Rm 1975 Penobscot Bldg
Detroit, Michigan.
Nov. 5, 1951.

Mr. F.L.Black,
Nash-Kelvinator Corp.
Detroit, Mich.

Dear Fred-

Under separate cover I am returning your very excellent research work which appeared in the Dearborn Independent in 1925 on the subject of John Wilkes Booth. There seems indeed, to be no question as to his disposition by Sgt. Boston Corbett(against orders) on the Garrett property, despite the later efforts of my "namesake", Finis L. Bates, to prove otherwise. Though a Bates, I never heard of the guy before reading your series and did not know that he was"behind the scenes" - or before them, in attempting to establish that Booth lived on after April of '65, as others ~~did~~ tried also.

Fred, I firmly believe that this splendid piece of research on a long-debated subject, should be put into book form. Of course, I fully appreciate that it would be interesting ~~only~~ mostly to schools, colleges and a few students of Lincolniana- but even so, that's quite a few people who'd buy such an obviously authoritative work on a long"moot" question, still bothersome to some. I, for one, would be very glad to buy a "subscrition edition" of such a book for- well, let us say - five or -yes, ten bucks. A first edition, even if the only one, would be worth it, so why not?

One other question, Fred. In all that research you did, you must have come up with an opinion as to the guilt of the various conspirators to the assassination. I rather imagine you accept the proved guilt of Herold, Atzerodt, Powell, etc. - but what about Mrs. Surratt? Aside from her feminine role in the deal, which even then,in a time of furore gained her sympathy for that alone, do you think she was equally culpable with the others? I know it was proved that she harbored the gang at her home-<u>but</u> do you think she actually participated in the assassination plot? -- Small difference, I know, since she would be some kind of "accessory to,before,or after, the fact" but just the same, there <u>would</u> be <u>some</u> difference. Just wondered what you may have picked up about her? And again, Fred, 'twas a swell job!

Sincerely,
Wally
W.E.Bates.