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Ardmore. Okla. May [illegible]-

The Dearborn Independent

Dearborn. Mich.

I have read the story of John Wilkes Booth with much interest but I am not convinced that your story is true.

In november 1872 at Helina Arkansas when I was seventeen years old I fell in Company with a man by the name of James Bentley, and I lived with him just one year, leaving him in november 1873 At that time he was living with his family near Redfork, in Desha County. Arkansas. near the mouth of the Arkansas river.

James Bentley claimed to have been a quarter Master Sargent in

the U.S. Army stationed at Washington at the time Lincoln was assassinated, that he knew Booth by sight just as well as he knew President Lincoln. That he seen the body of the dead man who was brought to Washington as that of John Wilkes Booth and that it was not Booth, and with the exception of being the same complexion it had no resemblance to Booth. That the body was identified by several persons as being that of a young confederate surgeon. That the body was taken at night and weights attached to it, and sunk near the mouth of the Potomac river. That all Washington officialdom knew Booth was never captured.

James Bentley was a strong partizan republican, and bitterly anti Southern.

I have heard him tell this story about Booth many times to different parties, and he always told it the same way.

While I was young at the time becoming 18 years old in July 1873, I was pretty well educated, a good historian, and had read much of the worlds best literature at that time. No one could hear Bentley tell his story without being impressed that Bentley felt sure of its truth.

Respectfully

S. J. Worley.

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