

Did Lincoln's Assassin

Really Escape?

This Is How History Says Booth Was Killed

JOHN WILKES BOOTH and his young accomplice, Davy Harold, eluded their pursuers until the early morning of April 26—eleven days after the assassination of President Lincoln. At 3 a. m., while they were hiding in a tobacco house on the Garrett farm, near Bowling Green, Maryland, the building was surrounded by twenty-nine men, led by Colonel E. J. Conger.

A lieutenant named Baker hailed the fugitives, warning them that unless they surrendered within five minutes the tobacco house would be fired. Booth answered that although he had but one sound leg he would agree to come out and fight them all singly; but presently Harold came out and gave himself up.

Colonel Conger then went to a corner of the building and set fire to it, lighting a wisp of hay that protruded through a crack. Immediately there was a blaze, which revealed Booth starting for the door. A shot rang out. Boston Corbett, a trooper of the Sixteenth New York, had lost his head. Disobeying orders he had fired through a crack with deadly aim.

Colonel Conger recognized the mortally wounded man, who died two hours later, murmuring the words: "Useless—useless."

Booth's body was carried to Belle Plain, the nearest landing to Fredericksburg, and placed under guard on the deck of the steamer John S. Ide, and thus conveyed to Alexandria. Here, by Secretary Stanton's orders, it was transferred to a tug in charge of Chief L. C. Baker, of the Secret Service, which conveyed the body of Booth to the monitor Montauk, anchored off the Navy Yard.

There Booth's body was fully identified and photographed. John Wilkes Booth was officially attested dead. Then Chief Baker took the body in a rowboat to the Arsenal inclosure and placed it on the wharf, in charge of a sentry. During the night it was carried into one of the cellar storerooms of the old penitentiary, placed in a gun box and buried under the brick pavement.

Four years later, with President Johnson's permission granted to the Booth family, a Washington undertaker exhumed John Wilkes Booth's body, placed it in a new casket, conveyed it to Baltimore and buried it in the family plot at Greenmount, where it still lies under the east face of the monument erected to Junius Brutus Booth by his son Edwin in 1858.

Now Comes a Woman with Documents to Support Her Claim That She Is the Daughter of John Wilkes Booth, and That He Married Her Mother While Hiding in the Tennessee Mountains.

At intervals during the half century since the assassination of Abraham Lincoln efforts have been made to disprove accepted historical records—to show that John Wilkes Booth did not pay the penalty for his crime, but made good his escape.

The latest of these efforts is just now being made by a Tennessee woman who claims to hold proofs that she is the daughter of the

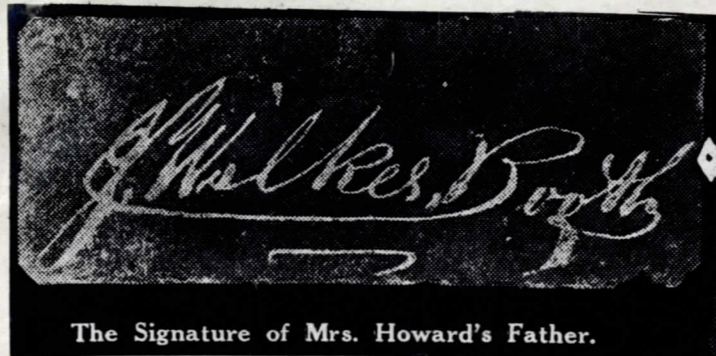
actor-assassin; that her mother, now dead, then a widow living in the Tennessee mountains, was married to John Wilkes Booth while he was in hiding there in the years shortly following the national tragedy at Ford's Theatre, in Washington, in which he was the chief actor.

The explanation of such a possibility is the same as has been advanced before, that the Federal troops, which surrounded the historic tobacco house on Garrett's farm, realizing that Booth had eluded them and buried himself somewhere in the more or less sympathetic South, deliberately made their identification fit another man, the one shot to death by Boston Corbett.

The great need of the Government to appease the horror and grief of virtually the whole country, and the eagerness of that searching party to secure the large reward offered for the assassin's capture, caused this false identification to be officially accepted and placed on record. Thus the theories of Booth's successful escape, in the face of history to the contrary, is explained.

The same explanation was made eight years ago, when, in Oklahoma, a scholarly and mysterious recluse known as David E. George, died by his own hand, leaving a written confession that he was John Wilkes Booth, the assassin of Abraham Lincoln.

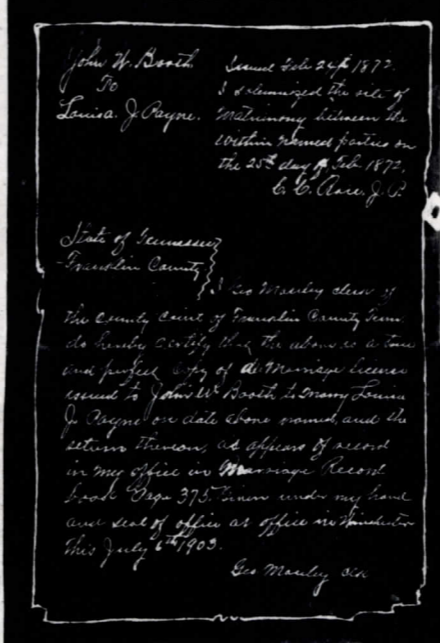
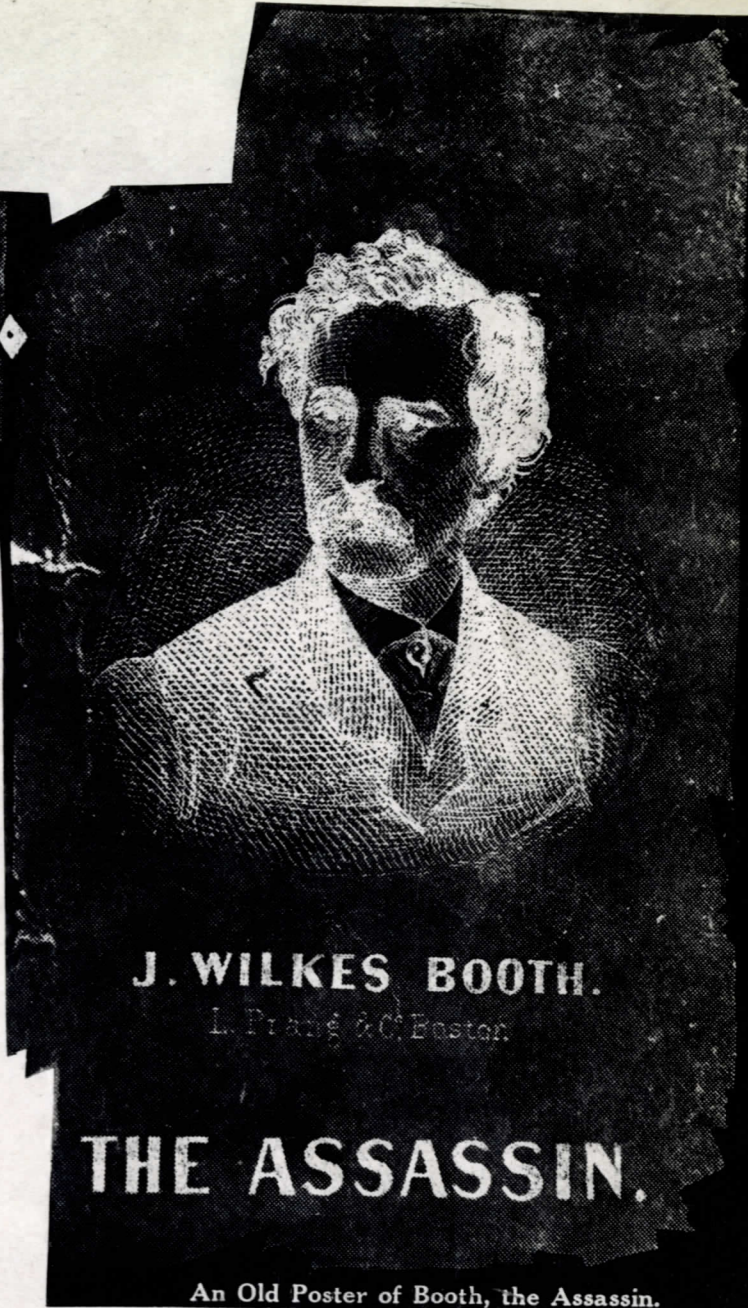
The Tennessee woman, who now declares that she is the daughter



The Signature of Mrs. Howard's Father.

of John Wilkes Booth, and submits documentary evidence in substantiation of her claim, is Mrs. L. A. Howard. She insists that Booth, with the assistance of friends, managed to escape, living to marry Mrs. Howard's mother, Mrs. Louisa J. Payne, then a young widow, in the mountains of Tennessee, on February 24, 1872. She further says that her father was the man who committed suicide in Enid, Okla., in 1903, leaving a written confession that his real name was John Wilkes Booth.

Mrs. Howard exhibits a certified copy of her mother's marriage cer-



Facsimile of the Marriage Certificate Issued to "J. W. Booth" and Louisa J. Payne.

In addition to these proofs Mrs. Howard has a picture of the recluse who committed suicide in Oklahoma, taken after his death, together with a copy of his confession that he was Booth. The picture of the suicide bears a striking resemblance to the more familiar photographs of Booth. The signature to the confession appears identical with that on the marriage license.

The mountain people in Tennessee who knew Mrs. Howard's father say she is very much like him. She has the same dark eyes and the same magnetic personality. They uphold her theory that he was Booth; that he lived to marry and become a father, and then, driven by fear to wander from place to place, until, in desperation he finally took his own life in the far West, probably without knowledge of the child that had been born to him in the mountains of Tennessee.

By Mrs. L. A. Howard
THERE is no doubt in my mind that J. Wilkes Booth, the actor, was my father. There is no doubt that my father was



Mrs. J. W. Booth, the Mother of Mrs. Howard, Who Believed That Her Husband Was Lincoln's Assassin.