

FROM THE NEW YORK HERALD

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" He who was known in life at Atlanta, Ga., as the Rev. James Armstrong, was, the whisperers said, undoubtedly John Wilkes Booth.

" Dumfounding and incredible as the assertion seemed, it demanded investigation, when lo! a wonder of another kind was revealed. Not indeed the assassin, but a man so marvelously like John Wilkes Booth in body and mental traits that twelve years after his sudden death the belief is firmly held in a hundred quarters that he was Booth.

" And, stranger still, the Rev. Mr. Armstrong well knew of this resemblance, and in many ways, without overtly saying so, allowed the belief to live that he indeed was the man they thought he was. Once at a crisis of his life, which was stormy for a minister, when asked by his bishop before an ecclesiastical trial court, "Are you John Wilkes Booth?" replied, "I am on trial as James Armstrong, not as John Wilkes Booth." Pressed further, he refused to affirm or deny.

" Back of the dreadful time when the clergyman's double, John Wilkes Booth, leaped into an accursed prominence the Rev. Dr. Armstrong had been making a personal history that he would not care to see unveiled. He was in

the South. Those who might suspect that he was Booth would be less likely to delve into that past if they thought that such delving would uncover the man who, however madly and fatally for the South itself, had risked his life in what he thought her cause. Policy, therefore, and the curious bent of an unusual mind conjoined to let the story keep on its way.

"How it grew, how its survival was so long possible, upon what meat of rumor, circumstance, innuendo and assumption it fed make a remarkable story. Above all is the extraordinary likeness down to minute details between the two men--the actor-assassin and the clergyman-actor--for Dr. Armstrong's taste lay not toward the pulpit, but toward the stage. His voice was remarkable and his personal magnetism great. He organized amateur theatricals among the young folk of the parish, and his favorite plays were Shakespearian. Before he died he went on the lecture platform, and his most remarkable lectures were "Richard III" and "Hamlet."

"Circumstantial evidence going to prove that he was Booth cropped up on all sides during his life at Atlanta. Years after the dreadful event of April 14, 1865, when Edwin Booth, the actor, ventured to play again through the South, the Rev. Dr. Armstrong occupied a stage box in the opera house at Atlanta, Ga.

" When these two men looked into each other's eyes across the footlights the Atlantans who were in the audience will tell you that they felt the play pause. Edwin Booth stood staring from the center of the stage at the likeness of his brother, and that night he visited the Rev. Dr. Armstrong in a close carriage at one o'clock in the morning.

" Every time he came to the town he sought out the doctor. They were fast friends. Everything he could do to further the belief in Southern minds Dr. Armstrong did. He openly visited Edwin Booth at the Kimball Hotel, enjoying the significant glances which were cast upon him."