Ford Motor Company

FACTORY AND GENERAL OFFICES
DEARBORN, MICH.

ALEXANDRIA, VA. January 28, 1938.

#8.

Mr. F. L. Black,
The Edison Institute,
Dearborn, Michigan.

Dear Mr. Black:

Referring further to your letter of January 14th:

Writer conferred this afternoon with Mr. Pitts in his office in the Otis Building, Washington, D.C. He was amused by the photostat of Eisenschiml's review of Izola Forrester's book. Will also show the photostat to Mr. Garrett when I call upon him the first of next week.

Mr. Pitts is without knowledge of the whereabouts of any original negatives of the Booth exhibits. There are no negatives among the various effects and no one ever posted him on the fact that Secretary Lamont had granted permission to have the exhibits photographed. Outside of the office of Judge Advocate General, Mr. Pitts does not know of any other place where records of the Booth matter would be kept, aside, of course, from what is contained in the Oldroyd collection, now housed in the Lincoln Museum under the charge of Mr. Garrett.

As for Major Rathbone's statement, Mr.Pitts and I will check on that from the official affidavits when he receives your letter addressed to the Secretary of War for permission to have such documents photostated. What photostating as has been done in the past, was performed by Leet Brothers, an outside concern in Washington and not by the War Department. Mr. Pitts is prepared to send whatever affidavits, documents, etc., writer may select to Leet Brothers by person of a representative of his office, providing the proper official authority is secured.

As for the question of password - Mr. Pitts reminded me that when President Lincoln was shot, the war had been ended. No doubt, during the progress of the War, measures were taken for protection of the capitol and certain passwords may have been used; but at the time of Booth's escape, it is his recollection that passwords were not necessary during the day and until a certain hour in the evening. If a person had come into the city from Maryland or Virginia and was late in returning, it was not uncommon for sentries to permit entry or exit of such parties, after proper explanation,when statement was made to effect that the party leaving Washington, D.C. wished to get home. The Sentry would permit the party to enter Maryland or Virginia with the admonition that they could not get back into the District of Columbia until the following morning. In the case of Booth, he advised the sentry that he lived in Maryland and was desirous of getting back home.

Yours very truly,
FORD MOTOR COMPANY,

J. W. Connolly
Traffic Department.

JWC/c