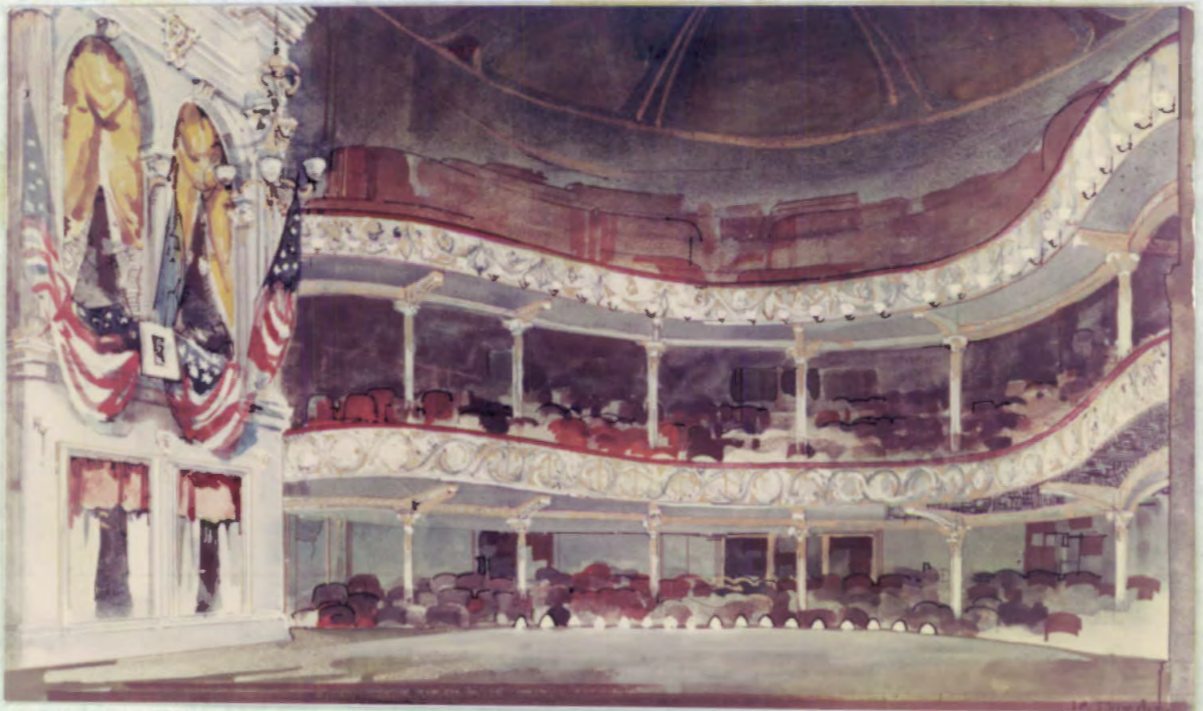


FURNISHINGS PLAN FOR THE RESTORED FORD'S THEATRE
AND ITS ANNEXES

by

George J. Olszewski, Ph.D.
Historian, National Park Service



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United States
Department of the Interior
National Park Service
Division of History Studies
May 1966

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PREFACE

This Furnishing Plan for the Restored Ford's Theatre and Its Annexes provides all the information currently available on its original furnishings at the time of Lincoln's assassination, April 14, 1865. Upon its restoration, the visitor will be able to view not only the original appearance of this historic site but will be able to see an authentic American theatre of the mid-nineteenth century.

While comparatively little information on the original construction and appearance of the theatre exists for what is generally termed the proper documentation of the building and its historic furnishings, the tragic event which occurred in the theatre with its resulting publicity provides what is considered to be sufficient documentary information to complete the restoration furnishings. Among the more important of these sources are: Records of the official trial proceedings; depositions of employees of the theatre; numerous primary and secondary works on the subject; contemporary newspaper accounts; and most important are the Matthew M. Brady photographs taken on April 16 and 17, 1865. The latter I consider a primary source of evidence. These photographs must be heavily relied upon to show the actual appearance of the theatre and its furnishings.

Since I have drawn together in my Historic Structures Report, Restoration of Ford's Theatre, all the information available from public and private sources which I considered essential to the

subject, I have drawn my main references from it, primarily, because of its availability. It has been published by the National Park Service and is the official report on the restoration of the theatre. As I have included a comprehensive bibliography in the restoration report, I recommend its use as the principal reference guide in connection with this furnishings plan. Photos used in the historic structures report are included herein, wherever feasible, to document the present narrative. Appropriate sections of these photos have been enlarged to provide sufficient detail for the identification and/or reproduction of furnishings and as a guide to the theatre's original appearance.

Finally, since the Guide to the Preparation of Furnishing Plans for Historic Sites is being superseded by a new guide still in preparation, the present Furnishing Plan has followed the format of earlier plans with special emphasis on materials significant to the restoration of the theatre. In essence, the authentic restoration of Ford's Theatre will be an outstanding contribution to the history of the Nation's Capital by the National Park Service, and an outstanding contribution to the history of the American theatre.

Ford's Theatre
April 14, 1966

G. J. Olszewski, Ph.D.
Historian

PART A

STATEMENT OF INTERPRETIVE PURPOSE

From August 27, 1863, to April 14, 1865, Ford's Theatre at 511 Tenth Street, Northwest, in Washington, D. C., was one of the leading theatres of the Nation's Capital. President Lincoln and, at times, the First Lady and her guests attended Ford's together with many of the main figures of the Lincoln administration. Lincoln attended Ford's Theatre on nine occasions, including the fatal night of his assassination. He also attended a musicale at Ford's Atheneum, the predecessor of the newly constructed theatre.

The proposed refurnishing of the theatre, particularly the President's Box and its two annexes, the North Wing or Dressing Room Annex and the South Annex or Star Saloon Building, will recreate the setting in which the assassination of Lincoln occurred and is essential to an effective interpretation of this historic site.

PART B

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Ford's Theatre was erected between January 1 and August 26, 1863, to replace Ford's Atheneum, the former First Baptist Church of Washington, which had been destroyed by fire on December 31, 1862.¹ Ford's Theatre was designed to provide wartime Washington with a first class theatre in which the best theatrical and musical entertainment could be presented by the leading actors of the day. Grover's Theatre, the present National Theatre on E Street, was the only comparable theatre in Washington at the time. It was undergoing remodeling as the new Ford's Theatre was being constructed.

Upon completion, the overall dimensions of Ford's Theatre were approximately 67 feet north to south and 103.5 feet east to west. The first floor interior of the theatre consisted of four sections: (1) the lobby; (2) auditorium; (3) orchestra pit; and (4) stage. Their dimensions were approximately as follows: (1) The main lobby was entered from 10th Street and was about 30 feet in length from north to south, widening from about 7 feet at either end to about 10 feet at the center. (2) The auditorium was about 49 feet in height from floor to central dome, 45 feet from the main lobby entrance to the edge of the orchestra pit, and about 66.5 feet wide from north to

south walls. (3) The orchestra pit was bow-shaped, about four feet wide at the apron and narrowed somewhat as it approached stage right and stage left. (4) The stage was approximately 45 feet deep from the apron to upstage at the east wall, and about 62.5 feet across backstage from north to south. The stage house was about 44 feet in height.

After Lincoln's assassination on April 14, 1865, the theatre was closed until the conspirators were hung on July 7, 1865. It was then returned to the owner, John T. Ford, who, however, received threats that his theatre would be burned if he should reopen it as a place of public amusement. The building was then closed by order of the Secretary of War and altered into a three-story office building by Richard S. Dunbar of Brooklyn, New York, for the processing of captured Rebel Archives. Dunbar started work in August 1865, and completed the alterations by the end of the year. In it were installed the Office of the Adjutant General, U. S. Army, under Colonel Fred C. Ainsworth. The Army Medical Museum also occupied the building from 1866-1877. In 1866, the Government paid John T. Ford \$100,000 for the building.

From time to time, the building was remodeled as defects in the construction of the original theatre were revealed. In 1876, the foundations of the north wall were strengthened by the Army Corps of Engineers. When part of the building collapsed in 1893, killing 22 Government clerks and injuring 68 others, Congress ordered the building closed. In 1894,

the north wall of the building was further strengthened and the east wall completely rebuilt. From that time to 1932, it was used for storage by the Adjutant General of the Army.

In 1926, when the Oldroyd collection of Lincolniana (which had been on exhibit in the Petersen House where Lincoln had died) was purchased, the building was turned over to the National Park Service and became the site of the Lincoln Museum. From 1932 until 1964, when the Lincoln Museum was closed, public agitation caused the Congress to order (PL 86-455) the National Park Service to investigate all the historical and architectural features of the building for the possible restoration of Ford's Theatre to its original appearance as of the night of Lincoln's assassination.

The official historic structures report entitled RESTORATION OF FORD'S THEATRE was completed in 1962 and published by the Government Printing Office. Convinced that the National Park Service had sufficient knowledge of the history and architecture of Ford's Theatre so that it could be restored to its original appearance, funds of \$2,076,500 were voted under PL to carry out the restoration. Meantime, three architectural renderings, the Historic American Buildings Survey drawings and the construction drawings for restoring Ford's Theatre had been completed.

By January 4, 1965, the artifacts of the Lincoln Museum had been boxed and placed in storage. The next day, January 5,

1965, Coe Construction, Incorporated, who had bid successfully as general contractors for the job, commenced the work of restoring Ford's Theatre. The building is now being fully restored with its auditorium, stage, presidential and other boxes, including the north and south wings. It is estimated that the restoration will be fully completed by the summer of 1967, when Ford's Theatre will be open to the public as a national historic site. It will then take its place among the other historic sites of the Nation's Capital which are under the jurisdiction of the National Capital Region. Ford's Theatre will be an outstanding restoration job and one of the finest to have been completed in the Capital City by the National Park Service.

PART C

DOCUMENTED ACCOUNT OF HISTORIC FURNITURE

When the newly constructed Ford's Theatre opened to the public on August 27, 1863, it had been but partially furnished so that its operation as a full-fledged theatre could proceed. Ford was heavily in debt and had to get his theatre operating. He had raised funds for the construction and furnishing of the theatre through the sale of stock.² He had built his theatre in a hurry to beat out his competitor, Leonard Grover, who operated Grover's Theatre, now the National on E Street. Obviously, the only attention given to descriptions of the theatre was that inspired by news of local events. On this basis, local newspapers went into generalities rather than specifics. For instance, the Washington Sunday Chronicle of August 23, 1863, reported in part:

"In magnitude, completeness, and elegance it has few superiors, even in our largest cities. It is finished in a style that has involved a most lavish expenditure, and that has brought into requisition the first mechanical and artistic skill."

The Washington correspondent of the Baltimore Weekly Sun gave a more detailed picture of the interior of the theatre in his account of August 29, 1863, which stated in part:

"The parquette is about equally divided between orchestra and other seats, or ranges of chairs, which will comfortably accommodate over six hundred persons. The dress circle also having chairs for seats will accommodate about four hundred. The family circle will also hold

several hundred. The seats are so high above those before them that there is no trouble about getting a good view of the stage. Indeed a person standing at any point in the auditorium has that great advantage. There is connected with the dress circle a large saloon or retiring room which is a most excellent feature of the establishment. In all respects the theatre seems to be an improvement upon existing ones of the country."

Although the Ford Family Papers have been carefully examined at the Maryland Historical Society in Baltimore, and practically every known living member of the John T. Ford family of Baltimore (who operated the theatre) has been contacted in an effort to locate original documents on the construction of Ford's Theatre, none have been brought to light. The only report of the original artisans and sub-contractors who supplied services or original furnishings was that of the Washington Evening Star of July 29, 1863. It reported that George R. Callis had subcontracted for the brickwork; Whitney and Company had installed the gas fixtures; Charles Stewart did the ornamental plastering; J. K. T. Plant, the paper-hanging; Foster and Sommergetz, the molding and gilding; Schutter and Lamb, the fresco work. Upholstering was done by Holland and Company; cabinet furniture was executed by Stephens. The ornamental stage properties were designed and executed by James Maddox. The stage scenery was designed and painted by Charles Getz of New York. Ford, subsequently, retained Maddox as theatre property man. No record has been revealed of the costs or type of materials supplied by any of the foregoing, although their type of work is alluded to. Despite a diligent

search of the Washington telephone and city directories of the period, only Whitney and Plant were found to have had Washington addresses. Since Ford had theatre interests in Baltimore, Philadelphia and Richmond, it is possible that he hired the same artisans and suppliers for all his theatres.³ In effect, therefore, the sole historical records which can be relied upon for purposes of this Furnishing Plan are those which evolved as a result of Lincoln's assassination on April 14, 1865, since it is from this tragic event that Ford's Theatre has assumed historical importance in the life of the Nation and the furnishings of the theatre as of that date become "historical furnishings." However, little thought was given to the preservation of the historical furnishings of the theatre when it was altered into a three-story office building by Dunbar in 1865 for the simple reason that public agitation over the horror of the assassination of the President impelled the obliteration of any artifacts dealing with such a heinous crime. It must also be realized that the subject of "historical preservation" was far from the official and public mind while the country was preoccupied with "binding the Nation's wounds."

In this furnishing plan, all references to details of the appearance of the theatre and its historic furnishings will refer to the night of Lincoln's assassination, April 14, 1865, unless stated otherwise. From the evening of this tragic event until Ford's Theatre was returned to John T. Ford on July 10, 1865, the theatre was under military guard and no one, unless

on official business or holding an appropriate pass from the proper authorities, was allowed to enter the theatre. None of the furniture or furnishings of the theatre were permitted to be removed, aside from personal belongings of some of the employees and/or actors who required their personal possessions such as musical instruments or scripts for their livelihood. They obtained special passes from the Judge Advocate General for this purpose. Some of the employees of the theatre were allowed to sleep in the building as was their normal custom. For purposes of this report, it is assumed that the Brady photographs and descriptions of the theatre during the trial of the conspirators are authentic and show the original appearance of the theatre, as of that fatal night in American history.⁴

CARPETING

Comparatively little documentary evidence exists about carpeting having been used in the theatre. While it would seem reasonable to presume that carpeting was used in the aisles of the auditorium, i.e., in the orchestra, the parquet and its lobby; and the aisles of the dress circle and its lobby, no evidence has been uncovered to support this view. Carpeting may also have been used on the steps leading to the dress circle and the passageways to the upper boxes.

Contemporary accounts do indicate, however, that the forestage was carpeted with "green baize" carpeting and that it was torn when the assassin Booth jumped to the stage from the presidential box.¹ Some evidence of the use of carpeting, which appears to be of Turkish design, is seen in the contemporary sketch of the interior of the presidential box by A. Berghaus.² This sketch appeared in Harper's Illustrated Weekly for May 20, 1865, and undoubtedly was made shortly after the assassination. It may, therefore, be presumed to be authentic within the usual artistic limitations. It is highly improbable that any carpeting was used on the steps leading to the Family Circle, or in its lobby or aisles between the benches.

Based on recommendations for carpeting to be used throughout the theatre, the following requirements have been estimated from an analysis of the appropriate sheets of the construction drawings:³

1. Green baize carpeting.--The green baize carpeting used on the forestage of Ford's Theatre was a standard hard-wearing, heavy-duty coarse fabric with a long nap that could easily be dyed in all

plain colors. No information is available as to the exact shade of "green" that was mentioned in contemporary accounts of the assassination. When Booth jumped from the presidential box and "tore" a hole in the carpeting, it was most probably due to the fact that the spur on his right foot dug into the fabric because of the height from which he jumped. According to contemporary accounts, it was "exactly twelve feet and eight inches" from the balustrade of the presidential box to the floor of the stage.⁴

Manufacturers indicate that at the present time this type of carpeting material has no equivalent on the market today and that it would have to be manufactured to order.⁵ Its cost is tentatively estimated at \$100. to \$150. per square yard. Requirements for the restored Ford's Theatre forestage are approximately as follows:

(a) Forestage: 40 feet long by 15 feet wide, requiring about 60 square yards of carpeting. A good median grade is recommended since the forestage will, undoubtedly, receive considerable use including the possibility that stage plays may be given on appropriate occasions.⁶

2. Turkish carpeting.--So-called "Turkish" rugs of this period, generally known as "Oriental," were actually imported hand-woven Persian rugs. Since documentation indicates that the presidential box was the sole area in the theatre where "Turkish" carpeting was used,⁷ it is most probably safe to assume that Ford used a more luxurious decor in the other boxes as well since the price (\$20.00) was the same for all boxes.

Manufacturers indicate that such "Oriental" carpeting could be manufactured domestically at about \$30.00 per square yard. It could also be manufactured overseas of genuine hand woven wool materials with authentic colors at a cost of about \$40. to \$50. per square yard, plus an ad valorem import duty of 42 percent. This duty may be ignored, however, since the materials are for Government use. The manufacturer has indicated that a sketch could be made by their artist from photos and that drawings could be submitted to us for approval prior to manufacture, and that a faithful reproduction was unquestionable.⁸

Based on measurements from the construction drawings, the four lower boxes are approximately 8 by 14 feet; the four upper, 12 by 14 feet. Oriental carpeting requirements are approximately 4 x 8 by 14 feet or 55 square yards for the lower boxes; and 4 x 12 by 14 feet or 75 square yards for the upper, making a total requirement of 130 square yards for all the boxes.⁹

Based on manufacturer's estimates indicated above, the tentative cost for Oriental carpeting is:

(a). Domestic manufacture: 130 square yards @ \$30. per square yard: \$3,900.00

(b). Imported manufacture: 130 square yards @ \$45. per square yard: \$5,580.00

Since little actual use of the boxes is anticipated, a good domestic brand of Oriental carpeting is recommended.

3. Red velour (wool) carpeting.--The deep red velour (wool) carpeting which is recommended for laying in the passageways to the

rear of the boxes; the aisles of the orchestra, parquet and dress circle; the lobbies of the auditorium and dress circle; and the steps leading thereto is a standard carpeting that has been used in theaters, churches and on ceremonial occasions for more than a hundred years. It has been constantly manufactured in the United States since carpet manufacturing was established in this country¹⁰ in the middle of the nineteenth century. There appears to be no procurement problem since it is generally available in various grades, depending upon the degree of luxury desired. It is currently priced from \$10. to \$50. per square yard.¹¹ A medium priced red velour (wool) commercial grade carpeting, about \$25. per square yard, is recommended for laying in the restored theatre. It is believed that this will give a hard, good-wearing surface and be most practical to use for the large number of anticipated visitors to this historic site.

Based on measurements from the construction drawings,¹² the following amounts of this type of carpeting will be required:

(a). Box passageways: The passageways to the rear of the lower boxes measure approximately $3\frac{1}{2}$ feet by 15 feet; those to the upper boxes 4 feet by 18 feet. Requirements are about 20 square yards.

(b). Auditorium: The auditorium consisting of the four aisles of the orchestra and the parquet, measuring approximately 3 feet by 50 feet, require about 67 square yards. The lobby to the rear of the parquet, measuring approximately 7 feet by 64 feet, requires about 48 square yards.

(c). Dress circle: The four aisles between the sections of the dress circle marked "A" to "E," including the aisles along the north and south walls leading into the box passageways, require approximately 98 square yards. The dress circle lobby is approximately 12 feet by 48 feet requiring about 64 square yards.¹³

(d). Stairs to dress circle: The stairs to the dress circle from the Tenth Street lobby, taking into account the 25 risers, requires about 28 square yards of red velour carpeting.

The summary of red velour (wool) carpeting requirements is as follows:

(1). Passageway to boxes:	20	square	yards.
(2). Orchestra and parquet:	67	"	"
(3). Lobby of auditorium:	48	"	"
(4). Stairs to dress circle:	28	"	"
(5). Dress circle:	98	"	"
(6). Lobby of dress circle:	64	"	"

Total requirements: 325 square yards @ \$25.

per square yard: \$8,125.00

4. Carpet padding.--Carpet padding that was in use in theatres in 1865 was most probably made of horsehair as it was the only type of carpet padding manufactured at the time.¹⁴ It is obtainable without difficulty today and it is recommended that a standard weight of 50 oz. per square yard be procured as padding for all three types of carpeting--baize, red velour and Oriental. Based on the foregoing estimates, approximate requirements are as follows:

(a). Baise carpeting:	68 square yards.
(b). Red velour (wool):	325 " "
(c). Oriental:	130 " "

Total: 523 square yards of carpeting.

Estimated cost would be: 523 square yards @ \$1.25 per square yard: \$653.75

REQUIREMENTS: Based on calculations of the carpeting requirements for the restored Ford's Theatre as recommended herein and by a minute examination of the appropriate drawings of the construction plans, the following estimates have been arrived at according to types:

1. <u>Green baize</u> :	68 square yards at \$100. per sq. yd.:	\$6,800.
2. <u>Oriental</u> :	130 " " " 30. " " " :	3,900.
3. <u>Red velour</u> :	325 " " " 25. " " " :	8,125.
<u>(wool)</u>		
4. <u>Padding</u> :	523 " " " 125. " " " :	<u>654.</u>
Grand total:		<u>\$19,479.</u>

RECOMMENDATIONS: Despite the lack of documentation, even though research in this connection has not only been intensive but also extensive, it is felt that carpeting should be used throughout the theatre, with certain exceptions as noted below. This decision was arrived at during official conferences held from 1962-1964 by the historians and architects.¹⁵ Furthermore, the restored Ford's Theatre will undoubtedly become not only one of the show places of the Nation's capital but also one of the outstanding historic

sites of the Nation. Undoubtedly, because of the wide general interest of the public and members of the theater profession in the restoration of an outstanding example of American theater architecture of the mid-nineteenth century, the Secretary of the Interior, the Honorable Stewart L. Udall, in a press release of May 20, 1965, approved structural modification in the restoration plans for Ford's Theatre consistent "with present-day building codes."¹⁶ The significance of the Secretary's statement is that he indicated the official views of the Department with respect to the use of the theatre for "live plays," a statement which has been generally misconstrued by the public and members of the theatrical profession.

Secretary Udall distinctly pointed out that the modifications had been approved, in addition to other reasons, "to permit use of the historic site for certain stage plays," that "occasional productions would be confined to the historical period of Lincoln's time in the Nation's capital;" and that these "stage productions would be presented periodically so as not to conflict with the National Park Service interpretation of the theatre for the general public." He also pointed out that the theatre, when restored, "could accommodate an audience of 600." The significant words of the Secretary's statement have been underlined to cope with any anticipated misinterpretation of his remarks by the theater profession as evidenced by plans of the Actor's Equity Association which would like to see "fulltime live theater" at the restored Ford's Theatre.¹⁷ Thus, there is no doubt as to the appropriateness

of recommending carpeting throughout the theatre as indicated on Illustrations CAR-1 and CAR-2.

It is therefore recommended that green baize carpeting be laid down on the forestage; that "oriental" carpeting be placed in all the boxes; and that red velvet velour carpeting of an appropriate weight be installed in the aisles and lobbies of the auditorium and dress circle, the passageways behind the upper and lower boxes, and the steps to the dress circle. The steps to the family circle, its lobby and the aisles of the second balcony should remain uncarpeted since the public will not be permitted to have access to these latter areas. In this connection there can be no doubt whatsoever that these upper areas of the theatre were carpetless if for no other reason than the low price of seats which, in general, was held to a minimum, in this case being twenty-five cents.¹⁸ Only VIP's will be escorted to the dress circle, the general public and visitors being confined to the main auditorium.

ACTION TO DATE: On October 15, 1965, Furniture Displays, Inc., of Washington (Mr. Eugene Pinkus, sales manager), was contacted for information on the possibility of supplying appropriate period carpeting for the restored Ford's Theatre. The information furnished is incorporated in subject report.

This organization has a good record having done considerable governmental contracting such as supplying carpeting to the House of Representatives among others; carpeting for the Williamsburg restoration project; and more recently has installed five floors of domestically manufactured Oriental carpeting for the Shoreham

Motel Annex which opened on November 1. Furniture Displays Inc., are the local agents for the Alexander Smith Carpet Company which was established in the United States in 1840.

This organization will have carpeting made to our specifications. Scheduling at the present time can be handled on a 120-day basis or four calendar months. Their artist could make sketches from our photos, etc., and prior to beginning to manufacture carpeting according to our specifications, would submit drawings and samples.

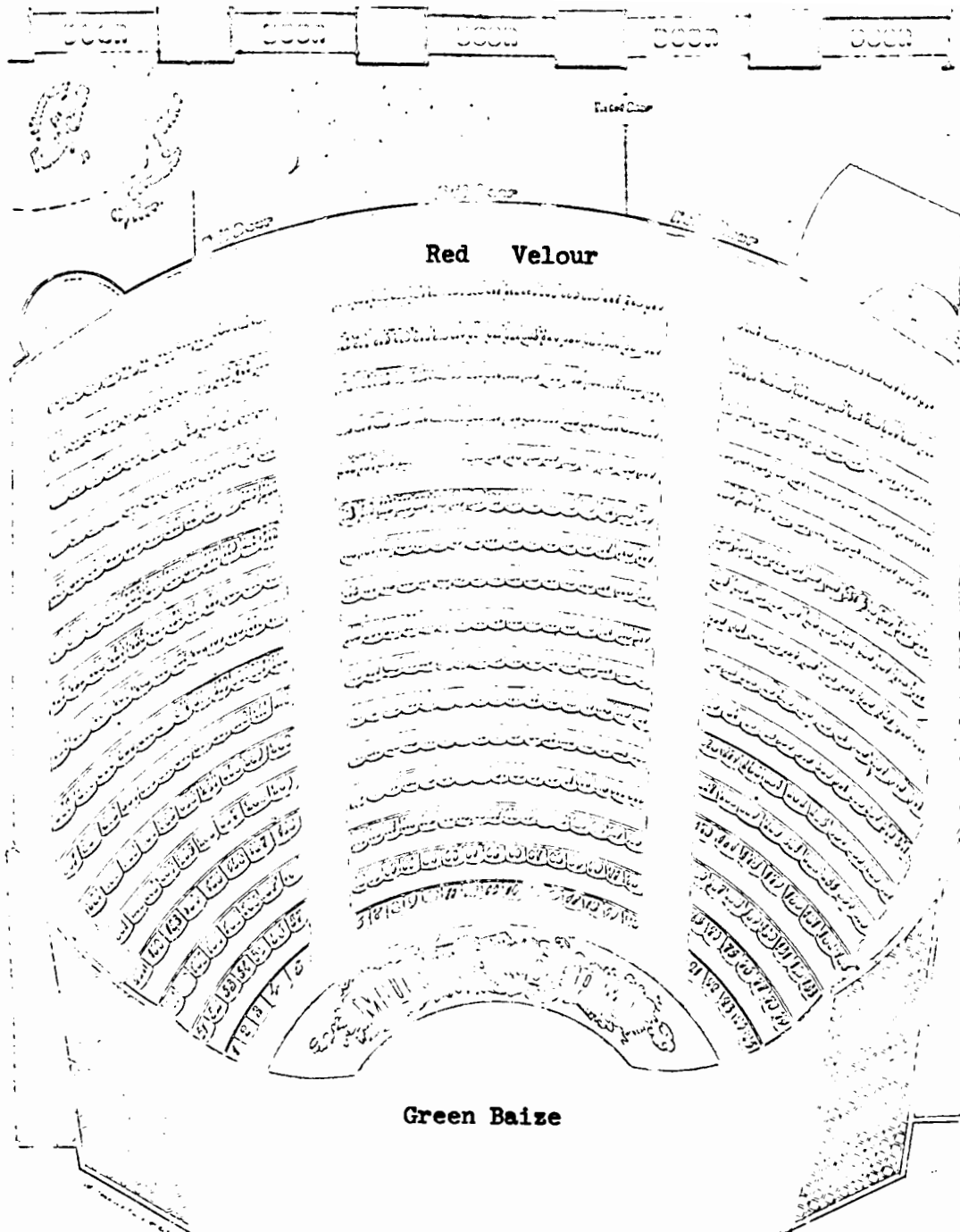


Illustration Car-1. Visual aid to carpeting requirements for Ford's Theatre. Green represents green baize carpeting of forestage. Cross hatching represents Turkish carpeting for boxes. Red indicates suggested velour carpeting for lobby and aisles of orchestra, parquet and passageway to boxes. Red at upper right of photo indicates area of suggested velour carpeting for stairs leading to dress circle.

Red Velour

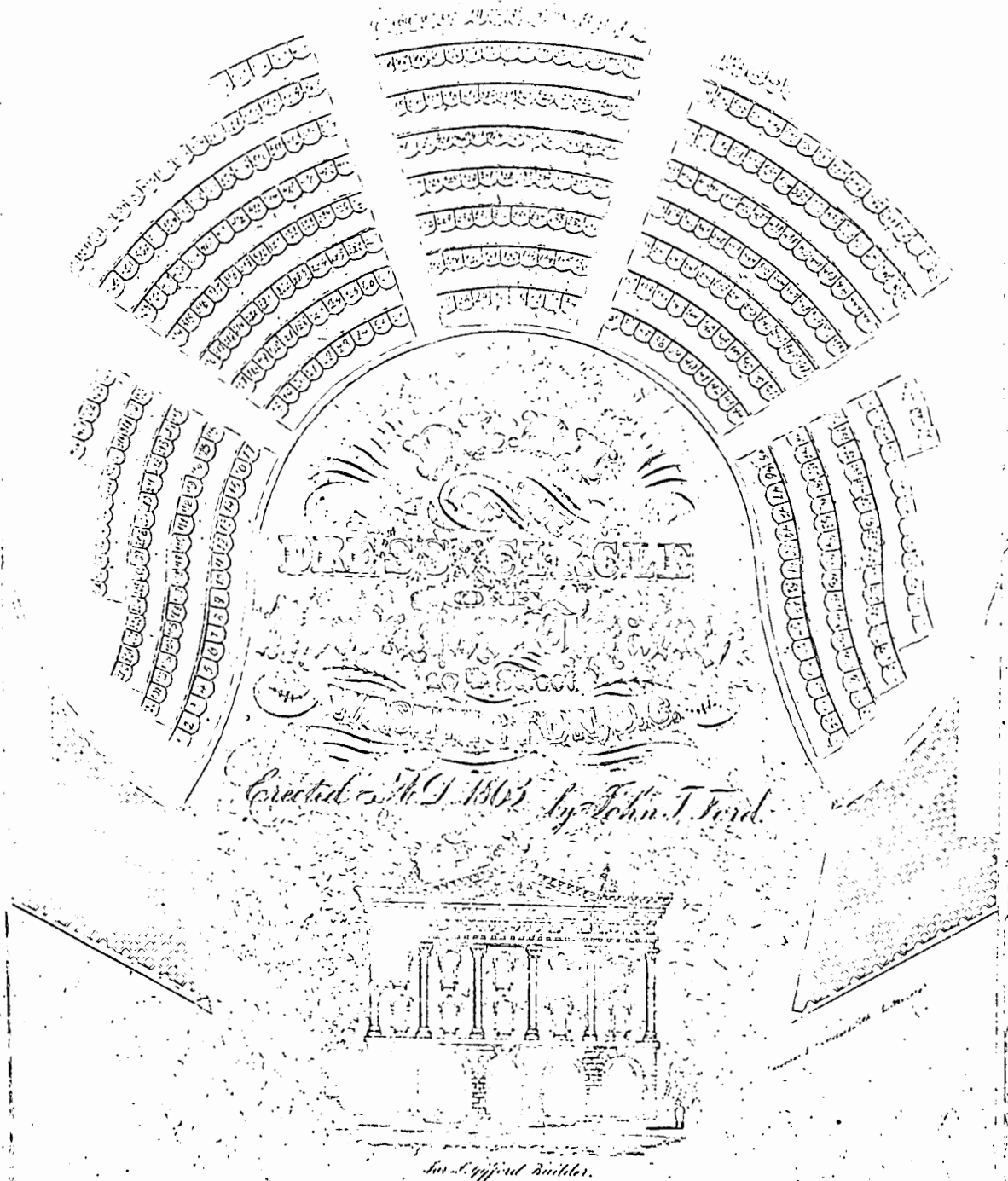


Illustration Car-2. Areas of suggested carpeting for dress circle. Cross hatching represents Turkish carpeting for boxes. Red indicates velour carpeting for box passageways, aisles of dress circle and lobby.

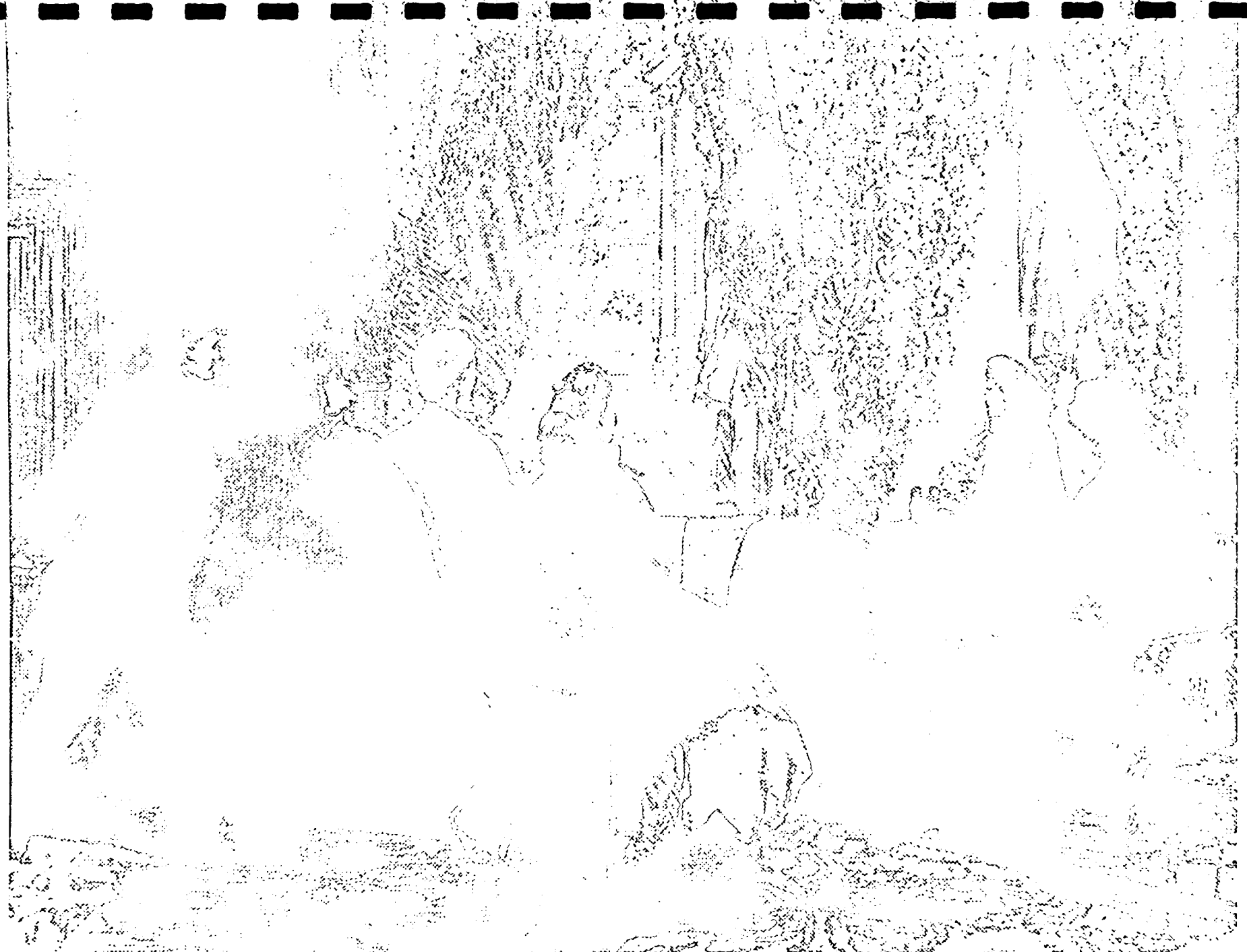


Illustration Car-3. Contemporary sketch by A. Berghaus of interior of presidential box showing numerous details of its decor. Note lace curtains, rush bottom chair on which Mrs. Lincoln is shown seated and design of Turkish rug.

FOOTNOTES TO CARPETING SECTION

1. Washington Weekly Chronicle, April 22, 1865.
2. See Illustration CAR-3.
3. The original construction drawings for the restoration of Ford's Theatre are the primary reference source for measurements cited in this Furnishings Plan. These drawings are entitled: "Restoration of Ford's Theatre," prepared for the National Capital Office of Design and Construction, N.P.S., U.S.D.I., by Macomber & Peter, Architects; Bernard F. Locraft, Civil Engineers; and Silver, Schwartz & Associates, Mechanical Engineers, dated 12-16-'63. Original drawings on file in Map File Section, Division of Lands and Legislation, N.C.R., N.P.S., file "N.C.P. Drawing No. 85-11-63," 47 sheets with changes. Citations hereafter will be indicated as "N.C.P. Drawing No. 85-11-63," with appropriate sheet number. N.C.P. Drawing No. 85-11-63. See sheets A3-A5, A9, A11, A12, A17, A21, and A23 for all references in this section. Note also Illustrations Car-1 and Car-2 which have been prepared as visual aids to show carpeting requirements.
4. See fn. 1.
5. "Memo. of Phone Interview," Eugene Pinkus of Furniture Displays, Inc., Washington, D. C., October 15, 1965, to Olszewski. See original memo on file in "Archives of the Restoration of Ford's Theatre" (ARFD), N.P.S. These archives, collected from 1960 to 1966 by the author, contain basic source material, correspondence and documents on the restoration.
6. News release by the Secretary of the Interior dated Washington, May 20, 1965.
7. G. J. Olszewski, Restoration of Ford's Theatre (Washington, 1963), p. 37 ff.
8. Pinkus, op. cit.
9. See sheets No. A3, "Orchestra Level Plan"; A4, "Dress Circle Plan"; and A17, "Details of Boxes"; op. cit. Illustrations Car-1 and 2.
10. Charles Singer (ed.), The Late Nineteenth Century, c. 1850-c.1900 (Vol. V of A History of Technology, ed. by C. Singer et al), (New York, 1958), esp. Chp. 23, Pts. I and II.
11. Pinkus, op. cit.
12. See fn. 3.
13. Ibid, Sheets A17 and A18.

14. Ibid, Sheet No. A-23, "Miscellaneous Details-Plan of Stairs at Lobby."

15. Pinkus, op. cit.

16. Olszewski, op. cit., p. xii.

17. See DI News Release, May 20, 1965.

18. Letter Milton Lyon, Director, Actor's Equity Foundation, Inc., to T. Sutton Jett, Regional Director, N.C.R., N.P.S., dated New York, N.Y., April 27, 1965. Original in ARFT.

19. Olszewski, op. cit., p. 37.

WALLPAPER

Evidence of the use of wallpaper in the theatre has been confirmed from several sources the most important being the fragment of wallpaper in the Lincoln Museum Collection¹ and the Brady photographs which clearly show the interior of the presidential and other boxes.² It is known that wallpaper was originally used in the theatre boxes for it was most probably installed by J. K. T. Plant, a paperhanger of Washington, D. C.,³ whose residence in the city has been confirmed.⁴ Descriptions of the presidential box following the assassination detail the fact that "the interior of the box is lined with crimson velvet wallpaper."⁵

The partitions between the boxes were also papered with the same material as confirmed by the Brady photographs.⁶ Evidence given during the trial of the conspirators by H. Clay Ford deposed that a stagehand, Edward Spangler, "took out the partition between the two boxes [7] and [8] leaving them both in one."⁷

During the alteration of Ford's by Dunbar, its theatrical interior was completely obliterated. It was most probably at that time that one of the doorkeeper's of Ford's, J. E. Buckingham, Sr., obtained the souvenir piece of wallpaper from one of the boxes. Later he either sold or donated it to O. H. Oldroyd whose collection of Lincolniana was purchased by the National Park Service in 1926.⁸ This sample of original wallpaper, documented as shown in Illustration No. WP-1,⁹ then became part of the Lincoln Museum Collection.

Although the wallpaper sample does not show its complete design, comparison of Illustration No. WP-1 with the Brady photographs in

Illustrations No. WP-2 and WP-3,¹⁰ showing the interior of the upper and lower boxes as they appeared on April 16-17, 1865, will give sufficient detail to wallpaper designers so that an accurate reproduction of the original can be manufactured. An analysis of these photographs¹¹ indicates that the overall pattern consisted of five figures, a two-line design running on each side the full length of the wallpaper.¹² Between this design two triple-leaved patterns were regularly interspersed the center being of a leaf and flower design. Even though the wallpaper sample is faded, a period color should offer no problem in its selection. It appears from the wallpaper fragment that it was hand-blocked and probably was manufactured in England.¹³

REQUIREMENTS: Based on calculations of the interior dimensions of the lower and upper boxes and on the dimensions of the partitions which were used to separate all the boxes, it is estimated that approximately 2,000 square feet of this wallpaper will be required to paper all the boxes and the partitions on both sides.

The following calculations have been arrived at by an examination and measurement of the boxes and partitions as shown in the official construction drawings for the restoration of the theatre as they were prepared for the National Capital Office of Design and Construction, National Park Service, by Macomber and Peter, Consulting Architects, Washington, D. C.¹⁴

Lower Boxes (1, 2, 3 and 4): 10 ft. x 30 ft. x 2: 600 sq. ft.

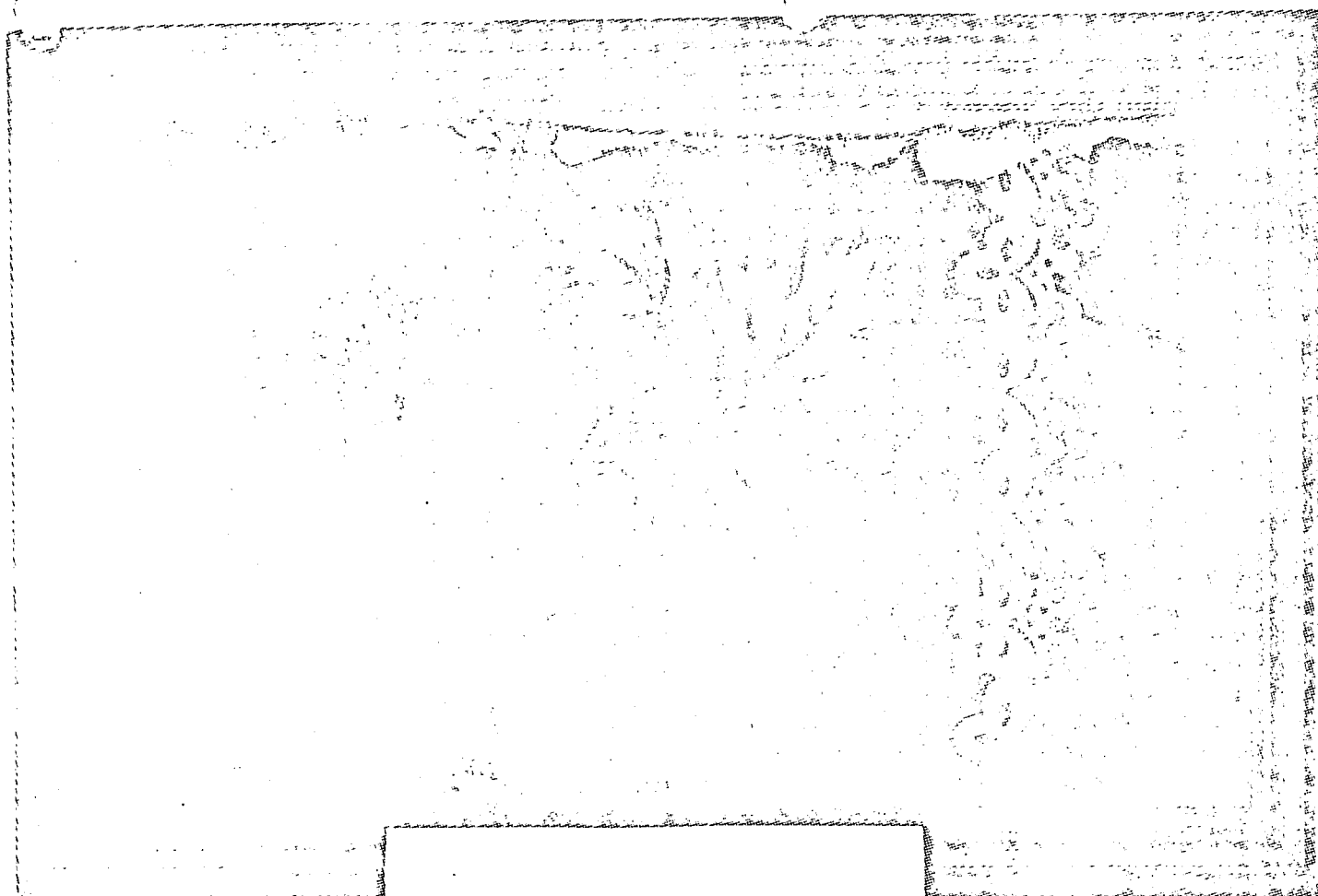
Upper Boxes (5, 6, 7 and 8): 14 ft. x 28 ft. x 2: 840 " "

Partitions for lower boxes: 7 ft. 9 in. x 7 ft. x 2:	220	sq. ft.
Partitions for upper boxes: 7.4 ft. x 7 ft. x 2:	224	" "
Grand total:	1,884	sq. ft.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Wallpaper manufacturers of historically accurate reproductions should be contacted and a sample, appropriately designed from the original fragment, should be requested prior to an official contract. As approximately 2,000 square feet of wallpaper will be required to restore the boxes and partitions of the theatre to their original appearance, an additional 1,000 square feet should be ordered at the same time and kept in reserve for contingencies.

ACTION TO DATE: Since period wallpaper had been manufactured satisfactorily for restoring the interior of the House Where Lincoln Died, the same manufacturer, the Birge Company, Inc., of Buffalo, New York, was contacted through their local representative, The Capital Wallpaper and Paint Co., Inc., Washington, D. C. The wallpaper fragment from the Lincoln Museum Collection was sent to the Birge Company and they are now in the process of recreating a faithful reproduction. When completed, it will be submitted for approval prior to its manufacture.¹⁵ An estimate of the cost will be submitted at the same time. Ninety days is estimated for reproduction time.

64-84-15



Wall-paper and curtain
of private box in which
Mr. Lincoln was shot
at Ford's New Theatre, April 14,
1865, Tenth st., Washington, D. C.
J. E. Buckingham, Sr.,
Doorkeeper.

Illustration W.P.1. Fragment of original crimson velvet wallpaper from presidential box, 1865. Same wallpaper used for decorating all boxes and partitions.

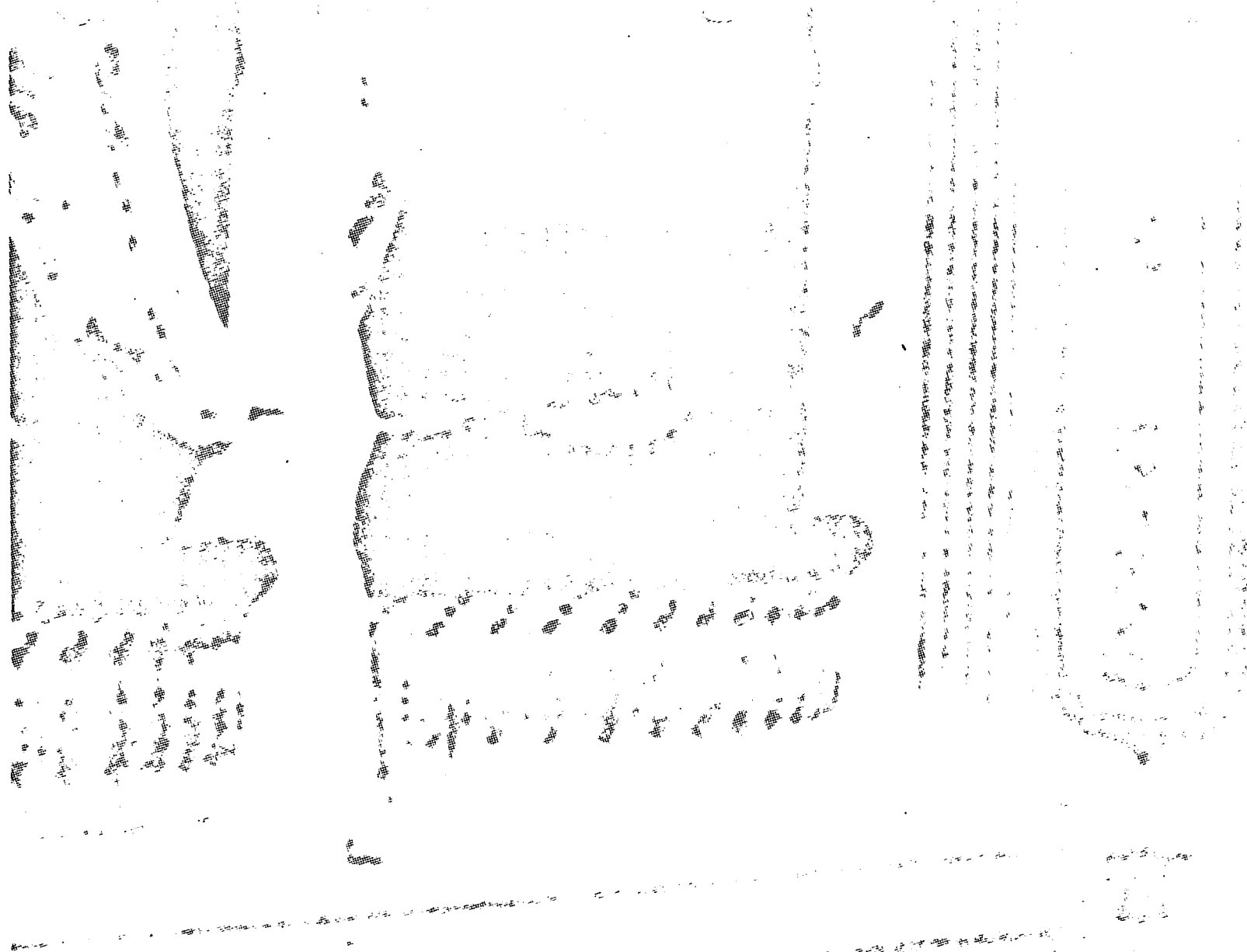


Illustration WP-2. Brady photograph showing wallpaper on walls of upper boxes 5 and 6 at stage right opposite presidential box.

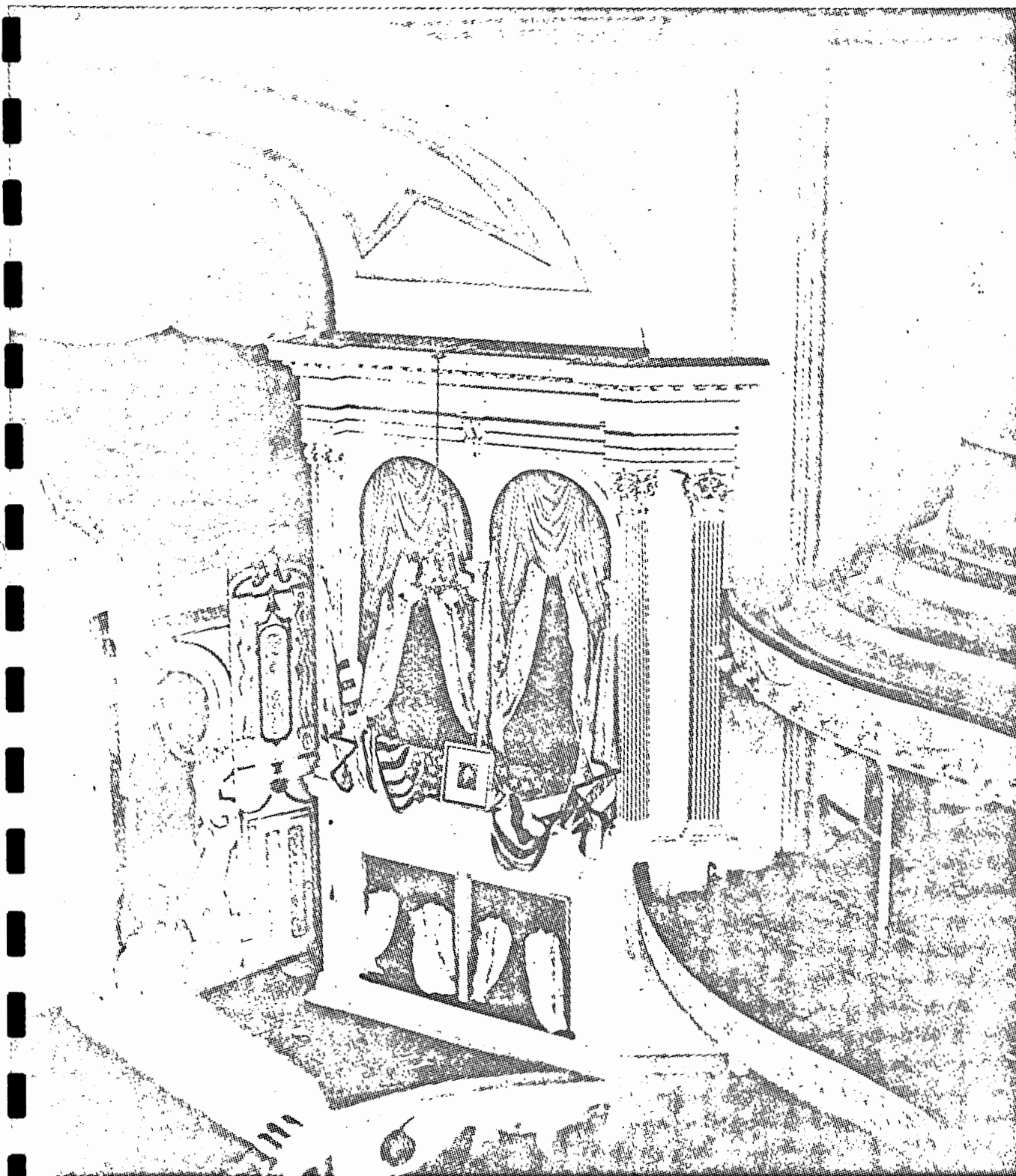


Illustration WP-3. Presidential box showing wallpaper on interior and in lower boxes 3 and 4. The wallpaper appearing at center of upper and lower boxes is on the partitions which separated the neighboring boxes 3 and 4 and 7 and 8. The partition of the presidential box is shoved to one side as it was that fatal night, its outline dimly visible to rear of the sofa which occupied the box.

FOOTNOTES TO WALLPAPER SECTION

1. See Illustration No. WP-1.
2. Ibid., and Illustrations WP-2 and WP-3.
3. Washington Evening Star, July 29, 1863.
4. Polk's Directory, 1863.
5. Washington Evening Chronicle, April 22, 1865.
6. See Illustration WP-3.
7. Peterson, op. cit., p. 120.
8. Olszewski, op. cit., p. 104.
9. See Illustration No. WP-1.
10. Ibid., and Illustrations WP-2 and WP-3.
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid.
13. Letter, dated November 8, 1965, C. S. Freeman, NSID, Vice President, Director of Design, The Birge Company, Inc., Buffalo, N.Y., to Randle B. Truett, NCR, NPS.
14. N.C.P. Drawing No. 85-11-63, sheet A17, "Plans and Details of Boxes."
15. C. W. Freeman to R. B. Truett, op. cit.

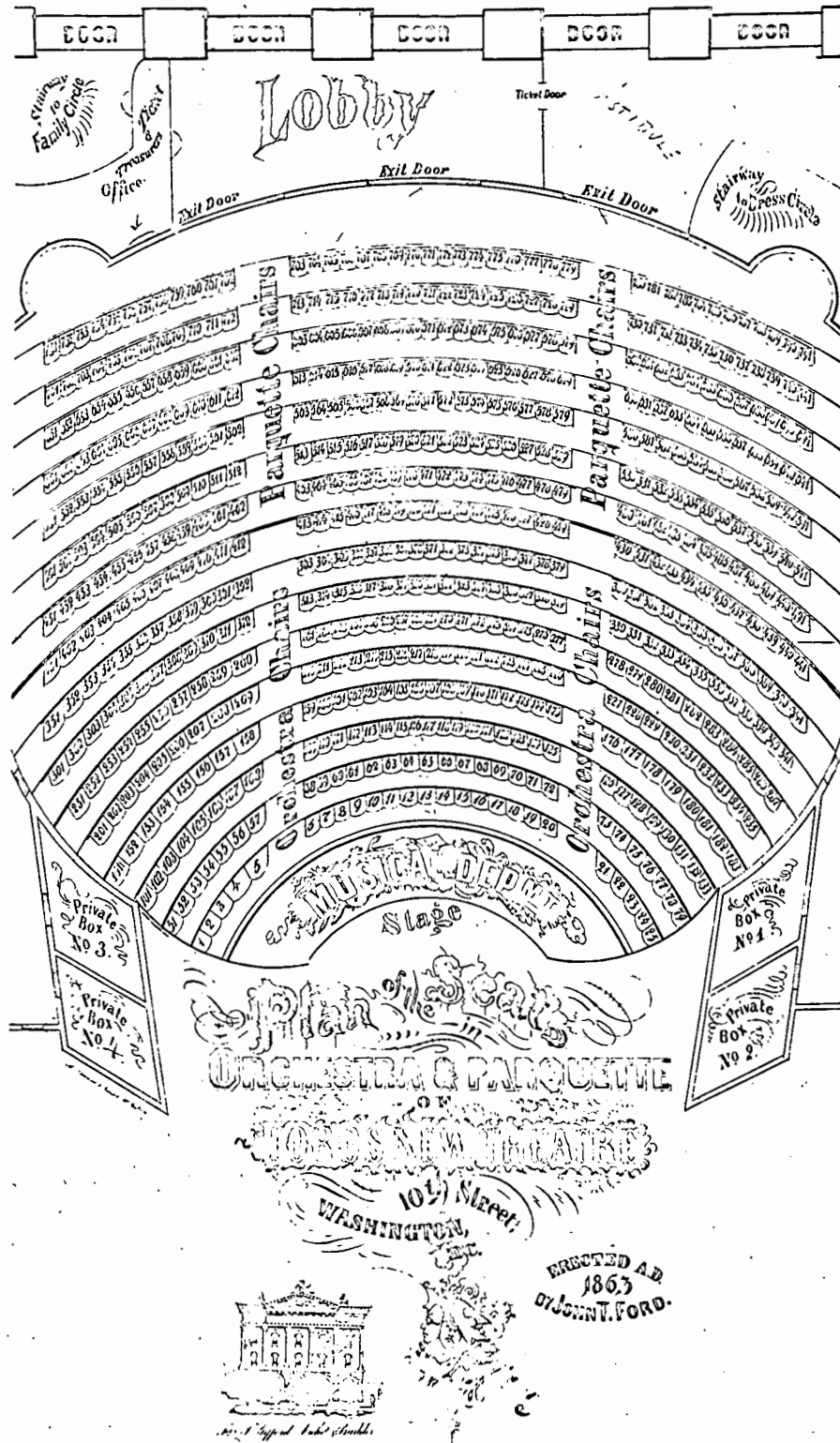


Illustration Ch-1. Seat plan of orchestra and parquette showing seating arrangements and numbering plan for each row and section.



Illustration Ch-2. Brady photo from about stage center showing side view of presidential box and overall view of sections of orchestra, parquet, first balcony (dress circle) and second balcony (family circle) against south wall side of theatre. Note particularly styling and various types of chairs and design of wooden benches of family circle.

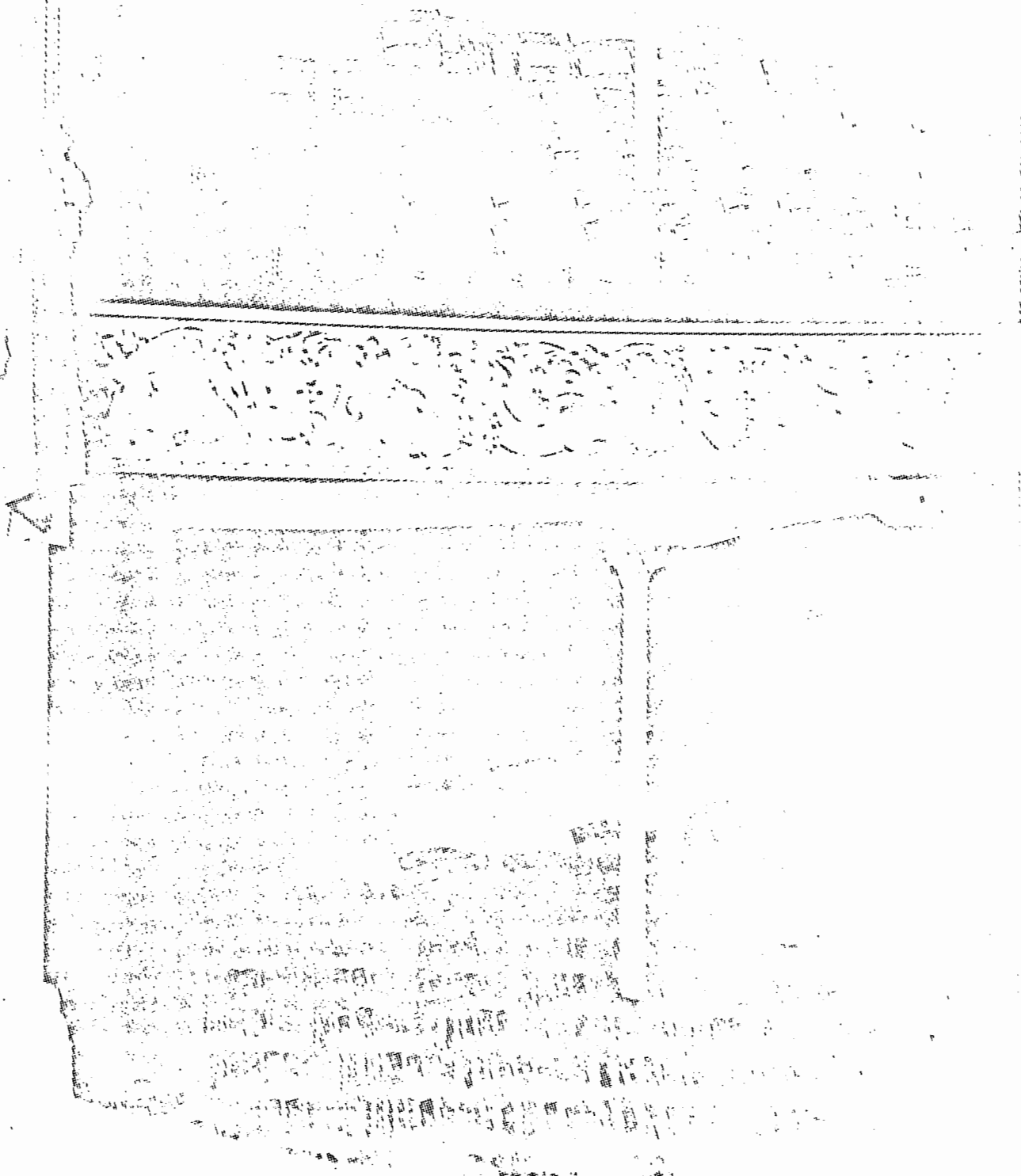


Illustration Ch-3. Closeup of archestra, parquet and dress circle chairs.

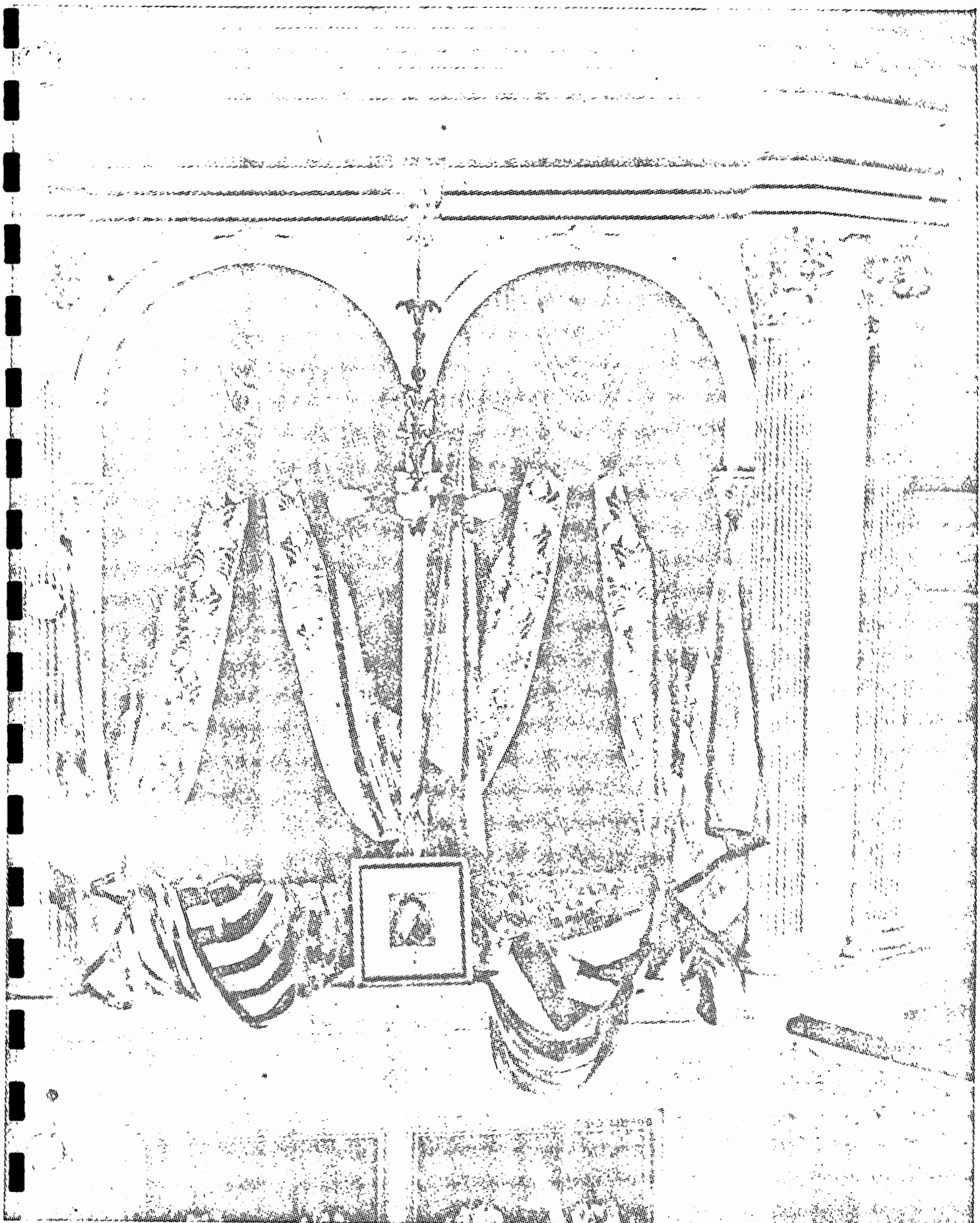


Illustration CH-4. Closeup of presidential box showing position of draperies and flags and interior of box with Victorian chairs and end of sofa.

CH-5

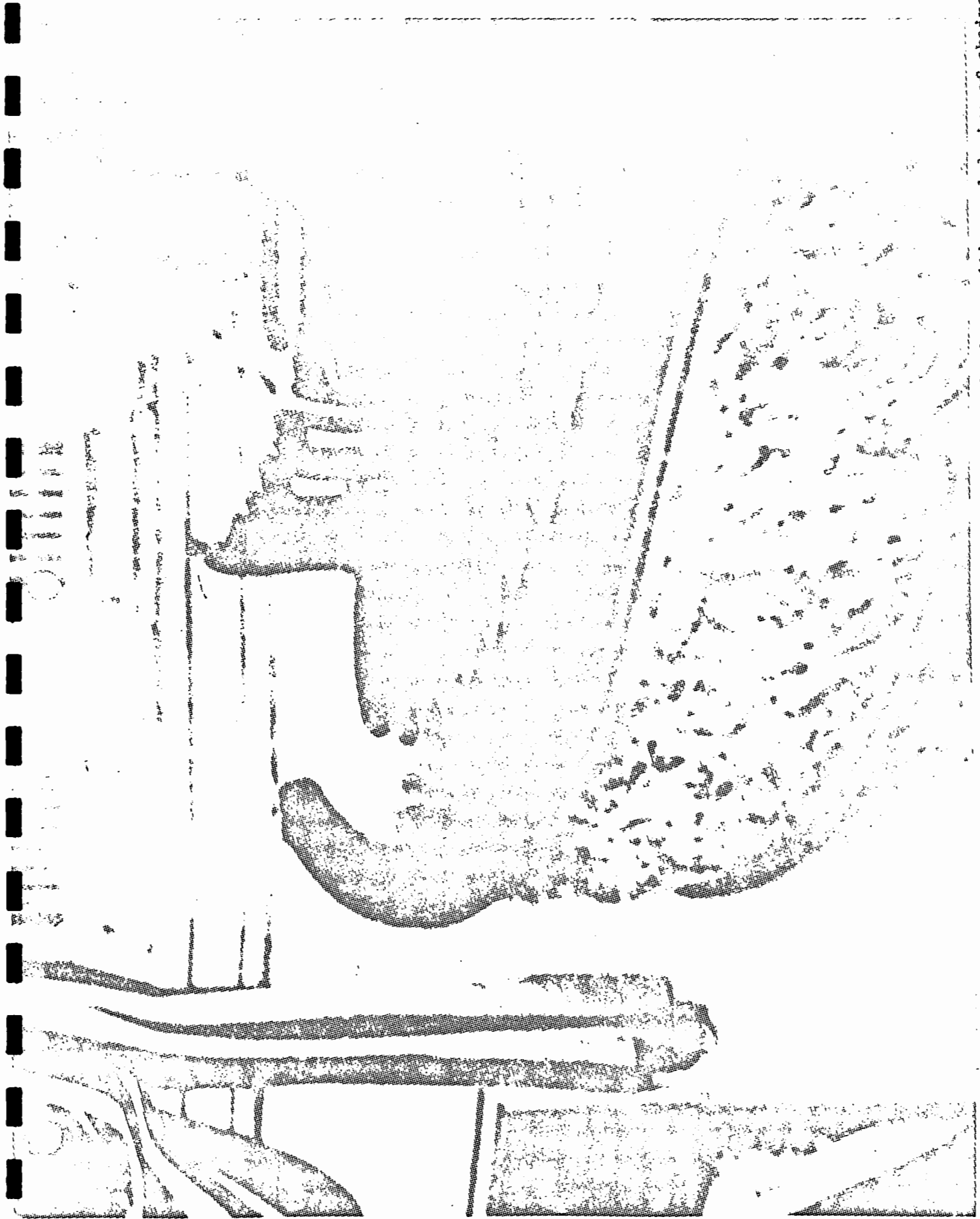


Illustration Ch-5. Closeup of south edge of dress circle at presidential box showing position and design of chairs.

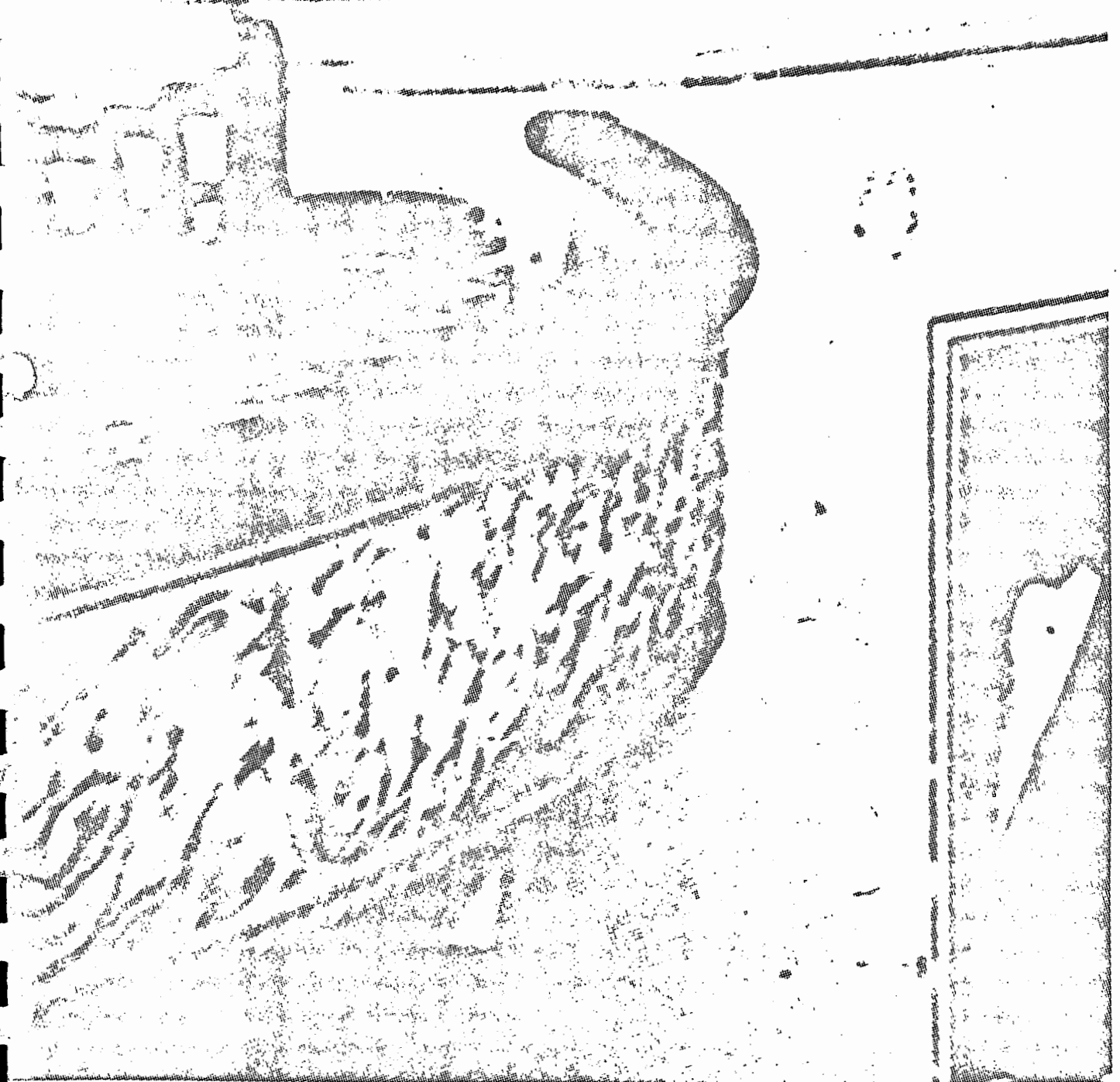


Illustration Ch-6. Closeup of north edge of dress circle at upper boxes 5 and 6, showing position and design of dress circle chairs.

Note: The seats are regulated by the rule of descent.

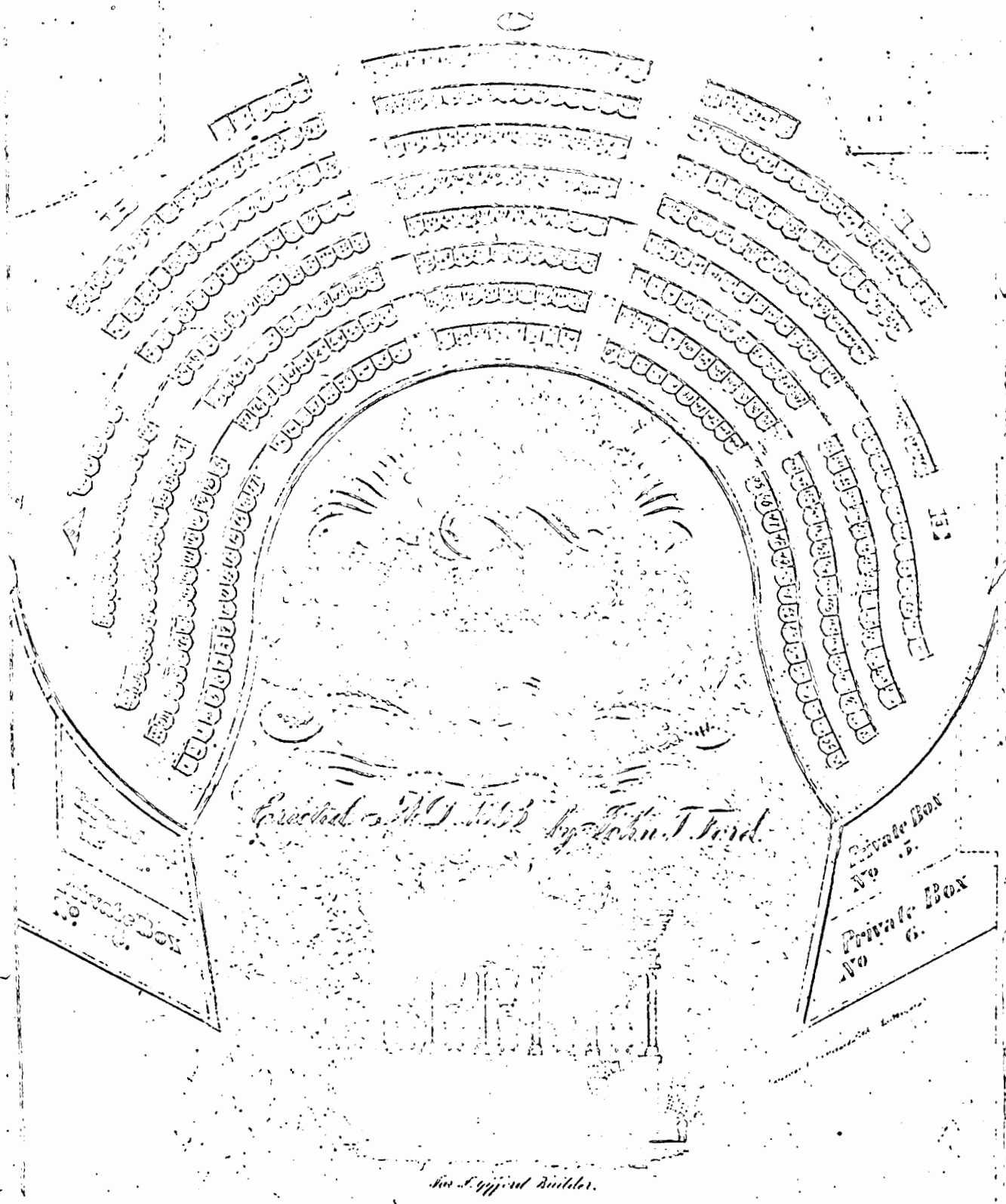


Illustration 6-7. Original plan of dress circle (1863) showing location and placement of chair seats by numbers, including entrance passageways to upper boxes on both sides of stage.

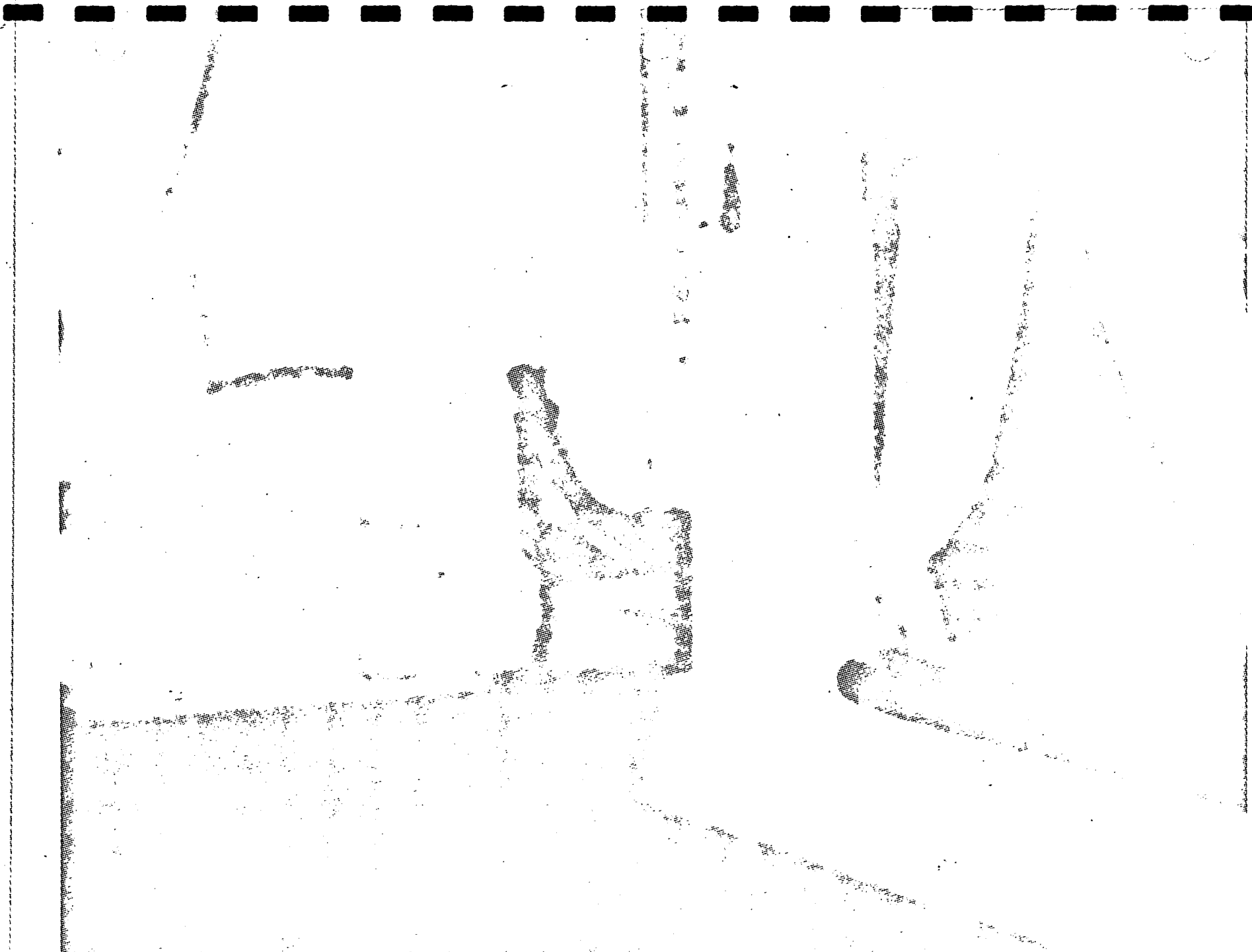


Illustration Ch-8. Closeup of prop chair on stage left at lower box 4. This is only photo showing this particular chair.

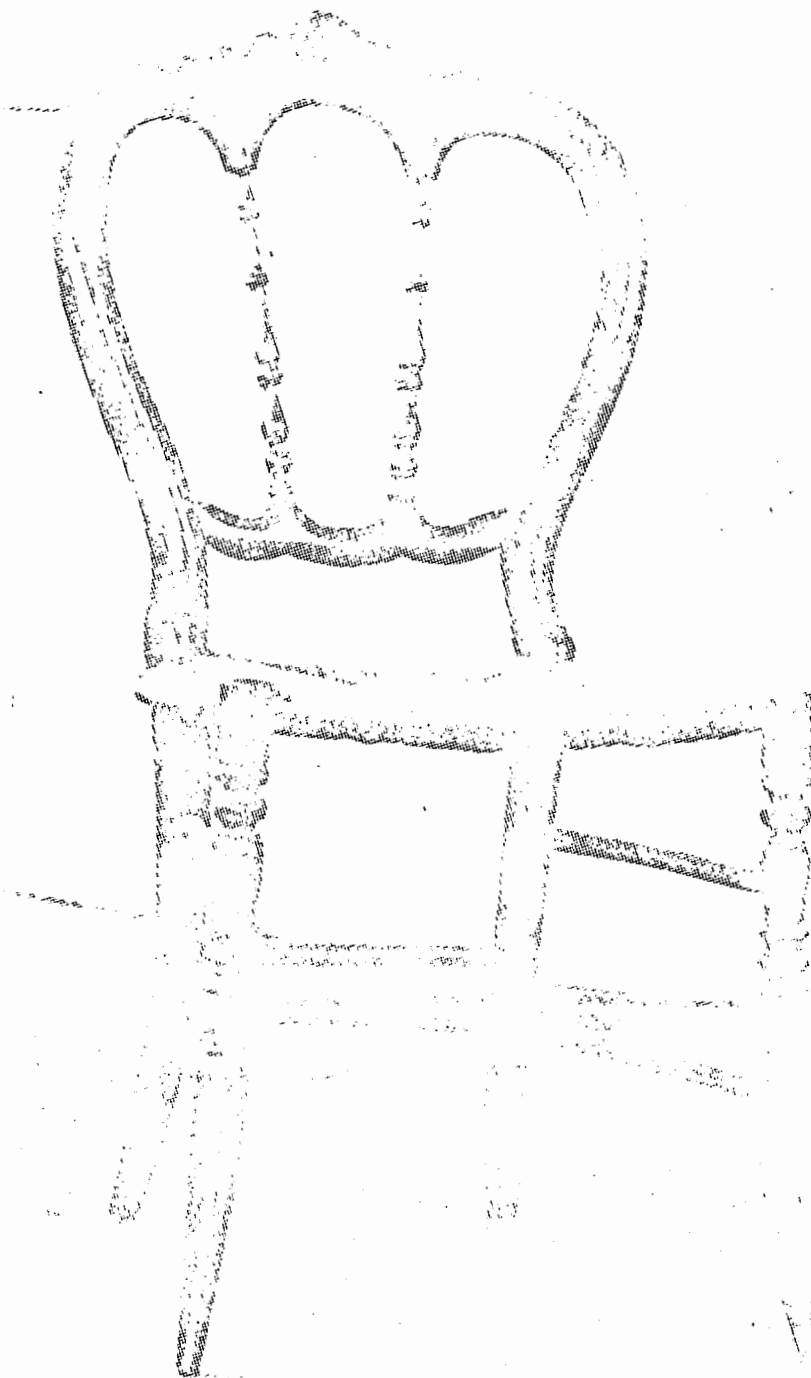


Illustration Ch-9. Rush bottom chair used in boxes of Ford's Theatre.

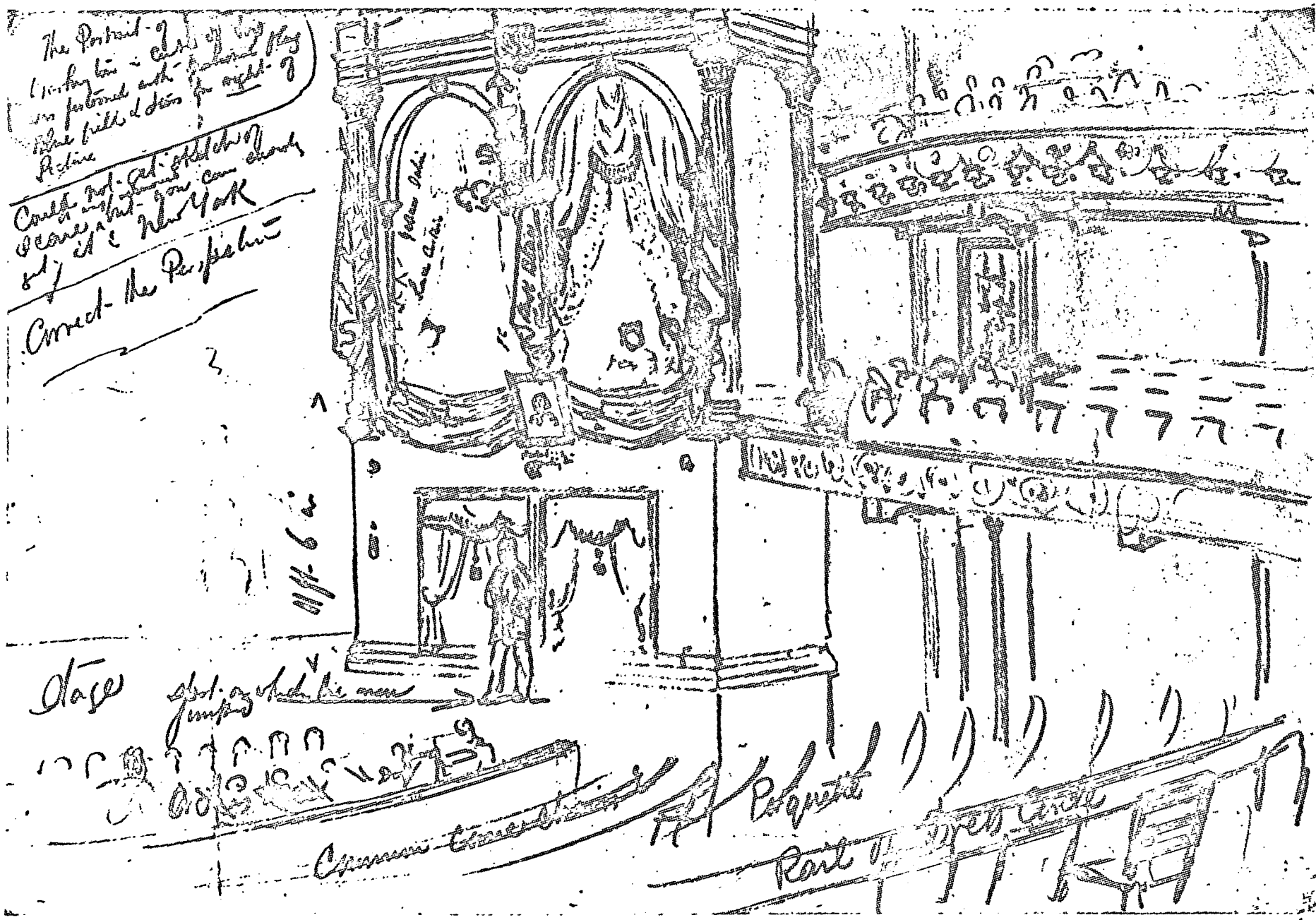


Illustration Ch-10. Sketch by A. Waud, May 1865, giving furnishings details and identifying type and construction of chairs in dress circle and parquet.

