Booth and Irving succeeded with Shakespeare for two reasons. First, the "improved" versions of Shakespeare by Cibber, Garrick, and others, which

were used during most of the nineteenth century, emphasized action and melodramatic episodes[6] perfectly suited to the audience's romantic taste. Even Booth admitted it was action and not poetry that brought audiences to the theatre. "Were it not for the continuous action throughout all of Shakespeare's plays--I fear the spectators would sleep through his exquisite poetry. . . ."[7] The second and more significant reason was their status as major stars. In the nineteenth century major Shakespearian roles were considered the true test of a star's ability. Audiences enjoyed the action-filled plays, but they came primarily to see the star.

As an actor-manager whose repertoire emphasized Shakespeare, Edwin Booth's management was in opposition to the significant changes which occurred on the New York theatrical scene between 1869 and 1873. Yet the actual effect of these changes on Booth and on his management practice is difficult to measure, and there is no evidence that Booth was even conscious of these changes during his management of Booth's Theatre.

Booth's Management Intentions

Edwin Booth intended to manage Booth's Theatre as he had managed the Winter Garden Theatre. He planned to continue presenting only legitimate drama in a historically accurate manner. Booth also intended his new theatre to be the home of the legitimate drama in America and he invited the major stars of the period to perform there. This format would have resulted in Booth's making only infrequent appearances as a star actor at his theatre.[8] Long-time friend William Bispham described Booth's dream.

> For many years one of his dreams had been to build a theatre which should be the home of the legitimate drama and a school of acting, where the plays of Shakespeare and the great dramatists should be presented in a style of splendor and perfection such as the world had never seen before, and where the most eminent members of the stage would have a pride in playing, and in being permanently established--in short an edition of the Théâtre Francais.[9]

However, Booth's plan for a "national theatre" failed to materialize. Edwin Forrest turned down an offer to open Booth's Theatre in Othello, and Charles Fechter chose Niblo's Garden for his American debut in 1870.[10] Some stars such as Joseph Jefferson, Charlotte Cushman, and Dion Boucicault later appeared at Booth's Theatre, but the snub by Edwin Forrest and Charles Fechter caused Booth to return to the format that had earned him critical acclaim at the Winter Garden Theatre--the acting and producing of revivals in a historically accurate manner.

In five seasons at Booth's Theatre he produced and starred in nine revivals and elaborately mounted two productions for other stars. He staged and starred in Romeo and Juliet, Othello, Hamlet, Macbeth, Richelieu, Much Ado About Nothing, Julius Caesar, Richard III, and Brutus. He also mounted Rip Van Winkle for Joseph Jefferson and The Winter's Tale for Lawrence Barrett. According to Charles H. Shattuck, these productions were part of Booth's master plan to build "a matchless production of every important play in the modern legitimate repertory."[11]

The public expected Booth to continue his revivals in the grand style popularized by Charles Kean at the Princess Theatre.[12] And, on at least one occasion, Booth also indicated a desire to go beyond Kean's work by restoring the "true texts" of Shakespeare's plays.

> Now I (egotist!) intend to go even beyond Chas. Kean in my devotion to the sacred text of the late W. S. I intend restoring to the stage (to mine, at least) the unadulterated plays of Shakespeare: his "Romeo and Juliet," not so performed since the days of Betterton, I fancy, unless Barry, in opposition to Garrick, revived it; "Richard III," which Chas. Kean feared to attempt, and offered a weak apology for retaining the Cibber version.[13]

Booth's own conservative taste and his position as a star-actor prevented him from making any serious attempt to restore the "sacred texts" of Shakespeare. Instead, he continued the star-actor tradition of cutting and rearranging the text to emphasize melodramatic action, to emphasize his own individual performance, or to suit his own interpretation of the script.[14] In addition, Booth deleted the more bawdy passages of the texts[15] so as to avoid offending the sensibilities of his nineteenth-century American audiences.

The Planning, Financing and Construction of Booth's Theatre

In January of 1867, two months before the Winter Garden Theatre fire, Booth contemplated building his own theatre.

> Now if I had a horse do you know what I could do? I'd take $30,000, hunt up the owners of the lots on 23rd & 4th Ave. opposite the Doge's palace and secure it. An architect told me this morning they could be had for $10,000 & it is large enough for an opera house.[16]

Booth had good reason to consider moving from the Winter Garden Theatre. By the mid-1860s, the theatre district was centered a considerable distance north of the Winter Garden's location. Several of Booth's wealthy acquaintances offered to finance such a move.

> While I was playing at the Winter Garden Theatre a number of men of wealth and position in this city said to me at different times, 'Why don't

> you build a theatre of your own farther up town?' My answer was that I hoped to some day, but that I hadn't capital enough for that yet. One gentleman said, mentioning the names of several others who had spoken to me on the subject, 'Oh, we'll furnish the money.'[17]

After the Winter Garden Theatre burned, Booth was eager to build his new theatre.[18] He approached some of his business friends but found "they buttoned up their pockets."[19] He then offered his brother Junius and Orlando Tompkins of the Boston Theatre an opportunity to invest in his venture, "but in response they offered some preposterous suggestion for my consideration which I soon found, would have given the advantage of my [unintelligible] & services with but little recompense--either of fame or fortune for me."[20] William Stuart, eager to renew his business association, offered Booth a list of "speculative pals of his who were ready to build a theatre . . . to be called Booths [sic]." But he "had already had too large a dose" of Stuart at the Winter Garden and Booth rejected his offer.[21]

Several weeks after the fire, Booth paid a visit to his old friend Richard A. Robertson in Boston. When on tour in Boston, Booth frequently spent his leisure hours with Robertson, an employee of the mercantile firm of Treadwell and Company. Booth told Robertson of his plans for a new theatre and of his failure to secure the necessary financial backing. After quietly listening to the story, Robertson surprised Booth by offering to provide the needed financial assistance.

Robertson admitted that, aside from the pride he would feel in associating with Booth, the project offered a great opportunity for financial gain. He estimated that the entire cost for land, building, costumes and scenery would not exceed $500,000 and that if they could

immediately raise $300,000, the project could begin. Robertson calculated he could raise $75,000 by selling a tack factory he owned in Taunton, Massachusetts, and could obtain another $75,000 in credit. Booth could easily raise the other $150,000 in one season on the road. With the financing quickly settled, only the actual terms of the partnership were left unresolved.

Booth proposed that they share the profits "half and half," but Robertson protested that Booth's share should be larger since Booth's name was a significant asset to the project. Within several weeks of their first conversation, the partners agreed upon a five-year contract. Booth would receive four-sevenths and Robertson three-sevenths of the profits. After five years, Booth was to assume complete control and ownership of the theatre while Robertson was to receive all of his share of the accrued profit plus a bonus of $100,000. If Robertson's share failed to reach $75,000, Booth was to make up the difference. They also agreed that Booth could dissolve the partnership at any time by reimbursing Robertson for his total investment plus an additional bonus of $100,000.

The search for a suitable location began immediately with J. Henry Magonigle and an associate named Delafield acting as agents. Booth and Robertson learned that real estate in New York City was overly priced and difficult to obtain near Broadway. Choice locations were available for leasing, but Booth insisted on buying land. Finally they settled on nine small parcels of land[22] on the corner of Sixth Avenue and Twenty-third Street at a cost of $250,500.[23] The property was farther off-Broadway than Booth wanted.

> After considering the difficulty in getting a better place, the growth of Sixth Ave., the nearness of B'dway & 5th Ave, with the hotels & c, & c, I concluded to accept the situation--firmly convinced that a few years would bring business crowding through 23d St.[24]

Booth paid $90,500 in cash and arranged mortgages for the remaining $160,000. Having used his available cash, Booth began a tour to raise his share of the construction costs. Robertson stayed in New York to supervise the construction. Before leaving New York, Booth made a major financial blunder. He left Robertson a number of signed blank notes to be used until Booth's earnings from his tour began to reach New York or were to be used in case of a dire monetary emergency. However, Robertson used the notes to obtain a series of short-term, high interest personal loans. He then used the money from these loans plus money he obtained by the issuance of promissory notes through his Boston office as his share of the initial investment. By this scheme, Robertson avoided selling his tack factory or using any of his own cash in the building of Booth's Theatre.

Delafield (who had helped to locate the real estate) convinced Booth to hire the architectural firm of Renwick and Sands. Booth was unaware at the time that one of the architects was Delafield's cousin. Although best known for their design of St. Peter's Cathedral in New York,[25] Booth later claimed that Renwick and Sands were incapable of constructing a theatre. The choice of the architectural firm also annoyed Richard Robertson who had planned on placing his brother John at the head of construction. Nevertheless, Robertson eventually convinced Booth, over Renwick's objection, to name John Robertson "superintendent of building" in charge of all construction.

The workmen began excavating in June 1867 and Booth expected to open the theatre in September 1868.[26] However, construction problems arose from the very beginning. Excavation was slowed by the discovery of a large ledge of granite which had to be blasted, causing all construction to halt for several weeks. In a letter to Miss Emma Cary in September 1868, Booth recognized the problems encountered in constructing Booth's Theatre, but he also presented a blasé attitude toward the entire venture.

> The enterprise swelled gigantically on my hands, and has attained such proportions as would frighten any one whose bump of 'don't-care-ativeness' was less than mine. I'm in a very big puddle; if I can wade it, well; if not, why as Bunsby would say, 'well, too.' I trust to fate, chance, or whoever that 'sweet little cherub'be that looks out for me. Certain it is, I have had enough vexation regarding this same theatre to drive me mad, and yet I am as calm and as careless as though the ultimate success were a fixed fact. It will entail a world of work and anxiety; but wouldn't life be long and dreary without these little worries and bothers?[27]

After missing the original opening date of September 1868, Robertson convinced Booth that all would be ready by early December.[28] Booth hired an acting company and started rehearsals for a December opening with Romeo and Juliet but again was forced to postpone the opening because of problems with the stage machinery.

> . . . at the eleventh hour my half-witted carpenter (Tuttle) informed me that his machinery would not work & we could not possibly open at the stated time. Bewildered & disgusted with the impracticability of many of his idiotic & extravagant mechanical experiments, for which I had paid such enormous sums, I had little 'head' left for anything beyond getting the theatre open, & my people [acting company] at work.[29]

In addition to the theatre's mechanical problems, Booth had also learned that the scene painters, Charles Witham and Henry Hilliard, had not

completed the scenery for the first season.[30] The December postponement meant that Booth missed the lucrative holiday season.

In the midst of these numerous complications, the Robertson brothers provoked Booth into an even more serious blunder than his issuance of blank notes. In early January 1869 Richard "kept aloof" for a few days while John moped around the theatre "looking very blue." After a few days, John approached Booth and began "a dismal recital of poor Dick's mental sufferings" caused by Richard's devotion and "stupendous work" on Booth's behalf. Despite his labors and devotion, Richard had received nothing from Booth, not even a word of praise. Booth stepped into a trap by promising to meet with Richard to resolve the whole situation.

Booth met Richard Robertson alone (at Robertson's request) and Robertson accused Booth of ingratitude and mistreatment. Robertson claimed that his dedicated supervision of the theatre's construction was unappreciated and that to finance his portion he had placed himself in a precarious financial position. First, he had drawn larger notes from Treadwell than had been authorized and now feared that Treadwell might close on him. Second, his friends were refusing him further aid since the only security he could offer was on the theatre's potential profit. Finally, Robertson resorted to an emotional and sentimental attack. He told Booth that one night, while sitting by the fire with his ten-year old son, the young boy asked: "Papa, what do you own of Booth's Theatre?" Struck dumb by the question, Robertson said that all he could reply to the small boy was "Nothing."

Booth capitulated and agreed to change the original contract. Against the advice of J. Henry Magonigle, Booth gave Robertson a

three-sevenths share of the building and real estate. Robertson had struck at the proper moment and as Booth later said, "to get that theatre open I would have said Yes, had he asked for all of it."[31]

Booth's Theatre finally opened on 3 February 1869 with Romeo and Juliet. Critics and fellow actors unanimously praised it for several reasons.

> The greatest theatrical event of the day--we might almost say of the present century--was the opening, last night, of Booth's new theatre. It was not that merely another place of entertainment, comfortable in its arrangements and gorgeous in its aspect, was added to the list of our popular resorts, but that the dramatic art in its highest development had found a suitable home among us, and that the most advanced intellect, the most cultured mind of the metropolis, were now offered a theatre worthy of their attention.[32]

E. L. Davenport praised Booth for daring to build a theatre devoted to the legitimate drama.

> Thank God there is one man who dares (in the face & eyes of legs & vulgarity, tinsel & stupidity) stand forth & uphold the drama in its true & noble self. Others have done & do do it as a filler in, a change from the usual [unintelligible word] of sensation & romance. You boldly [unintelligible word] forth as the High Priest in the Temple. God grant you may have health, ability, years & success to sustain you as you desire.[33]

Booth's Theatre was an imposing granite structure, elaborately decorated in what was called the Renaissance style.[34] Twentieth-century critics "tend to regard the exterior as an horrid example of the tasteless, popular design favored by the nouveau riche,"[35] but in 1869 the structure was "one of the architectural jewels of the city."[36]

Edwin Booth introduced several innovations in audience safety and comfort.[37] The theatre featured a sprinkler system consisting of pipes "vertically set into every possible position around the walls" and

capable of sending "a shower of water over both auditorium and galleries that will instantly quench a fire that by any unseen casualty may occur."[38] The business manager, J. Henry Magonigle, also organized the entire stage crew as a fire brigade. The massive chandelier in the center of the auditorium and all the gas-jets in the building were ignited by electricity and the gas pressure was controlled from a gas-room in the theatre's basement. Thus the dangerous practice of lighting individual gaslights was thereby eliminated, and the auditorium could be easily dimmed, extinguished and lighted again as often as was necessary. In a century riddled with theatre fires, Booth's Theatre was a milestone in the building of safer theatres.

In addition, four other features increased audience comfort. Nearly all seats enjoyed an unobstructed view of the stage and the acoustics were excellent.[39] The orchestra pit was below the auditorium level, making the conductor and musicians barely visible and resulting in good sightlines for patrons on the auditorium floor.[40] Patron comfort was further enhanced by luxuriously upholstered seats usually separated by iron arms. An effective and silent ventilation system eliminated noxious fumes from the gas jets and provided warm air in the winter and cool air in the summer.

The design and function of the stage house was the most revolutionary innovation.[41] In the mid-nineteenth century, the standard system of scene-changing was the wing-and-groove. Some theatres also employed rolled or tripped drops. But Booth's Theatre used a mechanized rise-and-sink system of scene changing. Entire scenes could be raised or lowered through slits in the stage floor. The new and unique machinery, designed and installed by J. L. Peake and Smith Tuthill of

San Francisco,[42] operated almost noiselessly and precisely. The machinery used hydraulic rams located two levels below the stage floor and was powered by the flow of water from water tanks on the roof.[43]

While scenery was raised to the stage level from below, large painted drops could be simultaneously flown in from the flies. Booth's was the first New York theatre with a stage house tall enough to fly fully extended drops and not be visible to the audience.[44] The combination of a fly system capable of handling fully extended drops and the mechanized rise-and-sink method of scene changing allowed Booth to use the massive scenery demanded by the grand style. At Booth's Theatre, large settings could be moved smoothly and silently without interrupting the flow of the play.

The opening of Booth's Theatre did not end the difficulties between Booth and Richard Robertson. As a new part-owner of the property, Robertson was no longer content to be a silent partner, and he demanded a voice in the theatre's management. Booth considered Robertson an uninformed outsider and soon a serious rift developed between the partners. In the spring of 1871, Robertson offered to buy Booth's share of the theatre. Robertson informed Booth that he intended to turn Booth's Theatre into a popular entertainment house, like Niblo's, and realized that Booth could not "stoop to that." He appreciated Booth's "delicacy & artistic feeling" but as a businessman he was only concerned with making a profit. Although acknowledging that Booth had already invested $400,000 in the theatre, Robertson offered $250,000 worth of mortgaged property. He also warned Booth that he was "mighty fortunate in getting that." Booth rejected the offer. However, in the fall of 1871, the Booth-Robertson partnership reached its breaking point.

Under intense pressure from Robertson, Booth agreed to open the 1871-72 season with Lotta Crabtree, the popular musical and comedy entertainer. Booth received considerable abuse from the press for featuring a variety star in his legitimate theatre, and he was probably pleased when Lotta's engagement failed to earn a profit. Lotta's failure disappointed and embarrassed Robertson, and he requested that Booth purchase his interest in the theatre. Booth agreed and an accountant (another friend of Robertson) was hired by Robertson to ascertain the financial state of the Booth-Robertson partnership.

The accountant found that the cost of the building could not be determined. Booth's brother Joseph, who was treasurer of Booth's Theatre, had combined the theatre's construction account with the costs of constructing the scenery for two plays, Romeo and Juliet and The Winter's Tale and the cost of the theatre's stock wardrobe.[45] Nevertheless, a settlement was reached and Robertson received $240,000 for his three-sevenths share of Booth's Theatre.[46] Booth also assumed the responsibility of repaying all mortgages and notes, an indebtedness which totaled $425,000.[47]

Robertson tricked a foolishly trusting Booth into giving him a gift of three-sevenths of the entire enterprise which he then turned around and sold back to Booth for $240,000. Yet at the time of the sale, Booth still failed to grasp the implications of his deal with Robertson. In a letter to William Winter, shortly after he had purchased Robertson's interest, Booth wrote, "Robertson has been a good friend to me & I have paid him well in dollars--but in friendship I must ever be his debtor."[48]

J. Henry Magonigle, Booth's business manager, also failed to comprehend Robertson's schemes. Although he had advised Booth against giving Robertson a share of the real estate, Magonigle believed the final settlement was equitable. Even after Booth went bankrupt, Magonigle still maintained that Robertson was a "good man & true."[49] Nevertheless, Magonigle failed to prevent Booth's falling into a financial trap.

Edwin Booth succeeded in building the most technically innovative American theatre of his time, a theatre capable of presenting the legitimate drama in a historically accurate manner. But Booth paid a very steep price. His inability to adequately plan, finance, and supervise the construction of Booth's Theatre as well as his blind trust in individuals such as Richard Robertson and J. Henry Magonigle resulted in enormous cost overruns and indebtedness which doomed the venture to financial failure.

Booth's Managerial Duties

As manager, Edwin Booth made a conscious effort to supervise both the business and artistic functions of the theatre simultaneously. His involvement in the business function centered on two major areas--the hiring of the theatre's staff and stock company and the planning of the season.

To perform the many day-to-day business chores, Booth selected his devoted friend J. Henry Magonigle as business manager. Magonigle's function was solely business management. There is no evidence to suggest that he made policy decisions or had any duties in the artistic realm of the theatre.[50] Magonigle described his duties.

> I was the business manager of Booth's Theatre . . . for four years from 1869 to 1873. My duties as business manager were to engage all the employees [unintelligible word] necessary for the Theatre and attended to the usual detail necessary in the executive department of the business, the purchase of materials and supplies were made by the heads of the different departments but all the business generally was under my supervision and I attended particularly to the supplies and repairs of the theatre in front of the curtain. . . .[51]

Magonigle assisted in hiring actors and staff by executing contracts and corresponding with actors whom Booth wished to hire. Magonigle was also responsible for the theatre's advertising. "I reach the people (and more of them) by a system similar to this circular," wrote Magonigle about his advertising methods. "For three weeks I haven't printed a poster--business has been splendid. . . ."[52]

According to William Winter, Magonigle "was zealous, conscientious, energetic, and prudent,"[53] and he served Booth well. He also freed Booth to concentrate on the artistic management by arranging all tours, hiring his touring company, and supervising all of Booth's personal finances.[54]

In addition to Magonigle, the only other major business staff position was theatre treasurer. Booth hired his brother Joseph as treasurer, and it was Joseph Booth who failed to correctly maintain the theatre's construction accounts, forever obscuring the theatre's true cost.

Richard Robertson's role in the business management of Booth's Theatre was minor. Booth considered him unqualified and noted that Robertson "displayed great anxiety regarding matters of management of which he knew nothing, & desired to be consulted on such affairs."[55] Among these management affairs were the selection of stars and the planning of the repertory. For example, in one letter Robertson suggested

that Dan Emmet, famous minstrel, be booked for an engagement.

> Should you do Richelieu this season I think Emmet wd be a good card to follow you, to run as long as he would. don't know that we could get him and presume we would be condemned by the newspapers but there would be no justice in it as the play is no worse than John Clarke.[56]

Other letters from Robertson to Booth indicated that Robertson often made such suggestions on stars and plays, but his advice, except in the Lotta Crabtree affair, was wisely ignored.

To head the artistic staff, Booth hired Mark Smith, son of the famed actor-manager Sol Smith, as stage manager. The New York Tribune called Mark Smith "one of the best trained and most accomplished actors in the land" and claimed that his presence as stage manager insured that the productions "cannot fail to pass off smoothly."[57] However, Smith was "careless" in his stage management and within two months he was replaced by an actor named D. Wilmarth (D. W.) Waller.[58] Waller proved more acceptable and remained as stage manager until Booth lost ownership of the theatre in 1874.[59]

The actors at Booth's Theatre formed a typical "stock" company. On numerous occasions, however, Booth contracted a special actor or actors to strengthen particular productions. Among the actors engaged for specific productions were James H. McVicker, Booth's father-in-law by his second wife, who played Dogberry in an 1871 production of Much Ado About Nothing and Lawrence Barrett, who appeared as Cassius in an 1872 production of Julius Caesar.

Booth planned to engage a stock company consisting of "stars" for the theatre's first season. "It was my original plan," he wrote to Robertson in December of 1870, "to collect together a huge array of

names, but our expenses frightened me. . . ." However, money was not the only reason Booth hesitated. "I've been scared--I confess, but more by my knowledge of these idiots' (actors) vanity and constant squabbles, and the doubt of being able to use them, than by the expense. . . ."[60] Booth also discussed hiring younger stars, such as Lawrence Barrett and Edwin Adams, but found that they also presented problems as members of a stock company. "These chaps all require their names to be at the head of the bill, and in the largest letters, and (as a secondary consideration) to receive as much as they get by 'starring'--to say nothing of declining to play seconds to each other."[61] Restricted by costs, actors' egos, and the star system, Booth abandoned his plan to hire a large number of "names."

Booth's stock company between 1869 and 1873 was relatively young and unknown, changed personnel frequently, and included several actors who were long-time friends of Booth's. Nevertheless, during Booth's five seasons "there appeared in its company many players who at that time were, or afterward became prominent on the American stage"[62] including: Lawrence Barrett, Mark Smith, A. W. Fenno, J. W. Wallack, Jr., Edwin Adams, Thomas J. Hind, D. W. and Mrs. Emma Waller, Frank C. Bangs, Mary Wells, and Fanny Morant.

Despite Booth's attempts to secure a good acting company, the majority of the New York critics never found his company adequate.

> From the opening of this theatre until its close there was never a good stock company, as a whole, seen within its walls. True, there may have been individual artists possessing great and sterling merit, but their efforts were overshadowed or marred by the comparative incompetency of the others.[63]

However, several critics complained that most New York stock companies

of the late sixties were poor,[64] and the critic for The Galaxy claimed that even "Wallack, with a prevailing eagerness all through the profession to act under his management, finds it difficult to select a company suitable for his purpose" and "when Wallack must go a begging we can hope for no great success with the others."[65] According to Booth, most actors were incompetent.

> The things we call actors are mere puppets--they do not study, they do not think; nine tenths of them have no idea who or what Shakespeare is; their sole object is to 'gobble' so many words, the fewer the better, for so many dollars without any regard for propriety, art or sentiment.[66]

Booth also found that many actors preferred to perform modern plays, not Shakespeare.

> I have offered engagements at good terms to men to play second or minor parts in 'Hamlet' or 'Othello,' who indignantly refused them and then went away and accepted places in modern society drama where they formed one of an inconsequential group of gentlemen in well fitting suits with little to say and less to do. It is inexplicable, but they would demand to play first or nothing in tragedy, and yet would do almost anything in a comedy company.[67]

Despite the difficulties in finding talented and dedicated actors, Booth believed his stock company was the equal of any in the country. "I still contend, and will always do so, that our company has always been the best in the country. . . ."[68] Booth attributed much of the criticism leveled against his stock company to the fact that he was a major star. He claimed that when good actors supported him they were considered a "bad company" but when the same actors appeared in a "farce" theatre they were considered an "excellent company."

> When Charles Fischer was a good actor and Gilbert was cast for the parts he is best adapted to, with

> Barrett and Setchell and several other great actors and actresses were at Burton's (Winter Garden) and acted with me--the company was called dire bad. They (some of them) got together in a farce theatre--where none of them are good for the work they do--and are considered an excellent company, and Mr. Barrett a great actor.[69]

Justified or not, the "poor support" criticism plagued Booth and most other nineteenth-century major stars. According to Booth, "'Poor support' has ever been, will ever be, the cry at the heels of the 'star', no matter how good his actors may be."[70]

Booth also planned the schedule for each season. He decided how many and which stars to hire, the length and timing of their engagements, and what salary should be offered. On occasion, Booth even wrote personally to offer an engagement or to settle the terms of a contract, as indicated in this letter to Lawrence Barrett. "I am this instant in receipt of yours together with one from Magonigle, saying he had written you according to my instructions. I am pleased to state there is now a prospect for an opening in early Spring--say about the middle of March, or 1st of April."[71]

Edwin Booth managed responsibly. He actively participated in all decisions which effected the management of Booth's Theatre.[72] And, on the surface at least, the theatre's staff and organization functioned smoothly. Joseph Jefferson and Dion Boucicault had generous praise for the Booth's Theatre management.

> 'Booth's theatre,' said Jefferson, 'is conducted as a theatre should be--like a church behind the curtain and like a counting house in front of it.' 'I have been,' said Dion Boucicault, 'in every theatre, I think, in civilized Christendom, and Booth's is the only theatre that I have seen properly managed.'[73]

Edwin Booth's artistic management of Booth's Theatre generally continued the work he began at the Winter Garden Theatre. Most theatre

critics again praised his style of production, but some began to question the appropriateness of elaborate and detailed scenery.[74] Nym Crinkle of the New York World, a long-time critic of Booth, decried the spirit of the times which encouraged producers "to localize and particularize." Crinkle observed that what "looks to the general eye like elaboration becomes to the poetic mind the limitation of realism."[75] However, he also recognized that the audience expected Booth to produce his revivals in the "grand manner" and "were [it] not for the realistic props which have been put under the old bard, he would attract very little attention."[76]

Booth's concern with production details, so evident in his artistic management of the Winter Garden Theatre, continued at Booth's Theatre where he quickly earned a reputation for high production standards. "The dresses, the equipment, and general 'make-up' of the actors are in keeping with the scenery. Even the minutest detail is carefully attended to. Nothing is so unimportant as to be overlooked in this establishment."[77]

In his effort to raise production standards, Booth came to realize that rehearsals, particularly dress rehearsals, were essential to the success of his grand revivals.[78] This emphasis on rehearsals, unusual in the American theatre of the 1860s and 1870s, resulted in greater production unity. In a review of Booth's Hamlet, Nym Crinkle noted that "the smoothness of the business of the entire corps" was evidence that Booth understood "the real excellence of a dramatic entertainment consists in the contribution by every member of the company, no matter how trivial his part, to the sum total of the action."[79] A young actor named F. G. Ross described a rehearsal under

Booth's direction:

> How distinctly I remember his first rehearsal with the company. He seemed then a god to us young men. When, during the course of a rehearsal, we failed to thoroughly understand or grasp the meaning of a speech or situation, he very quietly and courteously waved us aside and proceeded to illustrate for us his own ideas of the troublesome point, after which none but a novice would experience any further difficulty.[80]

Booth's stage management foreshadowed the rise of the modern director.[81] He was a transitional figure between the mid-nineteenth century American theatre dominated by the star actor and the late nineteenth-century theatre which featured directors such as Augustin Daly, Steele Mackeye and David Belasco. An unidentified observer said of Booth: "No other star, and I have seen many 'stars' in that position, possessed his equanimity or displayed one tithe of his wonderful ability to direct."[82]

CHAPTER IV FOOTNOTES

[1]From 16 August 1869 to 1 January 1873, Augustin Daly successfully managed the Fifth Avenue Theatre. The theatre featured a strong stock company which included Mrs. G. H. Gilbert, William Davidge, Fanny Davenport, and E. L. Davenport. Daly quickly built the reputation of the theatre. His repertoire included old comedies, such as London Assurance and Old Heads and Young Hearts, new comedies like T. W. Robertson's Play, occasional Shakespeare comedies, and a considerable number of new plays and adaptations by Daly himself. A. M. Palmer, who had no previous theatrical experience, became the manager of the Union Square Theatre in 1872 and changed it from an unsuccessful variety house into one of the most successful legitimate theatres in New York. According to historian Garff Wilson in Three Hundred Years of American Drama and Theatre (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1973), p. 250, Palmer had a remarkable ability to find popular plays and to build solid, talented acting companies.

[2]Wilson, p. 246.

[3]Wilson, p. 250.

[4]At Wallack's Theatre the only Shakespeare was an 1869 revival of its 1867-68 production of Much Ado About Nothing. Daly presented four different Shakespearean comedies at his Fifth Avenue Theatre. In 1869-70 he produced Twelfth Night, As You Like It and Much Ado About Nothing, in 1870 he revived Twelfth Night and in 1872 he mounted The Merry Wives of Windsor. The Union Square Theatre under A. M. Palmer's management opened in 1872-73 and he did not produce any of Shakespeare's plays.

[5]George C. D. Odell, Annals of the New York Stage (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1931), IX, 148.

[6]Charles H. Shattuck, Shakespeare on the American Stage: From the Hallams to Edwin Booth (Washington, D.C.: Folger Shakespeare Library, 1976), p. xi.

[7]Edwin Booth, Letter to Reverend Jno. M. Leavitt, 30 June 1869, A.S.W. Rosenbach Museum, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

[8]Edwin Booth, Letter to Lawrence Barrett, 13 June 1867, The Walter Hampden-Edwin Booth Theatre Collection and Library, The Players, New York.

[9]William Bispham, "Memories and Letters of Edwin Booth," The Century Magazine, Nov. 1893, p. 133.

[10]Charles H. Shattuck, "The Theatrical Management of Edwin Booth," in The Theatrical Manager in England and America, ed. Joseph W. Donohue (Princeton, Princeton Univ. Press, 1971), p. 154 and Charles Fechter, Letter to Edwin Booth, 7 Dec. 1869, The Players.

[11]Charles H. Shattuck, The Hamlet of Edwin Booth (Urbana: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1969), p. 285.

[12]In his study, "Edwin Booth, Producer--A Study of Four Productions at Booth's Theatre," Diss. Indiana 1969, pp. 368-69, Gerald Leon Honaker noted that "Booth's audience was ready to accept, even demanded, authentic, historical realism in dramatic mise en scene far beyond any pressure Charles Kean may have felt."

[13]"To Miss Emma F. Cary," 27 Sept. 1868 in Edwina Booth Grossman, Edwin Booth: Recollections by His Daughter and Letters to His Friends (New York: Century, 1894), pp. 176-77.

[14]Honaker, p. 369.

[15]Shattuck, "Theatrical Management," p. 160 and Honaker, p. 145.

[16]Edwin Booth, Letter to John B. Murray, 15 Jan. 1867, The Players.

[17]Augustus Pitou, Masters of the Show (New York: The Neale Publishing Company, 1914), pp. 76-77.

[18]This account of "The Planning, Construction, and Financing of Booth's Theatre" is based primarily on a batch of papers which Edwin Booth sent to William Winter in April 1876. The material had originally been compiled by Booth for James H. McVicker, his father-in-law by his second wife Mary McVicker, in February 1876. The material is located at the Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington, D.C. Hereafter, these papers will be cited as the "Booth's Theatre Romance" papers. This account is also indebted to: Shattuck, "Theatrical Manager," pp. 165-69; William Winter, Life and Art of Edwin Booth (1893; rpt. New York: McMillan, 1906), pp. 121-25 and Honaker, pp. 93-98.

[19]Pitou, p. 77.

[20]"Booth's Theatre Romance" papers.

[21]"Booth's Theatre Romance" papers.

[22]Honaker, p. 95.

[23]J. Henry Magonigle, Letter to James H. McVicker, 9 Feb. 1876, Folger Shakespeare Library.

[24]"Booth's Theatre Romance" papers.

[25]Honaker, p. 99.

[26]Edwin Booth, Letter to Lawrence Barrett, 13 June 1867, The Players.

[27]"To Miss Emma F. Cary," 27 Sept. 1868 in Grossman, p. 177.

[28]"To Miss Emma F. Cary," 27 Sept. 1868 in Grossman, p. 177.

[29]"Booth's Theatre Romance" papers.

[30]"To Richard Robertson," 16 Nov. 1868, cited in Shattuck, "Theatrical Management," p. 169.

[31]"Booth's Theatre Romance" papers.

[32]New York Evening Post, 4 Feb. 1869.

[33]E. L. Davenport, Letter to Edwin Booth, n.d., The Players.

[34]Shattuck, "Theatrical Management," p. 170. For a detailed description of the exterior and interior of Booth's Theatre, see Honaker, pp. 99-130 and Winter, Life, pp. 82-90.

[35]Honaker, p. 99.

[36]James D. McCabe, Jr., Sights and Shadows of New York Life (1872; rpt. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1970), p. 472.

[37]This discussion of the innovations and features of Booth's Theatre is indebted to Honaker, pp. 99-130.

[38]New York Herald, 23 Oct. 1867 cited by Honaker, p. 112.

[39]New York World, 4 Feb. 1869 cited by Honaker, p. 111.

[40]No authentic reproduction of the stage and auditorium has survived to reveal how the good sightlines were achieved.

[41]Shattuck, "Theatrical Management," p. 171.

[42]Honaker, p. 115.

[43]Shattuck, "Theatrical Management," pp. 171-72.

[44]Honaker, p. 117.

[45]J. Henry Magonigle, Letter to James H. McVicker, 9 Feb. 1876, Folger Shakespeare Library. The actual cost of Booth's Theatre was never determined. Magonigle estimated construction costs at $725,000 while Booth estimated the total cost at $1,200,000.

[46]According to the Booth's Theatre Account Books, the settlement terms were:

Cash	$ 39,500
Real Estate	
Long Branch, New Jersey	45,000
Harlem, New York	7,500
New London, Connecticut	8,000

Mortgages	
Booth assumed responsibility for two mortgages previously assigned to Robertson	140,000
Total	$240,000

However, Booth was short of cash and signed a four-year $39,500 bill of indebtedness.

[47]Edwin Booth, Letter to [unknown], 9 Feb. 1876, Folger Shakespeare Library.

[48]"To William Winter," 1 Nov. 1871 in Daniel J. Watermeier, Between Actor and Critic: Selected Letters of Edwin Booth and William Winter (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1971), p. 33.

[49]"Booth's Theatre Romance" papers.

[50]A relatively clear picture of J. Henry Magonigle's function at Booth's Theatre can be drawn from the "Transcript Book of Magonigle's Business Correspondence" located at The Walter Hampden-Edwin Booth Theatre Collection and Library, The Players, New York.

[51]Edwin Booth Bankruptcy Papers, "Magonigle Deposition," 6 May 1875, National Archives, Record Group 21, U.S. District Courts, Southern District of New York, Bankruptcy Act of 1867, Case No. 4613, Suitland, Maryland.

[52]J. Henry Magonigle, Letter to Mr. Florence, 20 Jan. 1873, "Transcript Book of Magonigle's Business Correspondence," The Players.

[53]Winter, Life, p. 82.

[54]Edwin Booth, Letter to Charles M. Barras, 25 July 1872, Harvard Theatre Collection, Harvard Univ., Cambridge, Ma. For correspondence relating to Magonigle's activities as Booth's tour manager, see "Transcript Book of Magonigle's Business Correspondence."

[55]"The Booth's Theatre Romance" papers.

[56]Richard Robertson, Letter to Edwin Booth, 11 Oct. 1870, The Players.

[57]New York Tribune, 21 Jan. 1869.

[58]Winter, Life, p. 98.

[59]Shattuck, Hamlet, p. 85.

[60]"To Richard [Robertson]," 11 Dec. 1870 in Edgar Beecher Bronson, "Edwin Booth's Opinion of the Players of His Day," Theatre Magazine, May 1910, p. 165.

[61]"To Richard [Robertson]," 11 Dec. 1870 in Bronson, p. 165.

[62]Lewis C. Strang, Players and Plays of the Last Quarter Century (Boston: Colonial Press, 1902), I, 172.

[63]"City Summary," n.s., n.d., Booth Scrapbook Number 5, Folger Shakespeare Library.

[64]New York Tribune, 17 August 1870.

[65]"Some of Our Actors," The Galaxy, Jan. 1868, p. 171.

[66]"To William Winter," [ca. 7 June 1873] in Watermeier, p. 113.

[67]Charles Burnham, Letter, The Sun (New York), [ca. 1938] located at The Humanities Research Center, Univ. of Texas, Austin, Texas.

[68]"To Richard [Robertson], 11 Dec. 1870, in Bronson, p. 165.

[69]"To Richard [Robertson], 11 Dec. 1870, in Bronson, p. 165.

[70]"To William Winter," 17 Aug. 1879, in Watermeier, p. 141.

[71]Edwin Booth, Letter to Lawrence Barrett, 25 Oct. 1870, The Players.

[72]Edwin Booth was also an original member of the Association of Theatre Managers. Founded by Augustin Daly in 1873, the association was organized to assist the managers in the conduct of their business and to promote cooperation between theatre managers. The original membership included Charles Fechter, Lester Wallack, Henry D. Palmer, Henry C. Jarrett, Daly, and Booth.

[73]Both stars were quoted in Winter, Life, p. 107.

[74]See Shattuck, Hamlet, pp. 79-83 for a detailed discussion of the reactions against Booth's use of historically accurate scenery and costumes.

[75]Nym Crinkle, The World, 9 Jan. 1870 cited in Shattuck, Hamlet, p. 80.

[76]Crinkle, The World, 9 Jan. 1870, n.p.

[77]McCabe, p. 471.

[78]In his later years, Booth found rehearsals "an exhaustion & a bore" ("To William Winter," 28 April 1881 in Watermeier, p. 187) but at Booth's Theatre dress rehearsals were the custom. [Katherine Goodale, Behind the Scenes with Edwin Booth (Cambridge, Ma.: The Riverside Press, 1931), p. 277.]

[79]Nym Crinkle, The Spirit of the Times, 5 Feb. 1870 cited in Shattuck, Hamlet, pp. 83-4.

[80]F. G. Ross, "Edwin Booth: Reminiscences of the Greatest Tragedian Living," n.s., 12 Feb. 1887, n.p.

[81]Booth apparently never proclaimed any philosophy of stage management. However, in a fascinating letter written while in England in 1881 rehearsing under Henry Irving's direction, he evaluated Irving and expressed a sincere respect for the art of stage management.

> I have been rehearsing Othello with Irving the past two weeks. The play will be finely set & well acted by the subordinates. Whatever may be the opinions concerning his histrionic ability (wh., after all is but a matter of opinion) he certainly has the element of greatness, largely developed, for the very difficult art of stage-management. His patience & untiring energy--his good taste & superior judgement in all pertaining to stagecraft are marvellous! He is very gentle & courteous--though tried to the extremity of endurance by the 'awkward squad.' To be on his stage & find all one's own ideas perfectly carried out is delightful! He imparts to the humblest member of his corps a somewhat of the true artistic feeling that animates himself. Rehearsals, which were always an exhaustion & a bore to me, are, on his stage; with him as director, positively a pleasure; it revives all my old interest in my profession.

("To William Winter," 28 April 1881, in Watermeier, pp. 186-87.)

[82]Gamaliel Bradford, "Portrait of Edwin Booth," Scribner's, Feb. 1925, pp. 146-47.

CHAPTER V

SEASON-BY-SEASON REVIEW OF EDWIN BOOTH'S MANAGEMENT OF BOOTH'S THEATRE

Booth's Theatre was a financial fiasco. He invested $500,000[1] in the enterprise, yet still had an indebtedness in excess of $140,000 and liabilities of $450,000.[2] Booth's incompetence as a financier in the planning, financing, and construction of Booth's Theatre doomed his enterprise to failure and stamped the label "bad manager" on his entire management career.

For four and a half years as theatre manager of Booth's Theatre, he took full responsibility for its business and artistic management. By examining his decisions in planning the repertory, selecting guest stars, hiring of the acting company and the artistic direction of his "grand revivals," Booth's management of Booth's Theatre will be more fully understood.

1869 Season

Booth began his management of Booth's Theatre with two "Grand Booth Revivals"--Romeo and Juliet and Othello. With the opening of the theatre delayed until 3 February 1869, Booth also extended the first season through the entire month of July. Booth engaged Edwin Adams, a young actor who had ably supported Booth in Romeo and Juliet and Othello, to fill the final nine weeks of the season.

Booth probably selected Romeo and Juliet because, first, the play's numerous scenes provided an opportunity to demonstrate the scenic and mechanical resources of the theatre; second, Juliet seemed a perfect role to introduce the New York public to his own 'Juliet', his fiance Mary McVicker; third, Booth's portrayal of Romeo, a role he had never previously performed in New York, promised to add to the excitement of the opening; and fourth, and most importantly, he wished to "emphasize the continuity of his producing program."[3] Romeo and Juliet had been the next scheduled production when the Winter Garden burned in 1867.

During the run of Romeo and Juliet, Booth restricted himself to six performances a week.[4] By acting only once on Saturdays, Booth could rest and promote the career of his major supporting actors. Once a week, young rising actors such as Edwin Adams and Lawrence Barrett were billed as "stars" at Booth's Theatre. However, the policy proved unpopular and hurt the theatre's business and reputation. Audiences wanted Booth, not the young actors. George Odell suggested "it would have been wiser from the point of view of prestige to have closed the house"[5] on Saturday afternoons or evenings.

Romeo and Juliet ran for 58 performances in ten weeks to enthusiastic audiences and grossed $83,887.20.[6] William Winter estimated the Romeo and Juliet profit in excess of $60,000,[7] but that figure was a gross exaggeration. Calculations based on entries in the Booth's Theatre Cash Book show known expenses of nearly $40,000,[8] leaving a profit of over $40,000. However, the profit would fall well below $20,000 if the scenery and costume expenses were known and deducted.[9]

Booth originally scheduled The Winter's Tale as the second production at Booth's Theatre. But the scene painters, who had already

delayed the theatre's opening, had not finished the scenery. Booth replaced The Winter's Tale with Othello by mounting a simpler production than either Romeo and Juliet or The Winter's Tale.

> Booth, by an ingenious contrivance, had the scenery of 'Romeo and Juliet' rearranged with the addition of a few small pieces to answer every requisition of the 'Moor of Venice,' thus illustrating that the eye of the master saves the laborer's hands.[10]

Audiences responded to Othello favorably. When the production closed after 42 performances, it had grossed $55,718.50 for an average of $1,326.63 per performance. With scenic expenses reduced and known expenses totaling just over $23,000, Othello returned a potential profit of over $32,000.[11]

The Edwin Adams engagement was less successful. Adams was an actor whose charm suited him to the romantic drama, yet he never achieved more than second-rate status as a star. The highlight of his engagement was the premiere of Arthur Matthison's Enoch Arden, a play based on Tennyson's poem of the same name. The play became a permanent part of his repertoire but earned only a small profit. Poor receipts during the final three weeks of July convinced Booth of the futility in extending any future seasons beyond 4 July.

Critical reaction to Romeo and Juliet and Othello was mixed. The harshest criticism was of Booth, particularly his portrayal of Romeo. The critic for the New York Daily Star thought Booth's Romeo "a lackadaisical swain" and characterized his love scenes as "simpering."[12] Most critics considered Romeo the least effective performance he had ever given in New York.[13]

Reviews of the acting company were generally favorable. In his review of Romeo and Juliet the New York Tribune critic concluded:

"The cast may be set down as a very good one; nor do we see how Mr. Booth could have practically arranged a better."[14]

Critics were most impressed, however, with the scenery and the theatre's new stage machinery.

> Most certainly the early acts [of Romeo and Juliet] were the most marvelous specimens of stage production ever witnessed here. The scenery is absolutely perfect, and the proportions of the stage enable it to be worked also to perfection. There were 'sets' last night which could not even be attempted at any other establishment. . . .[15]

Asia Booth Clarke provided a more detailed description.

> In the second act, the house of Juliet measured sixty feet in height, and had two balconies one above the other. Two trees measured fifty and sixty feet. For the 'loggia' scene in the third act was a line of connected arches of great height extending backward to the full depth of the stage; these flanked a wide courtyard in which the tops of the trees were visible, suggesting the idea of depth. Romeo's ladder was thrown over the balustrade of a balcony of this solidly constructed house. The 'loggia scene' employed fifty men to set and draw it above the 'flies.'[16]

Booth's concern for production detail and consistency was most obvious in the realistic and effective masking of the wings and in the crowd scenes.

> . . . 'the wings' are enclosed, so that the spectators who may happen to occupy seats on either side of the circles or tiers has the illusion maintained, and does not behold a series of awkward gaps sparsely populated by stage carpenters and supernumeries.
>
> The quarrel between the partisans of the houses of Capulet and Montague was vividly represented by a crowd that filled the scene, and gave an air of reality to what is usually on the stage a mere burlesque.[17]

Booth's artistic direction of Othello was also widely acclaimed. Critics greeted Othello as evidence of Booth's intention "to maintain the high reputation already won by an establishment that is now the

leading temple of dramatic art in America."[18]

The 1869 season was ultimately successful. Audiences responded favorably to Booth's first two revivals, critics lauded his scenery and staging, and the first season earned a gross profit of slightly over $52,000.[19] Yet Booth expressed little pleasure at the apparent success of his artistic and business management[20] as profits made only a small dent in the theatre's indebtedness. The following review clearly stated Booth's managerial dilemma.

> Mr. Booth has a combination of advantages;--his own popular name, his new and beautiful theatre, and the finest scenery ever displayed in this country, or (we suspect) in any other; yet it is not with brilliant Shakesperian revivals alone that the solid pecuniary success of his splendid enterprise can be established.[21]

To reduce the theatre's indebtedness by any substantial amount, guest stars as well as the revivals had to earn large profits. This fact provides the context for many of Booth's management decisions over the next four seasons.

1869-70 Season

Booth's first opportunity to plan a full season's schedule came with the 1869-70 season. He selected which stars to contract, when and how long they would be scheduled and when he would produce his own revivals. The 1869-70 lineup of stars indicated Booth's failure to engage major stars. Of the seven stars featured during the season--Joseph Jefferson, Kate Bateman, John S. Clarke, James H. Hackett, Emma Waller, James H. McVicker, and Ada Clifton--only Jefferson was a major star and only Jefferson and Bateman earned substantial profits.

Joseph Jefferson starred in Rip Van Winkle, a critical financial, and popular success. Critics praised the staging, Charles Witham's scenery, and Joseph Jefferson whose name was henceforth identified with that role. Audiences responded enthusiastically and Rip Van Winkle ran for seven weeks with a remarkable average gross of $1,591.44 a performance. Jefferson proved Booth's contention that other major stars besides Booth could earn large profits at Booth's Theatre.

Booth probably selected Kate Bateman, John S. Clarke, James H. Hackett, and Emma Waller because they were somewhat familiar to New York audiences. Kate Bateman, who, with her sister Ellen, was a child star in the early 1850s, appeared in Augustin Daly's Leah the Forsaken and Tom Taylor's Mary Warner. Her nine week engagement had average gross receipts of $1,237.07 per performance. Brother-in-law John S. Clarke was a disappointment. Clarke returned to the American stage for the first time since emigrating to England and filled six weeks with popular comedies and farces. Nevertheless, his per performance receipts averaged only $837.80 and returned a very small profit. James H. Hackett, sixty-nine years old and in the twilight of his career, also earned a small profit performing his most popular role of Falstaff in Henry IV and The Merry Wives of Windsor. Emma Waller, wife of Booth's stage manager, starred for only one week[22] and received critical acclaim for her performance as Meg Merrilies in the popular melodrama Guy Mannering. Emma Waller also earned a small profit.

The failure of Clarke, Hackett and Waller to earn larger profits was further aggravated by the disastrous engagements of James H. McVicker and Ada Clifton. McVicker, Booth's father-in-law and the popular actor-manager of McVicker's Theatre in Chicago, was unknown

in New York and averaged a weak $257.21 a performance. Following McVicker's two-week engagement was Ada Clifton, a now-forgotten actress, whom Booth contracted for three weeks. Appearing in Richard Sheil's melodrama, The Huguenot, she averaged only $282.13 a performance. McVicker and Clifton combined for a loss in excess of $17,000.[23]

Edwin Booth's selection of James H. McVicker, Ada Clifton, and others such as Edwin Adams and Lawrence Barrett indicated his desire to make stars. James H. McVicker and Lawrence Barrett were already stars outside New York, while Edwin Adams, Ada Clifton and others had gained a reputation as good actors in supporting roles with major stars. Booth hoped that star-billing at Booth's Theatre would gain the "New York" reputation and the public following that these actors needed to become major stars.

Booth mounted two new productions in the "grand style." On 5 January 1870, Booth presented a magnificently mounted Hamlet which ran for nearly eleven weeks and Macbeth opened 28 March for three weeks.

Booth had planned to present Hamlet during his first season, but the numerous delays in the theatre's opening and the shortened season caused him to delay its production. However, the theatregoing public's identification of Edwin Booth with the role of Hamlet made it imperative that Booth present the play early in his management.

Hamlet was financially the most successful production of Booth's entire management at Booth's Theatre. "At Booth's Theatre the houses have continued to be of an almost phenomenal description," wrote the critic for the New York Times, "and we see no reason to doubt the fulfillment of our former prediction, that the manager's Hamlet would tarry with us up to the season of Spring flowers."[24] Hamlet grossed

$107,992 in 64 performances for an amazing average of $1,687.38 per performance. The production would have surpassed the "one-hundred nights" of Hamlet at the Winter Garden but Booth chose to remove the play while it was still drawing sizable audiences. Booth announced to the public that the play was withdrawn because of a commitment to produce other works. However, his real reasons were financial.

> I take off Hamlet chiefly because I do not wish to surfeit the dear pub with it--as it is my stand by & must be done a little each season, and partly because I am not ambitious to act solely for the sake of acting and--although the receipts are large the expenses are correspondingly so--and if a change will winnow the $ why--let us change.[25]

After Hamlet closed on 19 March 1870, Booth presented Massinger's comedy A New Way to Pay Old Debts and Bulwer's melodrama The Lady of Lyons using the theatre's stock scenery and costumes. He ran these "old favorites" for one week while putting the finishing touches on Macbeth.[26]

Produced inexpensively with scenery borrowed from Hamlet,[27] Macbeth drew poor houses and lasted only sixteen performances. It grossed $16,542.00 with a per performance average of barely over $1,000. Because production expenses were low, however, Macbeth earned a small profit of nearly $6,500.[28]

Critical response to the 1869-70 season was mixed. Hamlet received the greatest acclaim. Most critics agreed that Hamlet was a landmark in the history of the New York theatre.[29]

> In the production of 'Hamlet' last night, the most admired actor and manager on the American stage achieved the greatest triumph he has yet known. In the face of such a production, dramatic criticism finds itself at fault. With a stage unrivaled in this country, with scenery which completely realizes all the ideals that the reader of Shakespeare could have found regarding the appointments of the play, with an actor who, in this country at

> least, is certainly the accepted Hamlet of the age, and with an intelligent company of assisting actors, it was easy to predict a great success for this desirable revival.[30]

Booth was also quite pleased with the support of his stock company. "I am very glad you will have an opportunity to witness the present production of Hamlet before its withdrawal," he wrote to an unidentified friend, "as it is better 'cast', I am sure, as a whole . . . than I have ever [unintelligible word] it to be."[31] While the majority of critics considered the company "reasonably good" in Hamlet, others were far less impressed.[32] In a review of Macbeth, the New York Evening Post wrote that there was "little to be said" of the Booth's Theatre stock company.

Edwin Booth achieved a major success as a stage director with Hamlet and Macbeth. By integrating the mechanical resources of his theatre with the play's action, Hamlet was never slowed by scene changes. The actors kept the play moving quickly from scene to scene while, simultaneously, the scenery changed in full view of the audience.[33] Booth achieved a continuous flow of action on the mechanical stage that preceded the work of William Poel, B. Iden Payne and other later directors on reconstructed Elizabethan stages.

With Macbeth, Booth also achieved an artistic unity between the visual and aural elements of production.

> The costumes are primitive, almost to savagery, the scenery has a vague and shadowy look, well in keeping with the solemn mystery of the action, even the music has an elementary or aboriginal structure which is equally harmonious with the details that meet the eye.[34]

The 1869-70 season earned the largest gross receipts and profits of Booth's five seasons at Booth's Theatre[35] and Booth's artistic direction was praised by most critics. Nevertheless, Booth admitted that the

theatre's indebtedness was probably unsurmountable. To his friend John E. Russell, Booth wrote, "the infernal expense [theatre's indebtedness] is perfectly barbarous--'tis overwhelming, and the d'l [devil] of it is--I don't see any possible method of reducing it, now--or ever."[36]

1870-71 Season

Despite larger profits in 1869-70, Booth made an effort to economize in 1870-71 and planned several repertory changes. First, he wanted to substantially reduce the number of guest stars, and, second, he would forego his usual winter appearance at the theatre. Booth planned to present Joseph Jefferson in Rip Van Winkle throughout the fall and early winter and then another major star for the remainder of the season. Jefferson was a guaranteed box office success and since the settings and costumes were already constructed, Booth saved the expense of mounting a new production. Also, since Booth's earnings were considerably greater on tour than in New York, he could substantially reduce his debt by remaining on tour throughout the 1870-71 season.[37]

Joseph Jefferson opened the season on 15 August 1870 for a remarkable five-month engagement which ended 7 January 1871. His 148 performances grossed $167,647 and earned a profit in excess of $30,000.[38] By late October 1870, however, Booth had not engaged another major star and was forced to alter his repertory plans. In a letter to Lawrence Barrett, dated 25 October 1870, Booth stated his new plan and invited Barrett to appear as a guest star in the early Spring.

> . . . I have determined to relinquish my idea of not visiting New York this winter and shall start then [early January]. Chiefly because I can get

> no sure card to follow Rip and fill the season. I will not act longer than 2½ months or 3 at most--when you can (provided all things be agreeable) bring out your piece [The Man o' Airlie] & run it, I hope as long as you can anticipate.[39]

Three weeks later Booth again wrote to Barrett and made him an additional offer.

> On the 5 evenings and Saturday afternoons [of Booth's engagement] your to perform the leading parts in my plays and on the Saturday evenings your plays produced.[40] At the conclusion of my engagement I will produce the Winter's Tale . . . with yourself as Leontes.[41]

By hiring Barrett, Booth also strengthened his stock company considerably. And, as previously mentioned, Booth believed this starring engagement would help to establish Lawrence Barrett as a major star in New York City.

> This [engagement] will give you what it may take years for you to acquire--the true position in New York, while acting with me can detract nothing for you--since every part will be sufficiently prominent to establish you classic to a higher position.[42]

Barrett's starring engagement was a major disappointment. The Winter's Tale, one of Booth's most magnificently mounted revivals,[43] grossed only $23,494.75 in forty performances for a disastrous $587.37 performance average and a loss of about $10,000.[44] The Man o'Airlie, a new play by W. G. Wills, ran for four and a half weeks and lost another $8,509.95. Lawrence Barrett's starring engagement at Booth's Theatre resulted in a loss of $18,500. New York audiences still considered Lawrence Barrett a supporting actor, not a major star.[45]

Booth's greatest mistake was not in hiring Lawrence Barrett, but in failing to find a major star to follow Joseph Jefferson's

engagement. Booth knew Barrett was a gamble. For example, when he offered Barrett The Winter's Tale, Booth informed Barrett that he "must have 2 other names to strengthen the cast. . . ."[46] The fact that Booth did not contact Barrett until 23 October indicates that Booth may have turned to Barrett only as a last resort.

Booth apparently never discussed why he contracted only one major star per season, but several possible explanations seem logical. First, Booth may not have offered lucrative enough contracts. However, this seems unlikely. Booth's contracts with stars such as Charlotte Cushman and Dion Boucicault, who appeared in later seasons, are overly generous. Second, some major stars would have considered it demeaning to appear under the management of another major star. Professional jealousy and over-sensitive egos were as much a part of the star system in the 1860s and 1870s as they are today. And finally, Booth lacked the time to seriously pursue the booking of stars. Between touring and his duties as actor-manager of a large metropolitan theatre, Booth had little time to plan adequately and schedule major stars.

Forced into an engagement at Booth's Theatre, Booth decided to produce and star in two new revivals--Richelieu and Much Ado About Nothing. Richelieu opened 9 January 1871 and enjoyed a moderately successful eight week run of forty-eight performances with gross receipts of $64,857.50 and a performance average of $1,247.26. Profits from Richelieu, while pale in comparison to Jefferson's Rip Van Winkle, can be estimated in excess of $15,000.[47] Richelieu's modest financial success was a disappointment to Booth and he became more preoccupied with making expenses. "Dern the odds--," he wrote to his friend John E. Russell during the run of Richelieu, "so long as I get my debts

paid--I'll retire gracefully when the time comes."[48]

Much Ado About Nothing, the second revival of the 1870-71 season opened 6 March. Booth had never before performed Benedick in New York,[49] and he hoped that the novelty of a new role and the promise of another elegantly mounted production would result in large profits. Much Ado failed to attract large audiences and Booth removed the play after two weeks with a profit of only $2,386.96.[50] Booth concluded his engagement with two weeks of Othello, in which he alternated Othello and Iago with Lawrence Barrett, and with three weeks of a mixed repertory. With profits from Booth's revivals lower than previous seasons, the season profit dropped from $74,262 in 1869-70 to below $53,000 in 1870-71.

Critics unanimously concluded that Richelieu had far exceeded Booth's previous revivals in splendor, richness and devotion to historical accuracy. The New York Times review of Richelieu was typical.

> On the whole, the cast is by no means as good as we have a right to expect in Mr. Booth's theatre, or as befits his own rank as an actor. The scenery and appointments are truly superb. We have never seen the play so well mounted. The elaborateness of some scenes is simply perfection--not for generous outlay only, but for care, finish and accuracy. If the acting in all particulars were as fine as its surroundings we should have the sincere pleasure of according to this revival of 'Richelieu' only hearty and unreserved praise.[51]

On the other hand, response to Much Ado About Nothing was lukewarm. Critics attacked Booth's Benedick and the supporting players who included Lawrence Barrett as Don Pedro and James H. McVicker as Dogberry. Only the scenery and costumes received its usual acclaim.

Criticism of the acting company, as in the New York Times review quoted above, increased during the 1870-71 season. "The present cast of 'Richelieu,' with the solitary exception of Mr. Barrett presents no

artist unless Mr. Booth be recognized as such," wrote one critic.[52] The New York Tribune had only a few kind words for the Richelieu supporting cast. "In the representation of the subsidiary characters in the drama, Mr. Booth has the cooperative aid of several artists of definite ability, not always, however, suitable to the work at hand."[53] Some critics even accused Booth of hiring poorly trained and incompetent actors.[54]

Although critics generally continued to praise Booth's artistic direction during the 1870-71 season, Booth actually returned to a more traditional staging for Richelieu. Gerald Honaker suggested the production lacked the innovative and imaginative staging which characterized Booth's earlier revivals. Booth returned to such typical nineteenth-century practices as editing the script to increase the importance of the star's character, making all star entrances from up center, and establishing the star's positions as stage center, down right, and down left. Booth's return to a more traditional staging indicated that the need to earn large profits was obscuring Booth's dream of "elevating the legitimate drama."

1871-72 Season

By the end of the 1870-71 season, Booth had reduced the theatre's floating debt but had made no progress toward retiring the mortgages.[55] Moreover, if profits continued to decline, as they did in 1870-71, Booth would be unable to further reduce the debt and his enterprise would collapse. Booth was getting more desperate and his management over the final two seasons was beset by uncertainty.

After featuring only two guest stars the previous season, Booth reversed himself and employed five stars during the 1871-72 season--Lotta

Crabtree, Charlotte Cushman, John E. Owens, Charlotte LeClercq, and Edwin Adams. The reason for this sudden emphasis on guest stars has never been explained, but Booth may have been responding to increased pressure from his partner Richard Robertson. For several seasons, Robertson had demanded that Booth include more popular entertainments in the repertory. As previously noted, Booth reluctantly agreed to engage Lotta Crabtree for the opening of the 1871-72 season.

Lotta Crabtree's engagement lasted six weeks and resulted in receipts of only $893.04 per performance. Booth estimated that her engagement lost about $200 per week.[56] The season then received a small financial shot-in-the-arm with the appearance of Charlotte Cushman. Long absent from New York because of illness and a European tour, she was warmly applauded for her performances as Queen Katherine in Shakespeare's King Henry VIII, Lady Macbeth and, Meg Merrilies in Guy Mannering. In 41 performances over a six-week period, Cushman averaged $1,225.30 in gross receipts per performance, but her whopping salary of $3,250 per week left only a modest profit.[57]

The profit earned by Cushman was soon wiped out by the losses of the final three guest stars. Considered "the greatest delineator of the Yankee type,"[58] John E. Owens presented two weeks each of B. N. Webster's Dot or The Cricket on the Hearth and Solon Shingle or The People's Lawyer. Owens averaged only $638.74 a performance. Charlotte LeClercq, who received acclaim as a supporting actress for Charles Fechter, was a disaster. Booth had expected her to at least make expenses,[59] but her repertoire of As You Like It, Sheridan Knowles' The Hunchback, and assorted comedies earned only an average of $358.55 a performance. Booth was forced to use his road earnings to cover LeClercq's losses.

> I am making enough here [Philadelphia] to pay my New York salaries weekly--Paul must pay Peter, it seems; and whenever I have a chance to get a little stock ahead by acting away from home--the business there falls so low that I am obliged to 'prop' it.[60]

Finally, Edwin Adams made his first appearance at Booth's Theatre since 1869. He revived Enoch Arden but was less successful than in 1869 and only grossed an average of $534.31 per performance. Although the Booth's Theatre Account Books do not reveal the total financial loss incurred by the visiting stars during the 1871-72 season, Booth's return to a repertory format featuring guest artists failed to earn the profits necessary to reduce the theatre's overhead and debt.

In addition to increasing the number of guest stars for 1871-72, Booth also scheduled an increase in personal performances. Booth appeared 113 times during the season in two separate engagements. He opened his first engagement on 4 December 1871 with Hamlet. While not as warmly received as his famous 1870 Hamlet, this production still ran eighteen performances with an average gross of $908.22 a performance. On Christmas day 1871, Booth presented his newest revival, Julius Caesar to an enthusiastic crowd of 3000. Gross receipts for the first five weeks averaged a remarkable $1,338.27 a performance. The next four weeks suffered a decline in receipts, but still averaged $968.39. However, by the tenth week the long run was taking its toll and receipts dropped to $660.60 per performance. Julius Caesar continued for two more weeks and completed its run of twelve weeks and 85 performances on 16 March 1872. Booth closed out his first engagement of the 1871-72 season with one week of The Iron Chest and The Fool's Revenge.

Julius Caesar's 85 performances were the most by any of Booth's revivals and its average performance receipts of $1,062.77 would normally

have earned a large profit. However, production costs were very high. Just nine days before the close of Julius Caesar, Booth wrote that "the grand revival of Caesar . . . with its fearful expenses . . . has not more than kept my head above the surface."[61]

Booth's second engagement of 1871-72 opened on 22 April and for one and a half weeks he presented a mixed repertory which included The Iron Chest, The Fool's Revenge, and David Garrick's version of Taming of the Shrew, Katherine and Petruchio. On 1 May, Booth opened his second revival of the season, Richard III. Although the revival drew good houses and averaged a healthy $1,274.61 per night, Richard III closed on 18 May after only sixteen performances. Nevertheless, with a smaller cast and less elaborate costumes and scenery, the production earned a small profit.

With guest stars incurring a loss during the 1871-72 season and profits on Booth's revivals below previous seasons, the theatre's profits declined for the second consecutive year. According to the Booth's Theatre Ledger Books, the 1871-72 season had a gross profit of $50,997.33, but a net profit of only $11,997.33.[62] Booth's new configuration of guest stars and personal appearances had failed.

Edwin Booth also made significant changes in the stock company for the 1871-72 season. Stung by the continuing criticism of his acting company, Booth contracted only seventeen actors from the 1870-71 company[63] and decided to "try what a host of strong names would do." Booth warned his partner, Richard Robertson, that this plan had many inherent problems--especially increased expenses.

> We are to expect a terrible increase of our payroll, for all these half-baked stars, such as Barrett, Adams and even Wallack[64] and Davenport (all excellent

> in the stock) require their $300 per week. And then again, say you get them (as I hope to, and will try to), where are the plays in which we can use them all? You see, Wallack reserves the right to decline any part he does not like, and two men of equal popularity (Barrett, Adams, etc.) will object to act together except in equal parts.[65]

Booth negotiated with several stars, including Mrs. D. P. Bowers and James W. Wallack,[66] but, with the exception of Frank C. Bangs, he was unable to secure any stars for the company. It is unknown whether Booth's failure to secure stars was due to his refusal to meet their salary demands or to the stars' refusal to work in a stock company format. In either case, these conditions fostered by the star system victimized the Booth's Theatre stock company.

Booth also continued his earlier practice of engaging guest actors for one or two productions. For his revival of Julius Caesar, Booth hired Lawrence Barrett to act Cassius. Barrett was still a close friend of Booth and received excellent reviews in his supporting role.

Critical reaction to the acting company continued generally negative. Booth thought that perhaps the critics were somewhat less hostile toward the stock company in Hamlet, and in a sarcastic note to John E. Russell wrote, "the [critics] are even now divided on the position as to whether my company is d--d bad or only tolerable so. . . ."[67] However, the performances of the minor roles in Julius Caesar were rarely mentioned and the Evening Post's comment that "the minor actors in the play were as indifferent as usual," best typified critical reaction.[68] In Richard III the criticism continued. The New York Times noted that "the minor parts are not, we must observe, as well acted as they ought to be. . . ."[69]

Edwin Booth's artistic management reached its climax in the magnificent revival of Julius Caesar. The acting of Lawrence Barrett as Cassius, Frank C. Bangs as Marc Anthony, D. W. Waller as Julius Caesar, and Booth as Brutus was widely acclaimed. Lawrence Barrett probably received the most consistently favorable reviews. "Mr. Barrett's Cassius was tempestuous and exciting, and stands out boldly as a striking and characteristic personation."[70]

Critics devoted an unusual amount of space to the descriptions of the production's awesome settings.

> A more magnificent setting no piece ever received in New York, or, it is fair to presume, in the world. The scenery was not simply gorgeous--it was scrupulously correct. The noble simplicity of Roman elegance was faithfully reproduced. One was transported as if by magic to those scenes of ancient grandeur when liberty was fought for and for centuries maintained. The Roman Senate and the Forum where Antony delivers his oration over the dead body of Caesar, were the finest acts of the piece. I have never seen so many accurate stage pictures. Each was a reflex of the epoch upon which the action of the play is founded.[71]

The New York Times praised the production for its successful integrating of the various production elements, including crowd scenes with over 200 extras.[72]

> In giving exceptional credit to this representation, we would imply, not that it is more sumptuous than others, but that it is more even and harmonious. The labor and minute care shown in the revival have not been expended in vain. Everything brought before the public eye, the grand and complicated scenery, the classic costumes, the banners and weapons, the groupings of the mob, and finally the acting of chief figures, was rigorously scanned and judiciously approved.
>
> We feel bound to say that the direction of the stage has been capital. The groupings of the mob, the action that has been taught to its members to accompany and succeed the more stirring incidents,

> is in wonderful contrast with what is usually seen from such assemblages, and is really among the most difficult things to attain.[73]

In his study of Julius Caesar, Gerald Honaker also pointed out that Booth made considerable use of lighting, sound, off-stage effects, judicious script-cutting, and effective stage picturizations to emphasize and highlight important moments of the production.[74] For the first time at Booth's Theatre, Edwin Booth successfully integrated the competent acting performances of his leading players, magnificant scenery and costumes, and effective and inventive staging. The New York Tribune called Julius Caesar "the best and highest success" of Booth's management career.[75]

Although Edwin Booth reached a milestone in his artistic career in 1871-72, the deteriorating financial state of Booth's Theatre revealed a growing cynicism on Booth's part. As early as November 1871, Booth gave a somewhat pessimistic appraisal of his "dream."

> I begin to fear all my dreams of high-art, refinement & delicacy in our profession are Utopian;-- dreams & nothing more. I must I find live with the times since I am doomed to live in it, and must necessarily do as others do--look out for No. 1.[76]

Booth's new resolve to "look out for No. 1" led him to two important conclusions. First, he finally admitted to himself that he had engaged too many unpopular stars and, second, he had paid these stars too much. Unfortunately, Booth's new found "pragmatism" had little effect on his management and his final season as manager of Booth's Theatre in 1872-73 still exhibited many of the same policy inconsistencies that plagued his earlier seasons.

1872-73 Season

Edwin Booth made three significant changes in the 1872-73 repertory format. First, he initially booked his season only through March. This gave him the flexibility of offering return engagements for the spring season to the most successful stars of the fall and winter. By this plan, he hoped to buoy up the spring season, traditionally the weakest at Booth's Theatre. Second, Booth resolved to engage only "sure cards" for the 1872-73 season.[77] This policy angered long-time friend, Lawrence Barrett, who accused Booth of reneging on an earlier agreement to hire him in 1872-73. Booth's terse rebuttal so angered Barrett that he refused to talk to Booth for nearly seven years.

> I [Booth] cannot afford to 'star' those who have proved to be unprofitable to me--unless they are prepared to insure me some return for my outlay in scenery, costumes, & c, & c [etc.], and guard me against positive loss. In your case--as in those of Owens, Lotta, LeClerque [sic] & others--I have paid dearly for the experiment of starring those who (however attractive they may be elsewhere) cannot draw sufficient money to my treasury to defray the nightly expenses.[78]

Third, Booth severely limited his own appearances in 1872-73 to one, five-week engagement and produced only one new revival. This change was especially surprising since Booth's engagements in 1871-72 had earned most of that season's profit. Booth apparently believed he could rely on guest stars in 1872-73.

The 1872-73 guest star line-up included James W. Wallack, Mr. and Mrs. Dion Boucicault, Adelaide Neilson, Helen Temple, and Mr. and Mrs. William J. Florence. Only James W. Wallack, Dion Boucicault, and Mr. and Mrs. William J. Florence were considered major stars, likely to earn a large profit and only Boucicault and Neilson were selected for return

engagements in the spring. This weak line-up of stars again demonstrated Booth's inability to execute his own stated policy.

James W. Wallack opened the season on 19 August 1872 with a lack-luster performance of The Bells. Once an actor of formidable power, Wallack was ill and near the end of his career. He averaged $602.57 in gross receipts a performance and just managed to meet expenses. After Wallack came the two most successful engagements of the season--Mr. and Mrs. Dion Boucicault and Adelaide Neilson.

Booth expected the Boucicault's to earn a profit and he was not disappointed. Boucicault presented his popular melodrama, Arrah-na-Pogue, for four weeks and followed with a mixed repertory of his own plays for the final four weeks. The Boucicault's grossed $66,617.50, for an average performance gross of $1,189.60. Profits from the engagement exceeded $15,000.[79]

Boucicault, without his wife, returned for another eight-week engagement in the spring but was far less successful. His business slumped despite the premiere and six-week run of his newest play, Daddy O'Doud.[80] Boucicault also presented a mixed repertory of his own plays for two weeks. During the spring engagement, Boucicault's gross receipts dropped to under $600 per performance and earned a profit of just $1,000.[81]

While the Boucicault's were a sure success, Adelaide Neilson[82] was a gamble which payed immediate dividends. Booth invited the beautiful and talented actress to make her American debut at Booth's Theatre. For four weeks and twenty-seven performances, she enthralled New York audiences with her Juliet, Rosalind and Pauline in The Lady of Lyons and averaged nearly $1,200 a performance. Neilson returned for a five-week engagement in the spring with a romantic opera entitled Amy Robsart and three

performances of As You Like It. Although her average gross receipts declined to $1,052.51 per performance, she still earned a profit of around $8,000.[83]

The engagement of Helen Temple was a financial disaster. Encouraged by long-time colleague and friend John Brougham, Booth signed the young unknown actress for a two-week engagement in Brougham's drama The Lily of France. In addition to average gross receipts of under $450, Booth considered her performance so poor that he cancelled her scheduled second week.[84] Booth immediately substituted James W. Wallack for one week in Tom Taylor's drama, Henry Dunbar, but the average gross per performance slipped to under $400. The two weeks of Temple and Wallack resulted in a loss of nearly $3000.[85]

Mr. and Mrs. William J. Florence, a successful husband and wife comedy team, also proved profitable. The Florence's presented four weeks of Tom Taylor's The Ticket-of-Leave Man and averaged a respectable $965.26 per performance, earning an estimated profit of between $5,000 and $7,000.[86] Their engagement ended with an unsuccessful two weeks of No Thoroughfare, a collaboration of Wilkie Collins and Charles Dickens, which incurred a minor loss.

Edwin Booth opened his portion of the 1872-73 season with three weeks of Richard III which averaged $1,274.62 in gross receipts per performance. Booth then presented the final "Grand Booth Revival" of his management career, John Howard Payne's heroic tragedy, Brutus or the Fall of Tarquin, for only twelve performances. Received favorably by both audiences and critics, Brutus earned a very respectable $1,388.49 per performance and a small profit.

Booth planned a short run for Brutus and cut down expenses by using numerous settings, set pieces, and costumes from his highly acclaimed Julius Caesar. "It [Brutus] was set upon the stage of Booth's Theatre with that wealth of Roman scenes for which this theatre is famed," wrote the New York Tribune.[87] And the Evening Post commented, "The tragedy was put upon the stage with the lavish employment of the magnificent Roman scenery and costumes of the theatre."[88]

Booth's economizing included the acting company. There is no evidence to suggest that Booth made any attempt to employ new stars in the company or hire any guest actors to support him in Brutus. Critical reaction to the stock company in Brutus and in the previous productions of the 1872-73 season was indifferent. In its review of J. W. Wallack's The Bells, the Tribune described the acting company as "efficient, in a matter of fact way."[89]

As usual with Booth's revivals, the artistic direction received warm praise. The critic for the New York Times wrote that the "stage business was . . . exceedingly well arranged" and Brutus had "never before been set so well on the American, or probably, on any other stage."[90]

The 1872-73 season had only a small decline in gross receipts and, according to the "Profit and Loss Account" the gross profit actually increased almost $5000.[91] The theatre's net profit for the entire season is unknown, but a memo in the "Expense Account" indicates that from 19 August 1872 to 15 February 1873 the net profit reached $19,568.21--an increase of almost $8000 over the previous entire season.[92]

Despite the financial gains of the 1872-73 season, Booth knew the profits would never be large enough to clear his indebtedness. On 15

August 1873, Edwin Booth withdrew from theatre management to devote all his energies to raising funds through starring tours.[93]

The story of Edwin Booth and his million dollar theatre did not end with his withdrawal from theatre management. In the immediate aftermath of the Panic of 1873, the theatre's mortgages were called in and Booth was besieged by creditors.[94] Booth searched unsuccessfully for a solution and on 26 January 1874 declared voluntary bankruptcy.[95] After two years of proceedings, Booth's Theatre was sold under foreclosure for a sum far less than the amount of the mortgages and the proven claims against Booth totaled $147,057.50.[96] James H. McVicker purchased the claims of Booth's creditors, and in the spring of 1877, nearly four years after leaving theatre management, Booth repayed the last of his debts.

Summary

Edwin Booth's management of Booth's Theatre demonstrated the difficulty of combining the business and artistic functions of theatre management. Booth's unwillingness to recognize the growing complexity of American theatre organization in the late 1860s and early 1870s was a major factor in his inability to successfully manage his theatre. In addition, his incompetence as a theatre financier resulted in an insurmountable debt which strongly influenced every major decision of his management.

Booth's business management was characterized by three major weaknesses. First, his planning of each season's repertory format was inconsistent and lacked a comprehensive overview. For example, the number of guest stars varied widely from season to season with little

justification. Second, Booth failed to secure profitable star engagements. He compensated by engaging lesser-known stars and by trying to advance younger actors to star status but few earned a good profit. And third, Booth was unable to engage a stock company of first-rate status. Despite large personnel turnovers, the addition of guest stars to supplement important productions, and Booth's own attempts to hire "name" actors, New York critics considered the stock company inadequate and inappropriate for the city's leading "classical" theatre.

Ironically, Booth's grand revivals, which were consistently profitable, were also a managerial dilemma. Audiences, critics, and Booth's own aesthetic tastes required that he produce in the historically accurate manner. But excessive production expenses drastically reduced net profit. The only way Booth could have dramatically lowered production expenses was to severely reduce the number of revivals. However, such a maneuver would have compromised his artistic intentions, alienated the vast majority of his audience and resulted in a greater financial disaster.

The magnitude of the Booth's Theatre financial fiasco obscured Booth's contributions in the area of artistic management. His intention to emulate Charles Kean's management at the Princess Theatre led Booth to embrace historical accuracy, the "greatest heresy of the century."[97] But, as Charles H. Shattuck pointed out,

> In fairness to Booth, it must be recognized that he did not permit scenic embellishment to wreck the plays but aimed at what he took to be 'fit illustration.' He did not, like Kean, displace great chunks of the plays with elaborate processions and pageants; nor did he, like the later Augustin Daly and Beerbohm Tree, chop and dislocate the texts to accommodate them to the cumberson, inflexible settings.[98]

Booth's commitment to "fit illustration" resulted in two important achievements. First, Booth's installation of a mechanized rise-and-sink system of scene changing, capable of changing massive settings instantaneously, allowed him to present Shakespeare with continuous action, stopping only for intermissions and for the final curtain. Second, Booth maintained high production standards for all of the revivals staged during his management tenure.

CHAPTER V FOOTNOTES

[1]"To William Winter," 14 Dec. 1873 in Daniel J. Watermeier, Between Actor and Critic: Selected Letters of Edwin Booth and William Winter (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1971), p. 43.

[2]Edwin Booth's Bankruptcy Papers, "Second General Meeting: Report of John H. Platt, Assignee," 11 Jan. 1876 and "Third General Meeting: Report on the condition of the Booth Estate," 20 June 1876, National Archives. The liabilities on Booth's Theatre, including taxes, amounted to $450,000. The theatre was bought by Oaken Ames for $109,000, but he also assumed responsibility for mortgages and interest which totaled $385,000.

[3]Charles H. Shattuck, "The Theatrical Management of Edwin Booth," in The Theatrical Manager in England and America, ed. Joseph W. Donohue (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1971), p. 175.

[4]George C. D. Odell, Annals of the New York Stage (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1931), VIII, 566.

[5]Odell, VIII, 427.

[6]All statistics regarding Booth's Theatre are taken or computed from the Booth's Theatre Account Books, located at The Walter Hampden-Edwin Booth Theatre Collection and Library, The Players, New York.

[7]William Winter, Life and Art of Edwin Booth (1893; rpt. New York: McMillan, 1906), p. 98.

[8]The expenses included salaries, printing and advertising, costume and scenery upkeep, and sundries designated to the production. It is important to note that the overhead costs such as gas, coal, interest on mortgages, and mortgage payments are not included in the "Expense" account.

[9]As mentioned in Chapter four, p. 108, Joseph Booth had combined the theatre's construction account with the costs of constructing the scenery for Romeo and Juliet and The Winter's Tale and the cost of the theatre's stock wardrobe.

[10]Clarke, p. 171.

[11]This profit figure would be considerably less if costume expenses were known and deducted.

[12]Daily Star (New York), 5 Feb. 1869 in Gerald Leon Honaker, "Edwin Booth, Producer: A Study of Four Productions at Booth's Theatre," Diss. Indiana 1969, p. 155.

[13]Honaker, p. 155.

[14]New York Tribune, 4 Feb. 1869.

[15]New York Times, 4 Feb. 1869.

[16]Asia Booth Clarke, The Elder and the Younger Booth (Boston: James R. Osgood and Company, 1882), p. 170.

[17]New York Evening Post, 4 Feb. 1869.

[18]New York Evening Post, 13 April 1869.

[19]According to the "Statement of Profit and Loss Account" in the Booth's Theatre Cash Book, the gross profit was $52,947.09. However, the profit would be significantly lower if the scenery and costume expenses for Romeo and Juliet were known.

[20]Booth was actually quite depressed. Despite generally favorable reviews, he was stung by adverse criticism of his own performances and accused the press of being against him. (Edwin Booth, Letter to Launt Thompson, 27 April 1869, Library and Museum of the Performing Arts, New York.)

[21]New York Times, 20 Feb. 1869, cited in Honaker, pp. 150-51.

[22]Emma Waller also starred in Guy Mannering on Saturday evenings during Booth's engagement.

[23]The Profit and Loss Account indicated that the final three months of the 1869-70 season, which included Clarke, McVicker and Clifton, incurred a loss of $17,082.92.

[24]New York Times, 6 Feb. 1870.

[25]Edwin Booth, Letter to William Winter, 15 March 1870, Folger Shakespeare Library.

[26]A New Way to Pay Old Debts and The Lady of Lyons had a successful nightly average gross of $1,277.41.

[27]New York Evening Post, 29 March 1870. Whether the costumes were specially built for Macbeth or pulled from stock is unknown.

[28]Known production expenses amounted to $10,048.66 which would leave a profit of $6,493.34 for Macbeth.

[29]This account of the Hamlet production is indebted to Charles H. Shattuck, The Hamlet of Edwin Booth (Urbana: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1969), pp. 67-98; Honaker, pp. 183-241; and the Booth's Theatre Account Books. For a more detailed discussion of the critical response to Booth's Hamlet, see Shattuck, Hamlet, pp. 89-96.

[30]New York Evening Post, 6 Jan. 1870.

[31]Edwin Booth, Letter to [unknown], 14 March 1870, Folger Shakespeare Library.

[32]According to Charles H. Shattuck, the critical opinion of the stock company ranged from reasonably good to very bad. See Shattuck, Hamlet, p. 83.

[33]Honaker, p. 222.

[34]New York Times, 30 March 1870.

[35]See Appendix C, Tables 15-21, for Gross Receipt and Profit totals.

[36]"To John E. Russell," 22 August 1869 in "Edwin Booth to John E. Russell," The Outlook, 20 April 1921, p. 638.

[37]According to William Winter, Life, p. 128, Booth's earnings in the years immediately following his management of Booth's Theatre were $75,000 a year--substantially more than he was making in profits at Booth's Theatre.

[38]Shattuck, "Theatrical Management," p. 180. Shattuck's estimate of a profit in excess of $30,000 was based on the theatre's reported profit of $40,883.96 for the period 1 August 1870 to 3 February 1871.

[39]Edwin Booth, Letter to Lawrence Barrett, 25 Oct. 1870, The Players.

[40]Edwin Booth, Letter to Lawrence Barrett, 13 Nov. 1870, The Players.

[41]There was no problem in mounting The Winter's Tale or Richelieu because both productions were already constructed and ready for presentation. On Saturday evenings of Booth's engagement, Barrett starred in Charles Selby's The Marble Heart and other popular melodramas.

[42]Edwin Booth, Letter to Lawrence Barrett, 13 Nov. 1870.

[43]According to William Winter, Life, p. 104, The Winter's Tale production costs totaled $40,000.

[44]This figure was computed from figures in two letters. In a 7 March 1872 letter from Edwin Booth to Lawrence Barrett (Players), he wrote that The Winter's Tale and The Man O'Airlie had lost a combined total of $18,500. In a second letter from Booth to Barrett on 31 March 1872 (Players), Booth noted that The Man O'Airlie alone lost $8,509.95.

[45]Shattuck, "Theatrical Management," p. 181.

[46]Edwin Booth, Letter to Lawrence Barrett, 13 Nov. 1870.

[47]Between 1 Aug. 1870 and 3 Feb. 1871, Booth's Theatre had a gross profit of $40,883.96 (see Appendix C, Table 21). With Rip Van Winkle's profit at nearly $30,000, the first four weeks of Richelieu earned a profit in excess of $10,000. Receipts of the final four weeks of Richelieu justify an estimated profit of no less than $5,000.

[48]"To John E. Russell," 12 Feb. 1871 in "Edwin Booth to John E. Russell," The Outlook, 20 April 1921, p. 638.

[49]Winter, Life, p. 104.

[50]Edwin Booth, Letter to Lawrence Barrett, 31 March 1872, The Players.

[51]New York Times, 10 Jan. 1871.

[52]John S. Morey, "Richelieu Supplement," The Season, 14 Jan. 1871, p. 4, as cited in Honaker, p. 258.

[53]New York Tribune, 12 Jan. 1871.

[54]Honaker, p. 260.

[55]According to William Winter, Life, p. 125, Booth had reduced the floating debt from $66,000 to $24,000 by the end of 1871 and had retired a mortgage of $100,000. The Booth's Theatre Ledger Books support Winter's claim regarding the floating debt but do not support his contention that a mortgage was retired. The ledger books contain a "Rent Account" for mortgage payment, but for some unknown reason the "rent" was transferred to the share accounts and divided between Booth and Robertson as profits. Additional evidence that no mortgage was retired is found in the Booth Bankruptcy papers. These documents reveal that when Booth declared bankruptcy in 1874, all of the original mortgages were still in effect.

[56]Edwin Booth, Letter to Lawrence Barrett, 9 Sept. 1871, The Players.

[57]J. Henry Magonigle, Letter to Charlotte Cushman, 5 Nov. 1872, The Players. According to Magonigle, Cushman cost the theatre $2,143.27 in losses during three of her six weeks at Booth's Theatre. Using Magonigle's figure, it can be computed that Cushman needed to gross about $8,000 a week to break even and her weekly average gross of $8,372.92 would have resulted in a profit of between $1,800 and $2,200 for her entire engagement.

[58]Glenn Hughes, A History of the American Theatre 1700-1950 (New York: Samuel French, 1951), p. 172.

[59]Edwin Booth, Letter to William Winter, 10 April 1872, Folger Shakespeare Library.

[60]Edwin Booth, Letter to William Winter, 10 April 1872, Folger Shakespeare Library.

[61]Edwin Booth, Letter to Lawrence Barrett, 7 March 1872, The Players.

[62]See Appendix C, Table 21. For the first time in the ledger books the term "net profit" appeared. The ledger book notation indicated that the "net profit" was the gross profit minus the $1000 a week allocated toward "rent" expenses (mortgage and interest expenses).

[63]This estimate was deducted from a study of numerous programs from the 1870-71 and 1871-72 seasons.

[64]Booth was referring to James W. Wallack, Jr., who opened the 1872-73 season in a starring engagement and then stayed at Booth's Theatre as part of the stock company.

[65]"To Richard Robertson," 11 Dec. 1870, in Edgar Beecher Bronson, "Edwin Booth's Opinions of the Players of His Day, Theatre Magazine, May 1910, p. 164.

[66]"To Richard Robertson," 11 Dec. 1870, in Bronson, p. 165.

[67]"To John E. Russell," 10 Dec. 1871, in "Edwin Booth to John E. Russell," The Outlook, 20 April 1921, p. 638.

[68]New York Evening Post, 26 Dec. 1871.

[69]New York Times, 2 May 1872.

[70]New York Evening Post, 26 Dec. 1871.

[71]T. Allston Brown, A History of the New York Stage (New York: Benjamin Blom, 1903), III, 99-100. Charles Witham's watercolor plates of the Grand Square in Rome and the Senate Chamber from Julius Caesar are preserved at the Museum of the City of New York, Theatre and Music Collection. Charles H. Shattuck in his Shakespeare on the American Stage (Washington, D.C.: Folger Shakespeare Library, 1976), p. 146, noted that while the scenery was historic, it was also anachronistic. Witham and Booth set the play in the "marble Rome of Augustus" rather than the "rude brick Rome of the Republic." Nevertheless, the critics failed to notice this anachronism and the Rome of Augustus was more suitable to the grandeur of Booth's revival.

[72]Turf, Field and Farm, 12 Jan. 1872, noted in Honaker, p. 312.

[73]New York Times, 26 Dec. 1871.

[74]Honaker, p. 359.

[75]New York Tribune, 26 Dec. 1871.

[76]Edwin Booth, Letter to Lawrence Barrett, 29 Nov. 1871, The Players.

[77]Edwin Booth, Letter to Lawrence Barrett, 7 March 1872, The Players.

[78]Edwin Booth, Letter to Lawrence Barrett, 26 Dec. 1872, The Players. Several other letters pertaining to this disagreement are available at The Players.

[79]This profit estimate is based on the financial terms of Boucicault's return engagement in the spring of 1873. He received 50 percent of gross after expenses of $500. When gross receipts exceeded $1800 a performance, Boucicault received 70 percent after expenses of $500. Source: J. Henry Magonigle, Letter to Dion Boucicault, 27 Sept. 1872, in "Transcript Book," The Players.

[80]Although Charles Witham designed the scenery and Boucicault personally supervised the production (Booth's Theatre Programme, Daddy O'Doud, Week ending 29 March 1873, The Players), there is no evidence to suggest that the production was mounted with the elaborateness or splendor of the Booth revivals.

[81]Boucicault's estimated profit of $719.15 was computed on the basis of the terms found in the letter from J. Henry Magonigle to Dion Boucicault, 27 Sept. 1872, "Transcript Book," The Players. See footnote 79 for the terms of Boucicault's engagement.

[82]The illegitimate daughter of an obscure English actress, she became one of the most highly respected actresses of the English stage. She died in 1880 at the young age of thirty-four while at the height of her popularity.

[83]Adelaide Neilson's estimated profit of $7,967.35 was computed on the basis of figures found in J. Henry Magonigle's "Transcript Book," Number 247, The Players. Neilson received 50 percent of gross after expenses of $500 for all evening performances and 50 percent after expenses of $400 for matinee performances.

[84]Edwin Booth, Letter to John Brougham, 18 Dec. 1872, "Transcript Book of Magonigle's Business Correspondence," The Players.

[85]Computed on the basis of nightly expenses of $600.

[86]The estimated profit was computed from the known gross receipts and terms of Florence's engagement. Florence received 25 percent of the first $1000 in gross receipts after the deduction of expenses ($600 for evening performances and $400 for a matinee). On all receipts above $1000, Florence received 40 percent after expenses. See J. Henry Magonigle, Letter to Edwin Booth, February 1873, "Transcript Book," The Players.

[87]New York Tribune, 21 Jan. 1873.

[88]New York Evening Post, 21 Jan. 1873.

[89]New York Tribune, 20 August 1872.

[90]New York Times, 21 Jan. 1873.

[91]"Profit and Loss Account," Booth's Theatre Ledger Books, Vol. III, The Players. See Appendix C, Table 21.

[92]"Expense Account," Booth's Theatre Ledger Books," Vol. III, The Players.

[93]Booth leased the theatre to his brother Junius Brutus Booth, Jr. for five years at an annual rate of $73,000.

[94]When an early 1873 business slump continued to deepen into the summer, J. Henry Magonigle and James H. McVicker devised a plan to retire all the mortgages via a single loan of $425,000. This plan was feasible because all of Booth's mortgages were on a short-term basis (1-5 years) and required only a two to thirty-day notice for payment. For some unknown reason, the plan never materialized. See J. H. Magonigle, Letter to J. H. McVicker, 25 June 1873, "Transcript Book," The Players.

[95]The events during the fall of 1873 are confusing and somewhat obscure. The most detailed version of these events is found in Richard Lockridge's Darling of Misfortune Edwin Booth: 1833-1893 (New York: Benjamin Blom, Inc., 1932), p. 228.

[96]Edwin Booth's Bankruptcy Papers.

[97]Shattuck, Hamlet, p. 57.

[98]Shattuck, Hamlet, p. 57.

CONCLUSION

Edwin Booth's management career is important for three reasons. First, Booth's unsuccessful attempt to combine the business and artistic functions of theatre management demonstrated the growing complexity of the American theatre's organizational structure. By the early 1870s, the combinational system had replaced the resident-stock company as the dominant organizational mode. This change resulted in the complete separation of the business and artistic functions. Managing a theatre became too complex for any "one man who was both actor and manager."[1] Edwin Booth's attempt to combine both functions of management was out of step with the organizational realities of his age.

Second, Edwin Booth's theatre management career marked the end of an era. His artistic achievements at the Winter Garden Theatre and Booth's Theatre made him a worthy successor to the great English actor-managers of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The era of the great actor-managers in America ended in June 1873 when Edwin Booth retired from his management of Booth's Theatre.[2]

Third, and most importantly, Edwin Booth's artistic management was innovative. His theatre was designed to handle historically accurate staging without the usual scene-changing delays. Booth's productions achieved a continuity in performance which foreshadowed the work of William Poel. Booth also demanded and attained the highest production standards of any theatre in New York. His supervision of all

production details, his staging of crowd scenes, and his imaginative use of the theatre's technical resources demonstrate that Booth made the concept of production unity a reality years before it became common practice. Edwin Booth's artistic management helped prepare the way for the rise of the modern director in the American theatre.

FOOTNOTES

[1]The Evening Sun (New York), 7 June 1893.

[2]Rumors concerning Booth's possible return to theatre management were common during the 1870s and 1880s and, on at least two occasions, there was apparently some substance to the rumors. The first was in 1881 when Booth received a suggestion (from whom Booth never revealed) that he manage Booth's Theatre again but without any financial worries. His mystery backer(s) were to assume all financial risks. Booth rejected this suggestion by claiming that he lacked the needed ambition. See "To William Winter," 22 May 1881, Daniel J. Watermeier, Between Actor and Critic: Selected Letters of Edwin Booth and William Winter (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1971), p. 188. The second opportunity came in 1887 when, according to Lawrence Barrett, he and Booth discussed building a new theatre. Booth's interest in this project is unknown and there is no evidence that the idea ever got beyond the discussion stage. See "An Actor Manager Talks," The World, 12 Dec. 1887, n.p. and Richard Lockridge, Darling of Misfortune Edwin Booth: 1833-1893 (New York: Benjamin Blom, Inc., 1932), p. 306.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

WALNUT STREET THEATRE AND BOSTON THEATRE FINANCIAL TABLES

TABLE 3

WALNUT STREET THEATRE: 1865-66
RECEIPT AND PROFIT/LOSS TOTALS

Performer	Performances	Weeks	Receipts (in dollars)	Profit (+) or Loss (-) (in dollars)
J. S. Clarke	6 (8)[a]	1+	5,355.07	+ 1,688.07
Mixed	6	1	3,491.75	+ 875.80
Mrs. Bowers	36 (36)	6	23,250.00	+ 5,743.36
C. Richings	24 (25)	4	12,240.75	+ 1,223.88
J. Brougham	32 (32)	5	21,964.25	+ 5,534.39
Company	15 (14)	2	8,003.25	+ 559.19
Mrs. John Wood	12 (12)	2	7,483.25	+ 1,332.05
J. S. Clarke	43 (43)	7	28,412.25	+ 5,971.45
M/M C. Kean	6 (5)	1	6,040.50	+ 1,041.00
J. H. Hackett	6 (6)	1	3,264.25	+ 446.91
Mixed	6 (6)	1	2,825.25	+ 290.24
Mrs. Bowers	13 (12)	2	4,882.25	+ 30.29
J. Brougham	6 (6)	1	3,291.50	+ 305.21
E. Booth	48 (51)	8	32,993.75	+ 7,261.67
Mixed	6	1	3,927.25	+ 792.15
Company	21 (23)	3+	5,135.75	- 319.27
J. B. Booth	12 (12)	2	3,156.50	- 17.18
Company	6 (6)	1	1,845.75	+ 207.73
J. B. Roberts	6 (6)	1	1,815.75	+ 111.06
Buislay Family	14	2	6,448.64	+ 290.04
Total	324	52+	185,827.64	+ 33,368.04

Source: Walnut Street Theatre Account Books.

Note: Account book entries for the 1865-66 season are on a weekly basis from Saturday through Friday. Hence, the records cut across engagements and a week's total may include performances by several performers.

[a]Actual number of performances by the performer during his or her entire engagement.

TABLE 4

WALNUT STREET THEATRE: 1866-67
RECEIPT AND PROFIT/LOSS TOTALS

Performer	Performances	Weeks	Receipts (in dollars)	Profit (+) or Loss (-) (in dollars)
J. S. Clarke	12	2	6,463.50	+ 1,224.96
Mayo & Perry	6	1	1,270.25	- 1,107.46
J. Brougham	12	2	4,907.75	+ 149.07
J. H. Hackett	6	1	2,014.50	- 117.67
E. Booth	38	6	26,364.50	+ 6,562.61
Mixed	7	1	2,295.00	+ 154.55
J. S. Clarke	31 (30)[a]	5	17,052.25	+ 3,408.10
J. Brougham	24	4	12,444.75	+ 1,099.98
Company	6	1	3,737.25	+ 665.53
Mrs. Bowers	12	2	7,695.50	+ 1,727.80
E. L. Davenport	12	2	6,316.50	+ 1,162.91
Luc. Western	38	6	18,729.75	+ 1,849.41
Company	6	1	2,578.00	+ 54.11
Miss Lander	12	2	5,027.25	+ 114.47
Susan Denin	18 (17)	3	5,545.75	- 692.47
Company	1	0	208.75	+ 60.78
Total	241	39	122,651.25	+ 16,316.68

Source: Walnut Street Account Books.

Note: Since account book entries are on a weekly basis, some weekly performance totals include performances by more than one performer.

[a]Actual number of performances by the performer during his or her entire engagement.

TABLE 5

WALNUT STREET THEATRE: 1867-68
RECEIPT AND PROFIT/LOSS TOTALS

Performer	Performances	Weeks	Receipts (in dollars)	Profit (+) or Loss (-) (in dollars)
Company	52	8	30,391.25	+ 4,343.20
C. Thompson	12	2	3,910.25	- 287.02
Company	12	2	3,628.75	- 1,000.49
E. Forrest	18 (15)[a]	3	17,424.75	+ 2,578.38
J. Brougham	24	4	16,520.50	+ 2,653.72
L. Western	18	3	11,192.50	+ 1,824.68
M/M B. Williams	36	6	24,286.75	+ 2,586.23
J. W. Wallack	12	2	4,291.50	- 255.50
Mixed	12	2	5,354.75	+ 106.60
Company	6	1	1,728.25	- 184.02
E. Booth	33	5	25,827.50	+ 7,963.20
J. Brougham	24	4	9,282.25	+ 18.68
J. Jefferson	24	4	14,022.50	+ 555.82
Company	4[b]	0	1,093.75	+ 589.07
Total	287	46	168,955.25	+ 21,492.55

Source: Walnut Street Theatre Account Books.

Note: Since account book entries are on a weekly basis, some weekly performance totals include performances by more than one performer.

[a]Actual number of performances by the performer during his or her entire engagement.

[b]Performances were non-consecutive.

TABLE 6

WALNUT STREET THEATRE: 1868-69
RECEIPT AND PROFIT/LOSS TOTALS

Performer	Performances	Weeks	Receipts (in dollars)	Profit (+) or Loss (-) (in dollars)
E. Adams	6	1	2,947.50	+ 514.08
Mrs. Landers	12	2	5,984.25	+ 873.58
F. S. Chanfrau	6	1	3,136.75	+ 654.95
E. L. Davenport	24	4	11,401.75	+ 1,343.78
E. Forrest	12 (10)[a]	2	11,863.75	+ 2,362.03
Mrs. Bowers	18	3	6,971.75	+ 411.84
Company	23	3	10,738.50	+ 3,916.46
J. E. McDonough	27	4	16,878.25	+ 4,507.57
M/M B. Williams	39	6	32,662.50	+ 6,445.54
Company	6	1	1,572.25	- 362.56
London Burlesque	20	3	9,546.25	+ 2,098.96
Mixed	12	2	4,118.75	- 1,451.05
J. Brougham	12	2	4,346.00	- 251.65
R. & H. Watkins	6	1	1,963.75	- 91.59
E. L. Davenport	6	1	2,036.25	- 182.85
J. Jefferson	12	2	11,695.50	+ 445.22
Company	6	1	4,512.50	+ 1,124.68
J. E. McDonough	6	1	1,388.00	- 484.21
Company	2[b]	0	770.00	+ 421.00
Total	255	40	144,534.25	+ 22,331.78

Source: Walnut Street Theatre Account Books.

Note: Since account book entries are on a weekly basis, some weekly performance totals include performances by more than one performer.

[a]Actual number of performances by the performer during his or her entire engagement.

[b]Performances are non-consecutive.

TABLE 7

WALNUT STREET THEATRE: 1869-70
RECEIPT AND PROFIT/LOSS TOTALS

Performer	Performances	Weeks	Receipts (in dollars)	Profit (+) or Loss (-) (in dollars)
Company	7	1	1,609.75	- 88.22
R. & H. Watkins	12	2	5,030.50	+ 1,148.51
Mrs. Bowers	12	2	6,457.25	+ 1,099.96
E. Booth	42 (41)[a]	6	33,081.75	+ 11,128.82
L. Western	14 (12)	2	10,154.00	+ 2,600.58
E. Forrest	15 (10)	2	10,733.25	+ 1,853.28
Company	7	1	2,178.50	+ 137.33
K. Bateman	28 (25)	4	14,842.00	+ 2,116.24
Company	35	5	25,508.00	+ 9,288.24
E. Adams	14	2	5,190.00	+ 311.11
R. & H. Watkins	15	2	5,521.00	+ 672.45
C. Fechter	14 (12)	2	8,373.00	+ 289.47
F. S. Chanfrau	21	3	7,261.25	- 11.68
Company	7	1	2,559.00	+ 8.11
M/M B. Williams	28	4	14,981.25	+ 894.28
Company	13	2	4,830.50	- 667.42
J. Jefferson	21	3	15,026.00	+ 630.00
Moore & Wyndham	10	1+	1,741.50	- 1,186.46
Total	315	45	175,078.50	+ 30,224.60

Source: Walnut Street Theatre Account Books.

Note: Since account book entries are on a weekly basis, some weekly performance totals include performances by more than one performer.

[a]Actual number of performances by the performer during his or her entire engagement.

TABLE 8

BOSTON THEATRE: 1866-67 RECEIPT AND PROFIT/LOSS TOTALS

Performer	Performances	Weeks	Receipts (in dollars)	Profit (+) or Loss (-) (in dollars)
Buislay Family	18	3	11,692.60	+ 47.01
Mayo & Perry	14	2	6,231.55	- 576.16
E. Booth	44 (38)[a]	6	44,205.15	+ 13,488.37
J. S. Clarke	14	2	8,065.05	+ 879.73
A. Ristori	14 (10)	2	27,487.55	+ 1,586.25
Opera-Maretzek	16 (14)	2	34,276.75	+ 4,484.98
J. Brougham	15 (13)	2	9,236.45	+ 1,625.21
Mixed	7	1	2,623.70	- 441.09
Company	7	1	3,234.65	- 166.30
J. B. Roberts	16 (14)	2	7,159.25	- 698.66
L. Barrett	7	1	2,977.45	- 141.77
Opera-Maretzek	17 (15)	2	24,026.70	+ 618.01
Mrs. Bowers	14	2	8,049.70	+ 597.84
F. Mayo	29 (28)	4	21,809.55	+ 6,619.76
Company	21	3	9,526.70	- 600.31
Opera	8 (6)	1	18,223.85	+ 4,226.49
E. Booth	42 (36)	6	45,084.96	+ 10,939.41
M/M Gomersal	21	3	7,404.60	- 2,553.68
Japanese Troupe	17	2	7,474.59	+ 1,106.79
Fox's Variety	8	1	1,696.10	- 576.34
Total	349	48	300,486.90[b]	+ 40,465.54

Source: Boston Theatre Account Book.

Note: Since profit entries are on a weekly basis, some weekly performance totals include performances by more than one performer.

[a]Actual number of performances by the performer during his or her entire engagement.

[b]Includes income from miscellaneous sources such as theatre rental.

APPENDIX B

WINTER GARDEN THEATRE FINANCIAL TABLES

TABLE 9

WINTER GARDEN THEATRE: 1864-65
RECEIPT AND PROFIT/LOSS TOTALS

Performer	Performances	Weeks[a]	Receipts (in dollars)	Profit (+) or Loss (-) (in dollars)
J. S. Clarke	85 (86)[b]	14	42,894.95	Not available for the 1864-65 season.
E. Booth	105 (103)	17	76,284.05	
Mixed	6	1	5,702.95	
H. Placide	27 (33)	4+	9,575.90	
Mixed	6	1	1,824.50	
Company	9	1+	1,852.30	
Hosmer & Hill[c]	36	6		
Total[d]	238	44	138,134.65	20,086.18[e]

Source: Winter Garden Theatre Account Books.

Note: Since account book entries are on a weekly basis, some weekly performance totals include performances by more than one performer.

[a]A week during the 1864-65 season is computed from Thursday through Wednesday.

[b]Actual number of performances by the performer during his or her entire engagement.

[c]Special rental arrangement--no receipt records available.

[d]Hosmer and Hill engagement is not included.

[e]Figure from "Profit Account," Winter Garden Theatre Account Books.

TABLE 10

WINTER GARDEN THEATRE: 1865-66
RECEIPT AND PROFIT/LOSS TOTALS

Performer	Performances	Weeks[a]	Receipts (in dollars)	Profit (+) or Loss (-) (in dollars)
J. S. Clarke	43 (47)[b]	7	24,268.30	+ 4,641.86
Mixed	6	1	3,579.35	+ 808.66
J. Brougham	12 (18)	2	9,139.90	+ 2,751.07
Mixed	6	1	4,286.40	+ 1,141.23
J. S. Clarke	37 (38)	6	15,071.30	+ 1,057.24
E. Booth	76	12	77,665.23	+ 23,149.12
Mixed	5	1	3,378.30	+ 151.00
M/M B. Williams	44 (50)	7	25,512.05	+ 1,644.17
Mixed	6	1	3,031.15	- 144.41
Company	9[c]	0	4,203.15	+ 1,022.04
Total	244	38	170,135.13[d]	+ 36,221.98

Source: Winter Garden Theatre Account Books.

Note: Since account book entries are on a weekly basis, some weekly performance totals include performances by more than one performer.

[a]A week during the 1865-66 season is computed from Wednesday through Tuesday.

[b]Actual number of performances by the performer during his or her entire engagement.

[c]Performances are nonconsecutive.

[d]Although not reflected in this figure, there is a $3.40 discrepancy in the account books between the entries and the computed total.

TABLE 11

WINTER GARDEN THEATRE: SUMMER 1866
RECEIPT AND PROFIT/LOSS TOTALS

Performer	Performances	Weeks	Receipts (in dollars)	Profit (+) or Loss (-) (in dollars)
J. Brougham	78	13	37,098.95	+ 2,378.16
Mixed	6	1	Not Available	+ 1,133.63
J. Brougham	6 (9)[a]	1	Not Available	+ 284.05
Buislay Family	18	3	Not Available	- 7,447.82
Total	108	18	37,098.95[b]	- 3,651.98

Source: Winter Garden Theatre Account Books.

Note: Since account book entries are on a weekly basis, some weekly performance totals include performances by more than one performer.

[a]Actual number of performances by the performer during his or her entire engagement.

[b]Total does not include receipts for the final five weeks of the summer season. Account books no longer include receipt entries but profit account continued.

TABLE 12

WINTER GARDEN THEATRE: 1866-67
RECEIPT AND PROFIT/LOSS TOTALS

Performer	Performances	Weeks	Receipts (in dollars)	Profit (+) or Loss (-) (in dollars)
Jean D. Lander	6	1	Not Available	- 2,206.00
Mrs. Bowers	36 (35)[a]	6	Not Available	+ 614.84
Opera and E. Booth	41[b](19)(21)	5	Not Available	+ 11,153.44
E. Booth	73 (71)	12[c]	Not Available	+ 12,335.54[d]
Totals	154	24		+ 21,897.82

Source: Winter Garden Theatre Account Books.

Note: Since account book entries are on a weekly basis, some performance totals include performances by more than one performer.

[a]Actual number of performances by the performer during his or her entire engagement.

[b]Includes one combined performance of E. Booth and the opera.

[c]23 March 1867 fire destroyed the theatre.

[d]Account books contain profit entries for only seven of the twelve weeks before the fire.

TABLE 13

WINTER GARDEN THEATRE: FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Season	Weeks	Perform-ances	Gross Receipts	Profit (+) or Loss (-)
1864-65	44	238	138,134.65	+ 20,086.18
1865-66	38	244	170,135.13	+ 36,221.98
Summar 1866	18	108	37,098.95[a]	- 3,651.98
1866-67	24	154	Not Available	+ 21,897.82[a]
Total (incomplete)			345,368.73	+ 74,554.00

Source: Winter Garden Theatre Account Books.

[a]Only partially complete

TABLE 14

WINTER GARDEN THEATRE: 1864-67 PROFIT AND LOSS TOTALS

Period	Profit After Running Expenses[a]	Profit Shared	W. Stuart Share	E. Booth Share	J. S. Clarke Share
18 Aug. 1864 to 31 May 1865	20,086.18	11,507.79	3,835.92	3,835.93	3,835.93
1 June 1865 to 31 Aug. 1865	Not Available	362.15	120.71	120.72	120.72
1 Sept. 1865 to 30 Nov. 1865	14,056.58	7,491.51	2,497.17	2,497.17	2,497.17
1 Dec. 1865 to 28 Feb. 1866	22,066.82	16,062.00	5,354.00	5,354.00	5,354.00
1 Mar. 1866 to 31 May 1866	13,778.53	5,643.57	1,881.18	1,881.19	1,881.19
1 June 1866 to 31 Aug. 1866	10,282.04	-2,255.37	-751.79	-751.79	-751.79
1 Sept. 1866 to 30 Nov. 1866	21,225.66	-10,935.98	-3,645.33	-7,290.65	--
1 Dec. 1866 to 28 Feb. 1867	Not Available	4,334.21	1,444.73	2,889.48	--
Total		32,209.88	10,736.61	8,536.05	12,937.22

Source: Winter Garden Theatre Account Books, "Profit Account."

[a]Includes profit from bar rental, space rental and other miscellaneous income.

APPENDIX C

BOOTH'S THEATRE FINANCIAL TABLES

TABLE 15

BOOTH'S THEATRE: 1869 GROSS RECEIPT TOTALS

Performer	Perform-ances	Weeks	Receipts (in dollars)
E. Booth	100	17	139,606.20
E. Adams	79	9	56,609.50
Mrs. Booth[a]	1	0	1,508.00
Total	180	26	197,723.70

Source: Booth's Theatre Account Books.

[a]On 15 May 1869, Mary McVicker Booth presented a special reading of Byron's Manfred.

TABLE 16

BOOTH'S THEATRE: 1869-70 GROSS RECEIPT TOTALS

Performer	Perform-ances	Weeks	Receipts (in dollars)
J. Jefferson	50	7	79,571.80
K. Bateman	60	10	74,224.00
James H. Hackett	24	4	20,749.00
Emma Waller	18	1+	11,623.50
E. Booth	90	15	135,657.50
J. S. Clarke	41	6	34,350.00
J. H. McVicker	12	2	3,086.50
Ada Clifton	19	3	5,360.50
Company	15[a]	0	7,476.00
Total	329	48	372,098.80

Source: Booth's Theatre Account Books.

[a]Performances were nonconsecutive.

TABLE 17

BOOTH'S THEATRE: 1870-71 GROSS RECEIPT TOTALS

Performer	Performances	Weeks	Receipts (in dollars)
J. Jefferson	148	21	167,647.00
E. Booth	93	15	106,868.50
L. Barrett	85	11	37,760.75
Wehli's	3[a]	0	537.50
Total	329	47	312,813.75

Source: Booth's Theatre Account Books.

[a]Performances were nonconsecutive.

TABLE 18

BOOTH'S THEATRE: 1871-72 GROSS RECEIPT TOTALS

Performer	Performances	Weeks	Receipts (in dollars)
L. Crabtree	42	6	37,507.75
C. Cushman	41	6	50,237.50
Cushman/Booth	1	0	4,835.50
John E. Owens	29	4	18,523.50
E. Booth	113	16	115,184.75
C. LeClercq	28	4	10,039.45
E. Booth	28	4	28,633.10
E. Adams	44	6	23,509.85
Total	326	46	288,471.40

Source: Booth's Theatre Account Books.

TABLE 19

BOOTH'S THEATRE: 1872-73 GROSS RECEIPT TOTALS

Performer	Performances	Weeks	Receipts (in dollars)
J. W. Wallack, Jr.	35	5	21,090.30
M/M D. Boucicault	56	8	66,617.50
A. Neilson	27	4	32,193.05
H. Temple	7	1	3,001.30
J. W. Wallack, Jr.	7	1	2,740.50
E. Booth	35	5	44,692.85
M/M W. J. Florence	42	6	34,939.00
D. Boucicault	56	8	32,355.80
A. Neilson	34	5	35,785.36
Company	3[a]	0	1,142.80
Total	302	43	274,558.46

Source: Booth's Theatre Account Books.

[a]Performances were nonconsecutive.

TABLE 20

BOOTH'S THEATRE: GROSS RECEIPT SUMMARY

Season	Performances	Gross Receipts (in dollars)
1869	180	197,723.70
1869-70	329	372,098.80
1870-71	329	312,813.75
1871-72	326	288,471.40
1872-73	302	274,558.46
Total	1466	1,445,666.11

Source: Booth's Theatre Account Books.

TABLE 21

BOOTH'S THEATRE: PROFIT STATEMENTS

Dates	Gross Profit[a]	Net Profit[b]
3 Feb. 1869 to 31 July 1869	52,947.09	--
1 Aug. 1869 to 31 June 1870	74,262.22	--
1 Aug. 1870 to 3 Feb. 1871	40,883.96	--
4 Feb. 1871 to 30 Sept. 1871[c]	11,911.05	--
1 Oct. 1871 to 29 June 1872	50,997.33	11,997.33
19 Aug. 1872 to 15 Feb. 1873	45,568.21	19,568.21
18 Aug. 1872 to 16 Aug. 1873[d]	50,183.42	--

Source: Booth's Theatre Account Books.

Notes: After 3 February 1871, there was no consistent entry kept on the theatre's profit or loss. All figures after 3 February 1871 are noted in various parts of the Booth's Theatre Account Books.

[a]Profit remaining after deducting production expenses.

[b]Profit remaining after deducting production and overhead expenses. Both "net profit" figures were marginal memos in the "Expense Account," Vol. III.

[c]Figure noted in "Profit Statement," Vol. I.

[d]Figure noted in "Profit and Loss Account," Vol. III. Entry indicates that from 15 February 1873 to 16 August 1873 the theatre earned a profit of only $4,615.21.

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