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8-20-27.

C3 h

Mr. J. L. Black,
Dearborn. Mich.

My dear Mr. Black:-

I recently had occasion to review your articles in the Dearborn Ind., touching the mythical story of the escape & suicide of Jno. Wilkes Booth as related by Finis L. Bates. Rev. Dr. Clarence True Wilson of Washington D.C. is to speak before the Methodist Ministers meeting of Phila., in late October, & will declare that Bates is right. I shall oppose him, for to me, the Bates story is a myth.

I would be pleased if you would take time to answer the following questions:-

You state in your prefatory note that the body of Booth was offered to the Independent for $1000.00, in 1920 by a citizen of Tenn. (1. Was it Bates who so offered to sell the body?

2. Where is the body now?

3. Did Bates exhibit, or cause the body to be

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exhibited through West + Southwest as stated in your articles?

4. It is stated that David E. George, alias Jno. St. Helen, Jno Vic, et al, left a small estate. Can you name to me the beneficiaries?

If Bates exhibited, or offered for sale, or sold, the body of his friend at whose death or upon identifying the body he exclaimed, "My God! St. Helen, is it possible?" then my manhood softened into sentiment, and my soul into tears; then the story would remind one of Judas who for thirty pieces of silver.

The only motive I can impute to Bates is a mercenary one. If he sold 75.000 copies of his book, + also went into the show business with the body, he made good financially. Bates states that it cost him $40.000.00 to get together the matter for his book. This I doubt. Having had some experience in the field of journalism + travel, I would agree to get everything the book contains for less than $5.000.00

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3.

I have read your articles with great care, and consider them unanswerable.

I will greatly appreciate your answers to my questions.

Respectfully yours,

Thompson K. McKinney.
Pastor of the Miller Memorial Church,
Philadelphia.

I am enclosing a stamped envelope self addressed, so that I may receive it at my home in Phila.

M. K.