April
14th
1925

Mrs F L Bates
1234 Harbert Avenue
Memphis Tenn

Dear Madam:

With reference to your letter of a few days ago, you evidently were not familiar with what transpired at the various conferences between Mr Bates, the writer, and other members of the Dearborn Independent staff. Mr Bates twice offered us the mummy for $1000.00. The offer under discussion was never put in writing as we were not at all interested in acquiring possession of the body. Mr Bates claimed that the only reason he desired this money was to help pay off a mortgage on your home and that this would reimburse him for the money he would lose by taking the mummy from its exhibition trips. We finally came to feel that Mr Bates' principal interest in the affair was the money to be obtained. You yourself probably have formed an opinion on this point from your own knowledge of his various exhibition enterprises. In a letter written by Mr Bates to George E Smith March 4, 1921, he attempted to get Smith to invest $1500.00 and become associated in the booking of the body for exhibition.

On Mr Bates last trip to Dearborn, the writer spent two days showing him affidavits obtained in Granbury and Glenrose, Texas, and Enid, Hennessey, and El Reno, Oklahoma, and pointed out to him the falsity and absurdity of the statements made in his book. He was given all the time he desired to submit a defense of the book but, of course, could not produce evidence which did not exist. We were not and are not interested in exposing him but since his book is printed and in general circulation it is open to whatever attack its weaknesses justify. When the newspapers began recently to print interviews with an alleged member of the Booth family and repeated all the false claims to be found in the "Escape and Suicide of John Wilkes Booth," we felt it was time to call a halt on the further distribution of the myths surrounding the assassination of Lincoln and the disposition of John Wilkes Booth.

You state in your letter, "Mr Bates always laughed at the Armstrong 'myth' so kindly don't link his name with it." If you will refer to our story, you will find that we do not claim any connection between Mr Bates and the stories that were told to the effect that Armstrong was Booth.

We have been advised that the papers which Mr Bates claimed as proof for his case have been turned over to another party who had expected to use the material in a new book which would repeat the stories that St Helen and George were Booth. We hardly expect this book to materialize after our series of articles and feel that we are doing a great public service in preventing the further spread of these historical travesties.

We are sending you the first five articles we have published and will forward the other two as soon as they are issued. If we have erred at all in the manner of making our statements, it has been on the side of moderation. You have access to your husband's documents - why not check them with what we say about John St Helen and David George?

Very truly yours

THE DEARBORN PUBLISHING CO

F L Black

FLB/L