

(From a Scrap Book in Possession of Mr. Bates)

THE ENID
DAILY EAGLE

Monday, June 1, 1903

IS IT JOHN WILKES BOOTH?

The Evidence Appears to be Conclusive
Beyond Doubt

THE PROOF IS NOW AT HAND

F. L. Bates, Booth's Confidential Lawyer
is Here and Furnishes Strong Evi-
dence.

It now seems a settled fact that David E. George and John Wilkes Booth are one and the same. George died in this city on Jan. 13th last, and no small amount of excitement was occasioned by a report that he had confessed his identity to Mrs. Harper, of this place, on a certain occasion three years before at El Reno, and thousands of people viewed the remains at Penniman's morgue; many of them at that time expressing the belief that the body was none other than that of Booth.

Corroboration now comes from F. L. Bates, of Memphis, Tenn., who is now here, and granted an interview with a reporter this morning.

Mr. Bates arrived in Enid Friday evening. The story he tells is a revelation of historic facts which set aside many well accepted and time-honored theories and statements.

Mr. Bates was for many years the confidential lawyer of Booth. From him he has the complete story of the duplicity of men high in official life, the names of the chief conspirators and the escape of the assassin. These confidential facts were, of course, given Mr. Bates under stress.

According to his report, Booth located at Glen Rose Mills, Tex., about five years after the assassination, and purchased a stock of tobacco and whiskey from a man named Snyder. Shortly afterward the vicinity was visited by an internal revenue collector. He discovered the violation of the revenue laws which was going on in Glen Rose Mills, and caused the arrest of Snyder, whom he believed to be the owner of the establishment where the violation was taking place. Snyder being innocent,

however, Booth having purchased his interest, pressure was brought to bear on the latter to get him to go to Tyler in order to testify in favor of Snyder. This he refused to do and persisted in his refusal until the second day of Snyder's trial when he acknowledged to Mr. Bates that he could not appear in a settled community for the reason that he was then in exile in consequence of his crime. This was the beginning of their acquaintance and from time to time afterward Booth disclosed more and more of the history of his crime and escape.

At different times during his life he presented Mr. Bates with photograph of himself for his future identification. These have been painted by competent artists and have been brought to Enid by their owner.

While in Texas Booth was known among the cow boys as John St Helen. And here exists a very pretty piece of sentiment which would be characteristic of a man of Booth's temperament. Napoleon was in exile on the island of St. Helena. Booth adopted the name, changing it slightly for the sake of uphony as representative of the similarity of the cases.

Contemporaneous history and current tradition assert and presume that Booth was shot by Boston Corbitt on Garrett's farm in Virginia. According to Mr. Bates, who details the story as told by Booth, the man who was killed was a man by the name of Ruddy. Booth had been at Garrett's for about twenty-four hours, but on the afternoon before the alleged capture he had been warned to leave by some Confederate soldiers who promised to arrange for his escape later. Therefore at about 2 o'clock in the afternoon of the day before the killing of Ruddy he had retired to a spot some distance from Garrett's house and was still there in hiding when the Federal cavalry arrived. Ruddy and Herold had been to Bowling Green, Va., to secure a boot for Booth. Owing to the presence of the Federal soldiers they were compelled to travel slowly and secretly and their return was long delayed. They reached Garrett's house about 10 o'clock at night and at 4 o'clock in the morning they were surrounded and attempted to escape and seek refuge in some corn cribs which are variously described as barns and tobacco warehouses by the different writers. In this effort Herold was captured

and executed and Ruddy was killed.

From his hiding place Booth was afterward taken by Confederate friends and his disguise was that of an old colored man moving. He made his way to friends in central Kentucky where he recuperated strength and proceeded on his way to the Indian Territory, following the course of the Arkansas river from a point near where it empties into the Mississippi. From here he drifted into Texas and naturally selected the most isolated spot in the state.

Mr. Bates is here for the purpose of delivering a lecture the title of which is: "Lecture of F. L. Bates on the Assassination of President Abraham Lincoln and the Escape of John Wilkes Booth."

In his lecture Mr. Bates will deal with the political conditions which led up to the assassination of the president and will show the parts played in the tragedy by all of the characters familiar in history and several who are not named as having any knowledge of the conspiracy, but who as a matter of fact were the chief conspirators. It is safe to presume that his disclosures will be more or less sensational inasmuch as they overthrow popular teachings and place popular heroes in an altogether different light. But in face of the evidence he brings to hand it cannot be doubted that he is in full possession of facts.

He has had the picture of the man George identified by the family of Booth and also by Joseph Jefferson and Miss Clara Morris, both of whom knew him well. He also has an extensive correspondence with the government and is in possession of one letter from a government employe who states that as a citizen and not as a government employe he is collecting data for an article on this subject but can find nothing in the archives of the government which shows that Booth was ever captured or executed.

Mr. Bates will lecture Tuesday and Wednesday evening.
