

The following article, entitled "THE TOWN CRIER" was taken from the New York Dramatic News, dated Saturday, August 1, 1891:

The beloved of all upon whom has been bestowed the boon of his personal companionship, the respected of those who know his noble character, the admired of tens of thousands who have viewed his matchless art, Edwin Booth occupies a position the like of which perhaps has never before been given to an actor in America. His charity to those in distress, his pure life, his gentle nature, his dignified bearing, and his devotion to the calling, of which he is the foremost figure of the time, compell the deep regard of the wide and watchful world. Had it been published of almost any other man that an attempt, deliberate and calculating, had been made to extort from him a large sum for the suppression of painful facts in his family history, the statement might have gone by without attracting more than mere passing notice. But when, recently, a great daily newspaper in New York declared darkly and with an air of great mystery that an ex-journalist and a person connected with the stage, had undertaken to blackmail Edwin Booth under threats of revealing a tale of shocking character regarding his parentage a cry of almost universal indignation was voiced. It is, of course, to be supposed that the conduct of the newspaper in question in calling public attention to this condition of affairs, was entirely sincere and devoid of any attention in the direction of mere sensationalism. Certainly no important publication occupying any kind of a position and having any regard for its standing in the world, would single out a man like Edwin Booth for indiscriminate attack. No man is more highly regarded. None has fewer enemies. None in connection with whom there is less excuse or temptation for assault. Consequently, when the New York daily paper referred to came out with some darksome hints of attempted blackmail, I felt it a duty to cut off at one stroke all possibility of working up into a sensational story the matters that had been hinted at. I had known for three years and more of the existence of certain letters and documents referring to the Booth family that were in the hands of Mr. Frank A. Burr. I had known that Mr. Burr upon one occasion had laid all these papers before Steele Mackaye, Charles W. Brooke, and one or two other gentlemen, who had expressed the greatest interest in these writings. With this knowledge in my possession, it was evident to me that the writer in the newspaper referred to had undertaken to deliver a stab in the dark against two men from whose minds blackmail is very far distant. It was under these conditions that having given to the public a brief outline of the real facts, I came to Baltimore two or three days ago for the purpose of making an exhaustive search regarding the life in America, and final death, of Agatha Delanoir Booth. The search was not unattended with difficulty, but it has developed an amazing story, and one for the accuracy of which I am quite prepared to vouch. It is not altogether a matter of my personal assurance either, for the tale is backed by a number of documents, which are filed in their proper places, and the truthfulness of which cannot for a moment be doubted. It is clearly demonstrated by the aid of these documents, and by other evidence of an unmistakable character, that when Junius Brutus Booth came to America, he was already the husband of Mary Christine ^{now the} Delanoir and the father of a child who had been named Robert Booth. It is fact beyond any question that the present generation of Booths were born and well along toward maturity when the elder Booth's wife appeared upon the scene. It is without the possibility of successful denial that Agatha Delanoir Booth secured a divorce from the greatest tragedian of his time, and thus enabled him to marry the mother of his childred and bestow upon them the legitimate right to the name they bore.

It is not possible to refute the tale that Agatha Delanoir Booth died neglected and alone, in the direst poverty, at the time when the man who was bound by law and by honor to care for her as befitted the position of the wife of a man of celebrity and opulence, was occupying a place which enabled him, had he been so minded, to see that she was environed most comfortably. It is a melancholy tale, this story of the life and ultimate death of the woman who first bore the legal right to sign herself, Mrs. Junius Brutus Booth. In telling it here, there is no motive beyond the detailing of a matter of history, which is forced into print by lack of caution on the part of some of those who have a knowledge of the correspondence and position of Agatha Delanoir. Regard for the great actor and courtly gentleman, who is now the most important representative of the name of Booth, ought to have held these documents in the deepest secrecy, at least until such time as the man principally affected by them should have passed out of existence upon this earth. That their publication should have been contemplated and talked about, until the time arrived when reference to them found its way into the daily newspaper press, is a fact that seems to me to make it not only advisable but necessary that the true conditions surrounding the unhappiest complications in the unhappy life of Junius Brutus Booth should be truthfully and without coloration given to the public. The collection of information regarding the career of Agatha Delanoir Booth has been a work of years with Mr. Burr, who has covered the ground very completely and he possesses unmistakable proofs regarding this most important matter. A little more than three years ago, as I have already stated, he laid this great mass of evidence before a party of friends in the private rooms of Steele Mackaye, in the Alpine Building at the corner of 33d Street and Broadway. Mr. Charles W. Brooke, who, up to that time had no extensive knowledge of the real condition of this case, became at once very deeply interested, and as letter after letter, document after document was gone through and laid aside, he grew fervid until he could no longer restrain that flow of eloquence which comes almost peerless from his lips. Walking up and down the floor he talked most impressive, saying, in substance:

"While Edwin Booth lives it is your duty, Mr. Burr, to keep these facts located firmly within yourself. It must become in time an important point in the history of the most tumultuous period of this country's career, that the slayer of Abraham Lincoln was born out of wedlock. But it is not a necessary, or a justifiable thing to make that knowledge known to the world while it can give pain to so great and fine and splendid a man as Edwin Booth."

These were not Mr. Brooke's words, of course, for no memory can conjure up the royal picturings of his fertile mind. But this was the effect, the substance of the conversation. And upon this great point that he made all present enthusiastically agreed. It was therefore a surprise to most of those who were at hand upon this occasion to learn that accurate knowledge of the existence of the Agatha Delanoir letters was possessed by any person not conversant with the interview to which I here refer. Mr. Burr, of course, takes the ground that he had always intended to follow the advice of Mr. Brooke in the matter now spoken of. Mr. Mackaye unfortunately sailed for Europe eight or ten days ago, and is therefore unable to make any direct statement in the matter. It is perhaps of interest in connection with the present publication to state that Joseph Howard, Jr., in his column in the Recorder, has published a declaration within the past few days scouting my previous statement that Mr. Burr never intended to make these letters known during Edwin Booth's life. Mr. Howard says, flatly, and in so many words, that

the Recorder has made arrangements for the actual publication of the letters. Mr. Burr, so far as I can find out, has made no reply to this statement of Howard's, although I am told that he insists in his private conversations that he never had any real design of giving the documents to the people at large through the medium of the newspaper press. In this City of Baltimore there lives a well-known and estimable physician named E. Ridley Baer. His address is No. 1423 Bolton St. He is a gentleman of fine characteristics, of dignified mien, and of high position, professionally, socially, and personally. He is 63 years of age but looks to be 15 years younger. Dr. Baer has been a medical practitioner for many years, occupying positions of great trust from the time of his surgical career with the Army of the Potomac down to the present period. He has had charge of a great many high Governmental medical posts, and has fully earned the esteem of his fellow-citizens, and the personal regard of all who have come in contact with him. Any man in Baltimore to whom Dr. Baer is known would stake his life upon that gentleman's word. It was this physician who attended Agatha Delanoir Booth in her last illness, and under whose guidance I have been enabled to find out all there is about the sad end of that unfortunate, mis-used, and honorable woman. At No. 535 West Baltimore Street there is an old 3-story building, now occupied as a harness factory. In 1850 the upper parts of this building were used for residential purposes. On the lower floor there was a cigar store occupied by one Charles Zell, whose name appeared in clear letters over the door. His store filled the main portion of the front of the building. At the left of his show-window, a plain little affair of small panes of glass, there was a side entrance leading to the floors above. At the head of the first flight of stairs there was a partition, with a door cut through it, leading into the back room. This apartment occupied a space ten feet by twelve in size, having three small windows, two at one side of the building, and one at the back. In one corner there was a poor and ill furnished bed. Beside it, underneath one of the side windows, there was a rough deal table and in two of the corners stood common, cheap wooden chairs. Under the mantel piece, to the left of the door in the partition, there stood a cooking stove, and in the cupboard close at hand there were a few dishes, pots and pans, of the kind necessary to a woman keeping house by herself in the most frugal way. There was no carpet on the floor. To save fuel the occupant of this wretched abode was wont to go down stairs and cook her meals at the fire of the more prosperous and kindly-disposed Mr. and Mrs. Zell. At night a single candle illuminated the room scantily. There was no attempted ornamentation. Poverty was everywhere made manifest. In this hovel lived a woman 64 years of age in solitude and misery. She was the lawful wife of an actor celebrated throughout the world, a man of money and of power. She had married him in London, and he had deserted her and ran away to America with a flower girl. Years afterward, in response to the urgent demands for her son, a humble teacher of French in St. Mary's Catholic Academy in this city, she had come to Baltimore to establish the boy's rights and to seek legal recognition for herself. It was on a bitter night in the month of February, just at the time when a new day was about to be ushered in, that Dr. Baer received a sudden and urgent call from the house in Baltimore Street. Hastily dressing himself and buttoning his overcoat tightly about him, he repaired to the back room here described. He found lying on the hard bed the elderly woman above referred to; she was in the final throes which take us over the threshold into the dark unknown. Behind the bed, with a tallow dip in her hand, stood the wife of a cigar maker downstairs. The kind Doctor lifted the patient's hand and placed his fingers upon her attenuated wrist. "Its too late", said he; "the poor creature is dead." They stood there alone, those two, for some moments in silence, looking down upon

the pallid features, in every line of which there was traced a great story of bitterness and suffering and wrong. While outside the winter wind was whistling, and the small windows shook with an eerie sound, a shudder, such as sometimes comes after death, passed over the recumbent figure. The features become distorted, the lungs emptied themselves of the air that had been there confined, and a hoarse, gurgling rattle came from the ashen lips. The woman behind the bed dropped her candle with a scream and fell fainting to the floor. She rolled partly underneath the bed, and the room was in complete darkness. The Doctor, unused to the apartment groped his way to the mantel-piece and found a dish of water. Dragging the unconscious Mrs. Zell out upon the floor, he sprinkled her face and she slowly revived. She had been greatly shocked by the sudden counterfeit of life in the woman she had known was dead, and it required several minutes of anxious work on the Doctor's part to sufficiently quiet her to secure the necessary illumination. Mrs. Zell finally went downstairs and got matches to relight the tallow dip. In that lonely apartment the ghastly object of the good physician's visit was prepared for the hands of the undertaker, and Dr. Baer went thoughtfully homeward. Later the body of Junius Brutus Booth's first wife was laid to rest in the Cathedral Cemetery. Mrs. Booth had lived in Baltimore for several years. Everyone who knew her realized fully that she was a woman of high character and fine personality. She rarely spoke of her condition. Whatever her sorrows were she kept them to herself with a fidelity of a true and noble woman. She received assistance from no person. Now and then there came to her from Europe a mysterious remittance that was barely enough to carry out along in the meagre way I have described. It is believed that she would not even accept assistance from her son. He was a man of small stature, and not of very forcible characteristics. He had been deeply grieved in his early life by what he conceived to be the wrong perpetrated upon his mother by the man whose name he carried, and he sought repose in a studious and highly moral life. He took charge of his mother's remains on the morning after the Doctor had performed his last sad rites, and he suitably inscribed her grave in the Cathedral Cemetery. He never made an effort to intrude himself upon the parent who had cast him off, but in later years when the struggle between the North and South took form, he went to the war and died on the tented field. Consumption had fastened itself upon his system in the care and sorrow of his boyhood days. Agatha Delanoir Booth had lived long enough in Baltimore to secure for herself the right of citizenship. Her first act under that right was to appeal to the courts for a divorce from her husband who had steadily discountenanced her, and who was living with his grown family in another part of the city. The divorce bill, in all its details, together with the finding of the court, is here appended.

"To the Honorable the Judges of the Baltimore County Court, sitting as a Court of Equity: Humbly complaining, showeth unto your Honors, your oratrix, Mary Christine Adelaide Booth, of the City of Baltimore, that on the 8th day of May, 1815, your oratrix was lawfully married in the City of London, in the Kingdom of Great Britain, to Junius Brutus Booth, then a citizen and subject of said Kingdom of Great Britain, but who has since become, and is now, and for many years past has been a resident of the City of Baltimore, and that your oratrix is now and for more than two years past has been a resident of the City of Baltimore, Md.; your oratrix further shows to your Honors that the said Junius Brutus Booth and your oratrix lived together as husband and wife for several years in the City of London, during which time she bore to said husband a daughter, who died in infancy, and a son, now living, whose name is Richard Junius Booth; that

in or about the month of January 1821, the said Junius Brutus Booth, without any intimation whatsoever, abandoned your oratrix and came to the United States, where he has since remained and that said abandonment has continued uninterruptedly from the month of January 1821, to this date, being thus far more than 29 years; and your oratrix alleges that said abandonment is deliberate and final, and that separation of said Junius Brutus Booth and your oratrix is beyond any reasonable expectation of reconciliation. Your oratrix further shows to your Honors that the said Junius Brutus Booth left the Kingdom of Great Britain and came to the United States in company with a woman, with whom he has been in the habit of adulterous intercourse from that time to the present, and that he has lived for many years past in the City of Baltimore with said woman, and does now treat and recognize said woman as his wife, and that he has by her a large family of children; and your oratrix asks leave to state that in charging these facts she is impelled alone by the necessity for the vindication of her own rights. In tender consideration whereof, and for as much as your oratrix is remediless in the premises save by the aid and interposition of your Honorable Court, may it please your Honors to order and decree that your oratrix shall be divorced a vinculo matrimonii from her said husband, Junius Brutus Booth.

"Wm. P. Maulsby,

"E. G. Kilbourn.

"Solicitors for the Complainant.

February 27, 1851."

Accompanying this bill was the following certificate:

"Marriages solemnized in the Parish of St. George, Bloomsbury, in the County of Middlesex, in 1815. Junius Booth of this parish and Adelaide Delannoy of this parish were married in this church by banns this 8th day of March, 1815, by me, Nathaniel Fork, B. A., Curate.

"This marriage was solemnized between us, Junius Booth and Adelaide Delannoy, in the presence of Tho. Blyth and John Harrison."

On March 26, 1851, Mr. John Glen, solicitor for Junius Brutus Booth, filed the following:

"The answer of Junius Brutus Booth to the bill of Mary Christine Adelaide Booth: This respondent admits the facts stated in said bill to be true, and assents to a decree as prayed for."

The defendant in this case did not merely satisfy himself with not putting in an appearance and letting the case go by default. On March 26th, 1851, his lawyer filed the following answer:

"The answer of Junius Brutus Booth to the bill of Mary Christine Agatha Booth: This respondent admits the facts stated in said bill to be true, and assents to a decree as prayed for."

It was on the 18th of April, 1851, that Judge John C. Legrand granted a divorce assessing the costs upon Junius Brutus Booth. On May 10th following, the marriage was recorded in the Superior Court of Baltimore, of Junius Brutus Booth and Mary Ann Holmes, the mother of the celebrated actor of the present day, and of John Wilkes Booth, the slayer of Abraham Lincoln.

The second Mrs. Booth died October 22, 1885, at Long Branch, the home of her youngest son, Joseph A. Booth. She was 83 years and 4 months old at the time of her death. She had been the mother of eleven children. Those surviving her were Joseph, Edwin, Rosalie, and Asia; Rosalie and Asia have since died; the others are living. Bonnie Brae Cemetery, about six miles from Baltimore, in a secluded spot shut away from the outer world, can be found the grave in which lie the remains of the unhappy victim of Junius Brutus Booth. The surroundings are peaceful, and the location is high. A short distance from the spot, at the foot of the hill, is a beautiful lake covering three acres. The lot is numbered 384, and is in section "S". The Superintendent of the cemetery very kindly conducted me to the grave. It was not neglected, and is the only one in the lot. The body was removed hither from the old Cathedral Cemetery about three years ago, by the trustees, and reference to the books would indicate the fact that Mrs. Booth had owned the lot in which she was buried. The grave is marked by a plain marble slab, which is sunken in the ground. A portion of it is broken. It was with some difficulty that the inscription could be deciphered, but I finally succeeded in tracing the following: "Jesus, Mary, Joseph, Pray for the Soul of Mary Christine Adelaide Delanoy, wife of Junius Brutus Booth, tragedian. She died in Baltimore May 9, 1858, aged 66 years. It is a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead. May she rest in peace." The marble foot stone bears the initials M. C. A. D. B. Bonnie Brae is a Catholic cemetery, and is beautifully located. The Booth grave is situated some distance from the entrance. There is a strange discrepancy in the records. The books of the old cemetery show that Mrs. Booth was buried February 10, 1858. The headstone makes the time of her death May 9th. There is a difference too about her name. Those who knew her called her Agatha Delanoir Booth. These burial records set her forth without the name of Agatha and spell her name Delanoy. It is out of sincere regard for the celebrated actor who now adorns the theatrical profession and the name of Booth, that comment has never been made concerning the conduct of his father toward the despised and poverty-laden woman, who was his first wife. She loved the great and erratic man who gave her his name, and she never undertook to force herself upon him further than was made absolutely necessary by her maternal regard for the fruit of their union. There is evidence in her letters, sent to her relatives in Europe that Mr. Booth agreed to pay her the sum of 120 pounds sterling in consideration of her willingness to leave this country, and end her days in a foreign land. Whether the money was ever paid or not I have been unable to find out. But from the impoverished surroundings of the good, old lady when she passed away there seems to be every reason to believe that the money never came into her possession. Her life was sadly blighted. She married Junius Brutus Booth against the commands of her parents, and when he subsequently deserted her, leaving in her care a young and helpless baby, the old people regarded it as almost an act of Providence. Later when she came to America to give her son the right to wear his own name, a right which he felt was being denied to him by reason of the open alliance of his father with another family - she did so against her own inclinations and only as a sacred duty. Her correspondence if it shall ever be given to the public, which now seems to be practically a settled question, will reveal one of the most pathetic and heartrending tales ever brought to the attention of readers. It will show a woman broken beyond hope, yet patient, true and honorable to the core. It will show a lacerated and bleeding heart that nevertheless rose buoyantly through all the agonies of despair. More than all, it will show that an actor almost idolized in his time, a man occupying the highest rank and fraternizing with the greatest spirits of his period, was capable of the deepest cruelty, of the most diabolical acts--deliberate, coldly and maliciously rending in shreds the life of a defenseless creature whose only crime was that she loved him too

well and had brought into the world his first and only legitimate children.

LEANDER RICHARDSON.

Immediately following the above article in the issue of Saturday, August 1, 1891, appears:

MR. MEGARGEES TELLS IT

In Sunday's Philadelphia Inquirer, Louis N. Megargee, the brilliant and reliable New York correspondent says:

"The New York Herald was, evidently innocently, lured into the publication this week of a story, entitled 'Edwin Booth and His Persecutors,' in which it was claimed that the distinguished actor had been made by a 'disreputable newspaper man and a person connected with the stage' the object of a conspiracy to extort money. The publication in question indulged in all sorts of vague rumors about a secret connected with Mr. Booth's life, but did not give the names of the people who, it was alleged, had attempted to use this direful information for blackmailing purposes. The Herald, however, intimated that unless the conspiracy, which, it was claimed, had driven the tragedian from the stage, found an immediate ending a further publication would be made. The next day the Dramatic News, in seeming kindness, republished the Herald story as a 'canard,' and gave the names of the two gentlemen referred to as Frank A Burr and Steele Mackaye, but, in explanation, recited an account of a meeting in Mr. Mackaye's apartments in which the matter referred to was incidentally made the subject of conversation. An account of that gathering has already been published in the Inquirer. Briefly told, it was to the effect that Colonel Burr had discovered in Baltimore a tombstone which recorded the death of "Agatha Delanoir, wife of Junius Brutus Booth." Following the story which this suggested Colonel Burr learned that there had come to this country a woman claiming to be the abandoned wife of the father of Edwin Booth; that she was treated with contumely and neglect by her husband, and that in letters which she left behind her and which are now in Colonel Burr's possession, the fact was revealed that Edwin Booth and all the other children born of Junius Brutus Booth in this country were of natural origin. The publication in the Dramatic News indignantly refuted the idea that any effort had been made to put this information to an improper use. However, it had this effect: The mysteriously referred to scandal in the Herald article was openly disclosed and the identity of the anonymous alleged conspirators was made public. More than this; by the Herald article Stuart Robson, who has heretofore been generally looked upon as a man of lovable qualities, was quoted as saying in reference to the alleged conspirator connected with the stage "that from what he knew of the man he believed he believed he was fully capable of the villainy attributed to him." These words alone would have been sufficient to detach Steele Mackaye from the affair had it not been for the revelation in the Dramatic News. As this matter is liable to have a public sequel of some kind I am glad to be in a position to speak authoritatively concerning some features of it. The Herald's story, so far as it concerns Mr. Booth, is an old one. Eight or nine years ago the narrative of the discovery of Agatha Delanoir's tombstone in a Baltimore cemetery was

made public over Colonel Burr's signature in the Philadelphia Press. Subsequently he came into possession of a mass of correspondence written by this woman, and which bears upon its face the evidence of the domestic infamy of Junius Brutus Booth. Anyone who reads these letters will not question their sincerity. These missives are all well written and most interesting. Yet they are not material proper for publication, and never were so considered. The genius of Edwin Booth is not affected by them, nor has any suggestion to that effect ever arisen until the Herald article was printed. In the Dramatic News publication Counselor Charles W. Brooke was mentioned as having been present in Mr. Mackaye's apartments when the letters of Agatha Delanoir were read. I asked him today for his recollection of the occurrence. He said: "I remember the occasion very distinctly. Mr. Mackaye asked me to come to his apartments in the Alpine building, on Broadway and 32d St., to listen to the reading of a play which he had written. There were a number of gentlemen present, including Colonel Burr. Late in the evening, for no other reason than to interest the men there gathered, Colonel Burr produced the letters of Agatha Delanoir and read them. They certainly formed a most interesting chapter in the private life of Junius Brutus Booth and were considered in no other connection. I remember distinctly that Mr. Mackaye said that while the letters constituted a very important feature in the life of the elder Booth, their publication would be an act of infamy, because the conventional view which would be taken of them would mark a stigma upon Edwin Booth, the best loved actor on the American stage. There was no suggestion made of putting the documents before the eyes of the public and nothing would have been heard of the matter but for the publication which has just been made." But such a revelation must have an origin. In this case, however, it is difficult to discover. Mackaye is not present to utter his vigorous denial of the accusation which some foe has attempted to place against him. He is absent from this country. Those who know him, however, and even those who are not intimately acquainted with him, are aware of the fact that a lovelier, more honest, more high-spirited, more charmingly endowed man never had being. He is the soul of integrity. Honor crowns his brow and honesty permeates his being. The only explanation of the Herald canard is discoverable in the theory that that great newspaper was unaware of the anonymous individual against whom its accusation was brought. Naturally, however, the query arises, "What of Robson?" He, while claiming to know the identity of one of the alleged conspirators, expressed himself as of the opinion "that he was fully capable of the villainy attributed to him." Thereby, perhaps, hangs a tale.

Steele Mackaye, besides being the creator of the Madison Square and the Lyceum Theatres and of Hazel Kirke, In Spite of All, Paul Kauvar, Money Mad, and a number of equally successful plays, was also the author of an Arrant Knave, which was purchased by Stuart Robson and has frequently been played by him. It had its opening performance in Cincinnati in the fall of 1889, and the important part of the Duke was played by Frank Mordaunt. At the conclusion of a week's engagement the latter actor was made helpless by an attack of sciatica. Mr. Mackaye was in Cincinnati at the time, and to him, in great distress of mind, Mr. Robson came and begged him to play Mordaunt's part for the opening in St. Louis on the following Sunday night, stating that if he did not comply with his request there could be no performance. Mackaye, with that kindly consideration which always distinguishes him, consented. Although he was then on his way to New York, he traveled to St. Louis, studied his part on the train, purchased a make-up case in the Missouri metropolis, and, at great personal discomfort, prevented the theatre from being closed that night. I know whereof I speak, not through any complaint from Mackaye, but because I was in St. Louis that day and witnessed that performance. The author-actor played every night that week and so great was his success, that after he had consented to accompany Mr. Robson's organization to

Kansas City. Mordaunt became suddenly well and rejoined the troupe. The latter's salary was \$250 weekly. For Mackaye's extraordinary services at the expiration of the week William Hayden, Stuart Robson's manager, brought him a check for \$100 and not even a ticket for his return to New York. Mackaye naturally refused the money, stating proudly that he had given his services as a matter of friendship. From that day to this there has been no communication between himself and Robson, and in that occurrence I find some solution for this latter-day infamy. The tale that has just been told cannot harm Mackaye. His life is without blemish. Few men have been as rigidly honest as he. In nearly all his public acts he has been the victim of his own belief in the sincerity of others. The only harm that can accrue from this unfortunately revealed tale is to his accusers."

STUART ROBSON'S VIEWS

Mr. Stuart Robson, whose name has figured prominently in connection with the Booth matter, arrived in New York from Cohasset on Monday morning. He was seen by a Dramatic News writer at the Imperial Hotel, and expressed himself in vigorous terms concerning the manner in which he had been drawn into the controversy. Said he: "I clearly and distinctly deny that I ever said Steele Mackaye had offered to write a life of Edwin Booth, or had approached him in any other way in connection with this or any other matter. If I can find out who has attributed such a statement to me, I will make an endeavor to put him in the penitentiary, and I won't stop until he is locked up or my resources are exhausted. A Herald reporter came to my place in Cohasset, and in course of time secured my confidence. He spoke to me about the Booth matter, and I referred him to Mr. Jefferson as being an older and perhaps a closer friend than I to Mr. Booth. But I have expressed no opinion on this question -- none whatever. I will say that Mr. Booth knows nothing whatever of the present newspaper publications concerning him and his family. Mr. Jefferson and a number of his other friends held a discussion of the situation, and concluded that it would be wise to keep him in ignorance of the affair. As he never reads the newspapers before they have passed through other hands, and as he leads a life that is very secluded, coming into personal contact with only a very few intimates, it will not be difficult to conceal the story from him. The tale itself has a good many sensational features, and these should be made known. It has been printed that the alleged attempt to blackmail Mr. Booth has affected his health, mental and physical. Such is not the case. I was with Mr. Booth yesterday. His mind was never clearer, his eye never brighter, his cheek never tinged with a ruddier glow. He is perfectly happy, perfectly strong, and I should not be at all surprised if he were to go to acting late in the coming season. He is quite well enough, and it is purely a question of preference with him. A good many people think he is lame and broken down. He has always had some muscular affection of the back that causes him to start off with a kind of limp, but as soon as he gets to moving he is all right. We walked for about three miles together a day or two ago, and he was not at all fatigued. I see that Mr. Louis Megargee gives as a possible reason for my having spoken of Mackaye in this connection, an alleged difference between Mackaye and myself in connection with a matter of money. If there have been any differences between us they will not under any conditions be discussed by me. I have nothing whatever to say about him, and I have not at any time referred to him in connection with Mr. Booth."

(The above article immediately followed the preceding one on page 6 of the Dramatic News, August 1, 1891 issue)

The following editorial was taken from page 14 of the New York Dramatic News, August 1, 1891 issue:

THE BOOTH STORY

The story of Agatha Delanoir Booth, as first printed in last week's issue of the Dramatic News, has been very widely circulated and commented upon, hardly a paper of importance in the United States having failed to copy the bulk of it. The Associated Press sent the narrative out by telegraph, giving us full credit. Probably no other such important item of theatrical news has been presented to the public in the past fifty years. Of course, no person will give credence to the Herald's sensational story that an attempt was made to blackmail Mr. Booth through the letters of Agatha Delanoir. Those who know the men hinted at by the Herald will not require any assurance on that question. Both of them are men of such character and calibre, that their attitude in any matter of this kind might be told with the utmost accuracy long in advance. The action of the Dramatic News in laying the matter before the public at great length is occasioned by a desire to strip the story of those elements of malice with which the original and mysterious publication was tinged. We have every sympathy for Mr. Booth. He has had one or two experiences with newspaper men that would have embittered a man of less gentle character. Some years ago he gave to an editor of a struggling weekly paper in this city a large sum of money to help him out of a bad scrape. For a time this man maintained a friendly attitude toward Mr. Booth, and even now he makes a feeble pretence at being his admirer. But three or four years ago this same editor wrote for the New York Star -- upon which he was at the time doing the dramatic criticisms, such as they were--an attack upon his benefactor so brutal and so cruel that the managing editor refused to print it. Mr. Booth knows of the existence of this article and the episode has made him rather timid, so far as newspaper people are concerned. We do not wonder.

The following article, entitled "THE TOWN CRIER" was taken from the New York Dramatic News, dated Saturday, August 8, 1891:

It was cabled to the Sun and Herald on Sunday that Steele Mackaye, who is in London, was in a great state of excitement over the connecting of his name with the alleged attempt to blackmail Edwin Booth. I cannot say that I blame Mr. Mackaye for his feeling in this matter. Of course, it will not be found that he had anything to do with so dastardly a scheme, and it is for this reason all the more peculiar on the part of the Herald that it made the original accusation in a manner so covert. The paper in question, it will be remembered, printed the story without mentioning any names at all. It stated deliberately that an attempt had been made to blackmail Mr. Booth on account of secrets hitherto hidden, in connection with the history of the Booth family, and it went on to say that these cold-blooded and infamous proceedings had practically broken down the actor's mental and physical system. Both Stuart Robson and Joseph Jefferson were quoted as having practically admitted that such an attempt had been made. Mr. Robson has flatly denied any such utterance, but Mr. Jefferson has apparently not been communicated with in the matter.

The course taken by the Dramatic News in connection with the Booth-Mackaye-Burr affair has completely vindicated the gentlemen anonymously accused in the Herald's article. Whether Mr. Mackaye on his return to America will deem it advisable to seek redress from the Herald is a question that can only be determined by future events. It would, perhaps, be a difficult matter for him to prove outright that the Herald really referred to him in its underhand assault. It is, of course, probable that a newspaper which would adopt such a method of making an accusation would resort to denial in order to evade responsibility. It is a significant fact, however, in connection with this controversy, that the Herald has not once attempted to show that Mr. Mackaye and Mr. Burr were not the people to whom the article referred. Mr. Burr, in frequent conversations with me during the past few days, has taken occasion to say he would be more than pleased if the Herald had come out in a flat-footed way with a mention of his name. He would then have been in a position to vindicate himself in an entirely satisfactory manner. To settle the matter once and for all time, I should like the Herald to state, without reservation, whether or no it referred to Mackaye and Burr as the men who attempted to blackmail Mr. Booth.

If the Herald refuses to answer this question, it will practically admit that these are the men described in its columns as "an ex-journalist and a person connected with the stage." From the moment that condition is established it will be easy to find out just what information served as the basis of this attempt to fasten a crime upon two men well known in their separate professions. The Herald will then be placed in a position where it must either prove that Mr. Mackaye and Mr. Burr did make an attempt to extort money from Edwin Booth, or must admit that its accusation was a mean and cowardly fabrication based upon the thinnest rumor that malice could conjure up. It seems to me that under these circumstances the New York Herald has permitted itself to fall into very unpleasant surroundings. The journal mentioned is the institution really on trial. If it genuinely believes the story it gave to the public, why are not the facts produced? If there are no such facts in existence, then the Herald is in the light of a cheap, low-lived, sensational publication, acknowledging its willingness to destroy men's reputations in the interest of empty sensationalism.

The Herald's course towards the Dramatic News in this business is somewhat diverting. No other newspaper of importance in this country, that has

paid any attention whatever to the Booth story, has failed to credit the Dramatic News with having brought the whole story to light promptly and without hesitation. The Herald has carefully avoided any mention of this paper, much to the amusement of journalists everywhere. It is evident that the action of the Dramatic News in giving the full particulars publication does not meet with the approval of the Herald people. Of course, everybody knows that the Dramatic News, as a matter of fact, appropriated the Herald's thunder, and quite naturally it causes a large and derisive smile to settle upon the features of journalism in general when it is observed that the Herald's resentment takes the form of referring to this periodical as "a theatrical newspaper."

It was, indeed, a thoroughly clean "scoop" that was recorded by this paper in its publications of last week and the week before concerning the Delanoir-Booth episode. The Associated Press sent out the story by telegraph with full credit, after its appearance in this paper, so that it appeared simultaneously in hundreds of important dailies throughout the country. In some instances -- notably in the New York Morning Journal and the Buffalo News of Sunday -- the result of my investigations in Baltimore was reproduced, illustrations and all, and everywhere profound interest has been awakened in this chapter in the life of the great tragedian whose name will always remain illustrious in the history of the stage. It is quite possible that in the near future I may supply another and even more startling surprise in connection with the matrimonial history of Junius Brutus Booth. Information has reached me within the past week that will probably lead to a most amazing discovery that has yet been brought to light in regard to the melancholy and turbulent career of the father of Edwin Booth.