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JNO. W. STARR, JR.
MILLERSBURG, PA.

September 5, 1925.

FORD MOTOR CO
DEARBORN

Mr. F. L. Black,
Dearborn, Mich.

SEP 8 1925

My Dear Sir:

As a collector of Lincolniana I was more than pleased recently to receive from the editor of the INDEPENDENT a file of seven issues of their magazine containing your investigations as to the alleged Wilkes Booth story. While I have not had the time to go over them carefully, wishing to have that pleasure at some near future time when I can get the full benefit, yet as I have glanced at the articles I must say that I believe that you have done a much needed job, and have done it well. It needed some one such as you to kill that tale which seemingly has gained wide credence.

I have a copy of Bates Book and about five years ago I wrote him a rather lengthy communication concerning come discrepancies noted between St. Helen's story and published narratives, presumably authentic, although I must say Bates made out a good case. To my letter I received no reply, and I know he got it, for I wrote to the address he himself had given me when I had addressed the Postmaster at Memphis for his whereabouts.

I believe that there is one story you had not run down and that you probably have no knowledge of it, which is one reason for my writing this. I thought you might probably be glad to hear of it.

In one of my scrap-books I have an article "Did Lincoln's Assassin Really Escape" from the New York Sunday American, December 24, 1911. The sub-title reads: "Now comes a woman with documents to support her claim that she is the daughter of John Wilkes Booth, and that he married her mother while hiding in the Tennessee mountains" The article goes on to tell that the woman, Mrs. L. A. Howard by name, believes that the man who married her mother, Mrs. Louisa J. Payne, a young widow, in the mountains of Tennessee, February 24, 1872, was no other than the assassin of Lincoln, later known as David E. George, who died by his own hand in Oklahoma. Mrs. Howard claims to have (a fac-simile of which apperas in the paper) a certified copy of her mother's marriage certificate made out to "John W. Booth and Louisa J. Payne" from the Franklin County Court records and a signature of "J. Wilkes Booth" which she claims was torn from the court records with the permission of the clerk. The signature appearing in the paper looks like Booth's all right, but did she get it where she said she did? Is this story unknown to you? It seems to me there is another lead to follow up. Mrs. Howard says she wanted to clear up the matter on account of its historical importance; she wanted to know for a certainty who the man waswho came into the mountains of Tennessee, in hiding, wooed, won, married and deserted her mother, and who on her mother's death bed was declared to be Wilkes Booth, the assassin.

If I can help you out in any way I shall be glad to do so. Will be glad to hear from you at your convenience.

Cordially yours,

Jno W Starr jr

P.S. In seeking data for an account of Lincoln's last day, I have gotten in touch with Admiral George W. Baird of Washington, who was one of those who identified the body of Booth, and I thought this might be of interest to you.

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