

December
11th
1924

Dr Amos T Harrington
179 Allyn Street
Hartford Conn

Dear Dr Harrington:

I have been out of town several times since receiving your kind letter of November 12th and am just today writing to some of our Ford Motor Company people on the western coast and to other sources mentioned in your letter for further information.

I am quite satisfied that John St Helen was not John Wilkes Booth. You possibly know that the body of the man shot in the Garrett barn was identified by Dr May of Washington, who had operated on Booth a couple years previous. That it had the tattooed initials "J.W.B." on the left arm; that a stick pin in the underclothes was one given to John Wilkes Booth by his brother-in-law. It was found when the body was taken up and turned over to the Booth family that the dentist who had filled John Wilkes Booth's teeth identified the fillings.

The younger of the Garrett boys with whom I talked four years ago stated that there wasn't any doubt about the man who came to their place being the man who was killed. I made a trip to Texas and got sworn statements from a great many people who knew John St Helen and, believe me, Bates' description of him did not tally with that given me by people who knew St Helen much better than Bates could ever have known him. However, I am always interested in checking anything that promises further information.

At one time, I had George Smith in Dearborn for two days and have several letters from him. When pinned down, he knew very little about David George. The story told in Bates' book in connection with Smith is only partly true. Smith never received a cent from the Booth family and had never heard of John St Helen previous to the story in the newspaper at the time of George's death. He loaned George money in the hopes of inheriting property which he thought George had.

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I talked with W P Campbell in Oklahoma City. His book is based on Bates' story plus the newspaper stories which appeared shortly after George's death. As to the statement regarding Albert Pike seeing Booth, he may have thought he recognized him as a great many people were quite sure that the Rev. Armstrong of Atlanta who died in 1893 was John Wilkes Booth. One would have a very hard time convincing hundreds of people around Atlanta that Dr Armstrong was not John Wilkes Booth. He was taken for Booth while still in Xenia Theological Seminary at Xenia, Ohio.

As soon as I have heard from the various people I am writing I will be glad to advise you further.

Very truly yours

 F L Black

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