

On July 1st, 1921, the following questions were sent Mr. Penniman, the undertaker in whose establishment at Enid, Okla. the body of David E. George was embalmed in 1903. The answers to these questions were received from Mr. Penniman on July 7th, 1921 in the form of a signed statement.

1-Question You say in the "Sunnyside" that Mr. Bates learned of George's death through the reading of the confession to Mrs. Harper in the papers. Do you remember any additional incidents in connection with the coming of Mr. Bates to Enid the first time?

1-Answer "A pathetic attempt on the part of Mr. Bates to make his arrival sensational and mysterious. Arrived at six P.M.; called me to the hotel and kept me there until long after midnight. He came to the store in the morning; wept when he saw the body; said it was his friend John St. Helen-J.W.B. Book account of all this is "Bunk"."

2-Question Do you remember how Mr. Bates first identified the body of D. E. George as his friend John St. Helen?

2-Answer "At first by a bare unsupported statement and afterward by the papers you have examined."

3-Question Did you believe that St. Helen and D. E. George was the same man from a recognition of the tin type in Mr. Bate's possession: That is, the tin type of St. Helen?

3-Answer "I never was able to see any striking resemblance between the body and the tin type. In fact Bates asked me to do all I could to make the body look like the picture and so we combed the hair and mustache accordingly. "

4-Question Was the tin type of St. Helen broken and defaced in any manner at the time that you first saw it?

4-Answer "I do not remember."

5-Question Mr. Bates claims that the body always belonged to him and that he had written authorization from the Booth family to act as their agent and take care of the body. Did you ever see this? As I understand the situation, you had the body declared as part of the estate and became administrator of the estate; therefore, the body belonged to you to do with as you pleased.

5-Answer "Never saw it and never heard of it until he was in Columbus last Winter. The body was inventoried in his personal effects at a nominal valuation. I am the administrator and the estate has not been settled up."

6-Question How was George E. Smith notified of D. E. George's death?

6-Answer "George E. Smith sent him \$25.00 a few days before his death and I summoned Smith to Enid hoping he would be soft enough to bury the old boy in a fine casket and pay cash for it. But there was nothing doing."

7-Question What papers were among D. E. George's effects in the trunk? I think you told me last Winter that you did not remember of ever seeing any manuscript copy that might be taken for a play.

7-Answer "This play M.S.S. is all new stuff to me. Never saw it."

8-Question Did you ever take any measurements of D. E. George's height after his death? If so, do you remember how tall he was?

8-Answer "He was short in stature, five foot eight or nine inches; large shoulders and fine head and neck; limbs weak and undersized."

9-Question Was there ever any real substantial evidence offered to you to prove that D. E. George was John Wilkes Booth? Your

news paper friends in Enid seemed to think it was merely good mater-

ial for news paper feature stories.

9-Answer "I guess you have examined all the "real positive" proof Mr. Bates has in stock at this time and have the ability to weigh its value. Bates is the only man who ever tried to convince me as to the real identity of this bird and he probably used the same selling talk that he used on you. It's good dope, but it don't carry."

Signed

W. B. PENNIMAN

July 8th, 1921 Another set of questions were sent Mr. Penniman. Questions and answers are as follows:

Q. Do you know whether Bates saw the letter and wills which George left? You filed these at the Court House about the time Bates arrived.

A. Do not know.

Q. Bates in his book tries to claim that George did not die until the 14th and alters Dumont's and Brown's affidavit to help him prove this. Have you any idea as to how he got that impression?

A. Have often wondered myself.

Q. Do you know of any reason for George committing suicide?

A. Busted - down and out.

Q. How did Bates learn of George's death?

A. Read it in the newspapers and wired me asking if he could see the body if he came to Enid.

Q. Was Bates' delay due to wash-outs on the Frisco lines as he says?

A. Yes, Rock Island.

Q. Is there anything at all to Bates' story that he impersonated a furniture salesman -- A. Feebly-yes -- Q. in order to keep the Enid people from taking the body and burning it?

A. Nothing to this burning dope.

Q. Did Bates register at the Hotel as Chas. O'Connor of New York?

A. Don't know.

Q. Did the right leg of George show signs of having been broken?

A. Yes.

Q. Were his eyebrows mismatches as Bates says in his book, Page 262? A. Yes.

Q. Was the thumb on his right hand deformed?

A. Might have been. I never thought so. A dead man's thumb by muscular contraction is drawn toward the palm of the hand and has a very unnatural look.

Q. Was there a scar on the back of George's neck that might have been the result of an operation?

A. I think there was.

Q. Did you ever get an inkling as to who D. E. George really was?

A. The Harper people and the Harper part of Bates' story is about right.

Q. Bates on Page 292 says that a couple men whom you took for Government secret service agents, called on you with pictures of John Wilkes Booth to identify the body "and having satisfied themselves that the body was that of Booth, they appealed to the Territorial legal authorities to compel the burial of the body. What do you know about this?

A. Two mysterious strangers - nothing else. There were lots of them.

Q. How did Bates finally obtain possession of the mummy?

A. After I sold out I had no place to put him and wired Bates asking if he wanted him taking from Bates a written agreement to surrender to me upon demand.