

Bloomington, Ill.

LOCAL DOCTOR IS ASKED TO BUY "REAL MUMMY" OF JOHN WILKES BOOTH

What is alleged to be the real mummy of John Wilkes Booth, slayer of Abraham Lincoln, was recently offered to a Bloomington professional man, Dr. V. E. J. Lam Beau, a chiropractor with offices in the People's Bank building.

The offer came to Doctor Lam Beau from an Iowa firm, which claims to have charge of the sale of the mummy. Doctor Lam Beau did not consider the offer for various reasons, among them the possibility of the mummy not being the one of the real John Wilkes Booth.

That there may be some truth in the matter lies behind the fact that the firm handling the proposition is considered a very reliable firm, dealing principally in real estate and patents, but frequently dealing in more or less unusual things such as this mummy. The offer made to the Bloomington man was that the body would be shipped to Bloomington along with a large number of sensational books giving the true story of Booth's life, in exchange for some patents and manufacturing property held by the doctor and a cash payment of \$5,000.

Although this supposed mummy of John Wilkes Booth will probably never become a Bloomington property, much interest has been entertained by friends of Doctor Lac Beau, who have watched the proposition.

Five Booth Skulls Out

Frequent reports have come from many parts of the country, of people who claim to be the real John Wilkes Booth but who simply "confessed" their identities when upon their death beds. Twenty such persons have died in the country, while there are now five alleged skulls of Booth floating about the country or on exhibition.

The mummy is now held in Enid, Okla., and is the mummy of a man who lived for many years in Texas and Oklahoma under the name of John St. Helen. Many years ago he became very ill and as he lay on what he thought was his death bed, he asked his attorney, Finis L. Bates, to send an old tin-type to his brother, "Junius Brutus Booth, New York City." Mr. Bates asked him, "What are you?" "I," said St. Helen, "I am John Wilkes Booth, the man who killed President Lincoln", said St. Helen.

Bates had known St. Helen as a client and friend for many years. St. Helen did not die, but recovered, and after many weeks made a full confession of his crime and escape which is as follows:

Implicates Johnson

"It had never entered my mind to kill President Lincoln until the afternoon of the day I committed the horrible deed. I and Herold with others, had tried for a year and a half to kidnap Lincoln and take him to Richmond as a hostage of war. We came to Washington that day

to make a final successful effort, but when we arrived in the city we learned for the first time that General Lee had surrendered. We went immediately to the Kirkwood Hotel to meet Vice-president Andrew Johnson and told him further efforts to kidnap the president were now useless, when Johnson remarked: "Will you falter at that supreme moment?" When Booth could not understand his meaning, Johnson said: "Are you too faint-hearted to kill him?" They then made arrangements for the assassination at Ford's theater that night.

Describes Escape

In the melee that followed the shooting of the president, Booth claimed he escaped and that Herold and another man, later heralded throughout the world as the slayer, sought refuge in a barn. The man alleged to be Booth was killed.

The real Booth changed his name to St. Helen, went to Oklahoma and lived as a new man until near his death. On January 14, 1903, he committed suicide at Enid, Okla., where the body is now said to be on exhibition as final conclusive proof of the story given herewith.

Many Stories Told

Many different stories have been published of the alleged shooting of Booth, the alleged escape, and the final disposition of the body. One report, said to come from General Dana, is that Booth was buried near the old jail at Washington and a battery of artillery drawn over the grave. Another report is that Booth was buried under a brick pavement in a room of the old penitentiary at Washington. A third report is that the body was buried on an island in the Potomac twenty-seven miles from Washington. Capt. E. W. Hillard, of Metropolis, Ill., says "I was one of the four privates who carried the remains of Booth from the old capital prison in Washington to a gun boat which carried them about ten miles down the Potomac river, where the body was sunk in the water."

While the rest of the world is still wondering what really became of the body, the body of John St. Helen remains at Enid, Okla., as the alleged John Wilkes Booth.