

Huntington, W. Va.

Lincoln's Slayer Lived 38 Years After Assassination, Says Niece

Miss Blanche Booth Declares Her Uncle, John Wilkes, Was Not Killed in Virginia Barn, but Committed Suicide in Oklahoma at Age of 65 Years

Minneapolis, Minn., Feb. 21.—John Wilkes Booth escaped.

This was admitted here today by his niece, Blanche Booth, breaking the sixty year silence of the Booth family regarding the fate of Abraham Lincoln's slayer.

In an interview given exclusively to the International News Service and the Minneapolis Daily Star, Miss Booth refuted statements made on February 17 by Edward Harper Sampson, of Moline, Ill., one of the guards supposed to have killed Booth that with his death the secret of the burial place of Booth's body would be lost. She believes that Sampson knew that Booth was not killed by his pursuers.

After fighting off interviewers for years, Miss Booth finally revealed that the story of Finis L. Bates was true, thus settling a controversy that has raged for years since it was announced that Booth was killed in a barn on the Garrett plantation near Bowling Green Va.

Met His Mother

"Wilkes Booth met his mother a year after the assassination and told her about the plot, its execution and his carefully planned escape," Miss Booth said. "They met in San Francisco after they had gone from Canada to Mexico and had arranged for a meeting there. She repeatedly told members of the family that she had seen her son and that he had told her all about it."

Miss Booth was for a considerable period a member of the company of her uncle, Edwin Booth. She has lived for many years in Minneapolis and was out of touch with other members of the family until the recent visit of a relative who continues to follow the state tradition.

Here are the high lights of her amazing interview:

John Wilkes Booth lived 38 years after the death of Lincoln and died by his own hand at Enid, Oklahoma, at the age of 65.

He revealed his identity twice, once when he believed he was dying and once on his death bed.

He produced a photograph proving his identity that was identified by Edwin Booth and Joseph Jefferson.

Duplicated Johnson

He left behind him a sworn statement declaring that Andrew Johnson, vice president, who succeeded Lincoln

not only suggested the crime but arranged for his escape.

"The man killed in the barn on the Garret plantation near Bowling Green, Va., was named Ruddy," Miss Booth declared. "Booth had escaped from the Garrett place nearly five hours earlier."

The story of Finis L. Bates, Greatest authority on the subject is true, Miss Booth said.

At the time of his death, Booth was known as David E. George and he pointed out physical characteristics that answered the description of Booth. The body has been embalmed so that it will remain intact for 100 years. It was examined in 1922, 19 years after his death, according to the story Miss Booth admitted it true.

"John Wilkes Booth, the man who assassinated President Abraham Lincoln at Ford's theatre, on the evening of April 14, 1865, died by his own hand of poison in the Grand Avenue Hotel at Enid, Oklahoma, on January 13, 1903," Miss Booth said today.

"Authentic photographs of John Wilkes Booth are in the possession of authorities that were taken of him at the ages of 27—before he murdered the president—at 38, eleven years after the assassination and 19 years after his death in Enid.

"Prominent men holding that Booth was not killed in the Garrett barn have exhausted the subject with their inquiries only to come to the conclusion that he lived to be 65 years old under the names of John St. Helen and David E. George.

Finis L. Bates, probably the greatest authority on the subject, knew John Wilkes Booth as John St. Helen at Granberry, Texas; it was there when Booth was deathly ill that he confessed to Bates his true identity and presented him with a tintype which was later identified by members of the Booth family and by Joseph Jefferson, the actor.

Later, according to Blanch Booth Dr. Clarence True Wilson, retired lobbyist for the Methodist Episcopal church in Washington, D. C. spent years in going over records pertaining to the death. His conclusion will soon be published in a volume of his own. That secret service guards under Colonel Baker missed their man at the Garrett barn and that David E. George, who died in Enid, Okla., was the true assassin of Abraham Lincoln.

At the present time one of the foremost capitalist of the United States, Judge Elbert H. Gary, president of the United Steel Corporation, is devoting his spare time to hounding down the mystery that has surrounded Booth's death, Miss Booth said.