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THE DAILY OKLAHOMAN

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# OLD CONTROVERSY OVER SLAYER OF LINCOLN REVIVED

## Enid Officers Asked Concerning Estate of Confessed Assassin.

ENID, April 17.—(Special.)—Memory of John Wilkes Booth, assassin of President Lincoln, who, it is claimed, died in Enid several years ago by drinking poison, was revived today by a letter received from Sarah Booth, Las Vegas, N. M., grand-daughter of the assassin, inquiring whether Booth had left an estate on his death here.

Old-timers here recalled Booth, then going under the assumed name of George St. Helen, a painter, who, when sick, talked deliriously about the shooting of Lincoln. On recovery, fearing he had revealed his secret, he confessed to those who had cared for him while ill that he was the real John Wilkes Booth, but swore them to secrecy. The story leaked out and following his death by suicide here relatives of Booth identified him.

Some here believe it is significant that the letter was received April 15, just fifty-five years after Lincoln's assassination, April 15, 1865.

### Old Controversy Revived.

The controversy as to whether or not the man here was an imposter or mentally deranged caused considerable speculation throughout the nation some years ago when the man died and his story came out.

It is understood that at some time previously while living at El Reno, St. Helen, or Booth, told the same story to those who were nursing him through a sickness which he supposed would be fatal. His confidants were sworn to secrecy when he recovered.

Enid people never believed the story, and were less credulous than outsiders. Thousands who have viewed the body while it was kept at the undertaking establishment here were convinced that the man was really Booth, basing their belief upon the rumors and facts of the assassination of President Lincoln.

These persons pointed out that while the undertaker here had taken the matter up with the secret service department at Washington, and had offered to furnish proof of the dead man's identity, intending to claim the reward of \$250,000 for Lincoln's slayer, no notice was ever taken of these claims by the department. The undertaker declares that he made repeated attempts to get the attention of the government, but his letters and representations were never even answered or noticed.

### Body Caused Row.

When the undertaking establishment was sold some time ago, the new purchaser and the former owner are understood to have had a heated controversy over the ownership of the body, but the former owner finally took it to Columbus, Ohio, with him.

Many who claim to be familiar with the shooting of a man who was supposed to be the assassin of Lincoln point out that there has always been a doubt as to whether the real Booth was killed. These say that rumor has long insisted that Booth escaped from the old barn where he hid, in a load of hay, and was carried into the confederate lines.

County officers are investigating the case in an attempt to find whether or not the man left any estate here.

It is believed that the letter received from Mrs. Booth may lead to the clearing up of the mystery as to the real identity of the man, and although he died here seventeen years ago, some hope this woman may know of the past history and life of "John Wilkes Booth."