May
20th
1926

Mr Bruce H Franks
Ewing
Ky

Dear Mr Franks:

Since receiving your last letter I have been looking through my files to find, if possible, a copy of the Booth family tree on which I thought the birthday of John Wilkes Booth was given. So far I have been unable to locate this. In a book about her family, one of the sisters of John Wilkes mentions that he was born in 1838 but does not give the day.

I was quite interested in your statement that you found in the St Helen print all that you expected to find and even more. When did your man come to Kentucky and from what place? Did he ever by anything he said or did indicate that he was other than what he claimed? Did he go under the name of St Helen? Do you know whether he ever received any communications from the Booth family? Did he have any tattooed marks on his arms or hands? What were the seven marks found about his face and neck? Did he ever mention Finis Bates? Did your man marry some woman in your neighborhood and have children? What made you first suspect that he might be Booth? Did he have bronchial trouble and how did it affect his speech? John Wilkes Booth according to the confession of Arnold, one of his associates in the abduction plot, attended school at St Timothy's Hall near Baltimore. You state that you would like to know a few more things to complete your research. If you will give me some idea just what you want, I will be glad to supply it. Frankly, I do not believe your man is Booth but the story interests me tremendously. He may have been St Helen all right and still not be Booth. Did you ever hear the story of the man at Swanee, Tennessee, marrying a Miss. Payne in 1872 under the name of John ~~Wilkes~~ Booth. I think you are right in not unduly exciting your man's family; at least if they amount to anything.

Very truly yours
THE DEARBORN PUBLISHING CO
F L Black

FLB/L