

New Rochelle
7482

222 Centre Avenue,
New Rochelle, N.Y.,

June 3, 1939.

Mr. Fred L. Black,
Director,
Ford Exposition,
Ford Motor Company,
World's Fair, N.Y.

Dear Mr. Black:

Having carefully read and re-read the photostatic copies of your articles in the Dearborn Independent, dealing with the Booth legend, I am convinced that it suggests the potentialities of an excitingly authoritative and final-say book on the subject. I say "suggests" deliberately and advisedly because my enthusiasm is not limited to the story that these scattered and not complete pages tell, but arises from a conviction that there must be a great deal more material in your possession or in the possession of the Ford organization that will serve as a basis for a thorough airing of this fantastic episode in American history.

Parenthetically, the material I have now is not in full continuity form, because the issues from May 2nd, 1925, to June 6, 1925, and from June 6, 1925, to February 6, 1926, are missing.

Not only have I read the material you turned over to me but I have made a cursory and tentative study of the field of recent literature on the subject. It seems to me that such books as "The Man Who Killed Lincoln" and others which profess to reveal "inside stuff" on the assassination plot do not compare with your story. I say this as one who has had published three relatively successful books and who is quite aware of the demands and possibilities of the present book market. Most of the recent articles and books on

the subject are based to an uncomfortable degree on guess-work, whereas your material springs from solid investigation, research and reporting.

Aside from the fact that, in preparing such a book, we can serve a high patriotic purpose---and that, to me, is extremely important---I think we have the chance to make it a thrilling and exciting story with popular appeal. I agree with you thoroughly that it should be treated as a mystery story---a mystery story of fact. We have two threads running through this book: (a) the detective motive, showing how the Booth legend was run down to earth and (b) the authoritative story of Booth and his cohorts, from their antecedents, on through their mental development and down to their capture, or escape or conviction after the assassination.

I appreciate the fact that, in writing the articles for the Dearborn Independent, you modestly refrained from stressing the work of tracking down these facts about Booth. But speaking objectively, as a potential writer of this projected book, I think that the facts of how that tracking down was effected is of the utmost importance from a "detective-story" angle. I think that in this book credit should be given where credit is due---if that is not against your personal wishes or the policy of the organization that really gave impetus to this remarkable investigation.

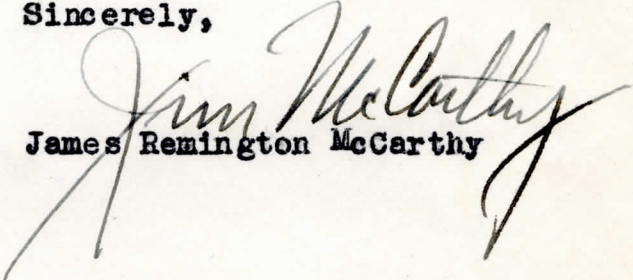
So far as arranging publication of the book is concerned, that is a detail which, as you are well aware yourself, is of minor importance. Bobbs-Merrill would grab at the chance, as would the others. But before any one of them are allowed to make a deal I should like to prepare a thorough outline, based on more material

---3---Mr. Black.

than is now in my possession.

Finally, let me say that I am more enthusiastic about this project than I have been about anything else that has come my way for some time. As I said before, we have, first of all, a good story; secondly, we have the opportunity to serve a significant patriotic purpose; finally, we can contribute to the literature of Americana a substantial and lasting document.

Sincerely,


James Remington McCarthy