

Unit 'D'.

DRAWER 13A

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John Wilkes Booth

The Assassination of Abraham Lincoln

John Wilkes Booth's Diary

Excerpts from newspapers and other
sources

From the files of the
Lincoln Financial Foundation Collection

Booth's Diary.

The Booth diary is published. It is simply a defence of his actions. He says under date of April 13 and 14:

Teamo. April 13-14. Friday, the idea. 'Until to day nothing was thought of sacrificing him to our country's wrongs. For six months we have worked to capture, but our cause being almost lost, something decisive and great must be done; but its failure was owing to others who did not strike for their country with a heart. I struck boldly, and not as the papers say. I walked with a firm step through a thousand of his friends, and was stopped, but pushed on. A colonel was at his side. I shouted '*sic semper*' before I fired. In jumping, broke my leg. I passed all his pickets, rode sixty miles that night with the bone of my leg tearing the flesh at every jump. I can never repent it. Though we hated to kill, our country owed all her troubles to him, and God simply made me the instrument of his punishment. The country is not (April, 1865) what it was. This forced union is not what I have loved. I care not what becomes of me. I have no desire to outlive my country. This night, before the deed, I wrote a long article and left it for one of the editors of the National Intelligencer, in which I fully set forth our reasons for our proceedings.' He or the government—

Friday, 21st—After being hunted like a dog through swamps, woods, and last night being chased by gunboats till I was forced to return, wet, cold and starving, with every man's hand against me, I am here in despair. And why? For doing what Brutus was honored for, what made Tell a hero. And yet I, for striking down a greater tyrant than they ever knew, am looked upon as a common cut throat. My action was purer than either of theirs. One hoped to be great; the other had not only his country's but his own wrongs to avenge. I hoped for no gain. I knew no private wrong. I struck for my country, and that at once; a country that groaned beneath this tyranny and prayed for this end. And yet now behold the cold hand they extend to me. God cannot pardon me if I have done wrong. Yet I cannot see my wrong, except in serving a degenerate people. The little, the very little I left behind to clear my name, the government will not allow to

be printed. So ends all. For my country I have given up all that makes life sweet and holy; brought misery upon my family, and am sure there is no pardon in Heaven for me since man condemns me so. I have only heard of what has been done, except what I did myself, and it fills me with horror. God, try and forgive me; and bless my mother. To night I will once more try the river with the intent to cross, though I have a greater desire and almost a mind to return to Washington and in a measure clear my name, which I feel I can do. I do not repent the blow I struck. I may before my God but not to man: I think I have done well, though I am abandoned, with the curse of Cain upon—. When if the world knew my heart that one blow would have made me great, though I did desire no greatness. To night I try to escape these bloodhounds once more. Who, who can read his fate? God's will be done. I have too great a soul to die like a criminal. May He spare me that and let me die bravely. I bless the entire world; have never hated or wronged any one.— This last was not a wrong unless God deems it so, and it's with him to damn or bless me. Hard for this brave boy with me, who often prays—yes, before and since with a true and sincere heart. Was it crime in him? If so why can he pray the same? I do not wish to shed a drop of blood but I must fight the course. It is all that's left me.

Upon a piece of paper found in the diary, and supposed to have been torn from it is written the following:

My idea (piece torn out.) Forgive me, but I have some little pride. I cannot blame you for want of hospitality; you know your own affairs. I was sick, tired, with a broken limb, and in need of medical advice. I would not have turned a dog from my door in such a plight. However, you were kind enough to give us something to eat, for which I not only thank you but on account of the rebuke and manner in which to [piece torn out.] It is not the substance, but the way in which kindness is extended that makes one happy in the acceptance thereof. The sauce to meet is ceremony. Meeting were bare without it. Be kind enough to accept the enclosed five dollars, although hard to spare, for what we have received.

2.4 1867

J. Wilkes Booth's Diary.

The Republican newspapers have very generally called on the administration to publish the Booth diary referred to in the Bingham-Butler controversy. I am able to say, upon good authority, that his diary will be given to the public in a few days. The witness who took the diary from the person of Booth and delivered it to Judge Holt has been sent for to identify the volume, and make affidavit of such facts as are in his knowledge relative to the matter, and especially to state if the eighteen leaves cut out of the diary were in it when taken from Booth or not. I learn from the same source that Secretary Stanton and Judge Holt have been before the Judiciary Committee and testified as to the contents of the book, which was also exhibited to committee, that Judge Holt testified that the diary was given to him, together with the other articles found upon him, immediately upon the arrival of the captors of the assassin in this city; that the book has been in the sole custody and control of Judge Holt from that time to the present moment; that it has not been altered in any particular, and is dotted nor crossed; that when the book was handed to Judge Holt the eighteen leaves were cut out of it; that the diary commenced with the date of April 14th, the day of the assassination, and the first entry states that on that day he (Booth) had prepared a communication and sent it to the National Intelligencer; giving an account of the purposes of himself and his confederates.

The balance of the diary consists of glorifying himself, (Booth.) whom he likened to Brutus, and denunciation of his victim, whom he calls "a tyrant," etc. Judge Holt further testifies that in his judgement the contents of the diary shed no light upon the case, and therefore as that character of evidence, being statements of the facts, was inadmissible, he did not deem it proper to offer it, and the only evidence on the subject offered on the trial of the assassins was that of the publisher of the Intelligencer, who proved that he had not received the communication which Booth pretended he had sent to that paper, and finally, there is absolutely no evidence of any kind that Booth ever wrote a line in the book other than that which is found there.—Washington Dispatch to the Baltimore Sun.—May 1, 1867.

Remains of J. Wilkes Booth.

Of the 10,000 or more relics of all kinds preserved in the Army Medical Museum at Washington, D. C., the most interesting, perhaps, are two portions of a human body—all that remains above ground of J. Wilkes Booth, the assassin of President Lincoln. These ghastly but most interesting specimens are numbered and catalogued for ready reference. The first (mounted on a little stand and labeled 4,086) is a section, or, rather, sections of three vertebrae, the third, fourth and fifth, through an aperture in which a thin wire is placed showing the course of the ball. Near this is the second specimen, suspended in a wide-mouthed vial of alcohol and labeled 4,087. It is about 3 inches long and reminds one of a section of well-cooked beef marrow. Referring to the catalogue, under the head of No. 4,086 we find the following: "Mounted specimen is the third, fourth and fifth cervical vertebrae. A conoidal carbine ball entered the right side, comminuting the base of the right laminae of the fourth vertebra, fracturing it longitudinally and separating it from the spinous process, at the same time fracturing the fifth through its pedicle and also involving the transverse process. The missile passed directly through the canal with a slight inclination downward, and to the rear, emerging through the left base of the fourth and fifth laminae, which are comminuted and from which fragments were imbedded in the muscles of the neck. (From a case where death occurred a few hours after injury, April 26, 1865)." The alcoholic specimen, labeled 4,087, has this entry in the catalogue: "A portion of the spinal cord from the cervical region, transversely perforated from right to left by a carbine ball which fractured the laminae of the fourth and fifth vertebrae. The cord is much torn and discolored by blood. (From a case where death occurred a few hours after injury, April 26, 1865)." As mentioned above these two specimens are the only portions of J. Wilkes Booth's body that were not consigned to the grave.

March 10 1869

A. B. Foyel (asked for fees of both diaries)

The diary is preserved here in the special keeping of the Bureau its mutilation would not be allowed for any purpose or in any degree.

J. Holt

(above excerpt from letter in Western Rivers Hist Soc.)
Cleveland Ohio.

JOHN WILKES BOOTH.

AN EXTRACT FROM THE DIARY FOUND
IN HIS POCKET.

He Describes His Sensations and Despairs of Forgiveness — Riding Sixty Miles with the Bones of His Leg Protruding.

Special to The Republic.

BALTIMORE, Md., Jan. 6.—The *American* received to-night from its Washington correspondent the following extract from J. Wilkes Booth's diary, found in his clothing after his death. It is now in possession of the Department of Justice:

April 14—Friday the 14th. Until to-day nothing was ever thought of sacrificing to our country's wrongs. For six months we have worked to capture, but our cause being almost lost something decisive and great must be done. But its failure was owing to others, who did not strike for their country with a heart. I struck boldly and not as the papers say. I walked with a firm step through a thousand of his friends and stopped, but pushed on. A colonel was at his side. I shouted *sic semper* before I fired. In jumping I broke my leg. I passed all the pickets, rode 60 miles that night with the bone of my leg tearing the flesh at every jump. I can never repent it. Though we hated to kill, our country owed all her troubles to him, and God simply made me the instrument of his punishment. The country is not what it was. This forced Union is not what I have loved. I care not what becomes of me. I have no desire to outlive my country. The night before the deed I wrote a long article and left it for one of the editors of the *National Intelligencer*, in which I set forth fully our reasons for proceeding. He or the South!

Friday, 21. After being hunted like a dog through swamps, woods, and last night being chased till I was forced to return wet, cold and starving with every man's hand against me, I am here in despair; and for why? For doing what Brutus was honored for, what made Tell a hero; and yet I, for striking down a greater tyrant than they ever knew, am looked upon as a common cut-throat. My act was purer than either of theirs. One hoped to be great himself—the other had not only his country's but his own wrongs to avenge. I hoped for no gain. I knew no private wrong. I struck for my country and that alone—a country ground beneath this tyranny—and prayed for this end. And yet now behold the cold hand they extend to me. God cannot pardon me if I have done wrong. Yet I cannot see any wrong, except in serving a degenerate people. The little, the very little, I left behind to clear my name the government will not allow to be printed. So ends all. For my country I have given up all that makes life sweet and holy, brought misery upon my family, and am sure there is no pardon in the heavens for me since man condemns me so. I have only heard what has been done except what I did myself, and it fills me with horror. God try and forgive me and bless my mother. To-night I will once more try the river with the intention to cross, though I have a greater desire, and almost a mind, to return to Washington and in a measure clear my name, which I feel I can do. I do not repent the blow I struck. I may before my God, but not to man. I think I have done well, though I am abandoned with the curse of Cain upon me, when, if the world knew my heart, that one blow would have made me great, although I did desire no greatness. To-night I try to escape these blood-hounds once more. Who can read his fate? God's will be done. I have too great a soul to die like a criminal. Oh, God, He, may He spare me that and let me die bravely. I bless the entire world. I have never hated or wronged any one. This last was not a wrong. I am condemned so, and it is with me to suffer or die.

And for two brave boys Harold with me who often pray (3 or 4 times a day) with a true heart and a true mind. I do not wish to see a trace of blood, but I must fight for the cause. This is all that I write.

There are two last words in the diary, and probably the last in every word, as he was not very much of a writer.

J WRIGHT

There was another, an underlying reason—the diary threw doubt on the existence of a conspiracy. It revealed the fact that Booth's deed was that of one insane man, working alone, and showed by inference that the persons whom he had implicated in his crime were no conspirators, but his dupes, whom he used, with their knowledge in some cases, without it in others, to do his bidding.
(Copyright, 1915, by Winfield M. Thompson.)

Tomorrow—The Verdict against

BOOTH'S DIARY

The book starts with nineteen sheets (possibly twenty) cut out irregularly. Half-way between these twenty sheets, the sheets are sewed in. One of these sheets that are cut out distinctly shows traces of Booth's hand writing.

There follows:

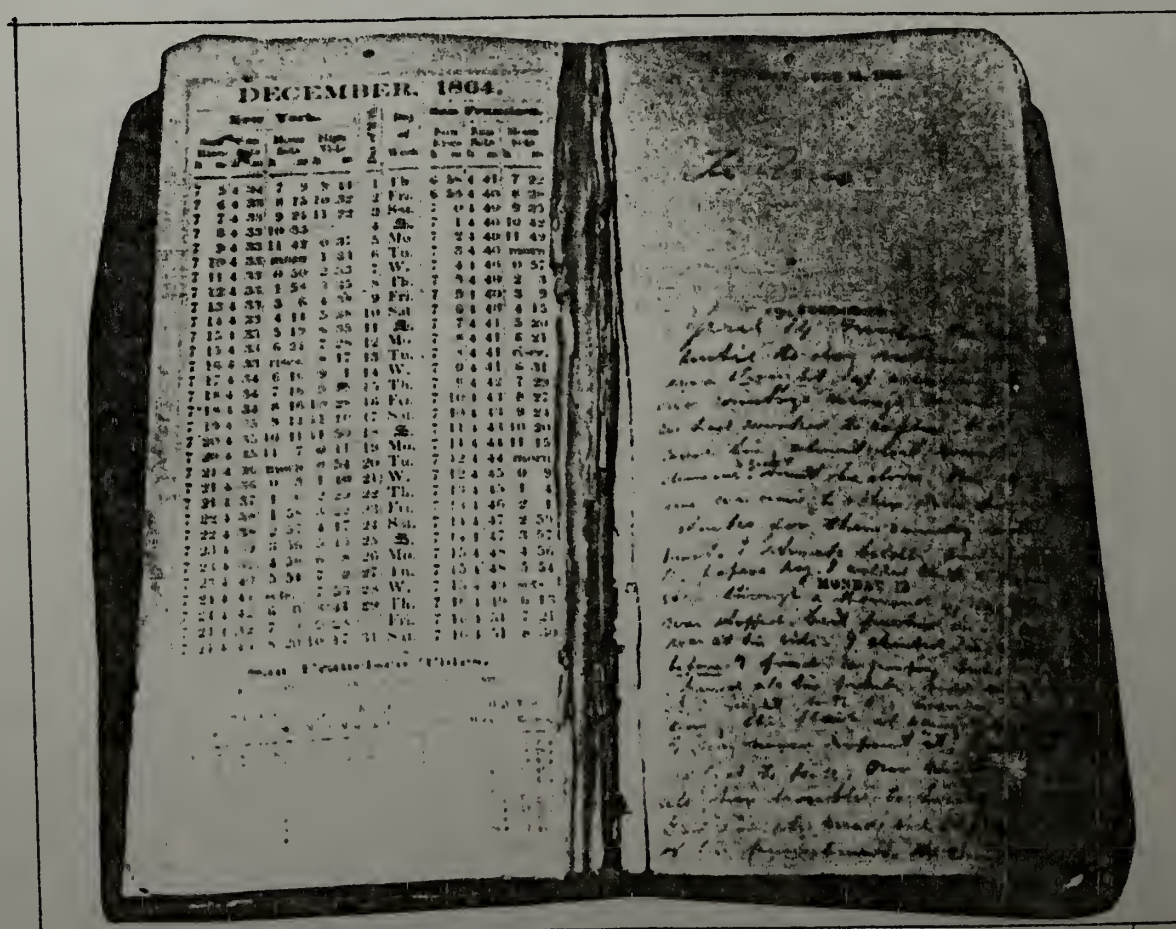
- 3 sheets containing the diary
- 5 full sheets without writings
- 1 sheet with about 1/5 cut off on top
- 1 full clean sheet
- 1 sheet torn out
- 21 full sheets not written on
- 1 torn out
- 1 sheet containing the words, in Booth's hand writing, "sempre le memo"
- 1 sheet containing in Booth's hand writing, "Toujours le memo" and "amo a te"
- 1 full clean sheet
- 1 sheet cut out
- 1 full clean sheet
- 1 sheet torn out
- 1 sheet with 1/5 cut off on top
- 2 full clean sheets
- 1 sheet cut out
- 4 clean sheets
- 3 sheets cut out

THE LINCOLN LOG

Richard Sloan, editor * 3855 Arthur Ave., Seaford, N.Y. 11783 * Nov./Dec., 1976 * VOL. 1, No. 11 * 50¢

MOVIE ON LINCOLN'S ASSASSINATION HAS SURPRISES -- Sunn Classic Pictures is producing a film documentary for theatrical release on Lincoln's murder. Many rumors have been floating around concerning the nature of the film and what it will disclose. We are now in direct contact with Sunn Classic Pictures, and we can now give our readers first-hand information on this film as it becomes available. The producers have been very cooperative with us, enlightening us so far as they can. Details will be difficult to get, understandably, until their film is well into shooting. To dispell one rumor, the film does not concern the story of the legendary Enid Booth mummy, as we erroneously reported in last month's issue. What the Sunn Classic film does cover are the events starting about six months prior to the assassination, and continuing through the conclusion of the conspiracy trial. This will include the conspiracy, the assassination, Booth's flight, the shooting at Garrett's farm, and the trial. We are given to understand that there will be many revelations and surprises in regard to these areas. What they are, we have yet to learn. The big news from Sunn is, according to their spokesman, that the missing pages of John Wilkes Booth's famous diary do exist. "We have purchased the rights to their contents," we were told, "and have acquired a transcript."

Our March, 1976 issue reported that Paul Weisberg, an antique firearms collector from upstate New York, said that he was in touch with a "go-between" for an heir of Secretary of War Edwin Stanton, who claimed to have the missing pages. About 18 to 20 pages are unaccountably missing from the little memorandum book in which the assassin confided, during his escape from Washington. How these pages vanished has been a subject of interest to students of the assassination for many years. Were they removed by Booth before his capture? If so, it would probably mean that they



John Wilkes Booth's diary

were simply discarded, with no importance attached to them. If they were removed after his capture, it would indicate that they contained incriminating information, and that there was some sort of a cover-up. The very fact that the missing pages, should they prove to be authentic, have surfaced, indicates the cover-up. We have no idea who the pages implicate or from whom they came. Our report that they came from a Stanton heir seems to have been erroneous. (Why would Stanton retain the pages if they incriminated him?!) Otto Eisenschiml was the first to point a finger of suspicion at Stanton, but the questions he raised have remained unanswered. We do not know if the missing pages will implicate Stanton or others when Sunn Classic Pictures reveals their contents. We can only guess at this point. Some of you may recall that David Herold, Booth's accomplice and guide, had stated to Judge Bingham after his arrest that Booth told him, "there are thirty-five others in Washington and four that ought to have joined me, and you could have gone to the devil." At the House Judiciary Committee hearings investigating Andrew Johnson in 1867, Major Thomas T. Eckert, former head of the War Department Telegraph Office, testified that Lewis Paine, Seward's assassin, had told him, "You haven't got the half of them." Stanton, Eckert, Lafayette Baker, and two of the men sent to get Booth at Garrett's farm in Virginia were all called to testify at the Judiciary hearing about the diary and the missing pages. (We shall have a review of their conflicting testimony in our next issue.)

We called Stanton's great-grandson, Ernest Lee Jahncke, to ask him if his family was in any way responsible for the alleged missing pages having come to light. He assured us that he wasn't. Other relatives are scattered around, and he doubted that they had anything to offer, either. We asked him what he thought of the stories that his famous relative had been accused of complicity in Lincoln's assassination. He didn't believe any of them, and had pretty much gotten used to those reports over the years. Asked to give his opinion about Stanton, Mr. Jahncke replied, "He was a tough autocrat, a bit of a bastard, but a darn good Secretary of War." He expressed an interest in the Sunn Classic Film, and asked us to keep him abreast of developments as they become available.

After the disclosures are made by Sunn Classic Pictures, no matter what they are, historians will naturally ask if the missing pages are authentic. To that end, according to a Sunn spokesman, they now have several historians checking the authenticity of their contents. Their research department has conducted extensive research on the case for the past eleven months. The Sunn spokesman added, "What we will be putting on the screen is solidly documented. Our almost one year of research will advance the Lincoln assassination story more than it has been advanced in the past 116 years!" We will continue to be in touch with Sunn's producers, and hope that we will have more details from them in future issues of THE LINCOLN LOG. Their film, as yet untitled, is scheduled for release in April, 1977. One producer told us, "We expect some of our revelations to be categorized as the greatest historical discoveries made in the annals of American history."

THE ENID BOOTH MUMMY -- Although Sunn Classic Pictures' film on the assassination doesn't tell the story of this famous cadaver, interest in this legend grows with every passing month. There are still many who believe Finis Bates' story that the mummy that toured carnivals and side shows was Booth, who had escaped alive from Garrett's tobacco barn. And there are folks out there still looking for the mummy.

In the absence of the cadaver, the search also continues for any material associated with the mummy, in an effort to learn if it could have been Booth. An examination of the mummy was made in Chicago in 1931 by a team of pathologists. This report has never been fully quoted before, and we are pleased to present the complete text to our readers. Dr. Richard Mudd came up with the copy for us, and we are grateful to him for sending it to us. We have also learned that one of the doctors who signed the report is still alive, and has all the original X-rays that are mentioned in the report. We hope to have more on that in the near future. It would certainly be a boon to historians to see these pictures, and we are glad to know that they still exist!

Chicago, Illinois
December 19, 1931

The Chicago Press Club
Chicago, Illinois

Gentlemen:

At your request, we were asked by Dr. Orlando F. Scott to examine in his office at 330 South Wells Street, Chicago, Ill, the body and X-rays of same, properly identified by us as being the body of an individual who died under the name of D.E. George, on the 13th day of January, 1903, in the Grand Hotel, City of Enid, Territory of Oklahoma, United States of America, and we did examine said body and X-ray plates.

On examining this body physically, we found and noted the following peculiarities:-

1. There was a peculiar elevation or upward riding, of the right eyebrow, it appearing on the body at a higher level on the forehead than the left eyebrow. There was an area about the eyebrow that looked like an old healed scar.
2. The right thumb was seen to be considerably hickened at its knuckle joint, and sort of bowed up, or arched, producing a deformity of the right thumb in question. On comparison with the left thumb: the left thumb was seen to be long and slender, and lying snugly along and in contact with the hand, there being no evidence of any deformity in this left thumb, and the left thumb appearing to be slender in size, as compared to the right thumb.
3. On examination of the legs, there was seen to be an apparent slight thickening over the outside of the left ankle: that is, over what is commonly called the ankle joint and what is technically called the lower end of the fibula, or external malleolus.
4. Examination of the back of the neck revealed that a piece of skin and underlying tissue had been removed. This we were informed, was removed by Dr. Charlos E.N. Fischer, of the Fischer Laboratories, for the purpose of making a microscopic examination in order to determine whether or not there was any scar tissue in the skin at this point.

The next examination conducted was an examination of the X-ray films taken in the laboratory of and under the supervision of Dr. Orlando F. Scott of this body, these pictures being of the head, hands, and legs. These pictures were identified by a photograph imprint upon them, and were further identified to us by Dr. Scott as having been made by him and having been continuously in his possession since they were made. He further stated that the X-ray machine was a vicotr X-ray machine in good working order at the time the pictures were made; that he was present when they were made, and that they are in the same condition now as when they were made; and further that it is his opinion that they are true and correct representations of that portion of the body of this man that they purport to show.

1. Examination of right lateral (side) view of the skull of this body shows a thickening of the tissues over the right eyebrow line. This may have been produced by the scar from an injury causing a thickening of the soft tissues over the eyebrow and forehead at this level, or may be due to an actual thickening of the bony covering from an injury, or may be due to both a thickening of the soft tissues and the bony covering.

2. Comparative examination of X-Ray pictures of the right and left leg, antero-posterior view: that is, taking the picture from front to back: this examination revealed that both the right and left legs as determined by the shadows in the X-ray films were taken in a correct and true antero-posterior position. On comparing the ankle joints, we find that the left fibula is markedly thickened at its lower end at the level of that portion which is called the external malleolus, it being the lateral (side) part of the ankle joint. This fibula is approximately 25% thicker at this point than the right fibula. This thickening indicates that at some time there has been a fracture of this left fibula just above the ankle joint, which has resulted in thickening of this bone and the bulbous appearance of it. This thickening is not due to any deform or defect that the body was born with: that is, it is not a congenital defect, but is an actual change in the bone due to a previous fracture of this fibula.

3. Comparative X-ray examination of the right and left hands:- the left thumb is long and tapering, with slender bones, as seen in the X-ray, and the thumb is seen to be lying close to the hand and parallel with the index finger, and is perfectly straight: whereas the X-ray of the right hand shows that there is a thickening of the entire thumb and thickening of the joints of the thumb, with a deformity, or bowing out of the thumb, which is very marked in comparison with the straightness and lack of this deformity in the left thumb. It is my opinion that this thickening of this right thumb and the bones of the right thumb and joints is due not to any congenital defect, but due to changes in the bones with thickening of the bones and joints, and that such a condition is commonly caused by only one thing, and that is, an injury of a crushing nature.

In summing up our findings, it is my opinion that:-

1. The elevation, or upward riding, of the right eyebrow has been produced by injury and could have been produced by the thrust of a sharp instrument, the scar forming when healing ensued.

2. Examination of the right thumb show(s) that the condition present has been produced by the injury and is not a congenital deformity of this right thumb.

3. The condition of the left fibula is not congenital. The bony thickening found and the deformity were produced, in my opinion, by a fracture of the fibula at some remote date.

SIGNED: Dr. Louis K. Eastman
Dr. Charles K. Barnes
Dr. Bernard Conway
Dr. Charles E.M. Fischer
Dr. Edward L. Miloslavich

ORLANDO F. SCOTT, M.D.

We would like to comment that one of the doctors in attendance at this examination was Health Commissioner Herman Bundesen. Why he chose not to sign it is unknown to us. It is also worth mentioning, we feel, that George Bryan, author of "The Great American Myth" sent a few queries to Dr. Scott. "From his answers," wrote Bryan (Page 357), "it seems certain that he looked for no identifying marks other than those mentioned in Bates' 'Escape (and Suicide of John Wilkes Booth)'".

THE

LINCOLN LOG

and E. Sloan, editor*3855 Arthur Avenue, Seaford, NY 11783*Vol.2, No.1, Jan.1977*75¢/issue, \$6/year

even take home movies of the Capitol building, using a tripod, without a permit, unless one stands outside of the parking lot!) Savannah's Mayor, John P. Rousakis, is cooperating with the film's producer on the shooting.

As we reported in our last issue, Sunn Classic Pictures claims to have the missing pages of John Wilkes Booth's controversial diary, as well as other documents, which, according to their producers, implicate various individuals in Lincoln's death.

We learn that the diary in Ford's Theatre had been pulled "for research". Following this up, we discovered that Sunn Classic Pictures had sent someone to Washington to photograph the pages of the diary. We have no information from the producers of the film as to how these photos will be utilized, from a research standpoint. We hope to have some information from Sunn Classic Pictures in the next issue of THE LINCOLN LOG.

We recently read in The New York Post that the producers fed various information to a computer, to determine where movie-goers interests lay, and came up with such subjects as Noah's ark and the Lincoln assassination. Sunn Classic Pictures has just released their film on the first subject, "In Search of Noah's Ark", which is playing all over the country at the present time. The public's interest in the story of Lincoln's murder is confirmed by the results of a nationwide poll recently taken by the Associated Press. 245 newspaper editors responded to the poll, which asked them to give their choice for the top story in America's first two hundred years. We did not learn how the editors came to their conclusions, but we imagine that most, if not all of them, gathered their information by conducting their own local polls. The editors' first choice, after the ballots were counted, was the American Revolution. Choice number three was the Civil War. #11 was Lincoln's assassination, beating out interest in President Kennedy's assassination by two positions. A local poll of readers by the editors of the Baltimore Evening Sun placed Lincoln's assassination as twelfth on the list.

SCHOLARS ALSO POLLED -- The chairmen of History departments at 100 American colleges and universities were asked who they thought were the ten greatest Presidents. The results of returns from 85 educators were given to United Press International. Abraham Lincoln was judged the greatest, by a unanimous vote. Following him were Washington, who received 84 votes; FDR, with 81; Theodore Roosevelt, 79; Thomas Jefferson, 78; Woodrow Wilson, 75; Andrew Jackson, 73; Truman, 64; James Polk, 38; and John Adams, 35. Those who came closest to the top ten were LBJ, with 24 votes; Cleveland, with 21; Kennedy, with 19, and Dwight Eisenhower, with 14. Jimmy Carter has said that he hopes to join the roster.

DEATH OF SENATOR HART -- Michigan's long-time Senator, Philip Hart, nicknamed "The conscience of the Senate", passed away recently. One of his constituents was Dr. Richard D. Mudd, of Michigan. Senator Hart was partly instrumental in persuading Congress to approve the erecting of the plaque honoring Samuel A. Mudd at Fort Jefferson. Hart never felt that the "time was ripe" to petition Congress to exonerate Dr. Mudd, in furtherance of the Mudd family's crusade to clear him of wrongdoing in regard to Lincoln's assassination. However, Sen. Hart did research the case thoroughly, and was very interested in helping the family. Senator Charles Mathias has expressed interest in taking over the project.

WEICHMANN'S MEMOIRS -- Floyd Risvold, who is responsible for the publication and the editing of the memoirs of Louis J. Weichmann, tells us that the book will be out the first of February. It is a rather large paperback, and sells for \$5.95, published by Random House Vintage Books. The title is "A True History of the Assassination of Abraham Lincoln & of the Conspiracy of 1865".

WEICHMANN ARTICLE -- Rev. Alfred Isacson of the Carmelite Fathers, and author of

¹⁹ Booth was a Protestant, although he was known to have attended St. Mary's Catholic Church near Bryantown in November 1864.

²⁰ Major Rathbone.

X
²¹ Booth's diary was never admitted as evidence at the trial of the conspirators. Because of this and the fact that eighteen pages had been cut out of the diary, it became the subject of a congressional investigation. See *Impeachment Investigation*, 1867, p. 672. Colonel Baker claimed that the pages had been cut out after he turned it over to the War Department. Colonel Conger claimed that *the pages were missing when he removed the diary from Booth's body at Garrett's farm*, and Secretary Stanton stated that they were missing when it was turned over to the War Department. One sentence in the diary has caused speculation: "... though I have a greater desire and almost a mind to return to Washington, and in a measure clear my name, which I feel I can do." Perhaps the real reason for withholding the diary as evidence at the first trial was the Government's determination to implicate Jefferson Davis and other Confederate officials in the Conspiracy to assassinate Lincoln. Since there was nothing in the diary to confirm this or to aid in the conviction of the accused conspirators, it was not presented. The diary is now in the Ford's Theater Museum in Washington, D.C. In order to conform to the Government transcript of Booth's diary, the missing words have been bracketed on Weichmann's rendition. See J. D. Allen, *Booth's Diary*.

²² U.S. ironclad *Montank*. Booth's body and Herold were delivered aboard at 1:45 A.M., April 27, 1865.

²³ For testimony of Dawson, see Pitman, pp. 42-3.

²⁴ For testimony of Dr. John F. May, see *Surratt Trial*, I, 270-1. See also his statement made at Washington, D.C., January 10, 1887, and printed in the *Cincinnati Enquirer*, January 30, 1893.

²⁵ It has been claimed that Booth was not the man shot in Garrett's barn. The most publicized example of these claims was the one made by David E. George of Enid, Oklahoma, who stated in 1900 that he was Booth. See Theodore Roscoe, *Web of Conspiracy*, pp. 516-23.

In a statement signed by Edward C. Jones (dated January 29, [1897], and located in the Weichmann Papers, Risvold Collection), Christopher C. Ritter, a butcher living in Anderson, Indiana, gave the following account: After killing Lincoln, Booth and Robert E. Stinton, another actor, changed into the cast-off clothes of some plasterers in the rear of a nearby restaurant. Later, when Booth was hiding out in Lower Maryland, he ordered Stinton to return to Washington and have Edward Fox and Edward Derrole retrieve his clothes and some documents they contained, put on the clothes, and return to him. These men, including Booth, were all members of an organization known as the Knights of the Golden Circle. Fox and Derrole never reached Booth and were the two men surrounded by the soldiers in Garrett's barn. Fox, who was wearing Booth's clothes, had injured his leg when he was kicked by Derrole's horse, had a scar on his neck, and, in addition, bore a strong resemblance to Booth. Fox was shot and

THE LINCOLN LOG

Richard Sloan, editor*3855 Arthur Ave, Seaford, NY 11783* Vol.II, No.2, Feb-March, 1977*75¢*\$6/yr.

THE MOVIE -- We've been trying to get more information on Sunn Classic Pictures' film, "The Conspiracy to Kill President Lincoln" and the material that has led their producers to conclude that high government officials were among those responsible for Lincoln's murder. Among the material acquired is a transcript of the purported missing pages of John Wilkes Booth's diary. Sunn's other material includes two other diaries, papers reportedly smuggled out of the War Department many years ago, collections of letters, a journal written in cipher code, transcripts of testimony "never admitted at the assassination trials", and other Booth items.

Sunn Classic Pictures' David Balsiger, who is in charge of research for the project, now reveals to us that he has "concrete evidence" to show Edwin Stanton's role in the assassination of Lincoln. "Stanton," says Mr. Balsiger, "was a conspirator --- but he's not the sole conspirator, as a lot of people would like to believe. Sunn's material also implicates senators, members of the House of Representatives, bankers, northern industrialists, cotton speculators, Confederate bigwigs, some military men, and a few newspaper executives. The film will name names and detail their roles. Mr. Balsiger also told us that he learned of four different plots aimed at the elimination of President Lincoln, all of them going on at the same time. "Our film tries to bring all four of these plots into focus, so people can understand visually what was going on, and what the motives were." He added, "Thirty persons were associated with one or another of the plots. In all cases, Booth ended up being the leader or the pawn in each." Sunn will also detail how the Government successfully covered up the conspiracy after the murder, and let Booth escape to freedom. (This does not include a look at the legendary story of the Enid "Booth" mummy, since the film will only deal with events up to July, 1865.) Sunn still won't say what information or names come out of the transcript of the missing pages of Booth's diary. We will have more on that in a couple of months. We can tell you that we have just read a transcript of these pages, but don't think we are in a position, from a legal standpoint, to say anything quite yet. According to Mr. Balsiger, everything that we will see on the movie screen will be thoroughly documented. Their researchers have been working on that for almost a year now. We hope that all of the original material Sunn has acquired will, someday, be made available to some of the leading experts and historians in the field, so that Sunn's findings can be corroborated. We would like to see the film's findings set down in the history books as fact, and not merely another speculative chapter in the search for Lincoln's killers. Perhaps only time will tell, though.

THE DIARY PAGES, MISSING AND OTHERWISE -- We have been writing and re-writing this aspect of the story for two weeks now. Everyone involved has been very cooperative with us in supplying information, and yet there have been just too many conflicting versions. This has made it difficult to piece together accurately. We have therefore decided to just tell the story as best we could, with apologies to anyone who thinks we haven't accurately described their part. We hope those involved will understand, and not be too harsh with us. Unless we approach it in this manner, the story will never be told.

Back in November, 1975, antique firearms dealer Paul Weisberg of New York was trying to sell a polished wood case for \$10,000 at the Potomac Arms & Gun Show in

Lanham, Maryland. The case was unique because Weisberg claimed it had once belonged to Edwin M. Stanton. There was even a silver clasp, with his initials on it. Fitted inside the case were portions of the nooses that hung Mrs. Surratt and Lewis Paine, along with a section of the scaffold beam. Weisberg said he had no documents authenticating the case or its contents. Without them, he was having difficulty in selling it. (Those who examined it at the gun show thought it was certainly old enough to be genuine, but they were not able to pass any professional judgement as to its authenticity. Weisberg said the case belonged to a great-granddaughter of Stanton, who, according to a "Mr.X", from whom it came, also had missing pages of Booth's diary, among other items. We were neither able to learn who "Mr.X" was nor the identity of the Stanton heir, who, Weisberg said, did not want any notoriety. Therefore, our efforts to follow up on the story of the "missing pages" were frustrated.

We had been led to believe that the Stantons still owned the case, and were trying to sell it through "Mr.X", but it now appears that "Mr.X" had originally bought the case from the Stanton family, and that Weisberg had, in turn, purchased it from him before he began exhibiting it.

Sunn Classic Pictures heard about the missing pages also, and wanted to see them for possible use in their film on Lincoln's murder. They finally tracked down "Mr.X", and a contract was eventually drawn up. Shortly after we had begun talking to Sunn, in an effort to learn something, anything, we received the first of a number of phone calls from none other than "Mr.X" himself. We spent hours on the phone with him, listening to some fascinating leading questions about the conspiracy and the missing pages, but he could not impart any information about the film's disclosures, due to his contract with Sunn Classic Pictures. We still knew very little. Eventually, "Mr.X" revealed his identity to us as Joseph Lynch, from Massachusetts. With his help, as well as the others involved, we relate the following story of the saga of the missing pages.

It was a mutual lawyer friend of his & Stanton's great-granddaughter who contacted Mr. Lynch, to appraise Stanton family material that had been passed down to her, and which lay dormant for many years. While examining this material, Mr. Lynch discovered what he believed to be the missing pages of Booth's diary, plus some other documents bearing on the Lincoln murder case. The material did not directly implicate Stanton, but, rather, those around him. Mr. Lynch theorized that Stanton had held onto this evidence as a sort of "insurance policy", in case any of the other implicated parties, ignorant of Stanton's cards, might someday be compelled to point their finger at him, to extricate themselves, or attempt to blackmail him.

When Sunn Classic Pictures finally located Mr. Lynch, they contracted with him for movie rights to tape recorded transcripts he had made of the missing pages and the other documents -- but not until Mr. Lynch had seen a scenario of the film and felt reasonably certain that the material would be presented in a scholarly rather than a sensational way. Additionally, the Stanton great-granddaughter (to whom the material still belongs), retained her anonymity.

Mr. Lynch had done a great deal of time-consuming research of his own after studying the material, and passed many of his findings and conclusions over to Sunn, who coordinated it with material they had also separately gathered, for use in the film.

Having studied the missing pages first hand (to our knowledge, only Lynch and the Stanton family have ever seen them), Mr. Lynch went to Washington to see the diary from which the pages had come, having already drawn some conclusions based on what he had seen in the missing leaves.

In Washington, Mr. Lynch found at least one blank page with writing -- in invisible ink. The writing had begun to surface from exposure to heat over the years. The page (the one dated July 18th, 19th, and 20th, 1864) apparently contains a list of names and numbers. The ones most readily visible with the naked eye are "White" and "Jenkins". Lynch also observed some faint writing in the front of the little book, which had also previously not been noted. The first name and the address are a little faint, but Mr. Lynch makes it out to be, without the slightest of doubt, the name and address of Frederick Douglass. This would be the famous black orator who fought for

negro rights and was a close advisor to Lincoln on negro problems. Lynch is sure it is written in Booth's hand. (If indeed it is Douglass, what in Heaven's name is it doing in John Wilkes Booth's diary???) Mr. Lynch also observed other bits of writing that have been victim of an attempt at defacing, through erasure.

Mr. Lynch then contacted the people at Sunn Classic Pictures and suggested that they arrange to have special light photographs (ultra-violet, infra-red, etc;) taken of the pages, to see what they might reveal. (He had in mind the National Archives.)

Mr. Ray Neff then appeared on the scene, with his own equipment, to take the pictures. Neff is an associate professor in the department of Health & Safety at Indiana State University, but back in 1961, when he was a research chemist in New Jersey, he discovered a coded message written by Secret Service Chief Lafayette Baker, in an old military journal. (Baker had become embroiled in the controversy surrounding the missing pages of the diary, and testified at the Johnson Impeachment hearings on the subject.) The code was easy to decipher, and it implicates Baker, Stanton, and unnamed high government officials in a conspiracy to kill Lincoln. (The story, by editor Robert Fowler, appeared in the August, 1961 issue of his Civil War Times. Comments about it can be found in the October, 1961 issue.) Although the code implicates Stanton, historians questioned the veracity of Baker, who was enough of a scoundrel to have fabricated the code, to embarrass his former boss. There is little doubt that the writing is Baker's, as far as we know.

David Balsiger, of Sunn Classic Pictures, explained to us that Neff took the pictures because he had seen some of his photographic work, and felt that he was highly qualified to photograph the diary. As of this writing, Neff is still reviewing the results of the hundreds of sophisticated pictures he took, but at this time, he says he doesn't think the pages contain any material that is particularly revealing.

But what about Joseph Lynch's own examination of the diary? Something must be in those pages. Lynch told us that it was the nature of the missing pages that led him to conclude the sort of thing he says he found in the diary. We are merely reporting the story as we have received it, and will not draw any conclusions. But at this point, it is only important that we see for ourselves just what is on those pages. Now, Mr. Neff was placed under no obligation to turn any of his pictures over to the Park Service. But all parties agree on at least one thing, that being that Mr. Neff gave verbal assurance to Mr. Michael Harmon, the curator of Ford's Theatre, that he would donate copies of all of the photos he took, and that Mr. Harman would then make them available for research. Harman told us that he expects to receive them by mid-March.

Mr. Lynch had protested to Mr. Harman that if photos were not taken by the government, as well as by Mr. Neff, the results of only one series of pictures, taken by a private individual, would be subject to speculation. At the time Neff's first series of pictures were taken (he returned at a later date for some more, the first series being a preliminary session), Mr. Lynch says that he asked for, and received, permission to take his own pictures, as well, to insure that at least two independent sets of pictures existed. (This is not meant to cast any shadows over Mr. Neff. We don't think there was anything wrong in the request, considering the circumstances.)

Researcher James O. Hall soon contacted Mr. Harman, asking him to arrange with the National Archives to take its own special light-photographs of the diary. The request was refused. Mr. Harman, in his position as Ford's Theatre's curator, is evidently interested more in preserving artifacts than in investigating Lincoln's murder. He told Mr. Hall that any more pictures would mean "unnecessary handling of a priceless artifact, and would pose a threat to its preservation, which would not be acceptable." He also explained, to THE LINCOLN LOG, that the pages were very fragile, having suffered from recent handling and the effects of aging -- too fragile to tamper with anymore. He therefore sent the diary off to the National Park Service Restoration Museum at Harper's Ferry, Virginia, where Park Service conservators would "refurbish" the diary, whatever that means. "None of the work...would in any way alter, erase, or obscure any portions of the text or any part of the diary itself." After the diary is refurbished and sent back to Ford's Theatre, Mr. Harman told us that he would not be likely to allow any more photographs of the diary, unless he

thought that the condition of the pages permitted it. He admitted that this might mean weeks, months, or years. The issue here is not the fact that Mr. Neff took the pictures. It is that a private citizen took them, and that another branch of the Federal Government, such as the National Archives, which certainly knows how to handle fragile documents, was not given the opportunity to take pictures of a government artifact, pictures which might conceivably, shed additional light on Lincoln's murder. Mr. Neff's generosity in sharing his own pictures with researchers should not go unnoticed, and we would like to thank him for saying that he would make them available to researchers. We do not mean to insinuate that Mr. Neff's pictures would be unreliable, either. But what could be more reliable than pictures taken by the National Archives?? It is to our advantage that Mr. Neff was able to take his. Now we think that the government should be impressed with the importance of taking a second set of photographs.

Just before "going to press", we learn that through the efforts of the editor of Civil War Times Illustrated, officials in the Interior Department have called the NPS at Harper's Ferry and told them to hold up, for the time being, any work on the Booth diary, until they are further instructed. To be continued...

1977 WINNERS OF BARONDESS LINCOLN AWARD NAMED -- Mabel Kunkel, author of "Abraham Lincoln: Unforgettable American", and Stefan Lorant, author of "Lincoln, A Picture Story of His Life", were named co-winners of the Barondess/Lincoln Award of the Civil War Round Table of New York for 1977. The award, given for "contribution to the greater appreciation of the life and works of Abraham Lincoln" will be presented at the group's February 9th meeting. Miss Kunkel's book was just mentioned in last month's LINCOLN LOG as suggested reading. She devoted seventeen years to research and writing of her 450-page book. Her compilation of facts, maps, and location of source material makes her volume a remarkable one that Lincoln historians should not be without. Mr. Lorant's first edition of the Lincoln picture biography was published in 1941. There have been numerous revised editions since then.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN LIBRARY & MUSEUM -- The Weather and extreme difficulty in securing adequate electrical power for the Lincoln library at Lincoln Memorial University in Harrogate, Tennessee, have put completion of the building about a month behind schedule. The power was finally obtained a few weeks ago, and work is now resuming. The hopes had been to hold dedication ceremonies on February 12th. However, it has been postponed for a few weeks. It is hoped that President Carter will be able to attend. He has expressed considerable interest in coming, according to Frank G. Rankin, Board Chairman at LMU. Robert Todd Lincoln Beckwith has also consented to take part in the dedication, health permitting.

FAMOUS LINCOLN LETTER SOLD -- According to a report in The Washington Star for Feb. 20, the Horchow Collection just sold what is generally considered the most publicized letter written by Lincoln. It is the 1860 correspondence to twelve-year old Grace Bedell, in which he answered her suggestion that he grow a beard. The letter was last sold for \$20,000, to David L. Wolper, the documentary movie producer. That sale had been held at a Charles Hamilton auction on March 22, 1966. Mr. Wolper is the producer of the Sandburg Lincoln series which starred Hal Holbrook, and "They've Killed President Lincoln", narrated by Richard Basehart. Wolper has been a collector of Civil War documents and a Lincoln fan for a long time. The Bedell letter was described as the most valuable Lincoln letter ever to be offered at auction when Wolper bought it. We hardly heard a word about its most recent sale, which brought \$67,000! (See Lincoln Lore, April, 1967, for more on the Bedell letter and Lincoln's letter.)

LINCOLN'S PEN -- Sloan's Auction House in Washington offered the following item at their February 1st sale: the pen with which Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation. It is attested to by John Hay, Lincoln's secretary, dated June 19, 1862. No word yet on how much the pen brought.

THE LINCOLN LOG

Richard Sloan, Editor * 3855 Arthur Ave., Seaford, NY 11783 * VOL. II, No. 3 * Mar-April, 1977 * 75¢

THE MISSING PAGES -- THE LINCOLN LOG has just received the text of excerpts from the "missing pages" of John Wilkes Booth's diary. This material was discovered by Joseph Lynch, an appraiser from Worthington, Massachusetts, in going over some 6,000 papers in possession of descendents of Edwin M. Stanton, Lincoln's Secretary of War. Sunn Classic Pictures, working on a motion picture about the assassination entitled "The Lincoln Conspiracy", tracked down the story about the missing pages, and contracted for rights to a transcript, for use in their film, which is set for release in mid-June. THE LINCOLN LOG is pleased to be the first to publish them.

When John Wilkes Booth was killed at Garrett's farm in Virginia twelve days after assassinating Lincoln at Ford's Theatre, a memorandum book was found in one of his pockets. Booth had confided his inner-most thoughts to this book in the course of his escape. Colonel Everton J. Conger, who had been given honorary command of the troopers that found Booth, personally took the book and handed it over to Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton. The little book, or "diary", as it became known, was locked in a vault, and not made public until two years later, when word got around that Stanton's Secret Service Chief, Lafayette Baker, had mentioned it in his memoirs, which were about to be released. A furor was raised in Washington, and Congress clamored for the little book. At that time, hearings were being held into charges of impeachment against President Johnson, and one of the accusations being made concerned the President's possible role in Lincoln's assassination. Stanton produced the diary, and its contents were made public by the press a few weeks later. But the controversy over the diary did not stem from the mere fact that the diary had been suppressed, but because when it was finally produced, it was claimed by those who had seen it before Stanton had that there were now about 18 pages missing, cut with a knife. Stanton testified at the House Judiciary Committee Hearing that the pages were missing when he received it. Just who was responsible for the pages being cut out remained a mystery. Were they cut out by Booth? Or by Stanton? If Stanton was responsible, it indicated that someone in the Government was trying to cover-up a conspiracy. Historians have argued for more than a century with each other, as to whether or not Stanton, or anyone for that matter, had engaged Booth in a plot to first kidnap Lincoln or to assassinate him. All agreed upon one thing, however: If the missing pages were ever found, they would provide the answers to many of the questions that still were being asked.

The pages show that among those involved with Booth in plots against Lincoln were Senator John Conness of California, financier Jay Cook, Confederacy Secretary of State Judah Benjamin, political boss Thurlow Weed, Michigan Senator Zacharia Chandler, Confederacy Secret Service Chief Jacob Thompson, U.S. Secret Service Chief LaFayette Baker, Col. E.J. Conger, and others.

As with all of this material acquired by Sunn, we point out that only Sunn officials, their researchers, and the parties from which the material came, have ever seen it. We have Sunn's word that everything they show in their movies, when it is released in mid-June, is thoroughly documented. But Sunn realizes that many will ask to see these documents, and let outside experts pass judgement on their authenticity. Until that is done, the public will have to consider Sunn's assurances for themselves, and use their own judgement as to whether or not the material is valid.

The pages delineate Booth's involvement in a conspiracy plot with Confederate leaders, some of Lincoln's own trusted friends, and N.Y. businessmen. Here are excerpts from the transcript, as supplied to us by Sunn. (Copyrighted material released by Sunn Classic Pictures.)

"At a party given by Eva's parents, I met Senator John Conness (California Senator). Conness says Eddie (Booth) and he are friends from days in California in '55 and '56.

"In a private conversation he informed me that he could render some service to the South.

"He suggests that I call on him tomorrow as we might have some common interests.

"I saw him this morning and he produced documents which proved that he was not an enemy spy.

"He gave me the name of a wholesale druggist who could be trusted and said the druggist would supply from 5,000 to 25,000 ounces of quinine.

"I purchased a six-week list in advance of all the passwords which changed daily on the post roads for the sum of \$3,000.

"He said that he would supply the new passwords every six weeks as they changed for as long as I wished, providing each time \$3,000 would be forthcoming.

"He said he was not a patriot for either North or South, but rather a man with a small pocket and a large need.

"In Philadelphia today I met with Jay Cooke [Lincoln's Civil War financier].

"Cooke brought his brother Henry [Washington banker] -- greeted me warmly and said he thought most highly of Judah Benjamin [Confederate Secretary of State] and acknowledged that anyone who that wily fox, Benjamin, would send would be the best man available.

"We had lunch, then went to a room where the people present were a number of speculators in both cotton and gold.

"Present were Thurlow Weed [Lincoln's campaign manager and loyal supporter], a person by the name of [Samuel] Noble [New York cotton broker], a man by the name of [Zachariah] Chandler [Michigan Senator], a Mr. [Issac] Bell [cotton merchant] -- who said he was a friend of John Conness.

"Each and every one asserted that he had had dealings with the Confederate states and they would continue, too, wherever possible.

"Cooke said that they would continue to have dealings with the Confederacy, but not out of fear of betrayal, but because in peace and in war, a businessman must do business whatever the stakes.

"Cooke gave me two letters -- one to Beverly Tucker [Confederate diplomatic agent] and the other to Jacob Thompson [Confederate secret service chief] -- both in cipher.

"At the St. Lawrence Hotel in Montreal --

"A half hour went by and Thompson arrived. I presented both gentlemen with the letters given me by Cooke. They read them and shortly we had dinner.

"And after dinner, Thompson gave me \$50,000 in bank notes with instructions to take \$15,000 to Senator Conness and to leave in a sealed envelope \$20,000 in notes at the home of Senator [Benjamin] Wade [Ohio Senator]. The balance of the money to be used to obtain recruits for our plan. The plan goes forward.

"Washington again at the National --

"[John] Surratt and I are to go south to reconnoiter the ground which we will cover. We have four routes and at least a hundred supporters along the way -- most patriots, some who need money, but all loyal to the South.

"We are ready at last. We waited all day -- six of us in the freezing rain and he did not come.

"Answering a knock on my door this morning, I found Lafayette Baker [Chief of the National Detective Police, a division of Stanton's War Department] on my doorstep. I thought the end had come.

"But instead, he handed me letters from Jefferson Davis [President of the Confederate States of America], from Judah Benjamin, and from Clement Clay [Confederate States diplomat]. I gave him the money and sent a message to Richmond [Capitol of the Confederate States of America]. I don't trust him. I wait for answer. I receive reply, my orders -- Trust him! I do not!

"I went to Conness. He said to trust Baker -- that he knew him in California in '55 and '56 and that Baker could be trusted because of that fact. I cannot. They believe in him. I cannot!

"I purchased a carbine entirely covered in leather. I darken it with lamp black.

"I took [Lewis] Paine and [John] Surratt with me and we waited on the road near the gardens.

"In the late hours of the morning we heard a horse approaching. It was him. It was dark and I waited until he was 25 or 30 yards from me. I fired! I saw his hat fall.

"Paine fired twice. He stayed in the saddle and galloped away. Within minutes they pursued us. Within two miles, we eluded them. Another failure!

"I met [Col. Everton] Conger [Baker's aide] at the Herndon House. He was in mufti [plain clothes] and warned no new attempts until we have a new plan.

"If I try again without orders they will find me in the Potomac along with my friends.

"No new orders come in the last ten days. I go to New York. I make it plain, I believe we have been betrayed and that I think the scoundrel responsible is Baker.

"I believe that Baker and [Maj. Thomas] Eckert [Stanton aide and chief of the War Department Telegraph Office] and the Secretary [Stanton] are in control of our activities and this frightens me.

"There is great excitement tonight. Rumors say that [Robert E.] Lee has surrendered. If it is true, it means the end.

"I believe that these politicians, these vipers and their cronies will strip the South bare.

"It seems that all things we have planned and striven for have come to naught.

"By the almighty God, I swear that I shall lay the body of this tyrant [Lincoln] dead upon the altar of Mars ["Mars" was Lincoln's name for Stanton]. And if by this act, I am slain, they too shall be cast into Hell for I have given information to a friend who will have the nation know who the traitors are."

There is no doubt in our minds that Joseph Lynch actually did find these purported pages of Booth's diary among the papers owned by the Stanton heirs. However, only those descendants and Lynch, (and possibly lawyers?) have ever seen them. This leaves everyone asking if they are authentic. Are they pages from Booth's diary? But are they blank pages on which someone forged Booth's handwriting a century ago? They may turn out to be the real thing, if experts are ever given the opportunity to examine them. Lynch thinks they are authentic. We invite our readers to study the text and try to determine for themselves whether or not there is anything from the transcript alone that can be challenged. Sunn Classic Pictures believes them to be authentic, having spent many months studying the transcript. David Balsiger, Sunn's chief researcher, and co-author of that studio's soon-to-be-released book on the subject, discussed the one major obstacle they overcame...

It seems that the pages of the diary, exhibited at Ford's Theatre, did not have any ruled guide lines. Yet Mr. Lynch insisted that the pages he had discovered did have lines. Not even the required acquisition card at Ford's Theatre mentioned the lines in the detailed description of the relic. All previous photos of the diary show the absence of lines, as well. An examination of the diary by Mr. Lynch into that aspect proved, as corroborated by Michael Harmon, curator of Ford's, that ruled lines do show -- on every page! The lines are faint, but they are there, having never been picked up by previous photographs.

In our next issue, we will provide some background about the various individuals from whom Sunn acquired their material, and what leads them to believe that their material is authentic. For the entire matter rests there -- on authenticity. We will also present your comments, if you have any to send us.

Among other claims made by Sunn Classic Pictures -- that a cover-up of the conspiracy was orchestrated by Stanton, who has long been suspected of being implicated in the plot, but who has managed to remain an enigma, due to the lack of sufficient evidence to either clear him or prove his complicity.

Sunn claims proof to show that Booth escaped to freedom after the assassination, the government having shot the wrong man at Garrett's farm, and passing off another corpse as that of Booth.

The list of claims is a long one. Sunn says it has documented proof for everything they will show on the screen. In effect, their scenario is tantamount to a re-write of history; the real history, according to Sunn. They have acquired -- or acquired rights to -- many other documents, which in many cases substantiate each other. (In fact, the missing pages discovered by Mr. Lynch go very far in substantiating material independently turned up by Sunn.) As the material released exclusively to us amounts to only excerpts, we believe that there are more revelations to be made by Sunn.) At first glance, much of the story they have pieced together seems plausible, but we feel that other parts are rather difficult to swallow.

JULIAN DIARY -- A diary account left by Rep. George Julian was also acquired by Sunn. This account establishes that Booth's diary was intact, with no pages missing, when delivered to Stanton. It describes a meeting held in Stanton's office, attended by several Radical Republican Congressmen. They read the contents of the now-"missing" pages, and state to each other that if the material would ever be made public, their political careers would be ruined, in addition to being tried for conspiracy, treason, and murder. We quote from the Julian diary, which is Ray Neff copyrighted material released through Sunn Classic Pictures.)

"Post-Assassination Monday, April 24, 1865 -- I was today summoned to the War Secretary's [Edwin M. Stanton] office. When I got there Major [Thomas] Eckert [Chief of the War Department Telegraph Office] was at the door with a grim look on his usually pleasant face and I sensed at once that something was amiss.

"He opened the door so I could enter and then I saw Senator [Zachariah] Chandler [Michigan Senator], who was reading from a small book. He too had a sour look on his face. The War Secretary was pacing up and down while Chandler read with mumbles. Stanton said that he had sent for [John] Conness [California Senator], and that he should be there momentarily. Conness soon arrived and was ushered in by Major Eckert.

"I asked what was happening and Stanton said, 'We have Booth's diary and he has recorded a lot in it.' Conness grabbed it away from Chandler and sat down in a chair as he read. He kept mumbling 'Oh my God, Oh my God,' and then said, 'I am ruined if this ever gets out.'

"Stanton asked me if I wanted to read the diary and I told him that since I had not met the man and was not mentioned in his diary, I was better off not reading it.

"Stanton said, 'It concerns you, for we either stick together in this thing, or we will all go down the river together.' But I did not read it nor do I know what was in it, but it excited Chandler and Conness as well as Stanton.

"Chandler said, 'We cannot let it out.' Conness agreed and so did Stanton. I all this time supposed that Booth had been captured and I asked what Booth had to say. Stanton replied that they would have him by the next morning. I did not ask how he had come to get his diary when they didn't have him.

"Stanton placed the book in an envelope and sealed it. Gave it to Eckert with the instructions to place it in the safe and release it to no one without his order. Eckert took it away and I left.

"It was disgusting to see those men grovel in fear because of their immoral activities. I returned to my office and thence to my rooms."

Sunn's Research Evidence:--"The diary was not discovered on the body of the man shot at Garrett's farm, but five days earlier by an Indian scout named Whippet Nalgae who discovered Booth's coat on a bank along Gambo Creek. The diary was returned to Washington, D. C. by two of Baker's detectives and was read in Stanton's office on April 24 -- four days before a man, purported to be John Wilkes Booth, was shot at Garrett's farm."

BOOTH'S LETTER TO NATIONAL INTELLIGENCER -- Another document, found by Mr. Lynch in the private collection of Stanton descendants, was a letter written by Booth and addressed to James C. Welling, editor of the Intelligencer. We are not sure, but suppose this to be the letter Booth gave to actor-friend John Matthews on the afternoon of the assassination. Matthews claimed that he read the letter after the murder of the President, and burned it, rather than be found with it. It was not until some time later that he admitted having been given the letter by Booth, for delivery to the Intelligencer. However, Matthews says that the letter was signed, "Men who love their country better than gold -- Booth, Paine, Atzerodt, and Herold." In his diary, Booth referred to such a letter: "This night before the deed, I wrote a long article and left it for one of the editors of the National Intelligencer, in which I fully set forth our reasons for our proceedings." We think that this may be the letter Booth gave Matthews, but we haven't had a chance to check into that, this information coming to us just yesterday. We will have more on that next month. In the case of this "Welling" letter, Sunn was only able to obtain a transcript, the actual document being in the private collection of the Stanton heir from which the missing pages came. Basically, the text of this letter is the same as the "To Whom it May Concern" letter which Booth had given to his brother-in-law months before the assassination. However, there are a few variations, and it does not appear, in any way, that it is the "To whom it may concern" letter. The letter concludes differently, and speaks about the corruption in the government. Booth asks editor Welling to print the names of those who were involved in stripping the southern states of all power after she was defeated. The names of 35 individuals follows. They are those of close friends of Lincoln, Congressmen, Judges, military men, members of the Cabinet, industrialists, etc; (The transcript of the letter referred to by us was furnished by Sunn Classic Pictures, and is copyright material released by Sunn.)

There is much more material now available to us, such as an alleged manuscript written in cipher by Lafayette Baker. We will present that in our next issue, as well as providing our readers with a brief synopsis of the story, as Sunn Classic Pictures sees it.

A BRIEF "WHO'S WHO?"-- Here is a brief description of some of the persons implicated by the material

Jay Cooke -- (1821-1905) Banker. Leading financier of the Civil War. Established valuable ties with financiers and government officials. But over-inflated security issues in private ventures, plus inefficient management drove him into unexpected bankruptcy, precipitating the panic of 1873. Recovered losses by speculating in mining and real estate out west within seven years. Still died with a fortune.

Thurlow Weed -- Influential newspaperman & political leader from N.Y. Played behind-the scenes role in controlling many political careers, policies. Helped make William Seward N.Y. Governor, Senator, managed his losing campaign for President in 1864, but helped him become Secretary of State. One of Lincoln's most valued advisors. Went to Europe to gain support for the North.

John Conness -- Born in Ireland, 1821. Came to U.S. in 1833. Served as California Senator from 1863-1869. Died in Massachusetts.



THURLOW WEED

Thomas T. Eckert -- Was in charge of military telegraph at War Department under Stanton. Serving as acting Assistant Sec. of War when Lincoln slain. Officially served as such from 1866-1867. Went on to become president of several telegraph companies. Died in 1910.

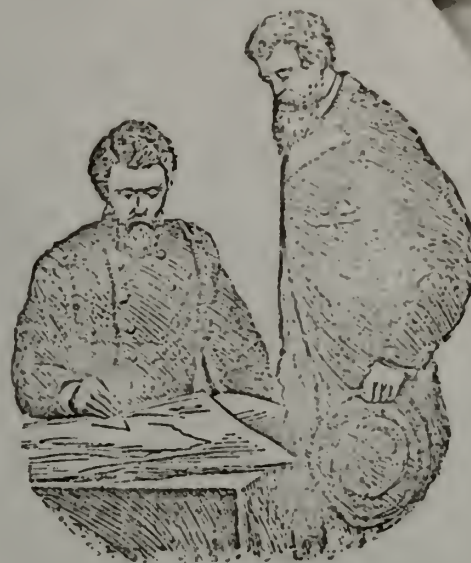
Zachariah Chandler -- (1813-1879) Rep. Senator from Michigan 1857-1875. Friend and confidant of Stanton, fought hard to defeat Lincoln's re-nomination in '64. Major supporter of Stanton in Committee on Conduct of War. Lobbied for Stanton's appointment to Supreme Court.



ZACHARIAH CHANDLER

Rep. George Washington Julian -- (1817-1899) Republican Congressman from Indiana (1861-1871). A friend and supporter of Stanton. Sat on Committee on Conduct of the War. Made a speech in February, 1865 that set the scene for a possible impeachment of Lincoln. Wrote "Political Recollections, 1840-1872" in later years.

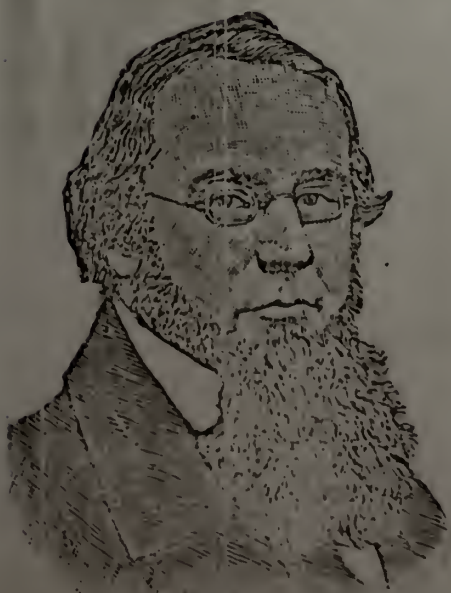
Lafayette Baker -- Chief of Detectives in War Dept's Nat'l Detective Police. (Early "Secret Service") Sent for by Stanton to find Booth. Dispatched troops to capture Booth after learning clue to his whereabouts from Major O'Beirne, whose request for men brought Baker to the assassin. Stole credit from O'Beirne. Loved the limelight. A master detective, but also a scoundrel, ruthless, dishonest, etc; Lost his War Department job after President Johnson caught him spying on him. Had grudge against Stanton after that. Died under mysterious circumstances, possibly poisoned, in 1868.



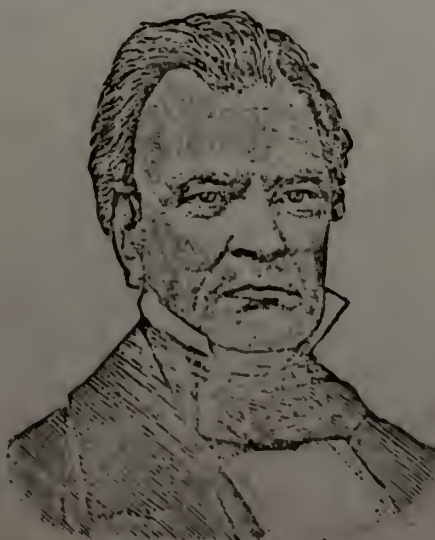
BAKER & CONGER PLANNING
THE CAPTURE OF BOOTH

Col. E.J. Conger -- (1834-1918) Named by Booth as being implicated in the plot. Educated as a lawyer. Joined Army in 1861 as 2nd Lt. Later served Commander Baker in 1st D.C. Cavalry as a Major. Wounded twice during war -- in spine and hip. Never returned to active duty. Taken on by Baker as a sort of bookkeeper (not a detective), keeping rank and pay until discharged from service one week before assassination. Placed on Baker's payroll. Testified that he took Booth's diary, and gave it to Stanton. Noted some pages might have been missing. Claimed to have made transcript of diary en route back to D.C. after Booth's death, and later turned over to Baker a transcript he had made of the writing, to give to Stanton. Stanton swore he never got it. Appointed assoc. justice of Montana by Pres. Hayes. Died in Hawaii where his son-in-law served as Judge of Hawaii territory under Wilson.

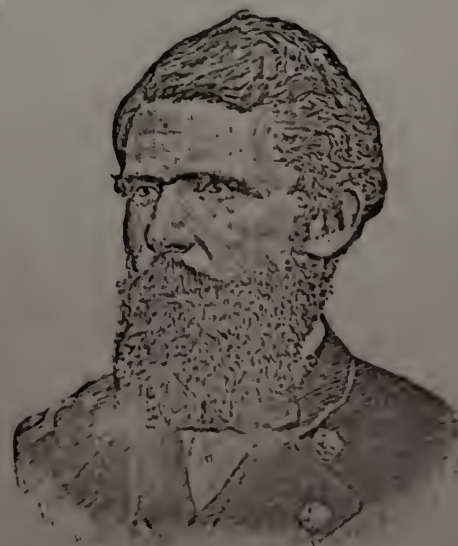
Benjamin Wade -- Senator from Ohio. Was major antagonist of Lincoln's policies, most notably the 1864 Wade-Davis Bill, which Lincoln vetoed. Was chairman of Joint Committee on Conduct of the War, which was significant Stanton allie. Was President Pro tem of Senate during Johnson Impeachment move. Had Johnson been removed from office, Wade would have been successor to the Presidency. Died 1878.



EDWIN M. STANTON



BENJAMIN F. WADE



GENERAL L. S. BAKER

THE BOOTH DIARY -- We reported in our last issue that Dr. Ray Neff was given permission to take his own series of sophisticated pictures of the diary by the National Park Service. Joseph Lynch, who discovered what are believed to be the missing pages of Booth's diary, examined the diary book at Ford's Theatre, and ascertained that pages contained writing in invisible ink that had started to show up. Lynch noted the name and address of Frederick Douglass in the front of the diary, in Booth's hand. In our last issue, we also reported that Dr. Neff said that he didn't find any evidence of invisible ink writing, but promised the curator of Ford's Theatre, Michael Harmon, that he would give him a complete set of the infra-red and ultra-violet light pictures he took. We also commented that it was desirable that the Government take its own sophisticated light pictures of the diary pages, to insure that they had their own photos to give to the public, which would serve as a second, independent study. However Mr. Harmon did not think that the pages should undergo any further handling, noting that they are in very poor condition. He sent the diary off to the Government's preservation lab for restoration. We understand that they are brittle and that many of the leaves have pulled away from the binding.

Progress report: Interior Department officials called a temporary halt to any Park Service restoration work until they were further instructed. Mr. Floyd Risvold heard about the story of the invisible writings observed by Mr. Lynch through Mr. James Hall and THE LINCOLN LOG, and of the failure to get the Government to take their own pictures. Mr. Risvold, who hails from Minnesota, is a noted collector of Americana, and the man who brought us Louis Weichmann's memoirs last year, having bought the rights to that work. He contacted high government officials, asking them for their help in seeing to it that the refurbishing of the diary is delayed until either the National Archives or the FBI conducts a sophisticated photographic examination of the diary. Wrote Mr. Risvold, "At stake here is an important chapter in the nation's history -- not merely an artifact... We now have a situation where a technical advisor to a motion picture was given what amounts to exclusive permission to take photographs which may bear directly on those charges (that certain members of Lincoln's administration conspired in his murder) and a logical request that official pictures be made by a trusted agency, the National Archives or the FBI was refused...Noone in his right mind would dream of allowing new evidence in the case of President Kennedy to be turned over to a private individual or to a movie company under the circumstances we find here." Mr. Risvold added that nothing should be done to refurbish the diary as long as there might be controversy over the matter.

As a result of Mr. Risvold's letter, Senator Humphrey and Vice President Mondale (both of whom hail from Mr. Risvold's home state of Minnesota) have now been in touch with the Interior Department and the National Archives. We can now report the following:

The Deputy Director of the U.S. Interior Department, William Briggie, has responded to Mr. Risvold in a letter dated March 28th, "The preservation of the John Wilkes Booth diary is a matter of very considerable importance to the conservation program of the National Park Service...Although no work has been done as yet, our curators have recommended that work on the diary should be limited to the refastening of several pages that had pulled away from the diary. This action would in no way obscure any invisible entries in the diary...We have asked the special photography unit of the Technical Analysis Laboratory of the Federal Bureau of Investigation to take infra-red and ultra-violet photos of the diary. If there is any invisible writing in the diary, it will be found through this study. This work will be done as soon as the museum conservation lab has completed its work...Please be assured that we will do nothing to damage this valuable historical document.

In the meantime, what about the pictures taken by Neff? Before thoroughly examining his pictures, Mr. Neff told us that even when studying the pages with his naked eye, he tended to scoff at the idea that there were any signs of invisible writing. He offered no confirmation to us that there was any evidence of invisible writing. This was in contradiction to what Joseph Lynch had reported. He believed there was evidence of invisible writing, without seeing the results of any special-light photos at all. Sunn Classic Pictures now reports that "visual and photographic examination of the pages reveal previously unanalyzed writing, names, and a possible map. They do not go so far as to say that it was in previously-invisible ink, and a story from an Atlanta newspaper only reports that Neff is using infra-red and other sophisticated photo devices in an attempt to recover some materials relevant to the diary. Mr. Harman, the curator of Ford's Theatre, had expected to have copies of all the photos, from Mr. Neff, by Mid-March. To date he has still not received them. According to Mr. Lynch, Neff told him that he would send him a complete set of pictures as well. But Lynch only received a couple of the pictures, ones which did not reveal anything. So we wait for the FBI to take their own pictures, and to report on their own findings. We will report on those results as soon as they are made available.

RARE ASSASSINATION TITLE -- John Bonner was able to obtain two xeroxed copies of Richard Smoot's rare booklet, "The Unwritten History of the Assassination of Abraham Lincoln" from the chief of the Library of Congress' Rare Book Section. Just a few months before he died, Mr. Bonner sent the copies to John Brennan, who forwarded one of them to your editor. Supposedly, only 100 copies were printed, back in 1903. Shortly after the beginning of 1904, when the Library received the two copies as required by law, there was a fire at the publisher's offices, which destroyed the remaining copies there. (This lead to the endorsement beneath the Library's official stamp that there are "only 5 copies extant".) Smoot's book was listed in the October 13, 1930 Lincoln Lore as one of the 100 scarcest Lincoln-related books. Not one copy was ever owned by any of the "Big 5" Lincoln collectors -- Fish, Lambert, McLellan, Oakleaf, or Stewart. Anybody wishing to obtain a xerox copy of this eleven-page booklet can probably do so by writing to the Library of Congress.

By the way, another scarce title that the "Big 5" were unable to acquire is Volume III of Poore's transcript of the conspiracy trial. A reproduction of all three volumes was published in 1972 by Arno Press in New York City, and sells for \$72. The third volume is a little "fuzzy", but students of the assassination are lucky to now have it available to them. By the way, we recently learned who does have all three volumes of Poore; it is Lincoln Memorial University, at Harrogate, Tennessee. (The Lincoln Bookshop values the set at \$2,500; vol. 3 alone at \$1,500!)

THEATRE WORLD -- Julie Harris stars in "The Last of Mrs. Lincoln", over the Public Broadcasting Service. Tapes are presently being seen on local TV stations across the country. This is the show Miss Harris first created on Broadway in 1972, and for which she received a Tony award. The play focuses on the widow of President Lincoln in the years after his assassination.

"SCENES FROM LINCOLN'S WASHINGTON" was listed in The Washington Post on August 4th as a slide presentation at Ford's Theatre, presented by the Theatre Department of the University of Maryland

The EDWIN BOOTH THEATRE is the new name of the Harford Community College's theatre at Bel Air, Md. Bel Air is also the home of the Booth family, known as Tudor Hall. Their season opens on October 20th with a production of "Peter Pan". Other productions scheduled are "The Owl & the Pussycat", "Seesaw", "My Sweet Charlie", "The Subject Was Roses", and "Minnie's Boys".

THE MOVIE IN THE WORKS -- The Sunset Schick Film Company has just about completed preliminary work on a documentary about the legendary Enid Booth mummy story. David Balsiger, technical advisor and "historian-author", says that his firm will begin shooting the film in November. Nate Orlowek has been working closely with Mr. Balsiger on the project. We haven't heard from Nate at all on the project, but other sources tell us that interviews have been held with many personages who have made news lately. Nate and Mr. Balsiger spoke to Paul Weisberg, the New York gun collector and dealer who has a wooden chest belonging to a Stanton descendant that contains portions of nooses and scaffold beams from the conspirators' execution. As reported in The Lincoln Log, Weisberg has been dealing with a middleman who claims that he represents a Stanton heir who has "the" missing pages of Booth's diary. We have tried, but to no avail, to learn anything more. We understand that Mr. Balsiger was going to try to interview a gentleman named Mooney who claims to have the famed "Booth" mummy. (Mooney's hobby is assembling carcasses, stuffed heads, and Lord knows what else. However, noone has seen the mummy in years. We are still trying to find out if there is any truth to Mooney's claim of owning the famous cadaver.) We'd appreciate it if any of our readers can add anything to this story. There are too many questions and not enough answers. Dr. Richard Mudd was seen by Mr. Balsiger, and agreed to help him with the movie. Balsiger also contacted James O. Hall, but they won't be back to see him; Hall didn't go along with any of their contentions about the mummy

legend being fact, rather than fiction. We believe we erroneously reported here that Floyd Risvold was also working with the Sun Schick Film folks. Apparently they did contact Mr. Risvold, but never got back to him.

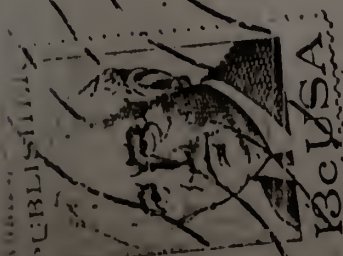
By the way, Alfred Knopf, publishers of Weichmann's memoirs, turned down an offer from a Hollywood playwright several months ago to dramatize the assassination story. Mr. Risvold, the editor of Weichmann's memoirs, would not reject any serious offers to make the book into a film. We hope that day will come. The dramatic story of the men behind Lincoln's murder, if presented properly, would be a tremendous film, in our opinion. The nearest the story ever came to be filmed was when Twentieth-Century Fox bought the film rights to Philip Van Doren Stern's "The Man Who Killed Lincoln", about twenty years ago. Unfortunately, they've kept it on the shelves ever since! P.S. Dr. Mudd has just heard from Mr. Balsiger, and tells him that the film will be completed in February, 1977.

FIREWORKS AT STATUE OF LIBERTY -- The most colorful fireworks display in New York's history exploded for half an hour on the night of July 4th. Many people, having heard that the show would combine music and commentary with the fireworks, brought radios and tuned them to one of the two radio stations that carried the audio portion. They heard patriotic songs and the words of Lincoln, Washington, John Adams, Grant, Eisenhower, President Kennedy, and Rev. Martin Luther King. The Lincoln words were taken from the Gettysburg Address.

The New York Times editorial for July 5, 1976 told about how regrettable it was "that no significant tangible symbol [of the previous day's festivities] will be left behind, for the betterment of the national life, the well-being of its citizens. But regrets on this point need not be excessive, for no tangible monument could embody what our revolution was all about. It is only we ourselves, and the generations ahead for whom we are preparing the way, who can do that. The ideals of independence, individual liberty, equality of justice and of opportunity and democratic government under law -- these ideals can be sustained only through the unceasing vigilance and effort of those now alive and yet unborn. Four score and seven years after the men in Philadelphia raised the banner of freedom, another great American stood at the cemetery of a Pennsylvania battlefield and spoke the challenge of our continuing revolution: 'It is for us the living... to be dedicated here to the unfinished work ... thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us ... That this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom.'"

Mr. Floyd Risvold
David + Ann

9321 Bloomington Parkway
Memphis, Tenn 38142



THE LINCOLN LOG
3855 Arthur Avenue
Scottd, N.Y. 11783

JAMES O. HALL, 1044 Douglass Drive, McLean, Virginia 22101

February 3, 1977

Mr. Michael Harman
Curator of Ford's Theatre
511 10th Street, NW
Washington, D. C. 20004

Dear Mr. Harman:

This will confirm our telephone discussion of yesterday. I am writing to you as spokesman for a small group of Lincoln scholars and researchers.

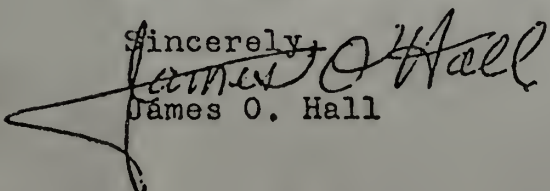
It is understood that the National Park Service has made the John Wilkes Booth diary available to Mr. Ray Neff to be photographed under various special lighting conditions with the proviso that you will be furnished a copy of each picture taken. Further, that all of the pictures will be available for study and purchase by others.

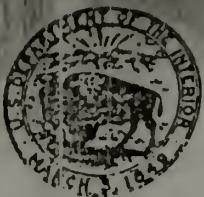
Please advise me when you receive the copies from Mr. Neff so that we can arrange a time to meet with you.

You told me that you intend to send the diary to be refurbished before returning it to the display case at Ford's Theatre. Presumably the refurbishing process will destroy or make very difficult any independent check on the special light photographs made by Mr. Neff. Although I hope not, this could lead to a controversy as to the interpretation of these photographs and some uncertainty that you have in fact received all of them. Accordingly, it is suggested that you protect the National Park Service by asking Mr. Richard Conger, National Archives (Tel: 523-3246) to make similar special light photographs of the Booth diary before it is refurbished. Mr. Conger is an expert in this field. The FBI also has facilities for special light photography.

I shall be most grateful for any comment you wish to make on this suggestion.

Sincerely,


James O. Hall



IN REPLY REFER TO:

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION
1100 OHIO DRIVE, S. W.
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20242

February 8, 1977

Dear Mr. Hall,

I have read with great interest your letter of February 3 and there are several comments I wish to make.

The National Park Service employs, at Harper's Ferry Center, the finest staff of Conservators in the world. None of the work that they do on the diary will in any way alter, erase, or obscure any portion of the text or any part of the diary itself. They will, however, repair the damage the diary has suffered from handling and the effects of aging.

Because we have received assurances from Dr. Neff that he will donate copies of all of the photos he took, and because of the fragile condition of the diary, we would be extremely reluctant to duplicate work that has already been done. This would be, I believe, unnecessary handling of a priceless artifact and would pose a threat to its preservation which would not be acceptable.

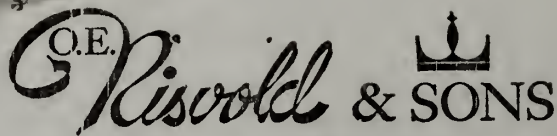
When we receive the negatives from Dr. Neff I will notify you so that arrangements may be made as regards the negatives.

If I may be of further assistance please do not hesitate on contacting me.

Sincerely,

Michael Harman
Curator
Ford's Theatre





Infants Wear and Accessories

9321 BLOOMINGTON FREEWAY • MINNEAPOLIS, MINN. 55420 • 888-7761

February 24, 1977

Mr. Mark E. Neely, Jr., Editor
The Lincoln National Life Foundation
The Lincoln National Life Insurance Company
Fort Wayne, Indiana 46801

Dear Mr. Neely:

Although you perhaps have been told and have read in the Lincoln Log about Sunn Classic Pictures doing a documentary based mainly on the missing pages from Booth's diary, which they claim to have located, I am taking the liberty of addressing you further on the subject. From my information, this seems altogether possible and it may be a bombshell as to what they will reveal.

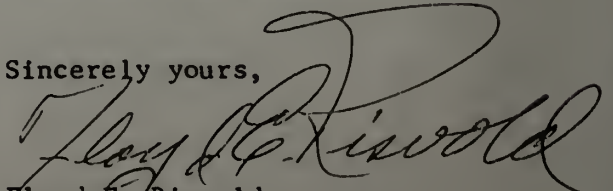
I am enclosing a photo copy of my letter to Senator Humphrey, which is self-explanatory. I am also enclosing photo copies from the Lincoln Log so you will be fully appraised of the reasons why Sunn Classic Pictures made a photographic examination of Booth's diary.

Sunn Classics claim they have located the missing pages to the diary and their documentation will be based mainly on this aspect of the assassination. This is the reason that it is important that the government make a sophisticated photographic examination of the diary and stop any attempts by the government or anyone else to "refurbish" (whatever that means) the diary. It should remain in its' present state of condition until the possibilities of a controversy over the missing pages has been resolved. Your influence with the proper authorities in this matter will be a public service of the highest historical importance. If the missing pages are genuine and make startling revelations, the United States government should be in a position to collate any claims with the original diary in its' present state and not after it has been refurbished.

Your cooperation in the above matter will be personally appreciated by the writer and everyone concerned in the interest of the truth.

I also wish to take this opportunity to thank you and the Lincoln National Life Foundation for honoring me and the Weichmann book with your purchase of the special leather-bound edition and your beautiful review in the Lincoln Lore.

Sincerely yours,



Floyd E. Risvold

FER:ns
enclosures

O.E. *Risvold* & SONS

Infants Wear and Accessories

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February 21, 1977

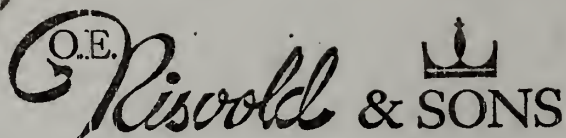
Senator Hubert H. Humphrey
232 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D. C. 20510

Dear Senator Humphrey:

In 1972, I bought the rights to a manuscript, "A True History of the Assassination of Abraham Lincoln and of the Conspiracy of 1865", written by Louis J. Weichmann, star witness for the government of the United States at the trial of the conspirators, of which I sent you an inscribed copy. In the process of editing the manuscript and providing footnotes and background material for the book, (which Alfred A. Knopf published in 1975), Mr. James O. Hall of McLean, Virginia, an eminent and respected historian, made his own research available to me and assisted me on the project. Since then, I have continued to be interested in the subject of Lincoln's assassination, and am in frequent contact with Mr. Hall and others among a small group of Lincoln researchers and scholars.

I am greatly disturbed by information I have just received from Mr. Hall and Mr. Richard Sloan, of Seaford, N. Y. (Mr. Sloan edits and publishes a monthly news bulletin entitled "The Lincoln Log".) It concerns the government's handling of John Wilkes Booth's diary, said to have been taken from his body after he was shot in Virginia on April 26, 1865. This diary is now in the Lincoln Museum at Ford's Theatre (National Park Service).

Sunn Classic Pictures, Inc., an affiliate of the Schick Razor Company, decided last year to make a movie, tentatively titled, "The Conspiracy to Kill President Lincoln". In the course of preparing their film, a physical examination of Booth's diary was made for them by a gentleman from Massachusetts, whose research had led him to believe that there might be some hitherto-unknown writing on the pages of the diary. As he suspected, his examination revealed that the diary contains entries which at some time had been partially erased, but were still faintly visible! In addition, some blank pages actually contain entries that appear to have been written in some type of "invisible ink"! As an example, see the attached Park Service photograph of two of the pages. The page to the right contains a long list of names, two of which can barely be made out as "White" and "Jenkins". This picture was made under ordinary light conditions! (It is speculated that the writing "came up" because of exposure to heat over a period of years.) Another picture of the very first page of the diary contains similar "invisible" entries, one of which contains the name and address of Frederick Douglass, the famous ex-slave of the Civil War period. None of this information has ever been observed or noted before, remarkable as it seems!



Infants Wear and Accessories

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page 2 -

Sunn Classic Pictures requested permission from the curator Ford's Theatre, Mr. Michael Harman, to photograph the pages of Booth's diary. This permission was given to one of Sunn's own technical advisors, who came to Washington last month and took preliminary photographs of the pages. A short time later he returned, to make literally hundreds of more sophisticated photos, using special lights (ultra-violet, infra-red, etc.,). This technical advisor to the film company took away with him all the roles of film. Mr. Harman later told Mr. Sloan, via telephone, that the Sunn advisor's permit to take the pictures does not obligate either him or Sunn Classic Pictures to donate any of the pictures, or their negatives, to the government. The gentleman from Massachusetts - who had first discovered the unusual writings in the diary -- was also present at the first preliminary photo session. Even before the first photos were taken, he pointed out to Mr. Harman that the procedure would leave Sunn's technical advisor with sole possession of the negatives, with no assurance that all the photos would be given to Ford's Theatre, for use by other researchers. The photographer gave Harman a verbal assurance that he would "donate copies of all the photos he took" (see Harman's letter to Hall, Feb. 8th). As of that date, he had received nothing.

On February 3rd, Mr. Hall wrote to Mr. Harman and asked him to arrange with either the National Archives or the FBI to make similar special light photographs of the diary. (This would avoid any possible controversy about the interpretation of Sunn's photographs, which, for all we know, might be tampered with for sensational or commercial reasons.) Hall also explained that this would put other researchers on an equal footing with the film company, and would assure public confidence in the photographs. The request was refused. (see Feb. 8th letter). For Harman now termed the diary pages as "fragile", and stated that he was now "extremely reluctant to duplicate work that has already been done." This would be, he continued, "unnecessary handling of a priceless artifact, and would pose a threat to its' preservation." He told Hall in his letter that he was sending the diary to Harper's Ferry, where damage to the diary from excessive handling would be repaired. In a phone call with Mr. Sloan, Harman stated that he would not permit any further handling or photographing of the diary pages after the repair work, until and unless the condition of the pages "improved" with age, which he admitted, might never occur. Mr. Hall also talked with Mr. Harman by phone, and urged that the diary not be "refurbished", as Harman termed it, until such photos could be made by the National Archives or the FBI. These agencies both have the skill and equipment to disclose all of this secret writing, by use of special light photography. I am confident that they could do so without any damage to the artifact. Within a couple of days, however, Harman had sent the diary off to Harper's Ferry, without providing the opportunity for those pictures to be taken. Yet, Harman had just granted a private individual the right to take his own pictures of the diary pages.

At stake here is an important chapter in the nation's history - not merely an artifact. I am sure that you are aware of the many charges over the past few years, to wit: that certain members of Lincoln's administration conspired in his

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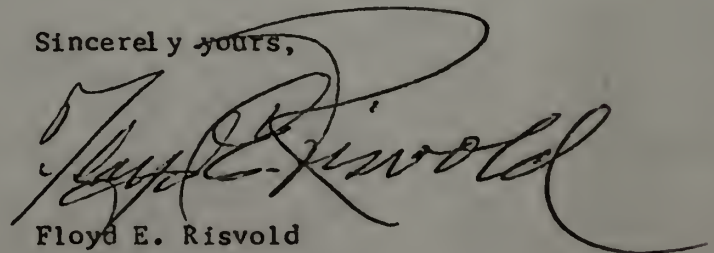
page 3 -

murder (Secretary of War Stanton, Vice-President Johnson and Lafayette Baker, to name just three.) Whether true or not, these allegations will continue to persist among the scholarly community. We now have a situation where a technical adviser to a motion picture company was given what amounts to exclusive permission to take photographs which may bear directly on these charges, and a logical request that official pictures be made by a trusted agency, the National Archives or the FBI, was refused. As things now stand, there is no way to check the integrity of the pictures made by the technical adviser to Sunn, or even to make certain that the crucial pictures (or any pictures at all) are delivered as promised. The possibility even exists that the pictures will be copyrighted! The government should take its own photographs, to protect itself and to supply to the public.

No one in his right mind would dream of allowing new evidence in the case of the assassination of President Kennedy to be turned over to a private individual or to a movie company under the circumstances we find here. I therefore urge you to get in touch with the Secretary of the Interior as soon as possible to make certain that the "refurbishing" is delayed, and that you arrange for the National Archives or the FBI to conduct a sophisticated photographic examination of the diary. Then, and only then, can historians evaluate photos of the diary without fear that the evidence has been tampered with, or that some of it has been withheld.

With sincere personal regards, I remain,

Sincerely yours,



Floyd E. Risvold

FER:ns

cc: Vice President Walter Mondale
Senator Wendell Andersen
Bruce Catton, Historian

Risvold

March 29, 1977

Mr. Floyd E. Risvold
O. E. Risvold & Sons
9321 Bloomington Freeway
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55420

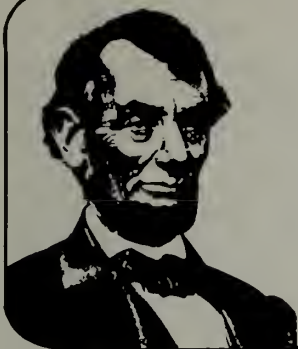
Dear Mr. Risvold:

I can appreciate your concern and will, as I'm sure all representatives of institutional collections will, do everything in my power to keep this Booth diary business on the up and up. I notice that in their most recent news releases, Sunn Classic Pictures has failed to mention the diary pages. Perhaps this will all blow over without a damaging storm, but we'll certainly keep on our guard.

Yours truly,

Mark E. Neely, Jr.

MEN/cks



Lincoln Lore

May, 1977

Bulletin of The Lincoln National Life Foundation...Mark E. Neely, Jr., Editor. Published each month by The Lincoln National Life Insurance Company, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46801.

Number 1671

LINCOLN HISTORIOGRAPHY: NEWS AND NOTES

The best news in the field is that more Lincoln books are in the offing. Professor William Hanchett of San Diego State University has written eight chapters of a book on the assassination of President Lincoln. He has perhaps four more to write. He began the project as an extended essay on the historiography of the assassination but quickly discovered that he could not judge the historians without making up his own mind about the nature of the assassination conspiracy itself.

Thus began a long period of research in original sources, still under way. It took the efforts of his Congressman and other Washington friends to gain him access to the famed

John Wilkes Booth diary, and, says Professor Hanchett, it took practically a half hour to free the little book from the Ford's Theatre Museum security system. He has done extensive research in manuscript collections, and his book promises to be a balanced and sane corrective to the recent surfeit of sensationalist theorizing about America's first Presidential assassination.

Though we tend to think of it as primarily a European phenomenon, there is a long tradition of American politicians who have written books that were something other than memoirs of their terms in office. No one has combined



FIGURE 1. *Harper's Weekly* published this view of the secession crisis on March 2, 1861, just before President Lincoln delivered his inaugural address. The cartoon suggests that Northern self-righteousness rather than Southern intransigence was the cause of secession. Henry Ward Beecher refuses to give George Washington communion as Seward, Lincoln, and Greeley sit in the congregation in various attitudes of exaggerated piety. This was essentially the Democratic view of secession — that it was unnecessarily provoked by the sectional self-righteousness of the Republican party. To hold, as William Appleman Williams does, that Lincoln was an "imperialist" requires the same assumption that this cartoon had behind it, namely, that the South was taking the humble attitude of the supplicant like George Washington in the cartoon.

From the Lincoln National Life Foundation

Thomas Jefferson's feat of contributing significantly to American letters with a work like *Notes on the State of Virginia*, on the one hand, and reaching the highest political office in the land, on the other. Still, Theodore Roosevelt's contributions to the history of Western America and Woodrow Wilson's scholarly contributions to political science and history should not be ignored.

The Lincoln field seems to be the last still to attract politicians as readily as historians. This tradition began with the recollections of politicians who knew Lincoln and reached great heights in the work of Indiana's Senator Albert Beveridge. This tradition is still alive. Congressman Paul Simon of Illinois, for example, wrote a book, *Lincoln's Preparation for Greatness: The Illinois Legislative Years* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1963), which changed our thinking on many of the points of Lincoln's early political career and improved upon the work of Beveridge. Now Representative Paul Findley of Illinois's Twentieth Congressional District is at work on a book on Lincoln's single term in the United States Congress. Lincoln's appeal, incidentally, is broad; Simon is a Democrat and Findley is a Republican.

James R. Mellon, III, moves from the field of anthropology to Lincolniana and photographic history with a promise of a work on the best photographs of Lincoln. He hopes that the book will serve a sort of "archival" purpose by presenting with the latest methods of photographic reproduction the very best print available of all the famous photographs of the Sixteenth President before they deteriorate any further. Viking Press, which recently published a book on Georgia O'Keeffe much praised for the quality of its color plates, is to be the publisher.

There has not been a motion picture about Abraham Lincoln in years. The movie industry has changed, and so has the nature of popular interest in Lincoln's career. Just now, it is probably the assassination which provokes the widest curiosity. Sunn Classic Productions, Inc., is filming "Conspiracy to Kill President Lincoln" in Savannah, Georgia, where the famed program of historic restoration has produced a city which is an ideal backdrop for a film about nineteenth-century America. The film is scheduled for release this summer. Although it does not promise to be of the sane and balanced school I championed in the first paragraph, the film will use actors of established reputation. John Anderson, who played Lincoln in a television special which preceded Hal Holbrook's lengthier portrayal, is supposed to play the Sixteenth President again. Richard Basehart, who has had a hand in a couple of television specials about Lincoln, will portray John Wilkes Booth. Sunn Classic's specialty is promotion, and they promise to give the film a big advertising campaign after this spring.

Winfred Harbison, who contributed substantial work on Lincoln and the Republican party in Indiana in the 1930s, has urged me to deal with the portrayal of Lincoln in Peter J. Parish's new one-volume synthesis, *The American Civil War* (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1975). It was good advice. Professor David Donald of Harvard University has said of Parish's book that "It would be hard to find a better one-volume history of the conflict," and he should know, for Donald himself is coauthor of the best one-volume work on the period by far—at least before the appearance of Parish's work.

Parish's is certainly the most elegantly written textbook imaginable, and it is full of quotable and pithy statements about Abraham Lincoln. Parish begins his treatment of the Emancipation Proclamation by suggesting that "a man may show political skill and shun sentimentality, without necessarily being either shamelessly opportunist or morally insensitive." He calls Lincoln "the arch exponent of the indirect approach to the slavery issue, the strategy of the 'soft sell.'" Parish has a particular gift for using the evidence of witnesses of Lincoln's career to great effect, and it is important to his appreciation of Lincoln that one understand the context: "Even Horace Greeley admitted that Lincoln was well ahead of the bulk of Northern opinion, and that there was probably a majority in the North against emancipation until mid-1863." Given this state of public opinion, "He took the low road to emancipation rather than the high. It was slower and more circuitous, but it was safer and it led to the same place." Again, the well-selected witness's quotation, this time from Boston businessman John Murray Forbes in a letter to Charles Sumner, makes Lincoln's course seem shrewd:

It seems to me very important that the ground of "military necessity" should be even more squarely taken than it was on 22d September. Many of our strongest Republicans, some even of our Lincoln electors, have constitutional scruples in regard to emancipation upon any other ground. . . .

I know that you and many others would like to have it done upon higher ground, but the main thing is to have it done strongly, and to have it so backed up by public opinion that it will strike the telling blow, at the rebellion and at slavery together, which we so much need.

I buy and eat my bread made from the flour raised by the hard-working farmer; it is certainly satisfactory that in so doing I am helping the farmer clothe his children, but my motive is self-preservation, not philanthropy or justice. Let the President free the slaves upon the same principle, and so state it that the masses of our people can easily understand it.

He will thus remove constitutional scruples from some, and will draw to himself the support of a very large class who do not want to expend their brothers and sons and money for the benefit of the negro, but who will be very glad to see Northern life and treasure saved by any practical measure, even if it does incidentally an act of justice and benevolence.

Now I would not by any means disclaim the higher motives, but where so much prejudice exists, I would eat my bread to sustain my life; I would take the one short, sure method of preserving the national life, — and say little about any other motive.

Parish clinches his argument by quoting Lincoln's explanation of his policy to British antislavery leader George Thompson, as reported by Francis B. Carpenter:

Many of my strongest supporters urged *Emancipation* before I thought it indispensable, and, I may say, before I thought the country ready for it. It is my conviction that, had the proclamation been issued even six months earlier than it was, the public sentiment would not have sustained it. . . . We have seen this great revolution in public sentiment slowly but surely progressing, so that, when final action came, the opposition was not strong enough to defeat the purpose.

Parish interprets Lincoln's early policies of gradual emancipation for the Border States and his lingering interest in colonization as having an "invaluable political and propaganda purpose":

If the gradual plan failed, it might still serve to assure conservatives that all else had been tried before the resort to more drastic measures, and to persuade radicals that the administration was moving in the right direction. If the colonisation schemes failed, as they surely would, they would still serve to show the president's awareness of the fears of a Negro influx into the North, and his concern with the consequences of emancipation. Many Republicans, some more radical than Lincoln, had spoken in favour of colonisation; a correspondent of Ben Wade had applauded his support for the idea: "I believe practically it is a damn humbug. But it will take with the people."

"Lincoln," says Parish in another memorable passage, "was at his best when appearing to bow to the inevitable while doing very much what he himself wished."

Parish's treatment of the election of 1864 is a little less sure handed. As a synthesis, his book can be no better than the best of the existing literature, and this election, unlike Lincoln's racial policies, has yet to receive adequate treatment. Certainly, he is correct in saying that the "1864 election was remarkable first in that it took place at all, and second in that it so much resembled other elections held before and after." The former judgment is getting to be commonplace (which is not to say that it is not true), but the latter lacks convincing proof in *The American Civil War*. He does make at least one original point about Lincoln's opponents within the Republican party: "Those who hoped to replace Lincoln were attracted by the tried and tested formula of nominating a military hero. Their problem was that the available military men in 1864 fell into two categories: generals like Grant who were wreathed in the laurels of victory but who resolutely refused to consider nomination, and those like Fremont or Ben Butler who were willing or anxious to be asked, but whose military record was scarcely untarnished." The "boom" for Salmon P. Chase,

then, was not a response to a popular clamor — the people and the hacks wanted a general — but a drive engineered from the top down. Parish does a nice job in “translation into plain English of the full-blown phrases” of the Republican platform, pointing to the real meaning of this gaseous platitude:

Resolved, That we deem it essential to the general welfare that harmony should prevail in the National Councils, and we regard as worthy of public confidence and official trust those only who cordially indorse the principles proclaimed in these resolutions, and which should characterize the administration of the government.

In other words, translates Parish, Lincoln should behead Montgomery Blair.

Parish is on the high road to contradiction when he begins a paragraph: “The experience of 1864 bears out the view that, in American presidential elections, the struggle within the parties is often at least as important as the struggle between them.” He then concludes the same paragraph by saying that “The rivals of 1864 offered the electorate a choice and not an echo.” The fact of the matter is that most of the existing literature is written from the former viewpoint, but the latter viewpoint seems more proper in light of the nature of the party conflicts preceding the election of 1864. Attracted to the latter conclusion, Parish is nonetheless limited to the evidence for the former case — hence, his embarrassment. This is, however, an understandable blemish in an otherwise excellent book. Professor Parish lectures on American history at the University of Glasgow and joins that tradition of great British scholars who have on occasion understood American history better than the Americans themselves have.

In the course of studying Lincoln’s ideas about expansion in his term as Congressman during the Mexican War, I was led to William Appleman Williams’s book, *America Confronts a Revolutionary World: 1776-1976* (New York: William Morrow, 1976). This little volume “celebrates” the Bicentennial from the perspective of the New Left, a term which as the years fly by is becoming inapplicable but which has not yet been retired from use and replaced. Professor Williams, who is primarily a student of American foreign policy, is one of those radicals who hate liberals more than they hate conservatives. In American history, then, Professor Williams dislikes Woodrow Wilson and Franklin Delano Roosevelt and speaks, on the other hand, with a sort of nostalgic fondness of Herbert Hoover.

Williams hates Lincoln. He does not quite fall into that queer trap into which some American Marxists have fallen of admiration of the slave South because it was pre-capitalist and provided one of the very rare examples of a non-capitalist society in the United States. But he does have enough of the radical’s tendency to admire people for the enemies they make to argue that the South should have been allowed to leave in peace after — a curious concern for a radical — a convention authorized secession and “pegged” Federal property in the South at a fair price to be paid for over time (John Minor Bott’s suggestion). Lincoln thus becomes for Williams what he hates the most, an imperialist and a precursor of Woodrow Wilson and Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Wilson, says Williams, “would do for the world what Lincoln had done for America.” Again, in the case of World War II, “in the narrow military sense, as with Lincoln and Wilson, Roosevelt carried his crusade to a victorious conclusion.”

The Lincoln who emerges from Williams’s pages, then, is a curious figure drawn as a monolith, though the commonest conclusion of any book on Lincoln these days is that he *grew*. He is terrifyingly ambitious (“Lincoln ultimately achieved his ambition to displace Washington as the Father of the Country”), and he is pictured as “hacking out his trail to the White House.” Williams ignores Lincoln’s periods of vacillation, doubt, and uncertainty about his career (politics, law, business, surveying), about his marriage (could a “penniless” piece of “floating driftwood” support a high-minded woman in a town where people “flourished” about in carriages?), and about politics (he claimed to have been losing interest in politics between 1849 and 1854). Lincoln is also depicted as “full of missionary zeal to globalize the American solution to life.” “Put simply,” adds Williams, “the cause of the Civil War was the refusal of Lincoln and other northerners to honor the revolutionary right of self-determination — the touchstone of the American Revolution.” The House Divided speech “was the ultimate appeal to the genius of Madison: expand or die.

Hence if we keep you from expanding you will die.” Lincoln “wanted to transcend the Founding Fathers, free the slaves, and expand America’s power throughout the world.”

These are the slashing strokes of the essayist as quick portrait painter, and they have a surface plausibility rooted in the echoing of familiar phrases. By accident, some of these phrases are quite familiar. For years, I have assigned as a favorite topic for student essays a detailed analysis of Madison’s *Federalist* Paper Number 10. And for years, I have been correcting a freshman misreading of that famous document. Madison says, “Extend the sphere and you take in a greater variety of parties and interests; you make it less probable that a majority of the whole will have a common motive to invade the rights of other citizens; or if such a common motive exists, it will be more difficult for all who feel it to discover their own strength and to act in unison with each other.” He is completing a syllogism not making a statement of foreign policy. He precedes the statement with a description of the consequences of narrower boundaries (“The smaller the society . . . the more frequently will a majority be found of the same party . . .”). The point of *Federalist* Number 10 is to convince people who think the proposed United States already too large that it is in fact all the better for its great size. Certainly, the savvy Madison was not going to convince the timid and cautiously by urging a policy of greater extension of territory. Madison’s political hero was Thomas Jefferson, who, though he had a tremendous interest in expansion, in fact thought that some of the possible expanded areas (Oregon, for example) would break off to form separate republics on the American model. This may be expanding the power of the United States, but it is not expanding it at the expense of self-determination. Madison’s message was not expansion and imperialism, and neither was Lincoln’s.

This is the best example to show the real fault of Williams’s work; he reads things out of context. When he describes Seward as “a persistent and by no means wholly defeated rival for supreme power,” Williams has smuggled the Imperial Presidency of the twentieth-century United States into the nineteenth century, when the Presidency could be conceived of (as it was by Zachary Taylor and Ulysses S. Grant, for example) as an office which merely enforced the Congressional will, a sort of vice-Congress. The floundering of a feeble republic protected only by geography and still widely regarded as a dangerous “experiment” are also very different matters from the purposeful policies of a giant power.

A lively writing style on occasion masks historical imprecision, as is the case in Williams’s discussion of Texas annexation and the Mexican War:

. . . the antislavery people, along with the abolitionists, posed the specter of secession — or war — if Texas was acquired. Lincoln was not the only one who read it right. But Calhoun disdained to play Illinois games, and laid it out on the table: “It is easy to see the end. . . . We must become two people.”

It is hard because of the imprecise style to tell exactly what “Lincoln . . . read it right” means here. However, not any of the possible meanings in the context can be true. Lincoln did not take the view of expansion that abolitionists did. He said bluntly in 1848 that he “did not believe with many of his fellow citizens that this war was originated for the purpose of extending slave territory.” He did not even perceive Texas annexation as a national problem, telling Liberty man Williamson Durley that “Liberty men . . . have viewed annexation as a much greater evil than I ever did.” In fact he “never was much interested in the Texas question.” This points up two things: (1) Lincoln was not a clear-eyed imperialist squinting towards United States power at all times, and (2) imperialism was not the issue in the mid-nineteenth century that it became at and after the end of the century. Lincoln’s indifference is thus the most effective answer to Williams; Williams is wrong about which side of the issue Lincoln stood on and unhistorical in his own concern about the issue. Williams’s ignorance of this period of Lincoln’s life is proven, and we need not, therefore, linger over this idle and sneering speculation:

. . . given his later maneuver around Fort Sumter, one cannot avoid the thought that he learned from Polk how to act in a way that would start a war while shifting the blame to one’s opponent. On the other hand, he may not have needed any instruction in such matters.

In the end, Williams draws a portrait of Lincoln which closely resembles the picture the opposition party drew during the Civil War. Of course, the Democrats' concern was not imperialism, but they drew Lincoln as a "ruthless" and "arrogant" (Williams's terms) potential dictator who rode roughshod over precious civil liberties. They had such disdain for him, however, that they could never respect his personality and drew quite another picture of him as a vague and wishy-washy pettifogger. Williams calls him "a Houdini with words" whose First Inaugural Address was "Hair splitting instead of rail splitting." He was "feeble," and "he lacked the courage to take his chances."

The ultimate conclusion is that President Lincoln "steered a counterrevolutionary course." But, as Peter Parish points out, Karl Marx — who knew a revolution when he saw one — came to quite a different conclusion in a letter to Engels:

The fury with which Southerners have received Lincoln's Acts proves their importance. All Lincoln's Acts appear like the mean pettifogging conditions which one lawyer puts to his opposing lawyer. But this does not alter their historic content . . . The events over there are a world upheaval, nevertheless.

In a very different kind of book, C. Peter Ripley makes some interesting observations about Lincoln's reconstruction policies. *Slaves and Freedmen in Civil War Louisiana* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1977) is a scholarly monograph based on extensive research in unpublished manuscripts. It is not easy reading, but it does present an interesting picture of politics and social life in a state about which President Lincoln came to care a great deal. Ripley argues that Lincoln's policies were on the whole and, especially in the end, conservative. When General Benjamin F. Butler failed to help escaped slaves even to the extent Congress allowed before the Emancipation Proclamation, Lincoln endorsed his policies by tolerating them. General Butler, often pictured as a ruthless radical, emerges from Ripley's book as a rather cautious man who feared emancipation. To Salmon Chase on July 10, 1862, he wrote, "I shall treat the negro with as much tenderness as possible, but I assure you it is quite impossible to free them here and now without a San Domingo. There is no doubt that an insurrection is only prevented by our bayonets." This was no political ploy; he wrote his wife just fifteen days later, "We shall have a negro insurrection here I fancy." The man who invented the idea of "contraband" as a cloak for escaping slavery came to discourage runaways from entering his lines. He welcomed only fugitives who could work; he paid these rations but no wages, even though Congress had authorized payment of wages. He did not give rations to runaways outside his lines, though that also was legal. He allowed masters who took the loyalty oath to retrieve their escaped property.

Later, in late 1863, Lincoln pulled the rug from under the state's radical movement and supported a moderate-conservative faction, even though he had given the radicals support earlier in the year. Finding the reason for Lincoln's actions is complicated by the identification of the radical faction with the Treasury Department and Salmon P. Chase, who was emerging as a rival for the Presidential nomination in the fall of 1863. Ripley avoids speculation about Lincoln's motives and usually opts for describing the effects of Lincoln's action or inaction on Louisiana politics. This is a bit disappointing from the perspective of the Lincoln field and makes it unfair to draw a conclusion about his motive after all (that he was conservative). Still, the Louisiana side of the administration's problems is interesting and enriches our understanding of the context in which President Lincoln operated.

Another interesting look at the context of Lincoln's actions from the perspective of a single state and, in this case, a single party is Eric J. Cardinal's article, "The Ohio Democracy and the Crisis of Disunion, 1860-1861," *Ohio History*, LXXXVI (Winter, 1977), 19-40. Cardinal attempts to resurrect the reputation of the Democratic party. The party "lost" the war as much as the South did, for its ideal was the restoration of the Union, "the Federal Union as it was forty years ago," in the words of Clement Vallandigham. Lincoln's historical reputation has been good enough to hurt that of anyone who opposed him, and the Democrats did. And, "the racism inherent in the Democratic ideology has made it morally unattractive to modern scholars."

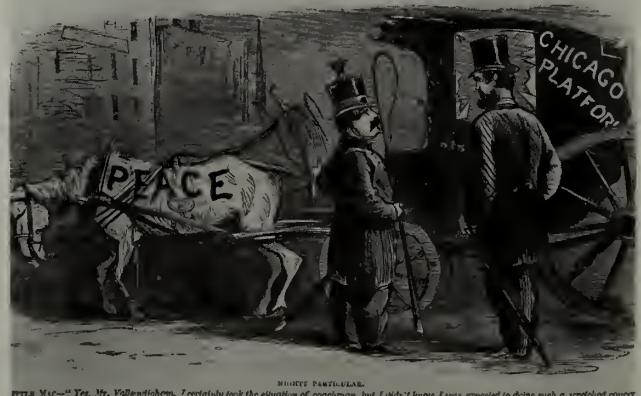
Cardinal argues that the Democrats should be awarded at least the virtue of consistency. As "the shattering events which accompanied the election of Lincoln pushed the United States over the precipice of sectional bitterness into civil war, the northern Democracy — more than any other political group — stood unwaveringly for the preservation of the Union . . . They recognized neither the right of secession nor that of coercion, and this remained the heart of their problem throughout the war. Moreover, northern Democrats first articulated positions concerning secession and civil war during this early period which, with few modifications, they maintained throughout the conflict."

Posing as the only true and steady advocates of Union, the Democracy claimed no responsibility for war and blamed Southern disunionists and Northern Republicans — not in that order. In fact, their persistence in blaming the Republicans in wartime for the war came to look a lot like treason to Republicans. Partisanship fed their belief that agitation of the slavery question rather than the peculiar institution itself caused the country's problems. Their answer to the crisis was compromise rather than coercion. Despite strong identification with and support of Douglas before the election, the Democracy united quickly on the idea of compromise with a South which had walked out on Douglas at the recent Charleston convention. The party's cohesion, as seen in votes in the Ohio legislature on key roll calls dealing with the national crisis, was much higher than that of the Republicans. Sumter brought immediate support for the Northern war effort, but "Democrats quickly made it clear that they supported the war effort expressly to restore the Federal Union; not to abolish slavery." Cardinal concludes carefully, "Democratic support for the war at its outset, then, may be characterized as willing, but conditional."

Cardinal is at work on a dissertation examining the experience of the Ohio Democracy throughout the war years. We all look forward to the completion of the project. There is much to be learned about the Democratic party in this period.

Harold Holzer continues to contribute his interesting pieces for Lincoln collectors. *Americana*, V (March, 1977), contains an article which pleads a believable case for "Collecting Print Portraits of Abraham Lincoln." *The Antique Trader* for February 9, 1977, contains Holzer's amusing article, "What Lincoln Touched: Intimate Souvenirs of an American Life" (pages 40-45) and "A Picture's Worth . . . 'Lincoln Mailbag'" on page 47. Holzer's "Print Portraits of a Martyr, Lincoln in Death: Bigger Than Life" appears in *Hobbies*, LXXXII (April, 1977).

American Heritage, XXVIII (February, 1977), contains a brief spread on actors' portrayals of Lincoln, called "Say, who's that tall, homely feller in the stovepipe hat?" There is a solid and accurate chapter on Lincoln by John A. Carpenter in *Power and the Presidency* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1976).



From the Lincoln National Life Foundation

FIGURE 2. Frank Leslie's *Illustrated Newspaper* stressed the differences within the Democratic party in this cartoon published on October 1, 1864. George McClellan, the Democratic nominee for President, refuses to drive the miserable one-horse shay rigged up by Clement Vallandigham and the peace wing of the party.



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THE COVER: "Pitching Horseshoes" by Winslow Homer (1836-1910). Homer's 1865 painting depicts Federal Zouaves engaged in the popular camp sport of horseshoes (Courtesy of the Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University, gift of Mr. and Mrs. Frederic H. Curtiss).

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Behind the Lines

CAVEAT EMPTOR

Within a few weeks you are going to get very excited. From your radio, your newspaper, and seemingly every other minute on your television, you are going to be bombarded by a media blitz for a new motion picture. "New film proves conspiracy in Lincoln assassination," they will say; "Researchers have advanced the Lincoln assassination study more in a one-year crash investigation than it has been advanced in the previous 112 years"; "calls for joint Senate-House assassination committee to re-examine Lincoln's death"; "With the historical discoveries we've made, our film will make Watergate look like kindergarten plotting."

The new film, "The Lincoln Conspiracy," is produced by Sunn Classic Pictures, makers of a recent film on Noah's Ark and several wildlife movies. It presents a scenario which, if true, does indeed make events surrounding the Watergate break-in pale into insignificance. "The Lincoln Conspiracy" does nothing less than charge that there were four separate groups conspiring against Lincoln; that Secretary of War Edwin McM. Stanton and Lafayette Baker were deeply involved; that Booth was a tool of all four groups; that Stanton tried to replace Booth with a Confederate Captain James W. Boyd; that it was Boyd, not Booth, who was killed in the dark hours of April 26, 1865, at the Garrett farm in Virginia; that Booth escaped to freedom while Boyd's body was identified and buried as Booth's; that Stanton and other high officials, finding incriminating evidence against them in Booth's diary, conspired to suppress this evidence; that Baker was later killed to silence him, and much more.

Space does not allow telling of the whole story. Briefly, however, Confederate leaders in Canada want Lincoln out of the way, and feel that kidnapping him may get Southern prisoners freed to continue the fight. Northern cotton speculators don't want their profits cut by a lenient peace with the Confederacy. New York financiers feel the same, and the Radicals in Congress want an opportunity to ride roughshod over the conquered states. All four groups want Lincoln kidnapped or killed for their own ends. All work through Booth. Stanton and Baker know of the plots—are involved with one or more groups themselves—and Baker acts as liaison with Booth. Booth makes several kidnapping attempts and fails. Disillusioned with the actor, the Radicals want a change. Baker and Stanton get Captain James W. Boyd—a ruthless character—out of Old Capitol Prison in Washington and put him in Booth's place. While Boyd schemes, a resentful Booth changes his plans to murder, and finally kills Lincoln on April 14, just as Boyd is ready with his own plot, which included spiriting Lincoln, Vice President Andrew Johnson, and Secretary of State William Seward, aboard a Chaffey Shipping Company vessel to be born away to Bloodsworth Island in the Chesapeake where they would be killed.

Booth attempts to escape in company with one Edward Henson over an unguarded route left open for Boyd. Baker immediately sends Boyd and young David Herold—an accomplice of Booth's who is captured on April 15 and coerced into giving aid—out to catch the assassin. But then Boyd, fearing that Baker will betray him, decides to escape himself, but he and Herold are trapped at the Garrett farm. Herold is taken, and Boyd slain. Since Boyd bore a remarkable resemblance to Booth, he is at first mistaken for the assassin. When the error is discovered, the War Department covers it up rather than reveal that the wrong man is dead. Thus begins the cover-up, which Stanton completes by hiding Booth's diary and excising from it eighteen pages which incriminate scores of prominent Northerners. And Booth escapes to West Virginia and, eventually, Europe.

It is an incredible story if true, and the way Sunn Classic goes about trying to prove it is equally incredible.

There is a special technique to this sort of thing. It has been around a long time, and has been used most effectively in recent years by Erich von Däniken in his "Chariots of the Gods" books. The formula is simple. To present a theory that no reputable authority has ever accepted, first attack the authorities. Sunn does this with a vengeance, claiming that traditional historians of Lincoln's murder have perpetuated the cover-up by slavishly accepting the official government version of the assassination conspiracy. "Seldom has a traditional historian questioned the government's statements or acquired primary resource material from the heirs of those who lived during the assassination period," claims a Sunn spokesman. As a result, Sunn went after "findings overlooked by historians or suppressed by them because new revelations could be embarrassing to some of the established historical writers on the subject." And whatever they looked for they found—in abundance.

Next must come the hint of a continuing conspiracy to keep the truth from coming out. Thus, when it came to filming the picture, Sunn went to Savannah instead of doing it on location in Washington. "Our film," they say, "which rewrites the history of the Lincoln assassination, rattles a lot of skeletons in family and official closets. We wanted to keep a low profile until we finished filming." In a separate statement, Sunn maintains that a book by one of their consultants, Theodore Roscoe's *Web of Conspiracy*, "came under open attack by the Federal secret service . . . and the publisher was forced to let the book go." Can this possibly be the same *Web of Conspiracy* that was condensed for a *Reader's Digest* anthology and later served as the basis for a CBS TV documentary?

Next comes the presentation, and with it the repeated and insistent statement of startling revelations, one building upon another. Repetition brings familiarity, and

familiarity breeds belief. Finally, when the supposition has been stated often enough, it is accepted as fact, and *presto!* we have spacemen building cities in South America, a voracious triangle of ocean off Bermuda that swallows ships like anchovies, and a massive plot to assassinate Abraham Lincoln and cover up the crime.

It is a twentieth century technique, and thus it is fitting that it be coupled with another modern "invention" in the making of "The Lincoln Conspiracy." "Sunn uses computers to help make movies," proudly proclaims the publicity release. After extensive demographic surveys are made, sample audiences are polled on "which scenes offered the greatest enjoyment, which scenes were the most interesting, and which scenes they wanted longest." Essentially the audience tells what it likes best, and that is what Sunn gives them. This is fine for a fictional drama, but when applied to the presentation of what purports to be history, the result can be disastrous. No society can afford to have its understanding of its own past determined by market research on what people want to believe. Winston Churchill once remarked of the legendary King Arthur that, if he hadn't really lived, nevertheless "he should have." Application of market research to history reverses that somewhat. If the studies indicate that most people would prefer that King Arthur had really lived, then he did. The implications are frightening.

But all of this pales when compared to the real meat of the story, the startling and extensive new evidence upon which the film is based. All such courageous, trailblazing endeavors must have a host of evidentiary materials overlooked by "traditional historians." "The Lincoln Conspiracy" has them in abundance.

The most interesting items, of course, are the purported missing pages from Booth's diary, supposedly taken out by Stanton. In the first place, it was not a "diary," but an appointment book. Booth's was not a diarist's temperament. He wasn't even a good correspondent. Secondly, Sunn's promotional campaign is headlined with the claim that "Sunn's research turns up Booth's missing diary pages." Not so. The pages were found by a Massachusetts manuscript dealer in the hands of a Stanton descendant. Sunn merely located the dealer. But—and this is important—neither Sunn nor anyone else has seen the actual pages. Only the dealer has seen them, and he furnished a transcript to Sunn. For complicated reasons, the owner of the originals is reluctant to release them for authentication. Meanwhile, the manuscript dealer has shown copies of the transcripts to a few experts, and the best that can be said at this point is that no serious anachronisms have been found to disprove authenticity. Nevertheless, until some unimpeachable authority such as the Library of Congress authenticates the original pages, basing any historical claims upon what is found in the transcript is irresponsible. And incidentally, the National Park Service tells us there are thirty-six leaves missing from the small book in their custody, not eighteen as is usually stated.

Having dispensed with the diary, about which no defini-

tive conclusion may yet be reached, let us turn to the other evidence produced to support the scenario of "The Lincoln Conspiracy." About this evidence, certain ironclad conclusions are inescapable.

First, from several sources they have resurrected the old canard that Booth escaped capture and lived out his days in disguise and seclusion. The evidence for these oft-repeated claims has been put to the test by Chauncey Black of the Dearborn *Independent*, George S. Bryan in *The Great American Myth*, Otto Eischiml in *The Shadow of Lincoln's Death*, and a number of other investigators. The consensus is that all such claims are spurious.

Far more fascinating is the story of Captain James W. Boyd, who we are told was mistaken for Booth. A collec-



Sunn Classic Pictures photograph purporting to be Captain James W. Boyd

© Sunn Classic Pictures

tion of Boyd's papers is offered to prove his involvement in the kidnapping scheme and his untimely death and mis-identification. There is a grain of truth here. In February 1865 Captain J.W. Boyd, formerly Captain of Co. F, 6th Tennessee Infantry, was in Old Capitol Prison, and he was released on War Department orders. It is documented by his signed Oath of Allegiance, now in the National Archives in Washington. An interesting document this is. It shows that at the time of his release Boyd, a native of Madison County, Tennessee, was gray-haired, blue-eyed, and 6 feet-2 inches tall. The 1860 census for Madison County indicates that in 1865, Boyd would have been about 42 years of age.

We are asked to believe that this man was passed off not only to friends, but also to intimate family members, as John Wilkes Booth, a black-haired, brown-eyed, 5 foot-8 inch, 26-year-old! Six inches difference in height; sixteen years in age; gray hair instead of black; blue eyes rather than brown. It strains credulity beyond the limits of reason to assert that Boyd could pass for Booth with anyone. Sunn does offer a purported photo of Boyd which shows a man somewhat like Booth, but in no way corresponding with the description of J.W. Boyd. And curiously enough, the man in the photo is dressed in a Federal uniform, a private's at that.

Equally interesting are the papers of the New York shipping firm of Chaffey and Biggs. It is claimed that Booth and Lafayette Baker had a long standing connection with this firm, and that it was to supply the ship for the original kidnapping and murder plot. The firm does business, we are told, at 178½ Water Street.

The errors here are legion. First, no New York City directory for the years 1844-1865 lists any firm such as Chaffey in shipping or any other business. Further, all references found to businesses at 178½ Water Street are for Martin Bates, furrier and importer. This includes the year 1853, when documents in the Chaffey papers show that firm doing business at that address. In New York City's tax records there is no account of this firm, and in the New York *Times's* daily listing of shipping in and out of the port of New York for the years of the Civil War, there is not a single vessel mentioned which is registered to Chaffey. This for a company which regularly ships into and out of New York! Add to this the fact that the Chaffey correspondence—at least that which we've seen—is written, not in a letter book, but in an account ledger; that the ledger paper bears a British and not an American watermark; and that the handwriting is poor and in places illegible in an era when mercantile firms employed scribes specifically for their penmanship—add all this together and it is not hard to conclude that Chaffey and Biggs never existed, and that the papers of this spectral firm are clumsy fakes.

Much the same can be said for the Lafayette Baker papers, which Sunn calls "journals and cipher-coded manuscripts detailing the Lincoln kidnap-assassination conspiracy plot and cover-up." At the outset it is enough

to say that Baker was such a notorious liar and scoundrel that anything he said would be unacceptable as evidence unless extensively corroborated. But internal evidence in the purported Baker journal makes certain that its information is a fabrication, and probably not by Baker.

We are asked to believe that, according to Baker, Stanton and his henchmen feared that Lincoln would not be re-elected in 1864. Rather than have Democrat George McClellan take the Presidency, they would kidnap Lincoln, Vice President Hamlin, and Secretary of State Seward prior to the inauguration. Then the Committee on the Conduct of the War, controlled by Radicals, would appoint an interim president who would announce that McClellan could not take office. When Lincoln won the election, however, the plotters retained their plans, for they feared Lincoln would be too lenient on the South. Only this time it was Lincoln, Seward, and Vice President Andrew Johnson who were to be kidnapped, and ultimately killed.

Implicit in Baker's statement is a belief on Stanton's part that in the event of the death or disability of the President and Vice-President, the office would fall to the Secretary of State as senior cabinet officer. Equally implicit is the supposition that Andrew Johnson would deal leniently with the conquered South. Well, there are problems with this plot. First, Johnson, so far as anyone knew at this time, was in the Radical Republican camp; his denunciations of the leadership of the Confederacy and shrill calls for their execution were well known. More important, it is impossible to reconcile such blatant ignorance of statutory and Constitutional provisions governing presidential succession with Edwin M. Stanton's prior position as Attorney General in the cabinet of James Buchanan and his reputation as a Constitutional lawyer. The succession in 1865—as it had been since 1792—provided that the Presidency would pass to the President *pro tempore* of the Senate in the event of the death or disability of both the President and Vice-President. Lafayette S. Foster of Connecticut would automatically have become President (interestingly, this order of succession changed in 1886 to include cabinet officers in the succession order). Seward would never have entered the picture—which Stanton would have known. Stanton would also have known that, constitutionally, the Committee on the Conduct of the War could not have been empowered to appoint an interim President. Stanton would have known this, but the creator of this document obviously did not, and he consequently stuck his foot in it up to the hip.

Andrew Potter's papers dissolve even quicker under scrutiny. We are asked to believe that National Detective Police agent Potter smuggled these papers out of his organization's files. Among them is his account of the discovery that the man thought to be Booth was actually Captain Boyd, and the decision to cover the mistake to avoid embarrassment. In the light of what has already been shown about the supposed Boyd-Booth identification, Potter's statement is obviously false. It is made the less believable by the photograph of Potter in Sunn's pub-

licity package. It shows a man not more than 30 years old, dressed in clothing which did not come into vogue until the 1880's. If this is Potter, then putting the best light on it, we must believe that Andrew was a trusted secret agent at age fifteen!

With the George W. Julian Papers, we have a real gem. Julian, an organizer of the Republican Party, stood among the foremost Radicals. He kept a diary during the war and after, a diary which his daughter loaned to historian Claude Bowers when he was researching his classic study of Reconstruction, *The Tragic Era*. When Bowers finished with the diaries, Julian's daughter destroyed the portions covering the Civil War and donated the remainder to the Indiana State Library. However, Sunn claims that they have a transcript of the 1865 portion of the diary that Bowers made before it was destroyed. And in the entry for April 24, 1865, there is an eight paragraph account of a meeting in Stanton's office in which Stanton and several others speak in panicked tones of what is in Booth's diary, which they have just received. Stanton gives the book to his trusted henchman Thomas Eckert with orders that it be kept safe and shown to no one. Note, this is April 24, two days before Booth—or Boyd, if you will—is killed. It is claimed that the diary was found in Booth's abandoned coat, and rushed to the War Department.

There are several problems here. First, a search of the Claude Bowers Papers at Indiana University reveals no correspondence to indicate that Bowers kept a transcript of the Julian diary or any portion of it. Second, anyone who has read *The Tragic Era* knows that Bowers was a rabid anti-Radical. The book pours venom on Stanton, Ben Wade, and others. If Bowers really had such a diary account revealing a Radical involvement with Booth and a cover-up, it is inconceivable that he would not have used it in his book. And the reason he did not use this entry is because he had the genuine April 24, 1865 entry before him. And anyone who is interested can read it today. Simply find a copy of the *Indiana Magazine of History* for December 1915, which contains an article titled "George W. Julian's Journal." Therein, interestingly enough, is an entry for April 24, 1865, the same date as in Sunn's alleged transcript. Only this entry has but one paragraph, and instead of recounting conspiracy and coverup, it describes a meeting of the Committee on the Conduct of the War. Instead of recording a meeting at Stanton's office, it tells of an audience with President Johnson during which Julian was "mortified" at the President's bad grammar (page 337). Obviously the fabricator of the more lurid version of the Julian diary didn't do his or her homework, else this earlier publication of the April 24 entry would have prevented the blundering forgery which is a major piece of evidence in Sunn's version of the conspiracy.

This sort of thing goes on and on. The film "proves" for us the old legend that Booth married Izola D'arcy. Further we are told that Booth and his wife lived on his farm near Harpers Ferry, and that it is to this farm that

he comes after successfully escaping in 1865. The title and tax books for this area, however, show no transactions whatever that have Booth owning land. There is a statement by Michael O'Laughlen in which he details those involved in the massive plot and what was planned. The statement comes from the Osborn Oldroyd collection, we are told. Oldroyd, an eminent collector of Lincolniana, kept inventories of his Lincoln items. Some are with his papers in the University of Chicago Library, and nowhere do they mention such a statement by O'Laughlen.

And there is testimony taken from the sister of David Herold, who fled with Booth and was later hanged with the other conspirators. It is supposedly suppressed testimony which backs up the contention that Herold was never with Booth on the escape. Rather, he was riding with Boyd in an attempt to find Booth. Well, the credibility of this one doesn't last beyond the first sentence. The initial question asked of Herold's sister is whether or not her husband is Edward C. Nelson. She says "yes." Yet church and census records verify that her husband was really Frederick M. Nelson! Is it not reasonable to expect that after thirteen years of marriage Mrs. Nelson would know her husband's given name? Additional errors abound in this obviously bogus testimony. Oh, yes, and in the revelation from Mrs. Edward Nelson—or was it Frederick?—is the tantalizing fact that her brother David Herold kept a diary in 1865 and that a relation of hers had it. Since this is the only hint to date of a Herold diary, and since it comes from a suspect document, any dated Herold diary which may hereafter come to light must certainly be viewed with caution.

Sunn's story line claims that David Herold was captured only the day after the assassination and then sent off with Boyd to capture Booth. To support this they cite a reward poster for Booth, Surratt and Herold, in which the photo of Herold is the same as a later view in which he is handcuffed after his capture at the Garrett farm on April 26. The conclusion is that this photo was taken April 16. Otherwise, how would the government have a photo of Herold, in irons, to put on a wanted poster issued days before his capture? While superficially persuasive, this claim, too, dissolves under scrutiny. There are at least two known versions of the reward poster dated April 20. In addition to the version at which Sunn points its finger, there is a poster which shows Herold as an adolescent schoolboy, and a photograph purporting to be John Surratt which is obviously erroneous. This is the poster distributed by Luther B. Baker at the behest of Lafayette C. Baker. The Sunn version of the poster—though they don't mention this—has a photograph of John Surratt taken in approximately 1867. The second poster—with the late Surratt photograph and the post-capture Herold photograph—was undoubtedly a response to the clamor for "souvenirs" of the century's greatest crime. In short, Sunn's claim is based on a poster that postdates the hunt for the assassins by many months, possibly years.

It must be apparent by now that virtually all of the



SURREAT.



BOOTH.



HAROLD.

War Department, Washington, April 20, 1865,


\$100,000 REWARD!

THE MURDERER

Of our late beloved President, Abraham Lincoln,
IS STILL AT LARGE.

\$50,000 REWARD

Will be paid by this Department for his apprehension, in addition to any reward offered by Municipal Authorities or State Executives.

\$25,000 REWARD

Will be paid for the apprehension of JOHN H. SURREATT, one of Booth's Accomplices.

\$25,000 REWARD

Will be paid for the apprehension of David C. Harold, another of Booth's accomplices.

LIBERAL REWARDS will be paid for any information that shall conduce to the arrest of either of the above-named criminals or their accomplices.

All persons harboring or secreting the said persons, or either of them, or aiding or assisting their concealment or escape, will be treated as accomplices in the murder of the President, and the attempted assassination of the Secretary of State, and shall be subject to trial before a Military Commission and the punishment of DEATH.

Let the stain of innocent blood be removed from the land by the arrest and punishment of the murderers.

All good citizens are exhorted to aid public justice on this occasion. Every man should consider his own conscience charged with this solemn duty, and rest neither night nor day until it be accomplished.

EDWIN M. STANTON, Secretary of War.

DESCRIPTIONS.—BOOTH is Five Feet 7 or 8 inches high, slender build, high forehead, black hair, black eyes, and wears a heavy black mustache.

JOHN H. SURREATT is about 5 feet 9 inches. Hair rather thin and dark; eyes rather light, no beard. Would weigh 145 or 150 pounds. Complexion rather pale and clear, with color in his cheeks. Wore light clothes of fine quality. Shoulders square; cheek bones rather prominent; chin narrow; ears projecting at the top; forehead rather low and square, but broad. Parts his hair on the right side; neck rather long. His lips are firmly set. A slim man.

DAVID C. HAROLD is five feet six inches high; hair dark; eyes dark, eyebrows rather heavy, full face, nose short, beard short and fleshy, feet small, top high, round bodied, naturally quick and active, slightly closes his eyes when looking at a person.

NOTICE. In addition to the above, State and other authorities have offered rewards amounting to almost one hundred thousand dollars, making an aggregate of about **TWO HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS.**

Reward poster with a photograph of Herold as an adolescent and an erroneous photograph of John Surratt.

startling claims in the film are based upon documents which, if not outright forgeries, are so highly suspect as to make them inadmissible as evidence in any serious investigation. While Sunn has unearthed a mass of documentary evidence, little would withstand the scrutiny of serious historians.

Just who had this material, and why, may never be known. There have been forgers and charlatans working in the field of Lincolniana ever since his death. Joseph Cosey produced some very well known Lincoln forgeries in the early 1900's. And the famous Minor collection of spurious documents relating to Lincoln and Ann Rutledge dates back to 1928. There have been many faked photos of Lincoln in death. It should hardly be surprising, then, that a lot of documents relating to the assassination have been manufactured. Americans do love a conspiracy, and in the case of Lincoln's death someone wanted one bad



SURREAT.



BOOTH.



HAROLD.

War Department, Washington, April 20, 1865.


\$100,000 REWARD!

THE MURDERER

Reward poster showing post—capture photograph of David Herold and 1867 photograph of John Surratt.

enough to invent data supporting a plot of monumental proportions. We may never know the identity of the person or persons who concocted the material that Sunn has found, or when it was done. Indeed, the work is so clumsily amateurish that its authorship should charitably be left anonymous. One should not criticize Sunn Classic Pictures over much for using this material. Pictures are their business, not history. Given the material to make a box office hit with blockbusting revelations, they simply have not questioned their evidence too closely.

One might suppose that the point of all this is to advise the readers of *CWTT* not to pay good money to see "The Lincoln Conspiracy" when it comes to your theater. Not so. Go and see it. See it twice. Take your friends and your family. Watch it carefully. You will literally see history in the making. Look with a careful eye and an open mind; there is, after all, the remote possibility that they really have something. The picture is based on far more documents than we can discuss here, and there is always the chance that they have turned up worthwhile new material; after all, only last year the "lost" manuscript account of the assassination by Louis J. Weichmann—undeniably genuine—finally came out in print.

But watch for the innuendo, the stretched truth. Keep in mind the evidence that the film is based upon, and what has been shown here about the evidence. Then decide for yourself. That is the point of this editorial. To urge you not to walk out of that theater unquestioningly accepting what you have seen as being the truth. Because once that happens, then we have all begun to lose touch with our past—and without that there can be no sure grip on the future.

And then, if there is anyone who still buys what this film has to offer. Boy! can I make you a deal on the Brooklyn Bridge.

William C. Davis
Editor

THE WASHINGTON POST

Wednesday, August 3, 1977

Jack Anderson and Les Whitten

FBI Probes Lincoln Assassination

The FBI has quietly entered the investigation of another presidential assassination — this one the 112-year-old shooting of Abraham Lincoln while he watched a performance at Ford's Theater in Washington.

In many respects, the 1865 murder of Lincoln remains even more controversial than the 1963 killing of President John F. Kennedy. Murky questions hang over both tragedies.

The belated FBI inquiry into Lincoln's death may help to resolve such mysteries as these: Was Lincoln the victim of a secret conspiracy reaching into his own cabinet? Was Frederick Douglass, the Martin Luther King Jr. of the Lincoln era, also marked for murder? Did the assassin, John Wilkes Booth, actually escape and leave another man's body in his place?

New light on these questions is contained in some 18 pages that mysteriously disappeared from Booth's diary but may now have turned up. The diary reportedly was delivered intact to Lincoln's arrogant Secretary of War, Edwin M. Stanton, who has been linked by rumors to the assassination plot.

When the diary was later introduced into the Andrew Johnson impeachment hearings, it was missing some pages that had been neatly excised. Now an indefatigable American expert, Joseph Lynch of Worthington, Mass., has found what appears to be the missing pages.

He made the discovery while appraising some historical artifacts belonging to Stanton's heirs. The pages were locked in a box in the attic. The heirs had never opened the box; in fact, they had no key.

The pages give a fascinating account, presumably written by Booth, of his intrigues with Lincoln intimates shortly before the assassination. Some of the most prominent politicians of the period, including Stanton, are implicated.

Referring to a plot perhaps unrelated to the murder, Booth allegedly writes that he may be working for the Secretary of War himself. At another point, he declares: "I swear that I shall lay the body of this tyrant dead upon the altar of Mars." Apparently, Lincoln is the "tyrant," and "Mars," the god of war, could have been a code name for Stanton.

For years, the Booth diary, shorn of its mysterious pages, has been on display at Ford's Theater museum. But the Interior Department, which runs the museum, has now turned over the diary to the FBI. Its handwriting experts, with their ultraviolet scanners, microscopes and other detection devices, are trying to determine whether the diary itself is genuine.

They have made two important tentative discoveries. The diary contains no writing in invisible ink, as some people have suspected for more than a century. The text also hasn't been altered, as others have thought. But the big question, whether the diary is entirely in Booth's handwriting, remains to be settled.

The FBI's findings may establish whether the 18 newly discovered pages are authentic. Lynch gained considerable credibility by insisting that the missing pages were lined. Most experts had thought the diary was unlined. But the museum's curator, Michael Harman, has now in-

spected the diary more scientifically and has confirmed that its pages, like those of Lynch's discovery, are dimly lined.

Along with the missing diary pages, Lynch also found hundreds of other intriguing items in the possession of the Stanton heirs. One is a letter to a newspaper, in which Booth reportedly outlined why he killed Lincoln.

A film company, Sunn Classic, has also been investigating the Lincoln assassination for a feature movie called "The Lincoln Conspiracy." One of its researchers, Lawrence Mooney of Alexandria, Va., has turned up some missing Booth letters and other data. Mooney believes he has evidence that Booth escaped and that another man's body was put in his place.

Another researcher, Prof. Ray Neff of Indiana State University, has also produced material which he believes shows Booth escaped at Garrett's farm where most experts believe he had been killed by pursuing troops.

Still another ingredient has been injected into the mystery by Lynch. He has discovered what looks like the name of Frederick Douglass, a black leader, in the Booth diary. This raises the possibility that Booth may have intended to kill Douglass, too.

Meanwhile, Curator Harman, a top government expert on the assassination, is taking an historian's cautious view about the renewed controversy. "It's the original can of worms," he said. "The government didn't conduct a thorough investigation at the time. I don't know whether we'll ever get all the answers."

By Charles Rodriguez

CASEY

Add 18 pages to the Lincoln mystery

JACK ANDERSON
and **LES WHITTEN**

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most prominent politicians of the period, including Stanton, are implicated. Referring to a plot perhaps unrelated to the murder, Booth allegedly wrote that he might be working for the secretary of war himself. At another point, he declared: "I swear that I shall lay the body of this tyrant dead upon the altar of Mars." Apparently, Lincoln was the "tyrant," and "Mars," the god of war, could have been a code name for Stanton.

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Woodcut by Albert Berghaus of Booth shooting Lincoln at Ford's Theater.

Now, About Those 18

Now, dear reader, here's a proposition: Every day you've got to determine, if you read us at all, what's true, what's false, and, as in most cases, what lies inconclusively in between. Witness today.

Elsewhere in these pages, you'll find a column by our colleagues, Jack Anderson and Les Whitten. It begins with the riveting words: "The FBI has quietly entered the investigation of another presidential assassination—this one the 112-year-old shooting of Abraham Lincoln . . ." The column goes on to say: "The belated FBI inquiry into Lincoln's death may help to resolve such mysteries as these: Was Lincoln the victim of a secret conspiracy reaching into his own cabinet? . . ." Credit for this monumental investigation ("new light on these questions") is given to "some 18 pages that mysteriously disappeared from Booth's diary but may now have turned up." And: "Now an indefatigable American expert, Joseph Lynch of Worthington, Mass., has found what appears to be the missing pages."

Not having much else to report in this most normal summer since the '50s, which is to say dull, aside from the recent discovery of that long-extinct prehistoric monster, the plesiosaurus, from the murky depths of the southern seas off New Zealand, or a sociological examination of the deeper significance of the latest phenomenon, the film "Star Wars," we turn now to that burning question—not who killed Kennedy, but who killed Lincoln. And also how that subject happens to surface in the press this first week of August, '77.

The American expert, Joseph Lynch, lists his address as P.O. Box 72, Worthington, Mass. His phone, the operator says, has been disconnected. A day of indefatigable tracking led from Worthington, Mass., to Salt

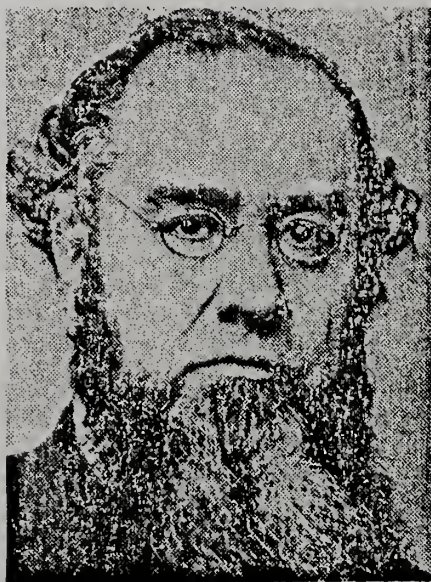
Lake City, Utah, and ended at the Steamboat Square Book Shop in Albany, N.Y., where Mr. Lynch was said to receive messages. "He's a very private man who jealously guards his privacy," the proprietor said, cautiously. Mr. Lynch maintains a phone in the Albany area, but it, too, is unlisted. Finally, late in the day, after more enterprising investigative reporting, the elusive Mr. Lynch himself was on the phone.

"I'm always interested in the subject of, shall we say, Americana, the artifacts of history," he pronounced, in a Brooklyn accent. "One might call me a dealer-collector. In general, I know a lot about American history. It's the thing I liked best in school. I'm not a liberal in my politics. No one's ever accused me of being a Communist. If anything, I'm conservative in my views. I'm totally amateur, I admit. My education is limited to high school and the business arena, as we know it—making a living from one day to next. I'm not Charlie Big Bucks, either."

Mr. Lynch then proceeded to tell the following story:

Some 3½ years ago, he was conducting an inventory and appraisal of papers in the possession of heirs of Edwin M. Stanton, Lincoln's secretary of war. As is his custom, he read out a description of various letters and manuscript pages into a tape recorder. Among the papers were some 18 pages of handwriting, which seemed to have been torn from a diary. In checking into the contents, he determined that these were the missing pages from John Wilkes Booth's diary. No matter how. He did.

In the course of his work, he happened to mention his discovery to another dealer, who in turn passed it on to another, who in turn . . . Anyway, you get the picture: The word was out.



Matthew Brady photo of Stanton.



Photos from the Bettmann Archive

From a book on Booth, rendition of his capture by New York cavalry.

'Missing Pages' in Booth's Diary

Fast curtain, exit Mr. Lynch. enter a David Balsiger, end act one. Plot thickens.

~

David Balsiger was in the East researching a movie on "The Lincoln Conspiracy," to be produced by Sunn Classic Pictures, with offices in Salt Lake City and Los Angeles. Sunn Classic describes itself as "a unique family film company." In its promotional material, Sunn says of itself: "Before starting a picture, this innovative com-

Haynes Johnson

HYPE

pany locates the special group of people who will enjoy that particular kind of film and then shapes it to their preferences like a custom tailor."

In other words, it uses the modern techniques that serve us in everything from selling cigarettes to politicians: mass market research, polling, computer readouts to determine what the audience wants. Then it makes the films. "Docu-dramas," it calls them. Some of Sunn's credits, for film and TV: "The Life and Times of Grizzly Adams," "The Mysterious Monsters" and "The Amazing World of Psychic Phenomena."

The company modestly claims "The Lincoln Conspiracy" will uncover "the most shocking historical conspiracy of our times." It's sort of a Watergate-revisited, before Watergate ever happened, of course. The seeds of the crime, and so forth. Watergate lives. And sells. Even before the fact.

David Balsiger, described as "an investigative snooper" by the company, was doing

the gumshoe work that all reporter-researcher investigators must do when he stumbled on a lead.

He says he was in Washington, D.C., at a Civil War type gun show, when he heard about an Americana collector who had found the missing pages from Booth's diary. "It took me nearly six weeks to track Lynch down," Balsiger says. After calling dealers from New York to Boston, he finally got a call back. He and Lynch began negotiations over the material. And here, if it hasn't already, the story becomes too complex to unravel at this writing. But the essence:

Balsiger says Lynch estimated the value of the material at a quarter of a million to a million dollars, and that Lynch, acting as the middleman for the heirs, first put a price of a quarter million on it. Lynch denies this. The Stanton heirs, he says, didn't want to deal with anyone. "So far as they were concerned, the diary was a black spot on everyone concerned," he says. That is, Stanton clearly was implicated as the master conspirator. How would you like to be known as a direct descendant of the man who had Father Abraham slain?

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By S.A. DESICK
Staff Writer

The San Diego Union

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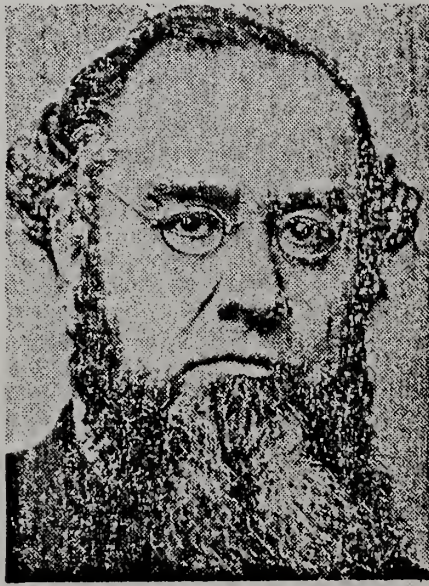
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Matthew Brady photo of Stanton.



Photos from the Bettmann Archive

From a book on Booth, rendition of his capture by New York cavalry.

'Missing Pages' in Booth's Diary

Fast curtain, exit Mr. Lynch, enter a David Balsiger, end act one. Plot thickens.

David Balsiger was in the East researching a movie on "The Lincoln Conspiracy," to be produced by Sunn Classic Pictures, with offices in Salt Lake City and Los Angeles. Sunn Classic describes itself as "a unique family film company." In its promotional material, Sunn says of itself: "Before starting a picture, this innovative com-

Haynes Johnson

HYPE

pany locates the special group of people who will enjoy that particular kind of film and then shapes it to their preferences like a custom tailor."

In other words, it uses the modern techniques that serve us in everything from selling cigarettes to politicians: mass market research, polling, computer readouts to determine what the audience wants. Then it makes the films. "Docu-dramas," it calls them. Some of Sunn's credits, for film and TV: "The Life and Times of Grizzly Adams," "The Mysterious Monsters" and "The Amazing World of Psychic Phenomena."

The company modestly claims "The Lincoln Conspiracy" will uncover "the most shocking historical conspiracy of our times." It's sort of a Watergate-revisited, before Watergate ever happened, of course. The seeds of the crime, and so forth. Watergate lives. And sells. Even before the fact.

David Balsiger, described as "an investigative snooper" by the company, was doing

the gumshoe work that all reporter-researcher investigators must do when he stumbled on a lead.

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The movie accepts John Wilkes Booth as Lincoln's assassin. But among its claims are:

- That four separate groups of government officials and businessmen wanted Lincoln kidnaped or killed. They included a number of radical Republicans in Congress who feared the president would make a lenient peace with the Confederacy. All the groups worked through Booth.

- That Secretary of War Edwin Stanton and Col. Lafayette Baker, chief of detectives in the War Department, were involved in one or more of the plots.

- That Booth bungled several kidnaping attempts and was replaced by a Con-

federate prisoner of war, James W. Boyd, but that Booth on his own then assassinated Lincoln.

- That Booth was not killed 12 days later at the Garrett farm in Virginia, but eventually escaped to Europe.

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Booth's Diary

WILLIAM HANCHETT

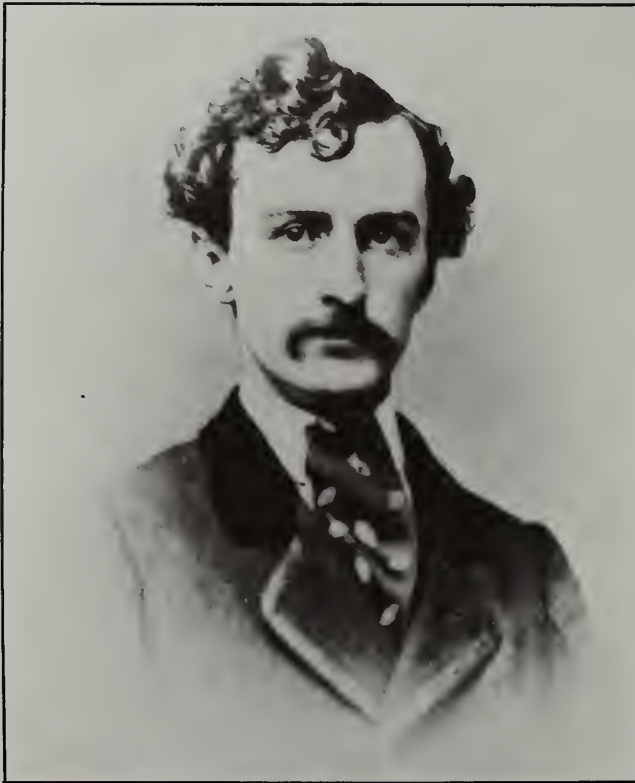
AN HOUR OR TWO before sunrise on April 26, 1865, John Wilkes Booth, mortally wounded, was dragged from a flaming tobacco shed on a farm near Bowling Green, Virginia, and carried to the porch of the farmhouse, where he was propped up against a doubled-over mattress. He had in his possession a knife, a pipe, a pocket compass, a pair of pistols in holsters on a belt, a carbine with cartridges, bills of exchange on a Montreal bank, about \$100 in United States greenbacks, and a small pocket diary—all of which were taken to Washington and examined by Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton, who later turned them over to Judge Advocate General Joseph

Holt.¹ Several newspapers reported the diary, but in the drama and excitement of Lincoln's assassination, references to it were overlooked or forgotten; no questions were raised when it was not submitted with the rest of Booth's belongings as exhibits in the conspiracy trial of May and June.

Except for a few officials in the War Department, no one seemed aware of the diary's existence until February, 1867, when the United States House of Representatives began an investigation to determine if President Andrew Johnson had committed any impeachable offenses. At that time, Lafayette C. Baker, a former Army officer once high in the undercover operations of the War Department and organizer of the party that captured Booth, referred to the diary in testimony before the Judiciary

William Hanchett is a native of Evanston, Illinois, and since 1956 has been on the faculty of San Diego State University. He is the author of "An Illinois Physician and the Civil War, 1864-1865: Letters of Dr. Joshua Nichols Speed," which appeared in the Summer, 1966, issue of the Journal. He is currently at work on a manuscript titled "Lincoln's Assassination: Theories and Perspectives."

¹ E.g., *New York Times*, April 28, 1865, p. 1, col. 2; *New York World*, April 28, 1865, p. 1, col. 5; *Chicago Tribune*, April 29, 1865, p. 1, col. 2.



"I knew no private wrong," John Wilkes Booth wrote in his diary concerning the assassination of Abraham Lincoln, "I struck for my country and that alone."

Committee. Baker also mentioned the diary in his memoirs, *History of the United States Secret Service*, published about the same time.²

The text of the diary, which consisted of two passages written by Booth during his attempt to escape, was released to the press in May, 1867. It is presented here exactly as he wrote it.³ In the interests of readability, the use of [*sic*] after errors of spelling, punctuation, and syntax is omitted.

April 13th 14 Friday the Ides

Until to day nothing was ever *thought* of sacrificing to our country's wrongs. For six months we had worked to capture. But our cause being almost lost, something decisive & great must be done. But its failure was owing to others, who did not strike for their country with a heart. I struck boldly and not as the papers say. I walked with a firm step through a thousand of his friends, was stopped, but pushed on. A Col- was at his side. I shouted *Sic semper before* I fired. In jumping broke my leg. I passed all his pickets, rode sixty miles that night, with the bone of my leg tearing the flesh at every jump. I can never

repent it, though we hated to kill: Our country owed all her troubles to him, and God simply made me the instrument of his punishment. The country is not what it *was*. This forced union is not what *I* have loved. I care not what becomes of me. I have no desire to out-live my country. This night (before the deed), I wrote a long article and left it for one of the Editors of the National Intelligencer, in which I fully set forth our reasons for our proceedings. He or the Govmt

Here, in mid-sentence, Booth stopped writing. His statement about a "long article" referred to a letter he had written the afternoon of the assassination and left with a

²(Philadelphia: L. C. Baker, 1867).

³As a direct result of the alleged discovery of the pages missing from Booth's diary (discussed later in this article), the Federal Bureau of Investigation made a comprehensive study of the volume in 1977. For details of that examination, see the February-March and March-April, 1977, issues of *Lincoln Log* (Seaford, N.Y.). The transcript printed above is based on the enlarged photographs made by the F.B.I. Where

friend and fellow actor, John Matthews, for delivery to the Washington newspaper *National Intelligencer* the following morning. After the assassination, Matthews opened, read, and, as he later admitted, burned the letter for fear of being incriminated in the assassination.⁴ On the night of his flight from Washington, Booth rode less than thirty miles, although it must have seemed like sixty. Because his was a simple fracture, not a compound one, the bone could not have been tearing his flesh, although it must have seemed as if it were. The man in the box at Ford's Theatre with Lincoln, Henry Reed Rathbone, was a major, not a colonel.

The next entry in Booth's diary is a hand-drawn calendar, necessary because the dates already printed there were for 1864, not 1865. Booth numbered the calendar through June 18, checking off each day as it passed.

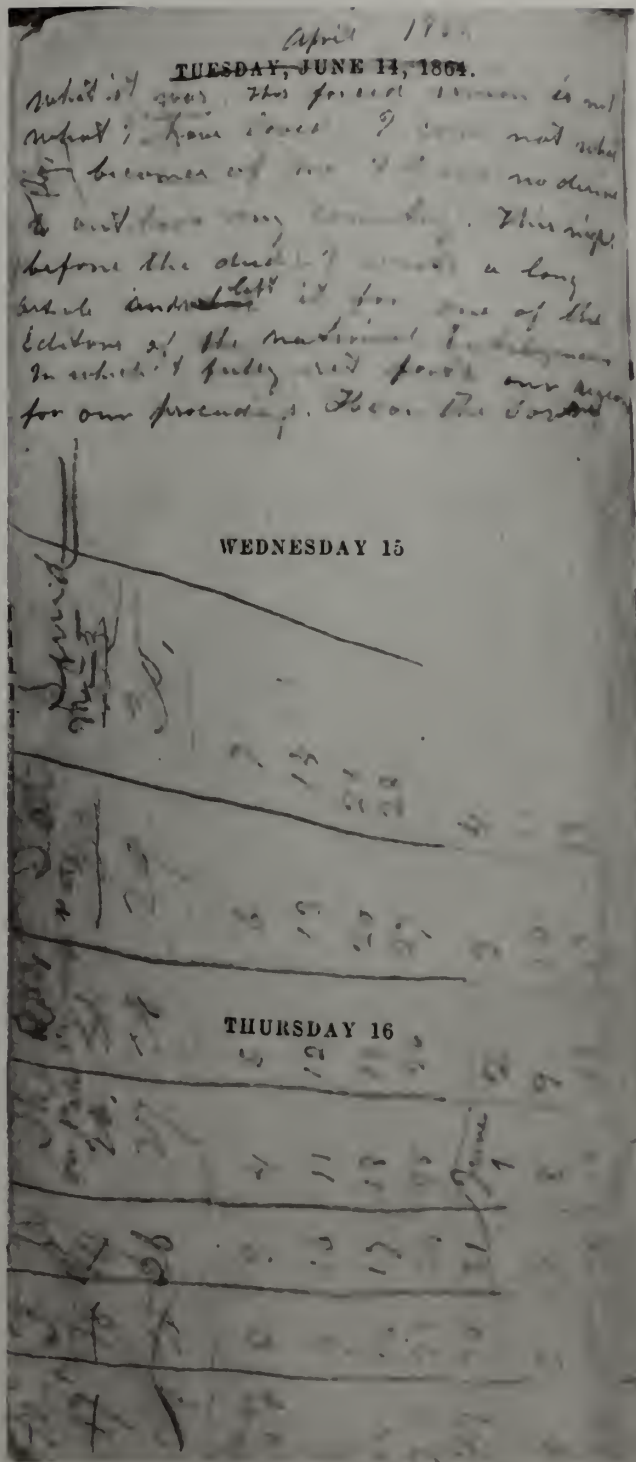
His text resumes:

Friday 21—

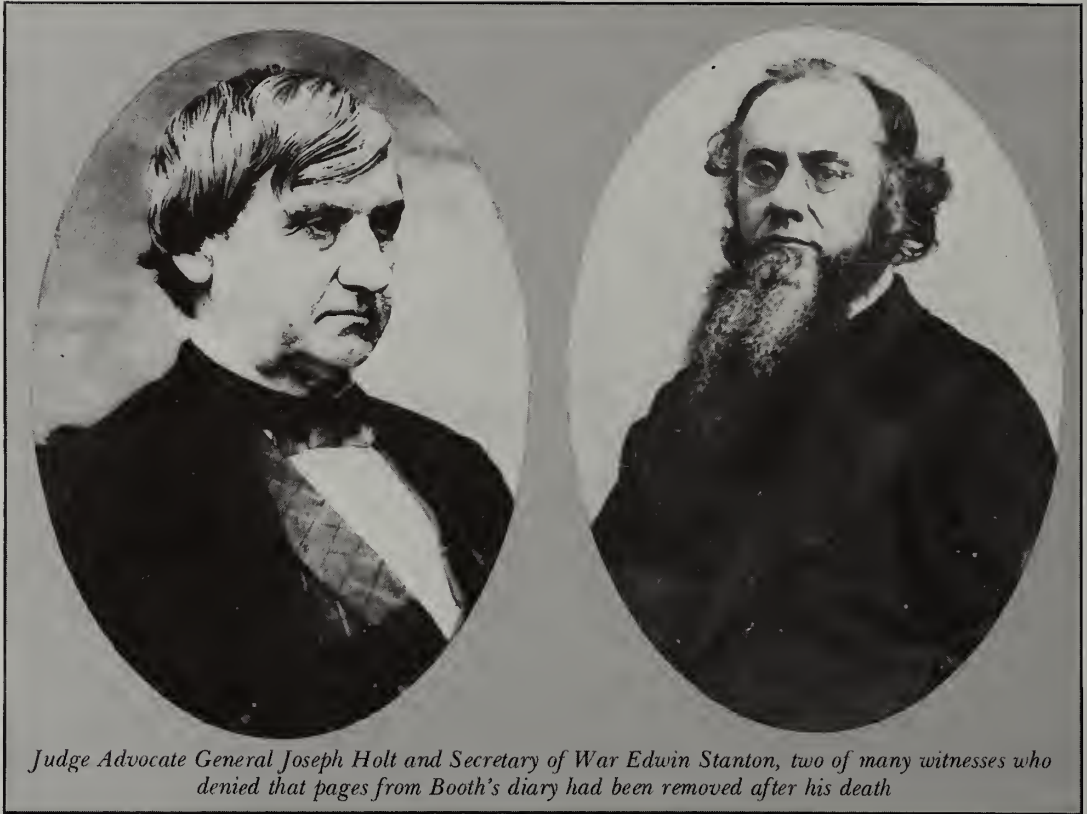
After being hunted like a dog through swamps, woods, and last night being chased by gun boats till I was forced to return wet cold and starving, with every mans hand against me, I am here in despair. And why; For doing what Brutus was honored for, what made Tell a Hero. And yet I for striking down a greater tyrant than they ever knew am looked upon as a common cutthroat. My action was purer than either of theirs. One, hoped to be great himself. The other had not only his countrys but his own wrongs to avenge. I hoped for no gain. I knew no private wrong. I struck for my country and that alone. A country groaned beneath this tyranny and prayed for this end. Yet now behold the cold hand they extend to me. God *cannot* pardon me if I have done wrong. Yet I cannot see any wrong except in serving a degenerate people. The little, the

Booth's pencilled script is no longer legible, I have deferred to the reproduction of the diary published in George S. Bryan, *The Great American Myth* (New York: Carrick & Evans, 1940), pp. 302-03.

⁴*Impeachment of the President*, House Report 7 (Serial Set 1314), 40 Cong., 1 Sess. (1867), pp. 783-88 (hereafter cited as *Impeachment Investigation*); see also pp. 532-35.



A page from Booth's diary, slightly enlarged, showing a portion of his April 13-14 entry and his hand-drawn calendar



very little I left behind to clear my name, the Govmt will not allow to be printed. So ends all. For my country I have given up all that makes life sweet and Holy, brought misery upon my family, and am sure there is no pardon in the Heaven for me since man condemns me so. I have only *heard* of what has been done (except what I did myself) and it fills me with horror. God try and forgive me, and bless my mother. To night I will once more try the river with the intent to cross, though I have a greater desire and almost a mind to return to Washington and in a measure clear my name which I feel I can do. I do not repent the blow I struck. I may before my God but not to man.

I think I have done well, though I am abandoned, with the curse of Cain upon me. When if the world knew my heart, *that one* blow would have made me great, though I did desire no greatness.

To night I try to escape these blood hounds once more. Who who can read his fate. God's will be done.

I have too great a soul to die like a criminal. Oh may he, may he spare me that and let me die bravely.

I bless the entire world. Have never hated or wronged anyone. This last was not a wrong, unless God deems it so. And its with him, to damn or bless me. And for this brave boy with me who often prays (yes before and since) with a true and sincere heart, was it crime in him, if so why can he pray the same I do not wish to shed a drop of blood, but "I must fight the course" Tis all thats left me.

If the Judiciary Committee was surprised to learn of the diary in 1867, it was perhaps even more surprised to hear Baker testify that the volume was not in the same condition that it had been when he had first delivered it to Stanton. "I think there was a great deal more of the original diary than appears here now," Baker stated, referring to the fact that pages had been cut out, leaving jagged stubs in the middle of the book. Baker remembered that one page, no longer present, had contained a sketch of a house. He said that he and Colonel Everton

J. Conger, who had taken the diary from Booth, had discussed the house and wondered if they would be able to determine "whether it was where Mrs. Surratt lived, or some other house he [Booth] was in the habit of frequenting." His recollection of the book was indistinct, Baker admitted, because he had had possession of it for just a short time. "I can only say," he concluded, "that, in my opinion, there have been leaves torn out of that book since I saw it."⁵

Three months later, before the same committee, Baker repeated his conviction that pages had been removed, but under questioning he modified his earlier statements about what had been inside the diary and admitted that he did not remember. He had, he said, "never examined that diary sufficient[ly] to recollect anything in it." Still, he observed, it was not necessary to have examined the book carefully to notice the stubs, if there had been any. Furthermore, he concluded, "I think Mr. Stanton would have asked me what had become of the missing leaves, if any had been missing." But Stanton had not asked, and that "is the reason I think the leaves were not gone."⁶

Of all the individuals who had seen the diary between the time it was taken from Booth and the time it was presented to the Judiciary Committee, Baker was the only one who believed that it had been tampered with. Conger, who appeared several weeks after Baker, testified that the diary was in the same condition that it had been when he had taken it from Booth. He remembered no conversation with Baker about the sketch of a house, although Baker had recently spoken to him about it. Conger said

that he had examined the diary very carefully and believed that there was "no change" in it. Another member of the capture party, Luther B. Baker, a cousin of Lafayette Baker's, testified that the pages had been missing in 1865. So also did Secretary Stanton himself, who had examined the book for thirty or forty minutes when he first received it. Thomas T. Eckert, an assistant secretary of war who carried the diary from Stanton to Judge Advocate General Holt, had also noticed the missing pages and testified that the book was in the same condition as it had been when he received it from Stanton. Holt, who had had physical possession ever since, declared, "It is now in precisely the condition that it was when it came into my hands."⁷ Thus, according to sworn testimony before a congressional committee, either Lafayette C. Baker was guilty of perjury (or a bad memory), or Conger, Luther B. Baker, Stanton, Eckert, and Holt were.

The weight of evidence, as well as of numbers, is against Baker. On May 20, when asked by a committee member how he had gotten hold of the extracts from the diary that were included in his *History*, Baker testified that he had heard Conger quote them in his office (in November, Baker changed that testimony, declaring that he had taken the extracts from newspaper reports—a clear impossibility because the text of the diary was not released to the press until May, 1867). Under further questioning, Baker admitted that he was not sure of what had been said about Booth's diary in his *History*, which, although published under his own name, had in fact been written from his materials by someone else. He admitted finally that he had not yet read the volume. Indeed he had not; for if he had, he would have known that the book contained no extracts at all from Booth's diary, but only a few passing references and the secondhand fiction that Booth had spent one night in the Maryland forest lying between the legs of his slain horse in order

⁵*Ibid.*, pp. 32–33; Baker, p. 508.

⁶*Impeachment Investigation*, p. 458.

⁷Conger's testimony is *ibid.*, pp. 325, 332; Luther Baker's, p. 484; Stanton's, p. 281; Eckert's, p. 672; Holt's, p. 28.

to absorb the warmth that remained in the animal's dead body.⁸

Baker was not only a wavering witness, he was a vengeful one as well. One year before his testimony he had been forced to resign from the Army, possibly because of Stanton's refusal to support him in a quarrel with President Johnson, who had forbidden him access to the White House. In apparent retaliation, Baker sought before the Judiciary Committee to embarrass Stanton by holding him responsible for the removal of pages from Booth's diary. Baker also sought to destroy Johnson by exposing him as one of the arch-traitors of all history. Under oath, Baker claimed that he had seen, and could obtain, wartime correspondence between Johnson and Jefferson Davis and other Confederate leaders that revealed Johnson to have been a Confederate spy. Johnson's well-publicized Unionist sentiments, his radical denunciations of Rebel leaders, and his call for their severe punishment had all been part of his cover, and of course had helped him secure the nomination as Lincoln's vice-presidential candidate in 1864. The implication of Baker's testimony was astounding: if Johnson was not himself a member of the conspiracy against Lincoln, his Confederate friends had engineered the assassination in order to make him President of the United States.⁹

There was a surface plausibility to Baker's sensational testimony, for once Johnson entered the White House, he had indeed opposed the Reconstruction policies of the Republican party, exactly as he might have done had he been a Confederate spy maneuvered into the Presidency by an intricate southern conspiracy. Some Republican members of the Judiciary Committee were only too happy to listen to Baker's charges and would have been delighted to have him prove them. Among the congressmen was Benjamin F. Butler of Massachusetts, who referred in the House of Representatives to Booth's comment

about being tempted to return to Washington and clear his name. "How clear himself?" Butler asked. "By disclosing his accomplices? Who were they? . . . Who spoliated that book after it got into the possession of the Government, if it was not spoliated before?" Presuming that Baker had told the truth about the diary, Butler declared that the missing pages would explain how Booth would have cleared himself in Washington. "If we had only the advantage of all the testimony," he said, "we might have then been able . . . to find who it was that changed Booth's purpose from capture to assassination; who it was that could profit by assassination who could not profit from the capture and abduction of the President; who it was expected by Booth would succeed to Lincoln if the knife made a vacancy."¹⁰

In July, 1867, Butler moved that a special committee be created to explore those questions, particularly the role of "many persons holding high positions of power and authority, . . . who were acting through inferior persons as their tools and instruments."¹¹ The House granted Butler's request and made him chairman of the five-member committee. But Lafayette Baker was not able to produce his sensational letters or even any evidence that they had ever existed, and Butler's committee never reported.¹² In his autobiography, Butler admitted its failure. "I think I ought to say," he wrote, "that there was no reliable evidence at all to convince a prudent and responsible

⁸*Ibid.*, pp. 452, 1192. The diary is mentioned in Baker's book on pp. 505, 538, 540.

⁹*Impeachment Investigation*, pp. 2-5, 29-32, 458-62.

¹⁰*Congressional Globe*, 40 Cong., 1 Sess. (March 26, 1867), p. 363.

¹¹*Ibid.* (July 8, 1867), pp. 515, 522.

¹²Stanton and Holt had previously investigated Baker's charge and were convinced that the letters never existed. *Impeachment Investigation*, pp. 29, 282. See also Hans Louis Trefousse, "Belated Revelations of the Assassination Committee," *Lincoln Herald*, Spring-Summer, 1956, pp. 13-16.

man that there was any ground for the suspicions entertained against Johnson."¹³ Thus in the end it was Baker, not Johnson, who was exposed. As two exasperated members of the Judiciary Committee exclaimed of him as a witness, "It is doubtful whether he has in any one thing told the truth, even by accident."¹⁴

Not for seventy years did anyone again succumb to the temptation of exploiting the missing pages from Booth's diary by hinting that Baker might have been telling the truth about them after all. In 1937 Otto Eisenschiml published *Why Was Lincoln Murdered?*, in which he suggested by inference that the mastermind behind the assassination conspiracy might have been none other than Secretary of War Stanton.¹⁵ Though Eisenschiml advanced his idea as a hypothesis only and admitted that there was no evidence to support it, he so skillfully (and deviously) built a circumstantial case against Stanton that "the Eisenschiml thesis" has multitudes of true believers even today.

In reviewing the testimony before the Judiciary Committee, Eisenschiml tells of Baker's assertion that pages were removed from the diary, but he does not make it clear that Baker later retracted most of his testimony and ended up swearing that he remembered nothing at all about what was inside the diary. Baker's sole reason for believing the book had been intact was that Stanton had not asked him about any missing pages. Of that remark, Eisenschiml states: "This shot must have told, for the investigators quickly abandoned the subject. . . . All in all, Baker had decidedly the better of the argument."¹⁶

But to give Baker the better of this particular argument was apparently too much, even for Eisenschiml, for in his next paragraph he modifies his conclusion. "It is difficult to arrive at a verdict," he declares judiciously.

On one hand there stands a disgruntled ex-secret service man whose love of veracity is not of

the highest rating. . . . Against him was pitted Edwin M. Stanton, who, as a young man in Cadiz, Ohio, during the presidential campaign of 1840, had once cited the Constitution and deliberately deleted one line, thereby distorting the entire meaning; as Secretary of War he was responsible for the actions of the bureau of military justice which had not hesitated to mutilate the official report of the conspiracy trial. It is impossible to glean the truth from the contradictory statements of two such men.

Because Stanton was alleged (in a reminiscence published in 1927) to have misrepresented the Constitution during an early and especially wild political campaign, and because the official report (actually an abridgement of the proceedings) of the conspiracy trial did not include the petition of clemency for Mary E. Surratt signed by five of the nine judges, Eisenschiml maintains that the Secretary's testimony before the Judiciary Committee, corroborated by four other men, is worth no more than that of Baker, who perjured himself both in his original testimony about the diary and in his testimony about President Johnson, and who was directly or indirectly responsible for the falsification of the diary in his *History of the United States Secret Service*.¹⁷

Eisenschiml was willing to call the controversy between Stanton and Baker a draw. Not so David Balsiger and Charles E. Sellier, Jr., who in 1977 startled students of the assassination and the public by announcing that the diary's missing pages—and Booth's letter to the *National Intelligencer* as well—had been found among papers owned by Stanton's descendants.

In their *The Lincoln Conspiracy*, released

¹³Butler's *Book* (Boston: A. M. Thayer, 1892), p. 930.

¹⁴*Impeachment Investigation*, p. 111. The committee's reports, from which this quotation is taken, precede the pages of testimony.

¹⁵The book was published by Little, Brown of Boston.

¹⁶Eisenschiml, p. 143.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, p. 144.

SATURDAY, JUNE 11, 1864.

DECEMBER, 1864.

New York.								Day of Month	Day of Week	San Francisco.					
Sun Rises		Sun Sets		Moon Sets		High Tide				Sun Rises		Sun Sets		Moon Sets	
h	m	h	m	h	m	h	m			h	m	h	m	h	m
7	54	34	7	9	9	44	1	Th.	6	58	4	41	7	22	
7	64	33	8	15	10	32	2	Fri.	6	59	4	40	8	28	
7	74	33	9	24	11	22	3	Sat.	7	0	4	40	9	35	
7	84	33	10	33	4	4	S.	7	1	4	40	10	42	
7	94	33	11	42	0	37	5	Mo.	7	2	4	40	11	49	
7	104	33	morn	1	33	6	Tu.	7	3	4	40	morn			
7	114	33	0	50	2	33	7	W.	7	4	4	40	0	57	
7	124	33	1	58	3	35	8	Th.	7	5	4	40	2	3	
7	134	33	3	6	4	38	9	Fri.	7	5	4	40	3	9	
7	144	33	4	14	5	38	10	Sat.	7	6	4	40	4	15	
7	154	33	5	19	6	35	11	S.	7	7	4	41	5	20	
7	154	33	6	21	7	28	12	Mo.	7	8	4	41	6	21	
7	164	33	rises.	8	17	13	13	Tu.	7	8	4	41	rises.		
7	174	34	6	16	9	1	14	W.	7	9	4	41	6	31	
7	184	34	7	16	9	45	15	Th.	7	9	4	42	7	29	
7	184	34	8	16	10	28	16	Fri.	7	10	4	43	8	27	
7	194	35	9	14	11	10	17	Sat.	7	10	4	43	9	24	
7	204	35	10	11	11	50	18	S.	7	11	4	43	10	20	
7	204	35	11	7	0	11	19	Mo.	7	11	4	44	11	15	
7	214	36	morn	0	54	20	20	Tu.	7	12	4	44	morn		
7	214	36	0	3	1	40	21	W.	7	12	4	45	0	9	
7	214	37	1	0	2	29	22	Th.	7	13	4	45	1	4	
7	224	38	1	58	3	22	23	Fri.	7	13	4	46	2	1	
7	224	38	2	57	4	17	24	Sat.	7	14	4	47	2	59	
7	234	39	3	56	5	13	25	S.	7	14	4	47	3	57	
7	234	39	4	56	6	8	26	Mo.	7	15	4	48	4	56	
7	234	40	5	54	7	2	27	Tu.	7	15	4	48	5	54	
7	244	41	sets.	7	53	28	28	W.	7	15	4	49	sets.		
7	244	42	6	0	8	41	29	Th.	7	16	4	49	6	13	
7	244	42	7	9	9	28	30	Fri.	7	16	4	51	7	21	
7	244	43	8	20	10	17	31	Sat.	7	16	4	51	8	30	

San Francisco Tides.

For explanatory remarks, see Note on Twelfth page.

Day of Mo'th	High Tide.		Day of Mo'th	High Tide.		Day of Mo'th	High Tide.	
	Morning.	Evening.		Morning.	Evening.		Morning.	Evening.
1	2 14	0 20	12	0 26	10 07	23	6 51	7 20
2	2 53	1 19	13	1 14	11 17	24	7 33	8 28
3	3 32	2 19	14	1 53	11 57	25	8 15	9 43
4	4 13	3 33	15	2 34	0 27	26	8 49	10 41
5	5 06	4 58	16	3 18	1 10	27	9 15	11 42
6	6 7	5 17	17	3 2	2 0	28	9 43	
7	7 1	7 40	18	3 55	3 17	29	0 27	10 29
8	7 58	19 18	19	4 28	4 18	30	1 14	11 22
9	8 47		20	5 0	5 8	31	1 50	0 16
10	9 39	11 22	21	6 17	0		2 28	1 14
11	10 32							

1720

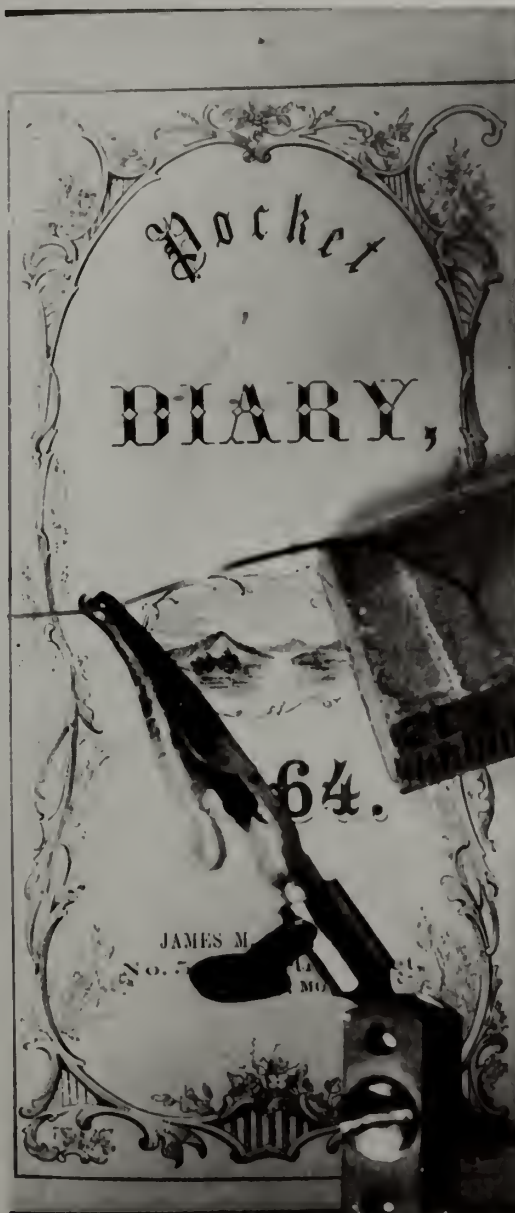
~~SUNDAY 12~~

April 14 Friday the 14th
 Doubt to day nothing was
 even thought of sacrificing to
 our country's wrongs for it means
 we have consented to capture. I don't
 care how almost to the country
 down. ² Such ³ would be done. But I
 am a man to others who will
 sacrifice for their country with
 heart. I should be able and not
 the paper say. I walked with a friend
 through a thousand, but
 was stopped, but pushed on. I was
 near at his side. I should see before
 before I found. In fact, but
 I found all his friends. I was not
 the night. I was not
 know, the flesh is so young.
 I can never repeat it. I
 had to tell. Our country
 all then to be able to live.
 God bless, by much and I am
 of this day's work. The country

The above photograph of the diary shows the first of two entries written in April, 1865. Also visible are the controversial stubs of missing pages.

familiar with it in 1867. He said it “was evidently written after the events,” declared that Booth had exulted over his crime, and observed: “The entries continue down to the 21st of April. They are not continued up to his capture. It does not appear even that he had crossed the river when they ceased.” Any close reading of Booth’s comments would make it clear that they were written after the assassination and that, although Booth justified his action, he did not exult over it. Holt referred to “the entries” as if they had been made day-by-day to April 21, when in fact Booth had written in the book on only two occasions: the first probably on April 17—antedated April 13–14—and the second dated “Friday April 21.” The text of the latter passage makes it obvious that Booth had not yet crossed the Potomac. Of the figures, letters, and lines Booth had drawn after the first entry, Holt said it was “probable” they were to indicate the days of the week and month.³⁶

If the diary was of so little interest that Holt had forgotten what it contained—even though he had had it in his possession for the past two years—and if it was true that Booth himself had cut out the missing pages for his own reasons, why was the book suppressed by the War Department? Why was it not presented at the conspiracy trial? It may have been, as Holt explained, that “There was nothing in the diary which I could conceive would be testimony against any human being, or for any one except Booth himself, and he being dead, I did not offer it to the Commission.”³⁷ John A. Bingham, one of the special prosecutors at the trial, declared that the diary was not evidence of the kind that the government was obliged to introduce. “Why, sir,” he exclaimed in the House of Representatives on March 26, 1867, “if one of several conspirators can thus make his declarations, made after the fact[,] evidence, either for himself or for his co-conspirators, how impotent is justice itself.”³⁸



Title page of 1864 pocket diary used by John Wilkes Booth in April, 1865. The booklet was published by St. Louis stationer James M. Crawford.

MONDAY, JUNE 20, 1864.

TUESDAY 21

WEDNESDAY 22

THURSDAY, JUNE 23, 1864.

After being hunted like a
mouse through the streets of
Washington for three
days I have at last found
a place where I can be safe.
Why? For owing to the
honor of the President
here, I had got down
a

FRIDAY 24

they were better. I had
upon a common antislavery
my section from the
of them. One of the
himself. The other had not
his country but his own
to bring. I hoped for

I knew no female names
which for

SATURDAY 25

my country
and that alone. I
ground beneath the
and proud for the
not one behold me
then extend to me. I
foundation me if I
have. Get I cannot
house. It is
resign

Above, the final pages of John Wilkes Booth's brief but impassioned account of his flight from Ford's Theatre after the assassination of Abraham Lincoln. The earlier pages of Booth's diary are reproduced on pages 41, 45, and 53 of this article.



Lafayette C. Baker, seated, confers with his aides Luther Baker, left, and Everton J. Conger. Lafayette Baker was the first chief of the Secret Service.

as a paperback by Schick Sunn Classic Books and produced as a motion picture by Sunn Classic Pictures,¹⁸ Balsiger and Sellier claim to have unravelled a conspiracy so shocking that they have called upon Congress to establish a joint Senate-House committee to reopen the case of Lincoln's assassination. "Until that congressional committee is formed," they instruct their readers, "you are the judge of the evidence."¹⁹

Unfortunately, they do not give their readers any evidence to judge; they simply state that it exists. Indeed, Balsiger and Sellier and their sponsor, Sunn Classic, have not seen the purported missing pages themselves, because negotiations to obtain them broke down over the owners' "desire for total anonymity, a disagreement on a dollar amount for using the papers, excessive contractual restrictions on their use, and numerous legal questions."²⁰ The best that Balsiger and Sellier were able to do was to acquire (for \$6,500)²¹ a transcript of the alleged paper, some three thousand words implicating seventy prominent businessmen and Union and Confederate political leaders, including, of course, Edwin M. Stanton. "Everything possible was done to authenticate the Booth diary transcripts," they declare, "including performing voice analyses on numerous interviews, using the psychological stress evaluator (PSE), used by many law enforcement agencies and the CIA." Based on the PSE results and their own critical evaluation of the page contents, "the authors believe the material to be authentic."²²

Critical readers judging the evidence for themselves would require additional substantiation, and Balsiger and Sellier give it to them. In the fortuitous discovery of still another document—the diary of an Indiana congressman, George W. Julian, who was in 1867 a member of Butler's assassination committee—they seek to prove that the missing pages were once in Stanton's pos-

session.

As described in *The Lincoln Conspiracy*, Julian was as anxious as other Radicals to remove Lincoln from the Presidency but was not a member of any of the four conspiracies the book claims existed against him. Summoned to the War Department on April 24, 1865, Julian found several Radicals greatly agitated over a little book being passed among them. "I asked what was happening," Julian wrote in his diary that night (as reported by Balsiger and Sellier), "and Stanton said, 'We have Booth's diary and he has recorded a lot in it.' . . . Stanton asked me if I wanted to read the diary and I told him that since I had not met the man [Booth] and was not mentioned in his diary, I was better off not reading it. . . . Stanton said, 'It concerns you, for we either stick together in this thing, or we will all go down the river together.' But I did not read it nor do I know what was in it."²³

If authentic, Julian's account would indeed prove that the missing pages from Booth's diary had once been in Stanton's office; it would also lend credibility to the transcript of the purported pages. But once again Balsiger and Sellier do not present a document for the judgment of their readers, but only the transcript of one.

In 1926 Julian's daughter, Grace Julian Clarke, lent her father's diary to the writer Claude G. Bowers, who used it as a source for his popular book on Reconstruction, *The Tragic Era* (1929). "I fear it will not be

¹⁸ (Los Angeles, 1977).

¹⁹ Balsiger and Sellier, p. 13.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 11–12.

²¹ Jack Anderson to the *Washington Post*, n.d. (ca. Aug., 1977), as reprinted in *Lincoln Log*, Aug., 1977, p. 3.

²² Balsiger and Sellier, p. 12.

²³ "Secret Documents Excerpts," promotional literature released by Sunn Classic Pictures (1977), pp. 9–10. The text of the alleged diary is reprinted in *Lincoln Log*, March–April, 1977, p. 5, and freely paraphrased in Balsiger and Sellier, pp. 219–21.

²⁴ Letter dated July 22, 1926, Manuscript Department, Lilly Library, Indiana University, and reprinted



This sketch, titled "Death of J. Wilkes Booth," appeared in Lafayette Baker's 1867 *History of the United States Secret Service*.

up to your expectations," Mrs. Clarke had told Bowers. "And please remember that it was never meant for such critical examination and that my father meant to destroy it. I feel a little guilty in sending it forth, even for your friendly eye."²⁴ When Bowers returned the manuscript, Mrs. Clarke burned the parts relating to the Civil War and gave

the rest to the Indiana State Library. But Bowers, so the story goes, had made a transcript, and it is that transcript that Balsiger and Sellier used.²⁵

The alleged transcript was found not among the Bowers Papers at Indiana University but in the collections of Ray A. Neff, an associate professor of Health and Safety at Indiana State University, Terre Haute, who supplied many of the documentary sources for *The Lincoln Conspiracy*, and whose name has been associated since 1961 with discoveries relating to the assassination.²⁶ If the transcript is genuine, it means that Grace Clarke was completely blind to the importance of her father's diary, and that Bowers, whose prejudices against the Radicals were extreme, deliberately closed his eyes to material that would have incriminated many of them in Lincoln's

in *Lincoln Log*, Aug., 1977, pp. 3-4.

²⁵Balsiger and Sellier, p. 314 (Ch. 18, notes 1-3, 11-17).

²⁶Neff claimed to have discovered two ciphered messages written by Lafayette Baker in the margins of an old magazine. As decoded by Neff, they revealed a plot against Lincoln involving Stanton, Baker himself, and many others. See Robert H. Fowler, "Was Stanton Behind Lincoln's Murder?" *Civil War Times*, Aug., 1961, pp. 4-23; see, also, "Reaction to Baker Story: 'Kudos' to 'Rubbish,'" *ibid.*, Oct., 1961, pp. 2-5, and "Further Reaction to Baker Story," *ibid.*, Nov., 1961, pp. 2-4.

death—suppositions it is nearly impossible to entertain. By a happy circumstance, portions of Julian's diary had been copied in the *Indiana Magazine of History* in 1915. The entry for April 24 contains no reference to Booth's diary and describes no meeting with Stanton.²⁷ It is obvious, observes William C. Davis, editor of *Civil War Times Illustrated*, that "the fabricator of the more lurid version of the Julian diary didn't do his or her homework."²⁸

On the strength of their dubious transcripts alone, Balsiger and Sellier cannot expect readers to believe that the pages from Booth's diary now exist or that they were ever in Stanton's possession. Lacking new evidence of a convincing character, the only reasonable conclusions to be drawn about the diary come from an examination of facts long available. Little has been written about the diary because prior to Eisenschiml there was little interest in it. After Balsiger and Sellier, the interest may be considerable.

It should be remembered, first of all, that the little book (it measures six inches high by three and one-half inches across and is one inch thick) was published by James M. Crawford of St. Louis as a pocket diary for the year 1864, and was thus not the sort of volume that a true diarist would carry in 1865. Booth had a niece in St. Louis, Blanche De Bar (Booth), and played an engagement there January 12–16, 1864, when he probably obtained the book. If he ever used it as a diary, it could only have been before June 11, for the pages that follow that date are blank, except for those on which he wrote after the assassination and for a few others on which some now meaningless names, dates, and numbers are pencilled in, apparently at random. The pages from January 1 through June 10, a total of twenty-seven leaves, are the ones whose absence is made so conspicuous by the stubs. In addition, a total of sixteen sheets have been removed from different places in the last half of the volume.²⁹

When the year 1864 ended, Booth kept the diary; it was convenient for memoranda, and perhaps he could not bear to throw it away. It is handsome even today, when its brown leather binding is no longer supple and lustrous and its red leather lining has faded. It must have been a thing of beauty when Booth carried it, and of utility too. Inside the front cover and hinged to the back cover are leather pockets, with flaps, for miscellaneous papers (Booth carried the pictures of five women), and there are smaller pockets, too, marked for tickets and postage, and a leather loop for a pencil. Immediately following the title page is a series of printed tables, some of them obsolete in 1865 (like those showing the times of eclipses and high tides in New York and San Francisco for the whole of 1864) but perhaps still capable of diverting a bored traveller; some of the tables, like those showing distance in time and railroad miles from New York to various cities, were still current and valuable. And then there were all those blank pages. Regardless of the year, the beautiful little volume was still useful.

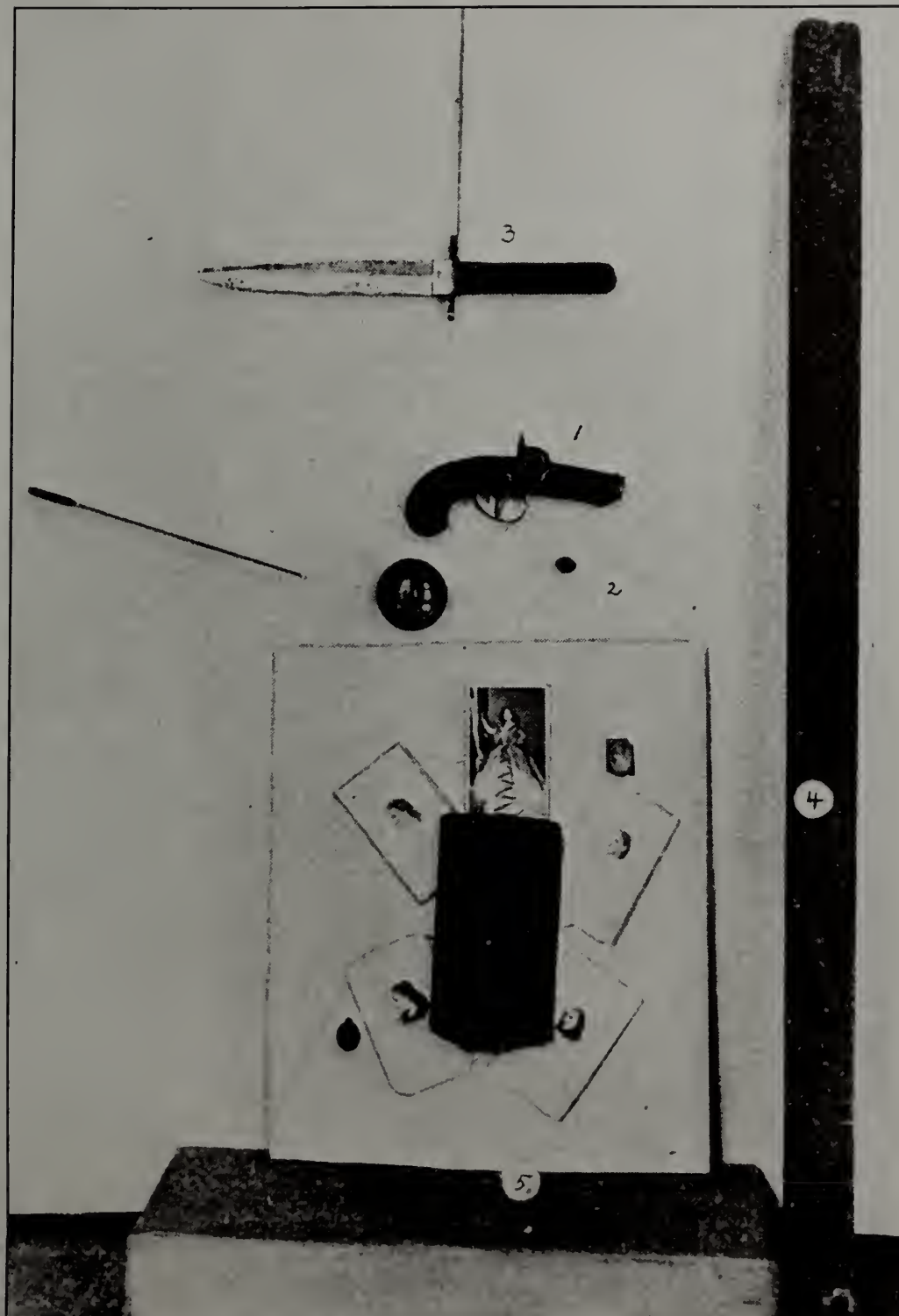
And Booth used it. In September, 1864, he showed it to a friend, Samuel B. Arnold, whom he tried to impress with the amount of money he was earning in the theater.³⁰ At the top of the first page after the stubs, just before the first passage about the assassination, Booth wrote the words "Ti Amo" (instead of "Te Amo"), and many of the stubs show marks and the beginnings or

²⁷"George W. Julian's Journal—The Assassination of Lincoln," *Indiana Magazine of History*, 11 (1915), 324–37.

²⁸Davis, "Caveat Emptor," *Civil War Times Illustrated*, Aug., 1977, p. 36.

²⁹"Report of the FBI Laboratory, Federal Bureau of Investigation" (on Booth's diary), Oct. 3, 1977, pp. 2–3.

³⁰[Charles F. Heartman, comp.] *Defence of a Lincoln Conspirator: Statements and Autobiographical Notes by Samuel Bland Arnold* (Hattiesburg, Miss.: Book Farm, 1943), p. 19.



Booth relics formerly held by the War Department: (1) derringer used in the assassination; (2) fatal bullet; (3) dagger; (4) wooden bar used by Booth to prevent admittance into the Lincoln box at Ford's Theatre; (5) diary and items found in it.

endings of words, proving that they had once been written upon. One wonders how many of them were love notes in Latin. On April 23, 1865, only two and a half days before the fatal rendezvous at Richard Henry Garrett's farm, Booth and his faithful companion David E. Herold, fleeing southward as fast as a broken leg would permit, reached the country home of a prominent Virginia physician, Richard Stuart (not Stewart).³¹ Already in trouble with Union authorities for his support of the Confederacy, Stuart would not receive the fugitives (though he did not turn them in, either) but sent them to the cabin of one of his former slaves, William Lucas, where he provided dinner for them and where they spent the night.

Booth was so indignant at the treatment that the next morning he opened the diary and wrote an angry note to Stuart. The note was dated April 24, the very day that Bal-siger and Sellier claim Julian saw the diary in Stanton's office. "Forgive me, but I have some little pride," Booth began. "I hate to blame you for your want of hospitality; you know your own affairs. I was sick and tired, with a broken leg, in need of medical advice. I would not have turned a dog from my door in such a condition." However, the doctor had given food, for which Booth thanked him; since Booth had not been treated as a guest, he asked Stuart to accept \$5.00. Booth tore the note from the diary, leaving parts of words on the stubs, and then reconsidered. The gesture was too extravagant. He cut out another sheet and copied what he had written, except for the conclusion. "Be kind enough," he now asked Stuart, "to accept the enclosed two dollars and a half (though hard to spare) for what we have received." He folded the first note and put it in one of the pockets of the diary, where it still resided when the diary was shown to the Judiciary Committee.³²

About two weeks after Booth's death, Luther Baker, backtracking Booth's trail for information about his movements,

heard from Lucas of the second note, secured it from Stuart, and took it back to Washington. In his presence, Lafayette Baker or his representative and Eckert matched it against the stubs in the diary. It fit. "I am positive," Luther Baker testified, "the leaf came from the diary."³³

On April 25, at the Garrett farmhouse where he had taken refuge, Booth asked Richard Baynham Garrett, a boy of eleven years, to take down a large map that hung on the wall and place it on the floor. Leaning his crutches against the wall and using a chair for support, Booth then lowered himself to the map. "After carefully studying it for a long time," Garrett later recalled, "he took a pencil and notebook from his pocket and wrote something in it."³⁴ The next day Booth was dead and his diary was at the War Department.

Stanton told the Judiciary Committee that he assumed Booth removed leaves whenever he had a use for them or wished to destroy something written on them. Holt conceded that in cutting out pages Booth could have been shielding co-conspirators, but thought it more likely that the actor, recognizing the possibility of being captured, was preparing his diary for maximum public impact. Booth's dramatic and passionate vindication of his deed had been written for publication, Holt believed, "I think there can be no doubt about that, if you examine it carefully."³⁵

For a man with limitless opportunities to study the diary, Holt was surprisingly un-

³¹ David Miller DeWitt, *The Assassination of Abraham Lincoln and Its Expiation* (New York: Macmillan, 1909), p. 80.

³² *Impeachment Investigation*, pp. 676-77.

³³ *Ibid.*, pp. 484-85.

³⁴ Richard Baynham Garrett, "A Chapter of Unwritten History," *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, 71 (1963), 393.

³⁵ *Impeachment Investigation*, pp. 281, 282-86.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 285-87.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 285.

³⁸ *Congressional Globe*, 40 Cong., 1 Sess. (March 26, 1867), p. 364.

The many little things which
 do make my memory of the
 time when I was alone to be
 bound. I am sure that for
 my country I have given
 up all that makes life
 sweet and that I have
 given up the only thing
 which makes life worth living.

MONDAY 27

TUESDAY 29

the Curve of Cam upon me
my heart, that one I could
The great
To my heart I say to make
there blood from hole once

more to **THURSDAY, 30** ...
the last ...

I have been here
7 also
the way to the
I have the entire road
I have been called on never yet
anyone. This last was seen
I have been called on never yet

FRIDAY, JULY 1

20. And its with him, do
clear... re, And
for this because day with
daho... large... before
since... the...
... the...
... bird's...
fight the course" ...

Following Booth's April 20 entry are several blank pages of calendar sheets, some torn, as well as printed sheets intended for personal use, including pages titled "Memoranda" and "Cash Account."

Perhaps the diary was suppressed because its opening lines spoke of a six months' kidnap conspiracy and also of the sudden need to do "something decisive & great" since the cause was almost lost. Whether or not the statement was evidence, it certainly would have weakened the government's contention that assassination had been the object of Booth's conspiracy from the beginning. Throughout the trial, Holt and the other prosecutors were determined that Booth's associates should be convicted and punished for their involvement in Lincoln's murder, and they were none too scrupulous about how they accomplished it.

But the most likely reason of all why the diary was suppressed was the same reason that Booth, not knowing of the cowardice of John Matthews, believed that his letter to the *National Intelligencer* had been suppressed. "The little, the very little I left behind to clear my name," Booth had written, "the Govmt will not allow to be printed." The government did not publicize the diary in 1865 because it would not allow Lincoln's assassin to clear his name, or try to, by describing the purity and selflessness of his motives. Stanton, who had had Booth's body secretly buried so that it could not become the object of glorification or veneration by rebels and rebel-sympathizers,

knew only too well that there were many people in the North, as well as in the South, who agreed that Lincoln was a tyrant and the author of the country's sufferings.³⁹ Stanton would not allow Booth to appeal to that group. Nor would he allow Booth to plead for understanding and God's forgiveness, or to reveal the torment of his dawning self-doubt; Stanton knew that there were many more people who would respond compassionately to such human suffering. He was resolved that Booth be denied any defense at all, that he be despised and execrated and, if not forgotten, then consigned to a place in history as miserable as his unknown gravesite.⁴⁰

Booth escaped the hangman, but Stanton sought to condemn him to silence and obloquy by concealing his diary. In doing so, the Secretary became vulnerable to the tragically ironic charge of being himself a party to the assassination.

³⁹So he told the Judiciary Committee. *Impeachment Investigation*, p. 409.

⁴⁰For the same reason, Stanton was "violently opposed" to the publication of the diary in 1867. Gideon Welles, *Diary of . . .*, ed. Howard K. Beale (New York: Norton, 1960), III, 95.

The Lost (Last) Words of John Wilkes Booth



Manhole entrance in the middle of Brooklyn's Atlantic Avenue

Bob Diamond gives a tunnel tour.

Is it possible that the diary of the man behind one of this nation's most notorious assassinations is buried in a hidden tunnel underneath Atlantic Avenue in Brooklyn? Robert Diamond thinks so. By Alison Lowenstein

It started with a historical novel. In December 1979, Bob Diamond was an engineering student at Pratt Institute when he heard a radio show about *The Cosgrove Report* by G.J.A. O'Toole. The program discussed a section of the novel that involved the missing 18 pages of John Wilkes Booth's diary hidden behind a false stone block in a metal box, next to an old steam train lying on its side in a tunnel that was supposedly underneath Brooklyn's Atlantic Avenue. A Brooklyn native, Diamond was immediately intrigued. Diamond even called up the author and inquired about the tunnel. "O'Toole said he got the idea for the tunnel from a newspaper article he read when he was a kid about Murder Incorporated burying dead bodies down there. He told me to see if I could find it." So Diamond did just that.

The quest to find the tunnel wasn't easy. First, nobody believed it was there: Countless times Diamond was told by various city officials that it didn't exist. But he researched old newspaper archives and found articles about the tunnel, and finally, in 1980, he discovered the plans for the tunnel in the Brooklyn borough president's office. In 1981, he persuaded the folks at Brooklyn Union Gas (now National Grid) to let him check underneath a manhole at the busy intersection of Atlantic Avenue and Court Street, which was where he believed the tunnel's entrance to be. It was the moment that changed Diamond's life forever: He had found the world's oldest subway tunnel.

The following year, Diamond started the

Brooklyn Historic Railway Association, a nonprofit company dedicated to preserving the tunnel's history. He also got the tunnel added to the National Register of Historic Places. And he started hosting tours. Now, almost 30 years later, the popularity of the tunnel is growing. Tours that were once given sporadically (around three times a year) now take place twice a month — with two scheduled tours a day. Each tour is capped at 100 people, and the tours are always full. Folks line up in front of the old Independence Savings Bank building that was recently turned into a Trader Joe's supermarket. The line snakes past what was once the bank parking lot, where luxury condos now stand. Change and the transformation of historic buildings is ubiquitous in a city like New York, which is probably why these crowds wait patiently to be escorted to the center of Atlantic Avenue — once they enter that manhole and climb down the small ladder, they're entering a living time capsule.

The tours attract a mixed crowd, but a majority of the folks are technology-addicted 20- to 30-somethings who sacrifice an hour of no wireless service, no access to Twitter and, evil of all evils, no Facebook to take the tour. When Bob Diamond introduces himself in the dimly lit tunnel, the crowd goes wild; people hoot and cheer. He is a hero. Diamond, a chubby middle-aged man dressed in flannel and wearing a knit cap, is their urban Indiana Jones. Diamond talks about the history of the tunnel, from witty stories of his search for the tunnel to intriguing tales of its historic folklore. He compares the tour to an off-Broadway play. (At one point in time the tour even had costumed actors who re-enacted the true story of an 1844 assassination of an overseer by a sandhog, which was what they called railway workers in those days.) It's not a far cry, though, considering the tunnel has also been used as a performance/art space.

The real draw, though, is Diamond's narrated tour. The people on the tour bring flashlights and follow him around as he pauses to tell the stories of the tunnel. The tales are fascinating, rich, engaging and plentiful. In addition to the story of John Wilkes Booth's missing diary pages, Diamond tells detailed accounts of river pirates who had secret entrances to the tunnel from the old Atlantic Avenue bars, corrupt

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Booth's diary may be at the end of this tunnel.

19th-century politicians, the escapades of the Smoky Hollow Gang, German spies, ghost sightings and many other stories. As you hear the tales in this unchanged tunnel, you can feel the history all around you. When you leave the manhole after the theatrical-like tour, it feels as if you've just stepped out of a time machine.

Yet, this play doesn't have an ending, because there is another 250 feet of tunnel that hasn't been uncovered. Instead, at the end of the tour, folks crowd around a wall, and some touch it and talk about what they think might be behind it. In recent years there has been serious interest in uncovering it, because, until the wall is removed, the entire history of the tunnel hasn't (and can't) be told.

Diamond is excited to finally discover what may or may not be there. "In a very limited way, I sort of found out what Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin felt like when they set foot on the moon, because after we broke through [the first] three-foot-thick concrete wall and got inside the tunnel, it was like landing on a different planet out in

space. Going behind [the wall at the end of the tunnel] is going to be repeating all that excitement, but tenfold."

But will he find the missing pages of the diary like he heard about in *The Cosgrove Report*? Those missing 18 pages of Booth's diary have baffled historians for more than a century, and they've also been used to fuel creative works like the O'Toole book and the 2007 Hollywood blockbuster *National Treasure: Book of Secrets*, where the character Ben Gates (played by Nicolas Cage) has to uncover a mystery hidden within the diary's 18 missing pages. Diamond refers to his search behind the wall as "National Treasure 3." If *The Cosgrove Report* was correct about the tunnel being there, then maybe the book is right about the missing pages of the diary also being hidden in the tunnel. According to Diamond, O'Toole wasn't only a novelist, he was also the CIA's resident expert on U.S. Civil War-era espionage. O'Toole served with the agency as chief of the Problem Analysis Branch. Maybe he knew some secrets and decided to disguise them as historical fiction? It's a possibility,



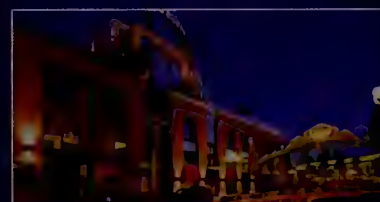
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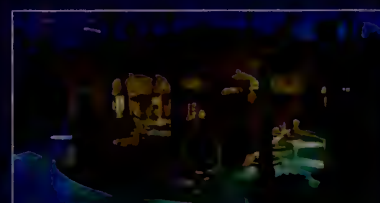
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HISTORY

but since the author passed away, there is only one way to find out.

Not everyone is sold on the idea that the pages are there, and Diamond has been compared to Geraldo Rivera and his quest for Al Capone's vaults. Ron Schweiger, a Brooklyn borough historian, hopes "they don't get the same result that Geraldo Rivera got. I hope there is something there. It won't just be great for Brooklyn, but it will be a great historical find." Diamond, for one, believes it won't be a failed attempt like Rivera's quest for Al Capone's vaults. In fact, he seemed quite confident when he claimed, "We are going to find something historically significant."

There's also the added question of why the pages would be hidden beneath a New York City street to begin with. Michael W. Kauffman, author of *American Brutus: John Wilkes Booth and the Lincoln Conspiracies*, admits, "John Wilkes Booth often took trips to New York while he was engaged in the conspiracy against President Lincoln. Those trips were never investigated, and Booth's New York contacts were apparently never questioned. The government was more interested in proving a Confederate connection than a New York one, so they ignored all leads that pointed northward. I'm very skeptical about the chances of finding those diary pages, but I have to admit that the search looks like an interesting project. One never knows what will turn up."

WHEN THE WALL is removed, Diamond hopes to find all the answers to the stories of the tunnel that he tells on his tours; the stories that he has thoroughly researched and documented on the nonprofit's website, www.brooklynrail.net. He doesn't believe he'll be disappointed when they reach the other side. No matter what they find, though, Diamond says, "It's the folklore that makes the tunnel valuable. It's the folklore that separates this tunnel from any other old railroad tunnel. This is the main artifact of the tunnel itself." **AW**

To tour the tunnel, visit www.brooklynrail.net or call (718) 941-3160. A \$15 contribution is suggested; tour dates are posted on the site.

ALISON LOWENSTEIN, based in Brooklyn, N.Y., is the author of three New York guidebooks, including *City Kid New York: The Ultimate Guide for NYC Parents with Kids Ages 4-12*. She writes for *Newsday*, the *New York Daily News* and many other publications.

