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S T A T E M E N T

Of

Mrs. Frank Anstine

El Reno, Okla.

Mary Anstine
Mrs. Frank Anstine

I am the wife of Frank Anstine mentioned in Mr. Bates' book. My husband and his father are both dead and I now run the Anstine House. I remember D. E. George very well indeed. We boarded him and gave him his room for \$5.00 a week during the time he was with us. B. B. Brown, the clerk in the Grand Avenue Hotel left Enid at the time of George's death, came to El Reno afterwards and clerked for me for six or seven years, leaving here about eight years ago for Hope, Arkansas.

While Brown talked about George a lot I do not remember that he ever said that George confessed that he was John Wilkes Booth while on his death bed. Laura Ida Booth who claims she was John Wilkes Booth's daughter was here about eight years ago and I cut out Mr. George's name from our old register and gave it to her. I also gave her an old whiskey flask which had belonged to him. I then took Laura Ida Booth over to the cottage, an annex to the hotel, to the room occupied by George while he was here. She sat down on the bed and wept "Father Oh! Poor Father". She was interested about the stories as to the properties of Booth that belonged to Mr. George and asked if I knew anything about the estate. George was drunk a lot while here and was considered pretty much of a nuisance by my husband. Once when he was drunk George said to me "Mrs. Anstine, I killed the best man that ever lived. At another time he said "I wish you could see the pictures I painted in Jerusalem. One time Mr. George did some house house painting in Yukon, a small town fifteen miles east of here. While there he courted a young girl 16 or 17, who was living with her aunt and uncle who were rather old people. He was painting the aunt and uncle's house. He told them he had plenty of money and would make a fine home for a wife and wanted to get married. The uncle and aunt took it seriously and came down to El Reno with the girl and asked for Mr. George at the hotel.

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They told me that the girl and Mr. George were engaged. I took them over to the cottage annex where George was at the time. He was scared frantic and begged me to stay with him and claimed that he had been just joking. The aunt and uncle got terribly angry and threatened to sue Mr. George for breach of promise, but never took any action. I remember that after the old uncle threatened to bring suit against George that he said, "Mrs. Anstine, they better not fool with me, "I killed the best man that ever lived". He asked me one time, "Mrs. Anstine, are you a Southern woman?" Then asked, "can you keep a secret." I replied "did you ever see a woman who could?" George then said I am going to tell you something some day. I never took it seriously since he was drunk so much and was thought to be a little "off." ~~Mr. George was always telling me that I had too much to do and that I was too young to ruin my good looks and that my husband was well enough off to give me a good allowance.~~ He was always giving me advice on how to handle my husband. I do not know whether Mr. George was a "dope" fiend or not, but that would account for his peculiar spells. He must have been about 60 years old at the time he was here, but in an attempt to look much younger dyed his mustache and hair. I remember seeing the dyes in his room. I do not remember that Mr. George ever borrowed any money from my husband. I am sure he would not have loaned him over \$10.00 without security, as my husband wasn't that poor a business man.

Mr. Anstine was nervous and would feel humiliated when Mr. George got drunk around the hotel where he would always try to be quite dramatic. I remember George Smith. He was called "Progress" Smith and had a clothing and shoe store here known as The Progress Store. Mr. Smith's wife was quite friendly to Mr. George and if I remember rightly came over to see him a couple of times and had him at their house. The Smiths were here but a year or two and then moved away. Mr. George had no friends with whom he was particularly chummy. I do not remember of him ever saying anything about living in Texas. He was quite Southern, had a very musical voice and a Southern drawl. He

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Painted quite steadily during the time he lived in El Reno. In fact, he painted the three cottages north of our hotel which were used as a hotel annex. He also superintended and aided in the painting of the hotel. He always paid his hotel bills and never seemed to have any large amount of money or large bills which would have been particularly noticeable because he would have tried to change them or pay his bills with large bank notes.

George's eyes were either dark blue or brown, not black. I do not remember that he ever took part in any amateur play, although he might have done so. I remember when Mr. Bates came here after George's death. He showed us the tin type which he claimed was St. Helen and also Mr. George. We did not instantly recognize it as Mr. George, but agreed that it looked something like him, and undoubtedly, was him when younger. I do not remember that Mr. George ever had his picture taken while here.

Signed:-

Mary Anstine

State of Oklahoma)
) S.S.
Canadian County)

W. J. Finch

I, a Notary Public in and for the said County, in the State aforesaid, do hereby certify, that *Mary Anstine* personally known to me to be the same person whose name is subscribed to the foregoing instrument, appeared before me this day in person, and acknowledged that she signed, the said instrument.

Given, under my hand and seal, this

18th day of *July* 19*21*
W. J. Finch
Notary Public

My commission expires

11/9/1924