

## THE ASSASSINATION.

### ATZERODT'S CONFESSION.

### THE PLOT TO ABDUCT THE PRESIDENT.

### TWO PLANS FAIL.

### THE STATEMENTS OF O'LAUGHLIN.

BALTIMORE, July 9, 1865.

The American has received a special report of the confession of Atzerodt, which was prepared by one who has known him since his arrest.

The details of the plot to abduct and murder the President, which are set forth below, were given the author by Atzerodt but a short time before his death.

George Andrew Atzerodt was born in the Kingdom of Prussia in 1835, and came to this country with his parents in 1844. He arrived at Baltimore, in which place he resided with his family for about one year, when, with his parents, he moved to Westmoreland County, Va. His father farmed and carried on his business that of a blacksmith, at the Court-House. Atzerodt was placed as an apprentice to the coachmaking business at the Court-House, where he learned the painting branch. He remained at the Court-House until 1856, when he went to Washington and worked for Young and also for Mr. Dermott, well-known coachmakers. In 1857 he joined his brother in the coachmaking business at Port Tobacco. This continued for four years, when the firm was dissolved. After this he carried on painting in Port Tobacco until last Fall, when he went with John H. Surratt and a man named Harline. Surratt induced him to join in the conspiracy for abducting the President. Atzerodt's knowledge of men and the country in the vicinity of Port Tobacco, and in fact, of all the counties bordering on the Potomac, gave to the conspirators a valuable assistant. He was well acquainted with Harrold, whom he was not long in finding out, and who was also engaged in the conspiracy. Surratt went several times to Port Tobacco and often sent to Atzerodt to come to Washington, where he was known to many as Port Tobacco, and looked upon as a very weak minded man in fact, was regarded as a very harmless and silly fellow. Surratt introduced Atzerodt to Booth, who feasted him and furnished him with horses, the horses being held in the name of Surratt, who appeared to be the principal in the absence of Booth. The first meeting of all the conspirators actually engaged was at a saloon in Pennsylvania-ave. called Geteer's. At this meeting O'Laughlin, Arnold, Booth, Surratt, Harrold and Atzerodt were present. The first attempt to abduct the President was to be on the Seventh-st. road. This was to be about the middle of March, when they expected the President to visit a camp. O'Laughlin, Arnold, Payne, Surratt, Booth and Atzerodt were present. Harrold left with the buggy with the carbines for T. B. The plan was to seize the coach of the President. Surratt to jump on the box as he was considered the best driver, and make for T. B. by way Long Old Fields to the Potomac River, the vicinity of Nargomey Creek, where they had a boat waiting with men to carry them over to the party. The boat was capable of carrying fifteen men, and was a large flat bottomed barge, painted lead-color, which had been bought for the purpose by Booth from two men, named Branner and Smart. This plan

filed, the President not coming as they desired. Harrold went next morning to Washington. All things remained quiet for some time after this. Booth went with Arnold and O'Laughlin to Baltimore, Payne and Wood left also for New York. A man named Howell was about this time arrested. This alarmed Surratt, and he left with Mrs. Slatter for the North. This was about the 1st of April. The next plan was to visit the theater on the night the President was expected to be there. It was arranged that Surratt and Booth were to go to the box; Arnold, O'Laughlin and Payne were to get some important part in getting him out; Harrold and Atzerodt were to have charge of horses, and an actor was to be secured to put out the gas. Booth represented that the best assistant he had was an actor. In this place, buggies and horses were to be used. A rope, which was prepared and to be at Keyd's was to be stretched across the road to impede the cavalry in pursuit. The route at this time was the same as before, except that they were to cross the Eastern Branch Bridge.

This whole affair failed and Booth said, "It is all up," and spoke of going to Richmond and opening a theater, and promised Atzerodt employment in it in some capacity. Atzerodt was waiting for Booth to arrange his going to Richmond; when the affair was renewed again he had taken a room at the Kirkwood House. Harrold called on him and left his knife, pistol and coat in the room, and told him Booth wished to see him at the Herndon House, to which place he repaired in company with Harrold. This was in the evening about six o'clock. We there met Booth and Payne. Booth told Atzerodt, "You must kill Johnson." Atzerodt demurred, when Booth replied, "Harrold has more courage—he will do it. Go get your horses. What will become of you anyhow?" Atzerodt and Harrold went down 9th-st together. Atzerodt said to Harrold, "We must not disturb Mr. Johnson." Harrold laughed, and wanted the key of the room. It was refused by Atzerodt, who expressed himself as fearful that harm would be done Mr. Johnson. Harrold left to go to see Booth, and I went to the Oyster Bay. Harrold came after him and said Booth wanted to see him. Atzerodt did not return to the Kirkwood House that night.

Booth told Atzerodt that Surratt was in the city. Atzerodt did not see Booth after leaving him at the Herndon House, and he roamed about the streets nearly all night and first heard of the murder about half past ten o'clock while passing up the avenue. The cavalry were rushing by at the time in pursuit. He threw away his knife that night and parted with his pistol next morning to a friend in Georgetown. Atzerodt had nothing to say at any of the former meetings. He knew nothing about the rope found with Spangler. He believed Spangler innocent as far as he knew.

Booth, when applied to for money, would remark that he had money in New York and would get some. At one time, in the Spring or late in the Winter, Mrs. Slatter, Mrs. Surratt, John Surratt and a Maj. Barrow, formerly of the Rebel Army, left Washington together. They got horses from Howard's. Mrs. Surratt stopped at Surrattsville, the others went to the Potomac; Maj. Barrow returned. He did not think that Barrow had anything to do with the conspiracy, although he was formerly in the Rebel Army.

One of Booth's plans to obtain an entrance to the Secretary of State's house was an invention which, if successful, would have involved others in his foul acts. He had made the acquaintance of a woman of strong Southern feelings living not far from the Secretary's house who was to make the acquaintance of a servant, who was to be introduced to Booth, and by this means he would learn something of the location of the rooms, &c. As far as known, it failed.

Booth was well acquainted with Mudd, and had had letters of introduction to him. Booth told Atzerodt, about two weeks before the murder, that he had sent provisions and liquor to Dr. Mudd's for the supply of the party on their way to Richmond with the President.

Michael O'Laughlin has made no regular confession, as far as is publicly known; but he has confessed to the original conspiracy. He denied any knowledge of the murder of the President, or the attempt on Mr. Seward's life.

There is no doubt that he knew much of the whole affair. Although an alibi was tried to be made out, there is no doubt in the minds of those who know all the circumstances of O'Laughlin that he did visit Stanton's house as charged in the testimony before the Commission.