

THE GOSPEL SPREADS

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Chapter 20.

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Was Abraham Lincoln assassinated or did he live on until the present time?. It is quite surprising that some of the Booth myth makers have not insisted that this is the case, for those who remember Lincoln have been startled by the resemblance to him of Judge Charles Bull of Reno, Nevada. He "Has facial marks strikingly like Lincoln's" and is a "second Lincoln" in lanky appearance, height and weight.

There have been thousands of cases of mistaken identity due to facial and bodily characteristics that were similar in different people. There is George de Papalie, of Brooklyn, N Y., who was often pointed out as the President by passersby when the late Warren G. Harding was chief executive, and James H. McCabe, another Brooklyn resident whose resemblance to Woodrow Wilson has been commented on often. Many other instances of like nature can be cited. The Prince of Wales has a double in J. A. Garrow, an assistant purser on an ocean liner and the ex-Kaiser one in Max Nitschke, a chimney sweep of Langenbieken, Silesia. (1)

Many of those who saw a long-mustached, dark-haired man who resembled John Wilkes Booth, although they may not have seen that actor more than once or twice, and then on the stage, have been fertile soil for the silly tales claiming that he escaped. Consider the number of people who were recognized and even arrested as John Wilkes Booth during the eleven days before his capture.

Augustus Thomas, playwright and producer, says in an article, "The Print of My Remembrance," (2): "Although my father was ten years Booth's (3) senior, he and Booth had been rather boon companions in New Orleans, and coming from the same theater, wearing the same kind of mustachios and the clubbed hair of the period, were so alike that each was sometimes mistaken for the other."

Would John Wilkes Booth have lived in such towns as Granbury, Texas, and El Reno, Oklahoma, as a saloon keeper in one and a house painter in the other, coming constantly in contact with the public, and have worn a mustache that was a sure means of identification?. He was too great a master of make-up and disguise to let such an easily controlled factor in his appearance be the means of his later capture. He shaved it off at Dr Mudd's home on the morning after the assassination to avoid easy identification. Common sense dictates that this also would have been the case had he escaped death at the hands of Boston Corbett. But without exception all these mythical Booths have had "long wavy raven locks" and "Booth mustachios."

In addition to literally hundreds of newspaper stories there has been issued since 1922, two books based on the fallacious Bates narrative, one a novel, "Booth and the Spirit of Lincoln," by Bernie Babcock, and the second, another "Correction of History," "The Escape and Wanderings of J. Wilkes Booth until Ending of the Trail by Suicide in Oklahoma," written or rather compiled by W. P. Campbell, Oklahoma City, who pays his respects to Mr. Bates with the statement that he "certainly handled his subject with wonderful tact, displaying a faculty for getting at the bottom of things. Throughout the volume creeps unmistakable evidences of painstaking perseverance, and genius in selection and sequential arrangement with clever arguments and criticisms." (4)

Of the Campbell story Bates wrote in a letter May 14th, 1923, that it is "largely in corroboration of my story, while in no statement contradicted." This could not be other than true since Mr. Campbell "largely" repeats Mr. Bates' own claims.

This second concoction reproduces even the pictures from the Bates' "Correction of History" and is a greater hodge-podge than that work and like

it is filled with assumptions that are shown by the testimony to be wholly untenable. It is written evidently by more than one person, as there is a wide divergence in style between the first fifty pages and the remainder of the book. Mr. Campbell was quite old and partly blind and probably procured the aid of someone else. The book repeats the "General" Dana story, the St. Helen "Confession" and all the D. E. George drivel, including the palm reading of the dead George's hand. It improves on Mr. Bates' imagination in spots such as this, (5) "Among other papers found on George one was in his bosom requesting that Finis L. Bates of Memphis, Tennessee., be telegraphed to come immediately and identify the body as that of John Wilkes Booth" and Mr. Campbell sagely adds, "Letter lost."

Another example of rare imaginative writing is a list of the contents found in George's trunk which Mr. Penniman, the undertaker, says contained merely some old work clothes. Mr. Campbell, however, states (6) "on opening the trunk were found wigs, paints, cosmetics, and other theatrical trappings."

Mr. Campbell did some valuable work, nevertheless, by collecting many weird tales floating around about John Wilkes Booth in the southwest, unfortunately he credits only those that claim Booth's escape and in these he takes no notice of the inconsistency clearly apparent when one is compared with another.

Mr. Bates (7) states in his book that "on the 22nd day of January, 1898, I addressed a communication to Mr. H. M. Alden, Editor of Harper's Weekly, giving a full statement of the facts in my possession respecting the escape of Booth, asserting that in my opinion Booth had not in fact been killed." Actually Bates wrote Harper's that John St. Helen while living in Granbury, Texas, confessed to him that he was John Wilkes Booth and that from investigation

he had learned that there were several other rumors of Booth's escape and that he would like to write a book for publication on the subject.

Mr. Alden replied January 25, 1898 and Bates quoted the answer but left out the sentence in italics which referred to his real reason for writing Harper's.

"Dear Sir:" wrote Mr. Alden,

"In reply to your letter of January 22, we must decline to make any offer for an article, or a book, on John Wilkes Booth. Of the facts that you mention we have not the slightest doubt. The rumor that John Wilkes Booth was still alive frequently reached Edwin Booth, the actor; yet it was frequently investigated, found false, or quietly ignored.

Thanking you for your courteous proposition, I am

Sincerely yours,

"H. M. Alden."

Bates wisely made no comment. Mr. Campbell in his book (8) twists Mr. Alden's reply into "H.M. Allen, Editor of Harper's Weekly declares in a letter of January 22, 1898, he hasn't the slightest doubt that the rumor that John Wilkes Booth is still alive, (1898) that frequently reached Edwin Booth the actor, and brother of John Wilkes Booth."

"Roddy Makes his Initial Bow" is the heading of one of Mr. Campbell's chapters. Under this he declares, "One of the most important bits of information touching the escape of Booth comes from Mr. W. P. Carneal, Postmaster of Lent, near the Garrett farm. Here the first mention of the name Roddy is made, except in the Booth confession." He then quotes Mr. Carneal as saying, "Bill Rollins and a man named Roddy crossed the river with Booth and Herold." If the quotation is correctly made, Mr. Carneal doubtless referred to Ruggles,

one of the three Confederate officers who crossed the Rappahannock at Port Conway with Booth and Herold, but Mr. Campbell considers this as confirmation of the "Ruddy" story.

Mr. Campbell forestalls the adverse comments of those who really knew D. E. George at El Reno by saying that there were "two painters in El Reno sailing under the name of George." "You will find" truthfully says Mr. Campbell, (9) " a number of the best and most reliable citizens of El Reno who will tell you that they were intimately acquainted with George the painter, sometimes called Crazy George because he was supposed to be more or less daffy. That they knew him to their financial sorrow, for he was a consummate beggar, living from hand to mouth on what he could beg or borrow and on garbage from the back alley dumps." But "he was not George the cultured gentleman," Mr. Campbell declares, and continues, "This was not the painter George who put up at the best places and had access to the most fashionable circles, whose clothes were of the finest cloth and latest pattern, who was a very Beau Brummel in dress, almost painfully clean and tidy." The first George described is then claimed by Campbell to have been "Crazy George Thrower who died at the Canadian County poor farm a year or so ago."

Other than the statement, "living from the back-alley dumps," the first description more nearly fits the David George we are discussing, the David George who lived at Hennessey, then at the Anstine and Simmons places in El Reno and who died a suicide in Enid, leaving a scrawl of ill-formed letters saying that he owed his saloon keeper "about ten dollars, but he has my watch in pawn for the amount." And in the trunk of David George the Enid suicide, was found just "some old work clothes" that may have been of the "latest pattern" but certainly would not have labeled their wearer as a "Beau Brummel in dress."

The next wild flight of Mr. Campbell's imagination (10) is his description of David George's death, which does not corroborate Bates' highly dramatic narrative of the same event, for it gives a new and shorter version of the death-bed confession. Campbell says that in less than an hour after buying the strychnine at the Watrus Drug Store in Enid, George was discovered in his room writhing in agony. "In a moment, " declares Campbell, "of less pangs-- the forerunner of the end, he motioned for the physician to put his ear close to his lips, and in faint whispers: "I am John Wilkes Booth, in my bosom you will find a request to telegraph Bates" The sentence unfinished. The spirit of John Wilkes Booth took its way into the mysterious unknown. The request referred to was that Finis L. Bates of Memphis, Tennessee, be telegraphed to come at once that he might identify the body of John Wilkes Booth." In view of the sworn statements of the attending physician, Dr. Field and Lee Boyd, the only other man in the room when George died, both of whom said that the dying man "made no confession" and "could not speak." Mr Campbell must have been the victim of some wild romancer.

We may ask - who made away with the message found in George's bosom and who sent the wire to Bates?. I spent several weeks around Enid and El Reno in 1921 looking for the party and could not find him - for he did not exist, neither did the bosom message or the telegram.

This man George, who is St. Helen only by virtue of Mr. Bates' unsupported claims, and we have seen that his claims are worthless, had never mentioned Finis L. Bates, his attorney, not even in his wills, nor in the "morphined" confession he made to Mrs. Harper in El Reno in 1900, nor in his letter written on the morning he died, in which he revoked his last will and testament. Bates and St. Helen parted about 1875. By Bates' own acknowledgment, St. Helen had never communicated with him and he did not know of his whereabouts during all those years, but on his deathbed in 1903, Bates

and Campbell would convince us that George-St. Helen-Booth suddenly remembered there might be some question of his identity and that among others he had confessed to a boy by the name of Bates about thirty years before.

It is all based on the reasoning of old men at the period in life when fact so often blends into fiction and fiction into senile dementia.

Just one or two laughable references to be found in Mr. Campbell's work and we will consider Mrs. Babcock's novel. Campbell quotes (11) Mr. W. H. Holmes of Oklahoma City with the statement that he sang in the choir at a revival in 1892 or 1893 at Atlanta, Georgia, and recognized the revival evangelist, "David Armstrong," as John Wilkes Booth. Mr. Holmes said he had seen Edwin Booth and was struck by the strong resemblance. The preacher, of course, was Dr. James G. Armstrong discussed in a previous chapter and who died at Atlanta in 1893. Yet according to the Campbell book, when Mr. Holmes took a look "at the embalmed body of David George, at Enid, he at once recognized the features of the evangelist he saw in Atlanta."

Mr. Campbell was not satisfied with the actress story that Bates told, and proceeded to find a new one. This time it is Miss Jessie Varsey for whom "Devoli" -George-Booth writes a play, "Shadows of the Past." It will be remembered that Mr. Bates' Harris-George-Booth wrote "A Life Within the Shadow of Sin" (Booth's Life) for Josie Cameron, an actress.

Mr. Devoli claimed to be an Italian and "possessed the proverbial pleasing polish of the elite Roman." Since this chap was said to be the "representative of a dramatic publication" he may also have been John Walter Robinson, the Dramatic Mirror correspondent.

While investigating the David George stories around Enid and El Reno in 1921, I was informed that Mr. Campbell knew something about the matter

and called on him in Oklahoma City. The stories he told me were just as disconnected as his book. He said that he had been loaned a photograph of John Wilkes Booth taken years after his supposed death, by a noted medium. At first he would not let me see this, claiming that he had promised the owner, Jim Duffy, not to show it. Finally, however, he relented and I was allowed to gaze upon a reprint of the St. Helen tintype which had been made from the retouched picture of this, which appears in the Bates book. In the upper right-hand corner was "Copy-righted February 16, 1898, by F. L. Bates." Poor old Mr. Campbell was honest. He at least did not alter and misquote in order to prove the truth of his thesis, but his eyesight was bad.

Jim Duffy, the owner of the "spirit photograph," was interviewed. He said that he was in the Army during the Civil War and was stationed at Washington, D. C., where "he knew John W. Booth and 'Abe' Lincoln intimately and saw Booth on the stage." He further declared that he had been an officer in El Reno, Oklahoma, prior to Mr. Roger's (the name he insisted on calling David George) death and that he was intimate with him and had heard him tell the story of his life. As Mr. Duffy related the matter, "Booth was not killed as history says, but stayed in Washington, D. C., six days after shooting Lincoln and had his leg set by Dr. Mudd and was nursed by Mrs. Surratt, who was hanged in connection with the shooting of Lincoln." Duffy claimed that "Rogers" lamented the hanging of Mrs. Surratt to him, stating that she was innocent.

He said that he had received a number of letters from a Miss Margaret Dupont Lee, of Washington, D. C., who according to him is a wealthy spiritualist, and interested in Booth. He claimed that she had given him a picture of Booth, which was the same as one already in his possession which he secured in 1876.

Although he declared that he still possessed these letters and pictures, he refused to show them. For further information he referred the inquirer to Mr. Bates' book.

Let us now consider the novel by Mrs. Bernie Babcock. As a novel the story may be all right. All the Booth myth stories are fiction anyway, but Mrs. Babcock opens the way for serious criticism of the many fallacious statements to be found in her book when she states as an "In appreciation":-

"This story Booth and the Spirit of Lincoln, is founded on documentary evidence, a great portion of which was gathered by Finis L. Bates (deceased) early-day friend of John St. Helen, evidence now in possession of his wife, Mrs. Finis L. Bates, 1234 Harbert Avenue, Memphis, Tennessee.

"This evidential matter I have examined with great care, using a strong magnifying glass over some of the signatures to detect the fraud charged by certain writers, who claim to believe Booth was shot in the Garrett barn.

"For the opportunity of this rigid examination I wish to thank Mrs. Bates and to advise readers of this story who may wish copies of Mr. Bates' book, "The Escape and Suicide of John Wilkes Booth," same containing original matter above referred to, that Mrs. Bates has a few copies. Mr. Bates spent \$50,000 accumulating the evidence presented in this book and in later affidavits. The book, now out of print, is invaluable to those desiring first-hand evidence on this disputed case."

In her second paragraph above, Mrs. Babcock refers to the statements I made in a magazine article two years ago and which I repeat in the preceding chapter in connection with the Brown & Dumout affidavit. The article, however, did not deal with signatures, as she states, but as was shown in Chapter 18, with the later insertion in the affidavit of an absolutely false statement not made by the signers.

quotations, attributed it to him. The article, after telling of the passing of Colonel Wood and describing the stirring events surrounding the assassination in two columns, devotes a third to the reminiscences of an actor, John T. Sullivan, who said that he was told that the body "was carried to an island twenty-seven miles from Washington and secretly buried there." Mr. Sullivan also was repeating just another of the 1865 rumors. This actor is credited in the same paragraph with the statement that "Edwin Booth was taken practically under arrest to Washington to identify the body." This is no nearer the truth than the other statement. It was merely the supposition of some imaginative reporter of the period. Those like Mrs. Babcock and Mr. Campbell, who accept Bates as an authority, repeat all his inaccuracies. It would be merely humorous if others were not also influenced by these unfounded claims and were not inclined to swallow them without question.

The four quoted by Mrs. Babcock are not the only varying statements about Booth's burial place. One old fellow claimed last year (13) that Colonel Baker told him he had buried the body in Portsmouth, Virginia. This town is over two hundred miles from Washington. Contradictions in the story itself indicated that it was but another case of senility. But what difference does it make if there are fifty dissimilar stories told about the disposal of the body after the identification and autopsy?. They would not prove that the man shot in the Garrett barn was not John Wilkes Booth. (Compare these with the facts as stated in Chapters X, XI, XII of this work.)

Mrs. Babcock quotes (14) from General L. C. Baker's "History of the Secret Service" (15) the quotation contained therein of George Alfred Townsend's story written the week after Booth's capture. In this Townsend said, "Finally, the Secretary of War, without instructions of any kind,

The claim that "Mr. Bates spent \$50,000 accumulating the evidence" is gross exaggeration. If he spent one-tenth that amount it was a tremendous overpayment for the material he had, all of which I examined and could have placed in a large traveling bag. It consisted of a dozen copies of various magazines containing Lincoln assassination stories, a scrap book of about fifty pages, the St. Helen tintype, some pictures of the D. E. George Mummy, a real picture of John Wilkes Booth, a few books on Lincoln, about a hundred letters, a dozen or fifteen affidavits, and that was about all. As far as I could learn Mr. Bates made several trips to Detroit, Chicago, and of course to Enid, Oklahoma, in 1903. He never took the trouble to visit Washington, D. C., the location of the crime and the source of official documents dealing with it - \$5,000 would be more than ample and most of this was spent in the interest of exhibiting the mummy at so much a look and not for gathering material. That was a mere incidental.

After her "Appreciation" Mrs. Babcock, as a preface, quotes from Bates' book the statements he had collected showing that there was some confusion in the public mind as to the disposal of the body of John Wilkes Booth.

"He (John Wilkes Booth) was buried near the old jail and a battery of artillery drawn over his grave to obliterate all trace of it.

'General David D. Dana.'

"John Wilkes Booth was buried under a brick pavement in a room of the old penitentiary building of Washington.

'General Lew Wallace.'

"The remains of Booth were carried on a gunboat about ten miles down the Potomac when the body was sunk in the river.

'Captain E. W. Hillard.'

"The body of Booth was placed on a boat by Captain Baker and his nephew, a Lieutenant in the New York Seventy-first Volunteers, carried to an island twenty-seven miles from Washington and secretly buried there.

'Colonel Wm. P. Wood.'

We have seen already that Lieutenant (Mrs. Babcock repeats "General") Dana's story is unreliable. All four just quoted had no part in the disposition of the body and had no personal knowledge of how or where it was disposed. Lieutenant Dana correctly stated the locality but was repeating just one of the newspaper suppositions of the period when he said that "a battery of artillery" was drawn over the grave.

General Lew Wallace was correct as to the building; the old penitentiary was part of the Arsenal. I cannot learn whether there was a brick floor to this building or not. At the time of the conspiracy trial the Boston Journal said: "The Washington arsenal, where the conspirators are confined, and where they will be tried, is about one mile southwest of the Capitol, on a point of land at the junction of the Potomac and Anacosta. The District Penitentiary, a large brick edifice, adjoined the arsenal and after the war broke out was added to it. Since then it has not been used as a prison." Warehouse No. 1 of the arsenal, to which the bodies of Booth, Mrs. Surratt, Payne, Herold, Atzerodt and Wirz, the Andersonville jailor, were moved in the fall of 1867, had a flagstone flooring under which the bodies were buried, this change caused some confusion as to the burial place. (12)

What authority "Captain Hillard" may have had for the statement credited to him is not known. He merely repeated one of the many newspaper stories current in 1865.

Colonel Wood, however, did not make the statement with reference to the disposal of Booth's body which is credited to him by Mr. Bates and quoted by Mrs. Babcock. I found in Mr. Bates' scrap book the original April 25, 1903, newspaper clipping from which this was taken. Mr. Bates had marked the passage under discussion. Mr. Bates saw the headlines in which Colonel Wood's name appeared and, with his usual carelessness in handling

committed to Colonel Lafayette G. Baker, of the Secret Service, the stark corpse of J. Wilkes Booth. The Secret Service never fulfilled its vocation more secretly. 'What have you done with the body?' said I to Baker. 'That is known,' he answered, 'to only one man living beside myself. It is gone; I will not tell you where; the only man who knows is sworn to silence; never till the great trumpeter comes shall the grave of Booth be discovered.' And this is true. Last night, the 27th of April, a small rowboat received the carcass of the murderer; two men were in it; they carried the body off into the darkness, and out of that darkness it will never return; in the darkness, like his great crime, may it remain forever; impassable, invisible, nondescript, condemned to that worse than damnation - annihilation."

But Mrs. Babcock does not touch upon General Baker's own story (16) written in 1867, after the necessity for secrecy no longer existed, in which he disclosed the actual burial place of John Wilkes Booth.

Although she brings in Tom Jones, a real character, Mrs. Babcock keeps the substitute, Captain Cox's hired man, who is supposed to die in the Garrett barn, safely incognito under the name, "Jimmie", but otherwise she closely follows the fake St. Helen confession for details. After getting her Booth safely through Kentucky and then Southwest, she brings him to San Francisco where in a highly dramatic scene she has him meet his mother and brother Junius and then she ships him to China as "Richards." From China to a tropical island he goes, where he has an affair with a married woman, and after many other journeys he lands in Mexico and becomes a Catholic priest. Then we have John St. Helen of Glenrose and Granbury and Finis L. Bates "an ambitious young lawyer scarce out of his teens."

After detailing the St. Helen "Confession," Mrs. Babcock repeats

all the hotel clerk B. B. Brown balderdash that Bates invented to prove a deathbed confession on January 14, 1903, the day after D. E. George died. She, however, does not print the altered affidavit which Bates used in an attempt to support this, but makes it worse by having three persons, the doctor and Messrs. Brown and Dumont, witness George's death agonies. (17)

She says: "A feeble motion of the lips told a desire to speak. The three men listened for words -perhaps the last. 'I am - am - John Wilkes - Booth. I killed - killed - Abraham - Lincoln - the best - best'" A paroxysm of pain stopped the words."

Mrs. Babcock then refers in a foot note, "Affidavit of B. B. Brown and S. S. Dumout in Bates' collection," which as we have seen does not tell any such story even after alteration.

Part of her last chapter is devoted to quotations from the newspapers of 1903. These were not taken directly from copies of the papers, but are reguoted from the Bates book and contain the inaccuracies and alterations made by Bates. It is greatly to be regretted that books like this are widely circulated which are so loosely written and which express opinions and conclusions so much at variance with the facts.

The love element in Mrs. Babcock's story is supplied by the rumors that were spread soon after the assassination that John Wilkes Booth was the lover of Bessie Hale, daughter of Senator John P. Hale. The family emphatically denied at the time that there was any truth to the stories.

The New York Tribune, Wednesday, April 26, the day of Booth's death, had this to say on the subject:

"About the most impertinent bit of gossip that has lately crept into some of the journals alleged that the assassin Booth was engaged to a daughter of the Honorable John P. Hale. The National Republican says:

"There is not the slightest truth in the statement. Booth attempted to force his attentions on Miss Hale, but she always manifested a decided aversion to the handsome villain."

The story grew until in the Ritter story, quoted in Chapter XV, the senator's daughter was declared to be Booth's mistress.

Mrs. Babcock has Booth and Robert T. Lincoln, the president's son, as rivals for the hand of this fair lady and of course jealousy developed from the situation.

The title of the Babcock book, "Booth and the Spirit of Lincoln," comes from the idea that Booth after his alleged escape was pursued by the Spirit of the dead President and this supplies the motive in the book for the D. E. George-Booth suicide in 1903.

Interwoven with sections of Mrs. Babcock's book that are meant to be fiction are also pages intended to impress the reader as fact. There are footnotes which are mostly references to Bates' "Escape" and Campbell's "Wanderings." Let us examine some of them. Two statements are referred to (18) which Mr. Bates had procured, one from Wilson D Kenzie; Beloit, Wisconsin, March 31st, 1922, and the other from N. C. Newman, Linton, Indiana, June 27, 1921. Kenzie, who claims that he is seventy-seven years of age but finds it difficult to write due to a "Stroke four years ago," says that he knew John Wilkes Booth for about four months in New Orleans in 1862. (He would have been seventeen at the time) Kenzie then claims that he finally landed in Washington as First Sergeant of his company and was a witness to the assassination in Ford's Theater. As Booth turned to move off the stage, "I noticed," says Kenzie, "That he was dressed with high riding boots and limping in his right leg." He declares that he joined Boston Corbett's company when they went looking for

Booth and that in the company was a friend of his, Joe Zisgen who also had known Booth in New Orleans. Kenzie says he was present at the Garrett barn when "Boston Corbett shot the man through a crack in the barn and killed him instantly." "They brought the man out," he claims, "and put him on the porch and covered him with a blanket except his feet."

"Joe Zisgen," according to Kenzie, "had discovered that it wasn't J. Wilkes Booth and then they covered him up so no one could see his face, as I rode up Joe Zisgen called 'Here, come here Sergeant, this ain't J. Wilkes Booth at all.' As he attempted to uncover the corpse, he was stopped by some of the officers, and his face was exposed enough so I could see the color of his hair and side of his face and from the fact that this man had sandy hair and Booth had very dark hair, I knew at once it wasn't he. His body was exposed, the lower part of it, and he had no injured leg that I could see and he did not have on riding boots, but I think ordinary shoes and I sized him up as being an ordinary Virginia farmer, what I do know and positively state that it was not the body of John Wilkes Booth.

"By that time the officers came up and ordered me and Zisgen, to keep still and not say that it wasn't Booth, saying the least you say about it, you are better off.

"I have examined," Kenzie states, "the pictures of Booth illustrating a book written and published by Finis L. Bates, called The Escape and Suicide of John Wilkes Booth and also of the mummified body, now being exhibited by Finis L. Bates and his lessees, and pronounce those pictures as the pictures of John Wilkes Booth and as the body of John Wilkes Booth."

Kenzie's statements might mean something if he had been along with the pursuing party, but on the list which has been published many times, there is no W. D. Kenzie.

Neither, as we have seen, was Booth killed instantly.

Kenzie's other statements also, when compared with the facts brought out in previous chapters, indicate that the stroke may have incapacitated his memory of events so long ago. In a letter to Mr Bates dated January 27, 1922, Mr. Kenzie says: "Booth got out of the U. S. and I have known for forty years the name of the ship on which he made Havana Harbor."

If Kenzie knew so much, why did he not report to the Judiciary Committee and the Assassination Committee of Congress when in 1866 and '67 they were moving heaven and earth to find something wrong with the handling of the entire Booth pursuit, capture and disposal of the body, and why didn't Kenzie apply for part of the reward - Jos. Zisgen got his share, although in conversation June 10, 1922, Mr Kenzie stated that "none of the soldiers, including Jos Zisgen, got any part of it." The Treasury Department records and vouchers, however, show otherwise.

Mr. Kenzie says that before the assassination he met General D. D. Dana at General Augur's headquarters. "General Augur," he declares, "refused to have anything to do with me as he had no jurisdiction over the regular army." And now we know that Kenzie got his "facts" and his memory from the Bates book for the official records show that C. C. Augur was a Major General in the regular army and that at the time under discussion he was in command of the Department of Washington. Sergeant Kenzie's next feat, according to his statements, was admittance "to the presence of E. M. Stanton, Secretary of War," who introduced him around and then sent him to a hotel. Kenzie evidently suffers from the same complex that was so prominent in Lieutenant Dana's case.

Old wives tales - all of them!

Mr. N. C. Newman the second affiant states that he was born "near Henderson, Ky., November 1, 1857." He completely ruins an impossible story

by saying that, "John Wilkes Booth's mother's name was Mary Ellen, and her maiden name was Mary Ellen Martindale, and my mother's name was Elizabeth Reed, half sister of my aunt, John Wilkes Booth's mother, being Mary Ellen Booth, wife of Junius Brutus Booth, my uncle by marriage."

Booth family records referred to in Chapter 1 of this book show that Mr. Newman is much muddled, for John Wilkes Booth's mother was Mary Ann Holmes, an English girl, who came to the country with Junius Brutus Booth, the elder. Neither is Mr. Newman's family mentioned in the letters of Edwin, John Wilkes, and other members of the Booth family, many of whom I have examined. Nor is it mentioned in the Booth family tree.

Of course, Mr. Newman, eight years of age at the time, remembers when John Wilkes Booth stopped at their place on his way west after the assassination and Mr. Newman in 1921, "recognized the cadaver of Daniel George as the body of John Wilkes Booth while it was in a mummy condition while here in this city (Linton, Ind.) on exhibition, from its likeness to his pictures taken in life, and could not fail, to recognize it by his broken right foot that I so often saw my mother dress." Mr. Newman reiterates that John Wilkes Booth could not have been killed, for he saw him many times. It is quite interesting to watch how Mr. Bates attempted to corroborate the broken right leg statement in his book after the writer in 1921 called to his attention that the War Department records showed a broken left leg and the boot cut off Booth by Dr. Mudd was for the left foot. But it was rather late for him to change from one leg to the other. In his book he had repeated "right" too often.

Mr. Bates claimed that his only interest in sending the body of David George around the country was for the "correction of history and to gather the statements of those who knew John Wilkes Booth and would recognize his likeness in the mummy." But his correspondence and some pictures

taken of his show suggest the money making rather than the historical interest motive for the exhibition of the body.

In my first interview with Mr. Bates in November, 1920, he told of having leased the mummy of David George to various carnival companies, but always in the west and southwest. During the following two years the body was on exhibition principally in Indiana and Illinois. Mr. Bates claimed that arrangements were being made to send it to Coney Island, New York, where, he said in a letter of April 3, 1922, "extensive preparations have been made." Any negotiations he may have had for the Coney Island exhibit came to naught and those down east who might have given him some real interesting statements did not have the opportunity.

The claims made by the typical show barkers accompanying the exhibition provided such stories as the following which appeared in the newspapers on September 29, 1921:

"John Wilkes Booth's "Body Hoaxes Crowds in Illinois."

Bloomington, Ill. Sept 28th: Hundreds of Central Ill, people have given up a dime to see the alleged body of J. W. B. who assassinated President Lincoln.

The lecturer informed the patrons that the body was being exhibited with the approval of the government and after being exhibited throughout the nation was to be returned to the Smithsonian Institute at Washington. It is now learned that a hoax is being perpetrated upon the gullible public. The body of Booth has never been disturbed since first interred, at least with the consent of the government." (19)

Mr. Bates exhibited his mummy of D. E. George-Booth at Riverview Park, Chicago, in September 1922 for "5¢" a look. On September 4th pictures of the show were taken. In the upper right hand corner of the billboard

was the statement:

"DAVID E HEROLD

Who was shot and killed in Garrett

Barn until now mistaken for John Wilkes Booth"

Inside the tent the Bates book was sold in which the claim is made that, "Roby or Ruddy" had this doubtful honor. Does this correct History? On July 7, 1865, the Government hanged David E. Herold "by the neck." All the Booth myth makers agree to that but it would appear that Mr. Bates had become rather doubtful on this point.

Mr. Axel Axelson, Chicago artist who took the pictures says of the mummy - "It was a sight, a mummy with glass eyes and rusty black hair and moustache."

While his exhibition was advertising Herold as the man killed in the barn Mr. Bates wrote, "I have just recently learned that the mother and brother of Franklin Robey, who was killed at the Garrett barn instead of Booth, went to Washington City to identify and claim the body of Franklin Robey, the son and brother, obtained an order from Secretary Stanton to Colonel Baker for this purpose; on the presenting of this order by the Robeys to Colonel Baker, Colonel Baker informed them that they could not see the body and unless they left at once, they would be arrested and tried as co-conspirators with the other prisoners, Mrs. Surratt and others who were then in jail. They left immediately and feared for their own safety to mention the matter. (20)

As usual Mr. Bates did not give his authority for this statement so obviously false when compared with the affidavits of those who knew Franklin Robey many years after the assassination.

If there was a third man, Ruddy, Fox, or someone else with Booth

and Herold who suffered death in place of Booth he was not along when on Friday night the 21st Jones placed Booth and Herold in the boat. He did not stay with them at Mrs. Quesenberry's, Dr. Stewarts or at the Lucas cabin. Neither Rollins, Mrs. Rollins, the three Confederate Officers nor any member of the Garrett family ever laid eyes on him.

Mr. Bates first met his "mysterious Mr. Smith" in my presence in Detroit, Wednesday morning, February 9, 1921. In his book and in previous conversations, Bates had declared that Mr. Smith was the man who acted as an agent between the Booth family and David George. I easily located this "fiscal agent" who is a traveling salesman, and brought him and the attorney for "John Wilkes Booth" together. The question of identification by "scars" arose and Mr. Bates promised to carefully examine the neck of his mummy when he returned to Memphis. He did so and corresponded with Mr. Smith on the subject of their mutual interest in David George.

From F. L. Bates to George E. Smith.

"Hotel Gayoso.
"Memphis, Tenn.

"March 4th, 1921.

"Dear Mr. Smith:-

"I have received and appreciate your letter. I had hoped that you would have been south at an earlier date than you indicated, as I should be glad to have a long talk with you which I think would be mutually interesting, but having to forego this pleasure, would be glad to have you write me what you know of this man George, and after having read my book, what you think of the proofs of identity I offer.

"In my association with St. Helen, I cannot at this time recall scars on his foot or neck. Did this man you knew have scars on his foot or neck?. And did you know of his being in Granbury, Texas, and when did you first meet him?. And such other information as you will give me touching this matter.

"I am not exhibiting just at this time, but expect will do so for season of 1921, which will open about first of April, and want an associate with fifteen hundred dollars and you are the logical man. If you would be interested, would be glad to have you wire me on receipt of this, as I must in a few days re-organize and make bookings for this season.

"With best wishes, I am
"Sincerely yours,
(Signed) "F. L. Bates."

Mr. George E. Smith answered from his home in Milwaukee, on March 23, 1921.

"Mr. F. L. Bates,
"Memphis, Tenn.

"Dear Sir:

"Pardon delay in answering your favor of March 4th.,
but I have been out of town and waited my return before answering.

"My first acquaintance with D. L. George was at El Reno,
I never noticed any scars on his neck nor on his face, except the peculiar formation of one eye brow.

"On my recent trip I visited Mr. Wm. B. Penniman at Columbus,
Ohio, and we reviewed matters there pretty thoroughly last Sunday.

"I have been informed that you exhibited the body at Memphis
and also at Los Angeles, and wish you would please advise me if I have
been correctly informed.

"I have read your book very carefully and congratulate you on
the proofs that you have gathered as to his identity. I will agree with you
in most of your statements, but differing a few instances, which I will explain
to you in our first personal interview.

"I would not invest any money in the proposition at this time, but will see you on my first trip South and talk the matter over thoroughly with you in a personal way. In the meantime I would be glad to hear from you further.

"With best regards,

"Yours truly,

"(Signed) Geo. E. Smith."

Note that Mr. Bates could not "recall scars on his foot or neck." Mrs. Bates, however, has finally discovered marks on the throat of the mummy, for she says in an undated letter bearing a Memphis postmark of March 9, 1925, and addressed to a western preacher, "I have the mummified body of Booth in a perfect state of preservation and am trying to sell it so it can be exhibited to prove history incorrect. The bone shows the fracture as well as the throat and eye brows show their marks."

In a later letter, March 30th, 1925, to the same party she says, "I am asking \$3500.00 for books, mummy, pictures, plates, etc. \$2000.00 for the mummy alone less of course 10% for selling. This is a most reasonable price as I have a standing offer to lease at \$25.00 per week. Mr. Bates at one time employed a lecturer and traveled with the mummy and made from \$200.00 to \$350.00 per week and only played the small towns. It is a great money-making scheme but I have no one in the family to take hold. Of course when this issue of the books are exhausted I shall not reprint. I am sure with your fluency of speech and writing you could make a fortune. The mummy is like any Egyptian mummy less the swathing and in a perfect condition, features, hair, etc perfect. I am especially anxious to dispose of the whole matter as I am leaving home for some months and would rather sell than store. I have myself without any advertisement sold this month \$75.00 worth of books. Of course I have a better edition that retails for \$2.25. Hope you can see your way to

purchase as I am sure you could make a go of it."

The offer to the Illinois Doctor referred to in Chapter XV was not limited to him alone, for I also received the Iowa firms circulars describing the Bates book and a letter dated April 21, 1925 which said that they had "the exclusive sale of the body of Booth, about 2300 books, the plates and copyright." They used real high-pressure oil stock sales methods and tried to rush the prospect off his feet with the statement that "A man came into our office a few days ago who has been quite a newspaper correspondent and also in a way a detective on one of the great murders of the United States, and he warned us to not let it go under \$100,000 and he said it was worth \$500,000 to some men who would want to suppress the whole thing."

What happened to the "men who want to suppress the whole thing" is unknown at least they did no suppressing, for on January 18, 1926, the same firm wrote offering various other things for sale and in this letter made the statement: "We had the Booth body for sale but a showman bought it a short time ago and it is now out of our hands. A showman offered us \$1,000 for it but we did not let him have the body, and the man who made us this offer had exhibited the body across the continent three times."

The letters and literature this firm distributed in their attempts to sell the books and mummy, while intensely humorous, also contain statements which the casual reader may accept without question and ever after believe the insane tales it tells.

It falsely claims that the Bates book is to be published by Harper's as a serial story and declares that the government did not pay "the large reward offered for Booth." For the latter statement there is no excuse - one letter to the Treasury Department at Washington would have brought the list of those to whom the reward was paid, the amount, and the receipted voucher numbers.

In addition to the sales agent circulars for the David George mummy,

in recent newspaper accounts and in some of the affidavits obtained by Mr. Bates, the statement has been made that the Government was not satisfied that the man shot in the Garrett barn was Booth and consequently had never paid the reward.

This not only is untrue in fact, but is a fair sample of the unreliability of numerous statements dealing with the assassination, which have been checked and found worthless.

As was shown in Chapter XI, the payments of the reward were made by separate draft of the Treasury Department of the United States, issued August 9, 1866, on Treasury Warrant No. 7724 and each of the paid drafts aggregating the total sum appropriated is now in the archives of the Government at Washington and may be seen by permission of the Secretary of the Treasury.

T H E G O S P E L S P R E A D S

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Notes.

- (1) Popular Science Mo. April 1926.
- (2) The Saturday Evening Post. Dec. 17, 1921, p. 5
- (3) John Wilkes.
- (4) Campbell p. 102
- (5) Campbell p. 46
- (6) Campbell p. 47
- (7) Bates p. 179
- (8) Campbell p. 56
- (9) Campbell p. 96
- (10) Campbell p. 100
- (11) Campbell p. 103
- (12) Boston Journal, Lincoln Scrap Book p. 109. The Columbian, April 1911,
New York World, Feb 16, 1869, Washington Star, Feb 15, 1869, See Chapter
12 for further confirmation.
- (13) The Owensboro, Kentucky, Messenger, March 8, 1925.
- (14) Babcock p. 109
- (15) p. 506-7.
- (16) Babcock p. 703-4
- (17) Babcock p. 307
- (18) Babcock p. 252-253.
- (19) Detroit Free Press, September 29, 1921.
- (20) Letter May 14, 1923