

THE  
**L I N C O L N**  
**A S S A S S I N A T I O N**

\* \* T H E E V I D E N C E \* \*

EDITED BY  
**WILLIAM C. EDWARDS**  
**AND EDWARD STEERS JR.**



# THE LINCOLN ASSASSINATION



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*The authors wish to dedicate this work to James O. Hall.  
His scholarship set the standard for all who follow.*





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And finally to Connor, Zachary and Emma, who are the future.



## INTRODUCTION

April 14, 1865, began as a day of jubilation. Five days earlier at a small village crossroads in Virginia known as Appomattox Courthouse, Confederate general Robert E. Lee surrendered his once mighty Army of Northern Virginia to Union general Ulysses S. Grant. Throughout the Northern states, the news set off wild celebrations with illuminations in nearly every city, town, and village. In the Executive Mansion in Washington, President Abraham Lincoln was in an exuberant mood. The news from all fronts was positive, and his eldest son Robert, a member of Grant's staff, was home after witnessing Lee's surrender. At breakfast Lincoln asked his son to describe every detail of that glorious event, glorious for Union supporters perhaps but not for those who loved the Confederacy and supported the way of life it represented.

Despite Lee's surrender, Confederate forces were not finished just yet. Jefferson Davis had fled Richmond shortly before its fall, but he was still the president of the Confederacy and was issuing orders as commander in chief. More than 146,000 Confederate troops remained in the field stretching from North Carolina as far west as Texas.<sup>1</sup> If they could be pulled together and turned against Grant and Sherman, a negotiated peace was still possible. What the South needed was time, but time was fast running out.

Of course, all of this was desperate thinking. Davis's generals and cabinet members knew it. But many of the men in the ranks, who had sacrificed so much, appeared willing to fight on despite the desperate situation.

John Wilkes Booth too was committed to continuing the fight. A Marylander by birth, he was enamored with the South and everything it stood for. Northerners might celebrate, but Booth believed that the war was not over. Others had failed, but he would not. Booth would write: "For six months we had worked to capture. But our cause, being almost lost, something decisive & great must be done."<sup>2</sup> That something "decisive and great" occurred on the night of April 14 as the day's celebrations in the North were drawing to a close.

At twenty minutes past ten o'clock on the evening of April 14, Booth entered the special box at Ford's Theatre and fired point-blank into the back of Lincoln's head. The lead ball, the size of a large pea, flattened as it smashed into the base of the president's skull and tunneled through his brain before coming to rest behind his right eye. The Confederacy's worst enemy became one more casualty of the war. Booth's conspiracy was aimed at decapitating the federal government. Included as targets were Vice President Andrew Johnson, Secretary of



State William H. Seward, and General Grant. If successful, the plot would have created a constitutional crisis unlike any before or since. Even as it was, the assassination of Lincoln tragically changed the course of American history.

\* \* \*

Secretary of War Edwin Stanton was preparing for bed when a War Department messenger banged on the front door of his K Street house. Breathless from having run several blocks, the messenger told Stanton that Seward had been murdered and the president had been shot at Ford's Theatre. Stanton thought that the message was clearly wrong, as he had been at the bedside of Seward only a half hour earlier.<sup>3</sup> Seward was confined to bed recovering from a carriage accident a few days earlier and could not have gone to the theater or anywhere else that night.

Despite pleas from his family not to venture out, Stanton hastily pulled on his clothes, called for his carriage, and hurried to Seward's home at Lafayette Square across from the White House. Arriving within a few minutes, he met Secretary of the Navy Gideon Welles and Assistant Secretary of War Thomas Eckert. They were horrified by what they found. Seward and members of his household had been attacked by an assassin, who had left the secretary lying on the bedroom floor in a pool of his own blood. Seward, although badly injured, would survive.<sup>4</sup>

Satisfied that Seward was not mortally wounded, the three men, now joined by Montgomery Meigs, quartermaster general of the army, hastened to Ford's Theatre. There they learned that the president had been carried across the street to the Petersen house.

Bounding up the steps that led to the front door, the four men hurried down a narrow hallway to the rear bedroom. There they saw the president lying diagonally across a bed that was too small for his six-foot, four-inch body. The president was still alive, his breathing labored and his pulse weak.<sup>5</sup>

Army surgeon Charles Leale, now assisted by the surgeon general and other physicians who were arriving by the minute, stripped off the president's clothes and began a careful examination of his body, searching for other wounds. Only a small wound in the back of his head was found. It was enough. The wound was fatal, and all agreed that the president could not survive the night.

Helpless to save his life, the doctors did everything they could to make their commander as comfortable as possible, placing hot water bottles around his legs and mustard plasters on his chest. Satisfied that there was nothing more that could be done, they began the long, sad wait for the inevitable end.

\* \* \*

As the deathwatch continued into the early morning hours, Booth was making his escape into southern Maryland. At the Navy Yard Bridge the Union officer on duty challenged Booth. After a brief exchange, the guard allowed him to cross.<sup>6</sup> Once on the other side of the bridge, Booth spurred his horse and raced up the long dusty road that led into southern Maryland and safety. He

stopped at a prearranged rendezvous called Soper's Hill, where he waited for David Herold.<sup>7</sup> Herold had accompanied Lewis Powell to the Seward home and had waited outside while Powell carried out his attack on the secretary. Frightened by the shouts coming from inside the house, Herold fled the scene, leaving Powell to fend for himself.

Without his guide, Powell made his way to Fort Bunker Hill east of the Capitol and the Congressional Cemetery. A member of the 3rd Massachusetts Infantry found his discarded coat on the afternoon of Easter Sunday.<sup>8</sup>

Booth and Herold lost no time continuing on to the Surratt Tavern some thirteen miles from the city. There they picked up a carbine, Booth's field glass, and some much-needed whiskey. Booth had injured his leg jumping to the stage of the theater. As the adrenaline wore off, the pain from his injury intensified. The whiskey helped dull the pain.

Another fifteen miles brought them to the home of Dr. Samuel Mudd, a member of the Confederate mail line who had agreed to help Booth in his plot to capture Lincoln and hold him hostage.<sup>9</sup> Booth was now in desperate need of Mudd's assistance. Mudd helped Booth into his house. After examining Booth's leg, Mudd told him that it was broken and needed setting. Preparing a splint, Mudd set the leg<sup>10</sup> and put Booth to bed to rest. Then Mudd and Herold rode into Bryantown to reconnoiter the area. Mudd would later tell his interrogator that he first learned of Lincoln's assassination while in Bryantown.<sup>11</sup> Returning home, Mudd sent Booth and Herold on their way, cautioning them to circle wide around Bryantown to avoid the soldiers.<sup>12</sup>

It was necessary for the two men to move at night while traveling through southern Maryland. Although the people who lived there were Confederate sympathizers, the area was filled with Union troops. Arriving at midnight at the home of Samuel Cox, another member of the mail line, Booth and Herold were invited inside.<sup>13</sup> After providing them with food and drink, Cox made arrangements to hide the two men in a pine thicket, where they would have to wait until it was safe to cross the Potomac River to Virginia. Cox turned the task of caring for the fugitives over to Thomas Jones, another agent who worked for the Confederate Signal Service.<sup>14</sup> Jones was forced to wait five days before sending the two men across the river. Once safely across, Booth and Herold made their way to the Rappahannock River east of Fredericksburg after stopping at the home of Richard Stuart and spending the night in the cabin of a free black named William Lucas.<sup>15</sup>

Joined by three Confederate soldiers at the river crossing, Booth and Herold were taken to the home of Richard Garrett near Bowling Green, Virginia. The stopover proved fatal for Booth. During the early morning hours of April 26, Union cavalry caught up with Booth and Herold. Surrounding the tobacco barn where they were hiding, the soldiers attempted to talk Booth into surrendering. Unable to convince him, they set fire to the barn in an effort to force him to surrender. As the fire began to envelop the barn, a shot was fired. It struck Booth in the neck. The bullet severed part of his spinal column, causing paralysis from the neck down.

Pulling Booth from the burning barn, the soldiers carried him to the porch of the farmhouse. Booth's wound was mortal, and with each passing minute it became harder for the doomed man to breathe. As the end drew near Lieutenant Luther Baker, one of the officers who had cornered Booth, noticed him move his lips as if trying to speak. Baker leaned over Booth, placing his ear close to Booth's lips. In barely audible tones he heard Booth say, "Tell mother I die for my country."<sup>16</sup>

\* \* \*

The path that Booth followed during his escape was not happenstance but rather was one that he had planned months earlier in anticipation of transporting a captured Lincoln to Richmond.<sup>17</sup> Southern Maryland was ideal for Booth's avenue of escape. Strongly pro-Confederate, it harbored a group of Confederate agents who successfully passed documents and people along a special route between Richmond and Washington known as the mail line.<sup>18</sup> To gain access to this line, Booth needed the cooperation of the people who managed it, men such as Mudd, Cox, and Jones who had served the Confederacy well. Booth would need their help if he were to be successful in transporting a captured Lincoln to Richmond. To get their cooperation, Booth had traveled north to Canada.

In October 1864 Booth left his brother Edwin's home in New York and boarded a train for Montreal. Arriving on October 18 Booth registered at St. Lawrence Hall. Montreal and Toronto were centers of Confederate secret service operations.<sup>19</sup> In April 1864 President Davis sent emissaries to Canada with one million dollars in gold and instructions to undertake a series of operations designed to undermine Northern morale and weaken support for Lincoln's reelection.<sup>20</sup>

Beginning in the summer months and extending into the fall, the Canadian group plotted the burning of certain Northern cities, the poisoning of New York City's water supply, and the spread of contagion in the form of yellow fever and smallpox in what was an early attempt at germ warfare.<sup>21</sup> Along with these offenses against the laws of war, the North accused the Confederacy of atrocities in its treatment of Union soldiers in prisons such as Libby Prison in Richmond and Andersonville Prison in Georgia.

St. Lawrence Hall was home to Confederate operations in Montreal. During his ten-day stay Booth was seen meeting with Confederate agents. One of these meetings took place in the Ontario Bank, where he made several transactions worth more than eleven hundred dollars in greenbacks.<sup>22</sup> Money was not the only business that Booth transacted while in Montreal. When he left the city on October 28 to return to Washington, he carried a letter of introduction from a Confederate blockade-runner and Secret Service agent by the name of Patrick Charles Martin.<sup>23</sup> Martin had lived in Baltimore prior to the war and was familiar with southern Maryland and the agents who lived there. The letter was directed to two men who lived in Charles County, Maryland: Mudd and Dr. William Queen. Both Queen and Mudd were active supporters of the Confederacy, and both men had contacts important to Booth's plot to capture Lincoln.

Traveling to Charles County, Booth met with Queen, who arranged a meeting with Mudd. It was the first of four meetings between Mudd and Booth.<sup>24</sup> Mudd introduced Booth to John Surratt and Thomas Harbin, two important agents who agreed to help Booth with his plan. Surratt and Harbin recruited George Atzerodt, thereby adding a river guide to Booth's enterprise. Surratt was also well acquainted with another agent, David Preston Parr, who owned a china store in Baltimore. Surratt, with Parr's help, recruited Lewis Powell, bringing muscle into Booth's team.<sup>25</sup>

The federal government, well aware of the Confederate operations in Canada, was convinced that President Davis was behind Lincoln's assassination and had aided Booth in his attempt to escape. The federal government left no stone unturned in an effort to gather evidence proving their case against Davis and his Canada-based agents. Without their help, Booth could not possibly have carried out his kidnap scheme.

Confederate agents in Canada and southern Maryland were not the only people whom the government believed were connected to Lincoln's murder. A number of fifth-column organizations worked throughout the North attempting to aid the Confederacy's military operations. These subversive groups organized as paramilitary units adopted such colorful names as the Knights of the Golden Circle (KGC) and the Order of American Knights (OAK). Their goal was an independent Confederacy, and they were willing to use any measure to achieve it, including assassination. As word of the attacks on Lincoln and Seward spread, most people concluded that it was the bloody work of a desperate Confederacy. By the time the government was ready to go to trial, it was satisfied that it had amassed enough evidence to link these subversive groups along with Confederate agents and their leaders in Richmond to Booth and his band of conspirators.<sup>26</sup>

\* \* \*

As Lincoln lay comatose edging closer to death with each passing hour, Stanton took control of the country. It was a moment for decisive action, and Stanton was up to the task. In the rear parlor, opposite the bedroom where Lincoln lay dying, Stanton set up a war room and a court of inquiry. From this humble room he sent orders throughout the country directing efforts to track down the perpetrators of the greatest crime in the nation's history.

David Kellogg Cartter, chief justice of the Supreme Court of the District of Columbia, had joined Stanton on his way to the Petersen house earlier that evening. Stanton asked Cartter to take charge of questioning witnesses as they were brought to the Petersen house. He then sent for two others to assist in the questioning: Judge Abram B. Olin, also a justice on the Supreme Court of the District of Columbia, and Britten A. Hill, a highly respected law partner of General Thomas Ewing, the attorney who would later represent Mudd, Edman Spangler, and Samuel Arnold.

Cartter, Olin, and Hill, with Stanton at their side, began interviewing witnesses. They soon realized that they were unable to record the testimony in

longhand fast enough. A call went out for a clerk with shorthand skills. A young army soldier named James Tanner was convalescing in the house next door. Tanner had been seriously wounded at the Second Battle of Bull Run on August 30, 1862, losing both feet. He remained in Washington, where he worked as a clerk for the army, and was proficient in a type of shorthand widely used at the time. He joined the men in the rear parlor shortly before midnight and began recording verbatim the testimony of witnesses to the events of that fateful night.<sup>27</sup>

By 1:30 A.M., the questioning was over. Six individuals had been interviewed, four of whom were present in the theater at the time Booth shot Lincoln.<sup>28</sup> Their testimony would be folded into the great body of evidence collected by the Bureau of Military Justice and later used against the eight defendants charged with Lincoln's murder. In a letter to a friend two days later, Tanner wrote, "In fifteen minutes I had testimony enough to hang Wilkes Booth, the assassin, higher than Haman hung."<sup>29</sup>

While Stanton and his high-ranking assistants were interviewing witnesses, several other government agencies were hard at work. The D.C. Metropolitan Police, Washington's provost marshal James O'Beirne, detectives from General Christopher Columbus Augur's 22nd Army Corps staff, and several different provost marshals and military detectives, all working independently of one another, were gathering evidence and taking individuals into custody. Stanton telegraphed Colonel Lafayette C. Baker, head of the National Detective Police (later to become the Secret Service), to return from Philadelphia to add his organization to those already at work. Hundreds of detectives and policemen in Washington and surrounding states were working around the clock on the largest manhunt in the nation's history.

The roundup of the eight individuals who would stand trial for Lincoln's assassination was remarkably speedy considering the lack of modern communications. By April 26, twelve days after Booth shot Lincoln, all eight individuals were in custody. Booth had been killed at the Garrett farm near Bowling Green, Virginia. John Surratt was in Canada, where he was given sanctuary by Catholic priests in the small town of St. Liboire.<sup>30</sup>

\* \* \*

On May 1 the government announced its decision to try the accused by military tribunal. President Andrew Johnson, who had been in office for only two weeks, issued an executive order establishing the tribunal.<sup>31</sup> The decision not to use the civil courts appears to have been made by Stanton. A military trial would ensure that the entire process of investigation, trial, and sentencing would remain under military control, and Stanton controlled the military. Washington was still a city of Confederate sympathizers, and there were fears that a trial by jury might well end in acquittal.

The contention that Stanton was the force behind a military trial is supported by the fact that the original draft of Johnson's executive order, including the editorial changes, was in Stanton's handwriting on War Department

stationery. In the draft, Stanton crossed out the printed heading “War Department” and replaced it with “Executive Chamber.”<sup>32</sup> Gideon Welles, who opposed a military tribunal, placed the decision squarely on Stanton. Welles wrote in his diary: “I regret they [the accused] are not tried by the civil court, and so expressed myself, as did [Secretary of the Treasury] McCulloch; but Stanton, who says the proof is clear and positive, was emphatic. . . . The rash, impulsive, and arbitrary measures of Stanton are exceedingly repugnant to my notions, and I am pained to witness the acquiescence they receive.”<sup>33</sup>

The use of military tribunals was well established by May 1865. During the four years of Civil War more than 4,270 tribunals had been held and involved just over 13,000 defendants, the majority being civilians.<sup>34</sup> While Congress had passed legislation on several occasions between 1862 and 1864 that recognized the use of military tribunals, the laws referred only to military personnel who were subject to the Articles of War.<sup>35</sup> Congress did, however, include individuals described as spies, or enemy belligerents, acting within military lines.

Johnson asked his attorney general James Speed for a legal opinion on whether the accused could be tried by the military. Speed concluded that the military had jurisdiction and that the tribunal established by Johnson was the proper venue for the trial. Speed’s opinion cited two important requirements justifying a military tribunal: that the offenses the accused were charged with were offenses against the laws of war and that the defendants were “belligerents” who served as “secret, but active participants [spies] in the recent hostilities.”<sup>36</sup>

Speed wrote: “If the question be one concerning the laws of war, [the accused] should be tried by those engaged in the war—they, and only they, are his peers. The military must decide whether the accused is or is not a participant in the hostilities. If he is an active participant in the hostilities, it is the duty of the military to take him a prisoner without warrant or other judicial process, and dispose of him as the laws of war direct.”<sup>37</sup>

Speed acknowledged the existence of the civil courts within the District of Columbia and their jurisdiction under normal circumstances but dismissed their right to try the accused conspirators. Speed wrote: “The fact that the civil courts are open does not effect the right of the military tribunal to hold [the accused] as a prisoner and to try. The civil courts have no more right to prevent the military, in time of war than they have a right to interfere with or prevent a battle.”<sup>38</sup>

Johnson appointed nine army officers to act as judge and jury.<sup>39</sup> All nine had seen combat service during the war and had shown qualities of leadership in their various capacities. Only Lew Wallace, however, was a lawyer or had any formal legal schooling. Among the nine officers were several graduates of West Point who had remained professional soldiers, a former U.S. marshal, a medical practitioner, an author, and a schoolteacher.

The trial was held in the women’s block of the old federal prison at the Washington Arsenal, now Fort Lesley McNair, and the present site of the Army War College. Testimony began on May 12 and ran through June 29, a total of forty-nine days. In all, 366 witnesses were called.<sup>40</sup> The tribunal officers deliberated on

June 30 and found all eight defendants guilty. David Herold, Mary Surratt, Lewis Powell, and George Atzerodt were sentenced to death and were hanged on July 7. Samuel Mudd, Samuel Arnold, and Michael O’Laughlen were sentenced to life in prison, and Edman Spangler was sentenced to six years at hard labor.

\* \* \*

The government hired Benn Pitman to oversee the recording of the trial proceedings. Pitman, skilled in a form of shorthand developed in England by his brother Isaac Pitman, was granted permission to publish the authorized transcript after the trial was over with the stipulation that it be without cost to the government and that it be strictly accurate.<sup>41</sup> Pitman edited the 5,000-plus pages of handwritten testimony into a manageable format by eliminating the questions and merging answers to several questions into a single response. The result was a single volume of 421 pages published in November 1865. Pitman’s skillful editing resulted in an abridged version that is generally accepted by scholars as accurate.

The Pitman version contains a table of contents grouping the trial testimony by defendant, listing name, date of testimony, and whether a prosecution or defense witness followed by a one-line summation of the testimony. Because Pitman added an alphabetical index of witnesses to complement his table of contents summary, his volume is considered the standard by most historians in the field and has become the primary source for citations.

In July 1865 after the trial had ended and the sentences had been carried out, Benjamin (“Ben:”) Perley Poore, a Boston newspaper journalist, published the first two volumes of a three-volume set, copying word for word (including misspellings) the daily transcripts published in the *Washington National Intelligencer*. He published the third volume a year later.<sup>42</sup> Poore’s work lacks editing and an index, requiring the reader to search the entire three volumes to locate specific testimony. These shortcomings aside, the Poore version contains almost the entire testimony, including questions and answers, and, importantly, follows the schedule of witnesses as they appeared in the trial. The only missing items are the summations and testimony inserted by the government that refer to apparent bribes taken by future congressman Ben Wood.

\* \* \*

Because the accused were tried by military tribunal, their case fell under the jurisdiction of the War Department. The prosecution was handled by the judge advocate general and his assistants, and all of the evidentiary material that was gathered fell under the War Department’s agents in the Bureau of Military Justice.

By Sunday, April 16, evidence was coming in so fast and in such volume that it was difficult to manage. Stanton solved the problem by appointing three officers with investigative experience from the War Department, asking them to take charge of the incoming evidence: Colonel Henry H. Wells, Lieutenant Colonel John A. Foster, and Colonel Henry S. Olcott. Stanton then sent a

telegram to Colonel Henry L. Burnett, judge advocate in the Northern Department with headquarters in Cincinnati, directing him to come to Washington immediately to take charge of the evidence and assist in the prosecution of the conspirators.

The appointment of Burnett was most likely at the request of Judge Advocate General Joseph Holt, the man who would prosecute the case against Lincoln's accused killers. Stanton was busy with military affairs and found it increasingly difficult to divide his attention between them and the pending trial. He resolved his dilemma by turning over the investigation to Holt, a man in whom he had complete confidence.

Burnett was ideally suited for the task. A graduate in 1859 of Ohio State National Law School, Burnett practiced law in Warren, Ohio. At the outbreak of the war he enlisted in the 2nd Ohio Volunteer Cavalry, where he was commissioned a captain in Company C. He served in Missouri, Kansas, and Kentucky. His regiment later took part in the capture of the famous Confederate raider John Hunt Morgan near Salineville, Ohio. In the spring of 1863 Burnett was called to Cincinnati by General Ambrose Burnside to serve as judge advocate in the trial of Burnside's own judge advocate, who was accused of criminal conduct. Burnett fulfilled his duties so well that he was kept on as judge advocate in the Department of Ohio.

In September 1864 Indiana governor Oliver P. Morton requested that Burnett serve as judge advocate in the treason trial involving members of the Sons of Liberty who were accused of plotting to liberate Confederate prisoners being held at Camp Douglas in Chicago. It was at this time that Burnett joined Holt as the army's chief prosecutor. Burnett's performance so impressed his superiors that he was awarded the brevet rank of brigadier general of volunteers effective March 8, 1865.

Holt and Burnett developed a deep respect for each other's capabilities. Holt made it Burnett's responsibility to sift through all of the material pouring into the War Department and select the evidence needed to prosecute the case.

\* \* \*

The very nature of the government's willingness to follow every lead no matter how preposterous resulted in a menagerie of cranks, crackpots, pranksters, and mentally ill individuals who contributed hundreds of pages of useless information ranging from a recipe for treating the "chills" (Remedy [7:524-25]) to a tip that Booth was seen hobbling on a crutch along E Street in Washington dressed as a woman (Joseph Hill [3:795-97]). Mixed in with this information are documents essential to the prosecution that tie Booth, Powell, Herold, and Atzerodt to the murder of Lincoln, the targeting of Johnson, and the attack on Seward. For example, see George A. Atzerodt (Defendant, 3:596-602).

It was Burnett's job to separate the useful from the worthless and to assist Holt in building the government's case. Burnett accomplished this daunting task quite well considering the short time frame and the volume of evidence collected. At the same time, bits and pieces of evidence were interspersed among



the reams of paper that with more time and greater diligence would have identified others who played a role in Booth's plot. Several of these people—Thomas Jones, Samuel Cox, and Thomas Harbin, for example—slipped through the government's net and lived out their lives unmolested. Evidence existed that would have made the government's case against Mary Surratt and Samuel Mudd even stronger than it was, leaving little doubt in most people's minds of their collaboration with Booth.<sup>43</sup> When Lewis Powell made the statement "You have not got the one-half of them,"<sup>44</sup> he was most likely referring to people such as Harbin, Cox, and Jones, three men who would have been convicted and who might well have hanged had the government pursued the evidence against them sitting in government files.

\* \* \*

While the evidentiary documents in Microcopy 599 provided the prosecution with its case against the accused conspirators, the files were unavailable to the general public. For more than seventy years the War Department treated the files as secret, restricting access to them. It was not until the mid-1930s that the files were opened to researchers. The earlier writers had to rely on the trial transcripts, first-person reminiscences, and newspaper accounts as their primary sources of information, thereby missing out on important details. Three of the early writers who were personally involved in the aftermath of Lincoln's murder—Thomas Harris (a trial commissioner), Thomas Jones (coconspirator who hid Booth), and William E. Doster (defense attorney)—told their stories without benefit of the information contained in the documents in the War Department archives.<sup>45</sup> Other early writers found themselves equally disadvantaged. David Miller Dewitt (1895, 1909), Osborn H. Oldroyd (1901), Finis Bates (1907), Clara Laughlin (1909), Burke McCarty (1922), and Francis Wilson (1929) all wrote their histories without the benefit of the evidence file.<sup>46</sup>

Otto Eisenschiml, a chemist turned historian, was the first writer to have access to the files as part of his study. Unfortunately, it seems that he did not examine the file carefully. In 1937 he published his seriously flawed book titled *Why Was Lincoln Murdered?*<sup>47</sup> He manipulated the data to lead his readers to the erroneous conclusion that Secretary of War Edwin McMasters Stanton was behind Lincoln's assassination.

Eisenschiml followed his 1937 study with a second book in 1940, *In the Shadow of Lincoln's Death*,<sup>48</sup> still maintaining that a Northern conspiracy was behind Lincoln's murder. In that same year George S. Bryan published *The Great American Myth*<sup>49</sup> challenging Eisenschiml's ridiculous theory and the earlier claim by Finis Bates that Booth escaped from the Garrett barn to eventually die by suicide in 1903. Bryan, unlike the authors before him, had access to the documents in the War Department but barely tapped the file to make his case, relying instead on secondary sources for his information. Nevertheless, Bryan's book became the standard for the next forty years.

The years that followed the publication of Bryan's book were not much better when it came to delving into the collection of material amassed by Burnett

and his staff. In 1943 the documents were turned over to the National Archives Records Administration (NARA) as part of a major transfer of more than forty-five hundred cubic feet of records from the Office of the Judge Advocate General (Army), where they became part of the Records of the Office of the Judge Advocate General (Record Group 153) and still reside today.<sup>50</sup> In 1940 certain of the exhibits used in the trial of the conspirators were turned over to the National Park Service, where they were placed on display in the Lincoln Museum in Ford's Theatre. In 1965 the NARA photographically copied the files, along with the proceedings of the trial, onto microfilm, greatly facilitating the public's access to the records.

In 1982 Thomas R. Turner was responsible for the first book on Lincoln's assassination published by a professional historian.<sup>51</sup> Turner's book focused on the public reaction to Lincoln's assassination and its aftermath. A year later historian William Hanchett published the second book by a professional historian, demolishing the earlier false conspiracy theories by Eisenschiml and others who distorted and even manufactured evidence in support of their spurious claims.<sup>52</sup> Both Turner and Hanchett relied heavily on primary sources.

In 1988 three historians—William A. Tidwell, James O. Hall, and David W. Gaddy—published their revisionist account of the assassination. Titled *Come Retribution*, the book draws on the evidence file now reproduced on reels 1 through 7 in M599 and sets the authors apart from previous writers.<sup>53</sup> They concluded that the Confederate leadership, including Jefferson Davis, was behind Lincoln's assassination. Unlike previous conspiracy theories that were based on flawed and even fraudulent evidence, the authors of *Come Retribution* supported their claim with evidence drawn not only from the files of M599 but also from other documents. While their conclusions failed to convince the majority of historians, their research has remained unchallenged. *Come Retribution* reinvigorated the debate over Lincoln's assassination.

M599 does not include all of the material originally collected by the War Department. Some of the documents were later used by the House of Representatives committee established to adjudicate the reward claims made by those who participated in the capture of the conspirators (and some who did not participate), while others were used in the impeachment hearing of Andrew Johnson. An unknown number of these documents never found their way back to the original file. We cannot be sure of what was borrowed and what was never returned. Nonetheless, the greater number of documents originally collected remained in the possession of the War Department until its archive was turned over to the NARA.

It can safely be said that out of the hundred-plus books written on Lincoln's assassination, only a handful have utilized the evidence file of M599, and then sparingly. Here, then, is a rich source of material that awaits exploration. Making the file available in printed form will make this fascinating historical data more readily accessible to a much wider audience than ever before. Hopefully, this will result in bringing new insight to this important chapter in our country's history.

## Notes

1. The figure 146,418 is given as the number of Confederate troops surrendered and released on parole after Lee's surrender on April 9, 1865. Robert Underwood Johnson and Clarence Clough Buel, eds., *The Way to Appomattox*, Vol. 4, *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War* (1887; reprint, New York: Thomas Yoseloff, 1956), 768.
2. John Rhodehamel and Louise Taper, "Right or Wrong, God Judge Me": *The Writings of John Wilkes Booth* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997), 154.
3. Benjamin P. Thomas and Harold M. Hyman, *Stanton: The Life and Times of Lincoln's Secretary of War* (New York: Knopf, 1962), 396.
4. Howard K. Beale, ed., *Diary of Gideon Welles*, 3 vols. (New York: Norton, 1960), 2:286.
5. *Ibid.*, 2:287.
6. Testimony of Silas T. Cobb, in Ben: Perley Poore, ed., *The Conspiracy Trial for the Murder of the President, and the Attempt to Overthrow the Government by the Assassination of Its Principal Officers*, 3 vols. (1865; reprint, New York: Arno, 1972), 1:251.
7. Statement of David E. Herold, NARA, RG 153, M599, 4:442-85.
8. See testimony of Thomas Price in Poore, *The Conspiracy Trial for the Murder of the President*, 2:22, and in Ben Pitman, *The Assassination of President Lincoln and the Trial of the Conspirators* (New York: Moore, Wiltach, and Baldwin, 1865), 158.
9. Edward Steers Jr., *His Name Is Still Mudd* (Gettysburg, PA: Thomas Publications, 1997), 39-48.
10. Booth suffered a straight fracture of the fibula "two inches above the ankle joint." See statement of Mudd (5:226-39).
11. *Ibid.*
12. Edward Steers Jr., *Blood on the Moon* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2001), 151-52. Edward Steers Jr., "Dr. Mudd's Sense of Timing: The Trip into Bryantown," *Surratt Courier* 24(9) (September 1999): 4-8.
13. Statement of Oswell Swann, NARA, RG 153, M599, 6:227.
14. Thomas A. Jones, *J. Wilkes Booth* (Chicago: Laird and Lee, 1893), 13.
15. Statement of Richard Stuart, NARA, RG 153, M599, 6:205-11.
16. Statement of Everton J. Conger, NARA, RG 94, M619, 455:691.
17. Steers, *Blood on the Moon*, 172. See also "Confession of Atzerodt," *Baltimore American*, July 10, 1865, p. 1, col. 3.
18. Edward Steers Jr., "Maryland My Maryland: Charles County and the War of Northern Aggression," *North & South* 6(2) (February 2003): 42-51.
19. William A. Tidwell, James O. Hall, and David W. Gaddy, *Come Retribution: The Confederate Secret Service and the Assassination of Lincoln* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1988), 171-211.
20. William A. Tidwell, *April '65: Confederate Covert Action in the American Civil War* (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 1995), 129.
21. Steers, *Blood on the Moon*, 46-54. Edward Steers Jr., "Risking the Wrath of God," *North & South* 3(7) (September 2002): 59-70.
22. Tidwell, Hall, and Gaddy, *Come Retribution*, 328-35.
23. Steers, *Blood on the Moon*, 73.
24. Steers, *His Name Is Still Mudd*, 39-48.
25. See David Preston Parr (5:517-41) and (6:18-27).
26. Tidwell, Hall, and Gaddy, *Come Retribution*, 271-98.
27. The Union League of Philadelphia published Tanner's verbatim notes in a facsimile edition titled *While Lincoln Lay Dying: A Facsimile Reproduction of the First Testimony Taken in*

*Connection with the Assassination of Abraham Lincoln As Recorded by Corporal James Tanner* (Philadelphia: Union League of Philadelphia, 1968).

28. The six witnesses were Alfred Cloughly (7:473–80), A. M. S. Crawford (7:481–83), William Henry Hawk (7:485–86), James P. Ferguson (7:487–88, PW, Poore I:189, Pitman 76; DW, Poore II:537, Pitman 106), Henry B. Phillips (7:490–92), and Colonel George V. Rutherford (7:484). Of the six, Crawford, Hawk, Ferguson, and Phillips were in the theater at the time of the shooting.

29. *While Lincoln Lay Dying*, 5.

30. Surratt remained in St. Liboire until the conspiracy trial was over, at which time he secured passage aboard the steamer *Peruvian* to Liverpool, England. From Liverpool he eventually made his way to the Vatican in Rome, where he enlisted in the Papal Zouaves. Discovered, he was arrested but escaped and made his way to Alexandria, Egypt, where he was arrested again and returned to the United States to stand trial in civil court in June 1867. The trial ended in a hung jury.

31. Edward Steers Jr., *The Trial* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2003), 17.

32. A facsimile of the original order appears in a publication of the Lincoln Group of the District of Columbia. See Edward Steers Jr., “To Remove the Stain of Innocent Blood from the Land,” *Lincolnian* 1(1) (November–December 1982): 4–5. The original draft is in a private collection.

33. Beale, *Diary of Gideon Welles*, 2:303–4.

34. Mark E. Neely Jr., *The Fate of Liberty: Abraham Lincoln and Civil Liberties* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 23, 168.

35. Louis Fisher, *Military Tribunals and Presidential Power: American Revolution to the War on Terrorism* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2005), 50–51.

36. James Speed, “Opinion on the Constitutional Power of the Military to Try and Execute the Assassins of the President,” in Steers, *The Trial*, 403–9.

37. *Ibid.*, 409.

38. *Ibid.*

39. Steers, *The Trial*, 17–18.

40. Steers, *Blood on the Moon*, 217.

41. Steers, *The Trial*, III.

42. Originally published in 1865–66, the Poore version was reprinted in 1972 by Arno Press.

43. Steers, *His Name Is Still Mudd*. Laurie Verge, “Mary Elizabeth Surratt,” in Steers, *The Trial*, LII–LIX.

44. Testimony of Thomas T. Eckert, *Judiciary House Committee, House of Representatives: The Impeachment Committee Investigation* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1867), 673–75.

45. Thomas Mealey Harris, *Assassination of Lincoln: A History of the Great Conspiracy, Trial of the Conspirators by a Military Commission and a Review of the Trial of John H. Surratt* (Boston: American Citizen Company, 1892); Thomas A. Jones, *John Wilkes Booth: An Account of His Sojourn in Southern Maryland after the Assassination of Abraham Lincoln, His Passage across the Potomac, and His Death in Virginia* (Chicago: Laird & Lee, 1893); William E. Doster, *Lincoln and Episodes of the Civil War* (New York: Putnam, 1915).

46. David Miller Dewitt, *The Judicial Murder of Mary E. Surratt* (Baltimore: John Murphy, 1895), and *The Assassination of Lincoln and Its Expiation* (New York: MacMillan, 1909); Osborn H. Oldroyd, *The Assassination of Abraham Lincoln: Flight, Pursuit, Capture and Punishment of the Conspirators* (Washington, DC: O. H. Oldroyd, 1901); Finis L. Bates, *Escape and Suicide of John Wilkes Booth, or the First True Account of Lincoln’s Assassination* (Boston:

George M. Smith, 1907); Clara E. Laughlin, *The Death of Lincoln: The Story of Booth's Plot, His Deed and Penalty* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Page, 1909); Burke McCarty, *The Suppressed Truth about the Assassination of Abraham Lincoln* (Washington, DC: N.p., 1922); Francis Wilson, *John Wilkes Booth: Fact and Fiction of Lincoln's Assassination* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1929).

47. Otto Eisenschiml, *Why Was Lincoln Murdered?* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1937).

48. Otto Eisenschiml, *In the Shadow of Lincoln's Death* (New York: Wilford Funk, 1940).

49. George S. Bryan, *The Great American Myth: The True Story of Lincoln's Murder* (New York: Carrick and Evans, 1940).

50. Personal communication from Cynthia Fox, Chief, Old Military and Civil Records, National Archives Records Administration, 2007.

51. Thomas R. Turner, *Beware the People Weeping: Public Opinion and the Assassination of Abraham Lincoln* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1982).

52. William Hanchett, *The Lincoln Murder Conspiracies* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1983).

53. See note 19 above.

## EDITORIAL NOTE

### TEXT

The texts of the documents are reproduced word for word. Many were produced by government clerks, either because they were acting as recording secretaries during interviews or were asked to copy original documents before sending them on to other departments. In both cases, misspelled words, punctuation, and underlined words have been left unchanged except in certain instances where the editors felt that clarification was needed or the punctuation was archaic. Variant spellings of the same name were transcribed as they appeared in the original document. In such instances the correct spelling is given in a note. Where the writer used a dash to end a sentence, a period was substituted. Double dashes are replaced with a single em dash (—), and quotation marks are added when the writer or interviewee was providing a quote of another person. Some letters were so poorly written that the spelling itself was significant in conveying the character of the writer. These letters were not corrected for any spelling errors. Any corrections or additions by the editors occur within brackets.

Words or phrases inserted into the document are bordered by a caret (^). All insertions are included whether they seemed meaningful or not. Words or phrases stricken by the original writer are shown as strike-through (e.g., ~~word~~). As with insertions, all strike-through words and phrases are shown whether they seemed meaningful or not. Underlined words that the editors determined were underlined by the original writer are underlined in the transcription, not italicized. Italics appear only in printed documents where they occur in the original (newspapers, pamphlets, advertisements, notices, etc.). Superscript in the original documents (most often used in dates and abbreviations) has been lowered.

The most difficult part of transcribing original documents occurs in deciphering handwriting and mutilated or badly discolored documents. Where a word or phrase exists but is unreadable due to mutilation or stain, the editors use the form “[unreadable].” Similarly, wherever the editors are unable to decipher individuals’ handwriting, the form “[illegible]” is used. In the first instance the word or phrase is unreadable by the human eye, while in the second instance the word or phrase is undecipherable by the editors but may be decipherable by another examiner.

Of course, transcription is subject to human error. Handwriting varies greatly. Some words once common are no longer in use, and spelling varies considerably among correspondents. Decisions about transcription can greatly influence historical interpretation. For example, among the documents in M599 is a letter dated “N.Y. 20th Feby/65” delivered to “J. W. Booth, Esq.” and signed “J. J. Reford.”<sup>1</sup> The letter was found in Booth’s hotel room after the assassination. The letter is quoted in a major work on the assassination and is described as a loosely coded message between Reford and Booth concerning Lewis Powell, the conspirator who attacked William H. Seward.<sup>2</sup> A part of the letter was transcribed in the book to read “As Lewis anxious to have had a conversation with you relative to the order for shipping the horses, as well as the Ile [oil] question,” leading to the conclusion that the letter is an important piece of evidence supporting a wider conspiracy involving Reford with Powell and Booth.

A careful reading of the original document, however, resulted in the present editors transcribing the quoted part of the letter to read “As I was anxious” rather than “As Lewis anxious.”<sup>3</sup> This changes the whole meaning of the sentence. While the letter may still be a loosely coded message from Reford to Booth, one cannot conclude from it that Powell wanted to get in touch with Booth concerning Booth’s plot.

While we have striven to avoid such errors and to reproduce text exactly, errors may creep in. This is especially true because of the hundreds of different handwriting styles, type of ink (pencil in a few cases), and type of paper, including the condition of the paper. The editors have made every attempt to ensure the accuracy of the transcriptions.

## FORMAT

The style of formatting used in transcribing the file followed that found in the original document with the single exception that all headings were standardized by adjusting to the left margin. This should present no problem, in the editors’ opinion, since the variation in over-all format found in letters, affidavits, or statements does not present a problem in reading or understanding the text.

## SOURCES

The evidence file compiled by Burnett along with the trial proceedings are located in the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) as part of Record Group 153, Records of the Office of the Judge Advocate General (Army).<sup>4</sup> In 1965 the NARA photocopied the entire evidence file, along with the trial proceedings, onto sixteen reels of microfilm (designated Microcopy No. 599, or M599). Reels 1 through 7 contain the evidence; reels 8 through 15 contain the proceedings of the trial including the closing arguments and exhibits. Reel 16 contains issues of the District of the Washington, D.C., *Intelligencer*, which published each day’s trial transcript.

When Burnett was appointed special judge advocate to the Military Tribunal, his first step was to contact each officer in the field collecting evidence and have them turn the material over to him immediately. He then set up a register containing the name of the person furnishing the statement, the date, and a summary of his statement, including the names of any persons referred to in the statement. An example of Burnett's number designation reads "'B' Evid. B. (JAO) P3 1865." The designation refers to a statement by John "Peanut" Burroughs (B), the person who held Booth's horse in the alley behind the theater. A summary of Burroughs's statement was copied into the "Evidence Book" (Evid. B.), located in the judge advocate's office (JAO), on page 3. A similar entry for William Gaither, the man who gave George Atzerodt a ride to Montgomery County, Maryland, the day after the assassination, reads "'G' R.B. (JAO) P43 1865," the summary copied into Burnett's "Record Book" (R.B.) on page 43. The original of the document could be recovered from the file by using the number designation in the register book.

### ORGANIZATION

Because the filing system used by Burnett and his staff has little meaning to researchers today, the editors have arranged all of the documents into an alphabetical file using the surname of the addresser (or, where none exists, the subject of the document) and chronologically within the same addresser's file. This was done for all of the documents copied in M599, reels 1 through 7, including those documents that were unregistered. The NARA arranged the unregistered documents alphabetically by addressee surname in folders numbered 1 through 128. Documents that lack an addressee were placed at the end of this file. The editors have done away with the folder system created by the NARA and have included the documents from folders 1 through 128 as part of the alphabetized file.

The documents found in Booth's hotel room by detectives on Saturday, April 15, have been kept together and entered under "John Wilkes Booth." This one exception to the alphabetical arrangement was made because of the importance of keeping Booth's papers together as detectives found them.

Each document is arranged by surname followed by a number designation in parentheses giving the location of the document in the microcopy file (M599). For example, Benjamin F. Ficklin, a Confederate blockade-runner and cotton trader suspected of being a conspirator in Lincoln's assassination, has the following citation: Benjamin F. Ficklin (5:424-35). This statement is found under (F) Ficklin, reel 5, frames 424 through 435.

When the person appearing in the evidence file also appeared as a witness in the trial, the citation for both the Poore version and the Pitman version follows the M599 citation.<sup>5</sup> For example, Louis J. Wiechmann, the government's key witness against Mary Surratt and Dr. Samuel Mudd, appears as follows: Louis J. Wiechmann (7:445-51, PW, Poore I:69, 135, 369, Pitman 113, 118, 120). The citation reads as follows: reel 7, frames 445 through 451, a prosecution witness (PW); his testimony appears in Poore, volume I, pages 69, 135, and 369, and in



Pitman on pages 113, 118, and 120. Occasionally a witness appeared for both the prosecution and the defense. The citation in such a case reads: William Withers (2:564–66, PW, Poore I:198, Pitman 79; DW, Poore III:10, Pitman 104).

The largest number of entries fall under the heading “Anonymous” (fifty-nine entries). The largest group of documents by subject is for disloyal utterances. Many of these accusations reflect personal grudges between individuals, usually work associates or neighbors. Merely suggesting that a neighbor behaved in a suspicious manner following word of Lincoln’s assassination could be sufficient to warrant his arrest. Undoubtedly, the tense atmosphere provided mean-spirited persons an opportunity to punish enemies or, in some instances, business competitors. While such accusations might result in arrest, the accused were eventually released without penalty. Much has been written about the suppression of free speech that led to wholesale arrests and punishment under Stanton’s “iron fist,” but an order received by Burnett dated May 31, 1865, suggests that such charges have been exaggerated: “It is understood that the Secretary of War does not deem it expedient for the government to incur the trouble and expense of bringing to trial the parties whose offenses consist solely in the utterance of words expressing satisfaction at the assassination of the President, their language being unaccompanied by any acts of a treasonable character and no connection with the conspiracy being alleged.”<sup>6</sup>

### Notes

1. J. J. Reford (2:353–57).
2. William A. Tidwell, James O. Hall, and Winfred Gaddy, *Come Retribution: The Confederate Secret Service and the Assassination of Lincoln* (Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 1989), 404.
3. J. J. Reford (2:353–57).
4. The trial exhibits (ninety-eight in all) were divided, with several being given to the National Park Service where they are on display at Ford’s Theatre. The remainder are in the NARA.
5. The editors wish to acknowledge the major contribution of Richard Sloan, who produced an index to the Poore version that has withstood the test of time. Mr. Sloan’s index was used in producing this work.
6. A. A. Hosmer (2:585).

# THE DOCUMENTS



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**MERCY ABBOTT**

(7:200-204)

Letter to Stanton from Abbott, April 20, 1865  
Buffalo, A[p]ril 20th 1865  
To Edwin M. Stanton,

Dear Sir,

I hope this letter will not surprise you, for I believe that every man, woman and child in the United States ought to do all in their power to find the assassin of our late President, and I have thought for the last week of going to an old lady who sometimes tells fortunes and today I went.

She does not advertise to tell, but she has told some wonderful things to persons in this city and in Canada, which have come to pass in a very short time.

The following is what she said, as near as I can remember, in her own words.

When Mr. Lincoln was shot, there was a tall light man, stood a few feet behind Booth, who was connected with it, and when Booth left the Theater, he took a circuit half around Washington but not all the way on horseback. That he is concealed in a house in the suburbs of Washington. He is preparing to go off on a large steamer. The woman of the house where he is a short thick woman, neither light nor dark. The man is rather a large man & when he speaks holds his head down. Booth has changed his clothes since he left the Theater, his clothes are lighter; they hide him by moving a secret panel.

The house is a large brown Gothic style house. The way she described it to me it must have two wings, she says "the top is covered with little steeples & the man in this house is connected with it". I asked her if there was half a dozen connected with it and she said, "Yes, more than a dozen. The head man of all is a very tall, light man. It is situated (the house) either North or South of Washington.

The persons in the house have either sent two letters or will send two letters to tell that Booth is there.

Now, sir, in the name of our beloved President, I beg of you to not throw this aside, as common as Lincoln & Seward did before this happened, because

you have no faith in fortune telling. If nothing comes of it, no one will ever know it, but send armed men to such houses & let them search thoroughly.

I never was in Washington in my life, but it seems to me that I can almost see the house. My mind is so impressed with it. If you have any forts of that description, search them for money will do everything.

This old lady has never been out of this state, since she was eleven years old and is now almost seventy-five.

Your humble sevt.

Mercy Abbott

38 Tenth St. Buffalo, NY

**FRANK ABELLS**

(3:895)

"A" 640 (JAO) 1865

Abells, Frank, Miss

Washington DC, April 24th 1865

Maj. Gen. C. C. Augur

Comdg Defenses of Washington

General,

After having been in the service of the Government for nearly four years, I would most respectfully offer my service again if required in ferreting out the whereabouts of Booth and his accomplices, the assassins of President Lincoln and Secretary Seward.

Very Respectfully

Your Obt. Servt.

Frank Abells

**FRANK ABELLS**

(3:911-12)

"A" 645 (JAO) 1865

C. C. Augur

Will Col. Foster hear the statement of a Mr. Raymond in reference to the statement of Frank Abells; she should be examined

C. C. Augur

April 24/65

**EDWIN ADAMS**<sup>1</sup>

(2:59–62)

"A" <sup>31</sup> (JAO) 1865

April 17

Long Branch, NJ

Edwin Adams

My Dear Reakert

I have just arrived home, and hasten to write you a few lines. With regard to the subject upon which we were conversing the other evening. I can only repeat what said of Booth's manner and reckless habits when I knew him a few years ago. I have not spoken to him since one year ago last January, and that in Louisville, Ky., when he followed me with an engagement at the Theater in that city. I had not seen him before then for sometime, and readily noticed a marked increase of his reckless manners. I heard him boasting over a very long and tedious journey from Leavenworth across the prairies in a sleigh to St. Louis and after of having threatened a conductor's life, who had stopped his train on account of the great depth of snow, and that by placing a pistol at his head, made him continue his journey.<sup>2</sup> And I am sure that all of his profession (which he has disgraced) will agree with me that he has ever been noted for his love of notoriety and also for his reckless manners generally. He has ever been known a bitter "secessionist". And I believe he would hardly hesitate to perform any rash or bloody deed to satisfy his vengeance and this last horrible crime which can hardly be pondered over confirms my opinion of the inhuman murderer. It is increased when I remember that at Richmond, Va., when John Brown was at Charlestown, he forced himself upon the cars, having been repeatedly pushed off by the soldiers and armed with pistols and knife secreted himself in the baggage car until the train had got far upon his journey; when he showed himself and was made either an assistant commissary or quartermaster.<sup>3</sup>

The man Butts spoken of (whose name I heard of from the telegraph operator at the "Continental") I think is a person of that name who used to be continually with Booth while he was fulfilling an engagement in Richmond in the season of 1858 and 9 and was either an employee or permitted to remain about the theater and, if the same person, used to carry my basket to and from the theater and was as I remember him tall, quite slim, and with a very pale face. I refer to the above incidents that I may give an idea of the former manners of the murderer of our President. And if there is anything more I can write, say or do (which you think would be the means of giving the least possible help) write me

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<sup>1</sup> Edwin Adams was an actor and close friend of Edwin Booth. Adams and his wife were witnesses to Booth's marriage to actress Mary McVicker in 1869.

<sup>2</sup> The incident occurred in January 1864 during one of Booth's western tours. Snowed in at St. Joseph, Missouri, and scheduled to appear in St. Louis, Booth traveled part of the way by sleigh through deep snow to Breckinridge, Missouri, where he was able to take a train to St. Louis.

<sup>3</sup> Booth was welcomed by members of the Richmond Grays and given one of their uniforms. He stood guard duty with the Grays at the scaffold and witnessed John Brown's hanging in Charlestown, Virginia (now West Virginia), on December 2, 1859.

directly and I will most cheerfully perform them, being only too thankful that I can be the means of giving aid to others that we may bring this horrid monster to light and the punishment which must surely overtake him. I cannot describe to you my feelings since returning home, where, in the quietness that pervades here, we think more seriously of the murder.

I feel with the whole nation that we have lost our best friend on earth. I am writing in some haste and you will forgive my cramped manner. Mrs. Adams joins me in sincere regards to yourself. Remember me kindly to Dr. Wallace and also our mutual friend Bispham. Believe me as ever,

Your sincere friend,

Edwin Adams

April 17th 1865

P. S. Make use of this letter in any way you think proper.

E. A.

**C. M. ALLEN**

(4:507-10)

Consulate of the United States at Bermuda, April 14th 1865

Sir, During the prevalence of the yellow fever at these islands last September, a Dr. Blackburn<sup>1</sup> formerly belonging to new Orleans came here from Halifax, for the ostensible purpose of aiding the physicians here, he refused all offers of a pecuniary nature, either for his services while here or for expenses incurred by his visit here, claiming to have had much experience in the treatment of said disease, and being desirous only of benefiting this community, who had manifested so much sympathy for their holy cause; While advocating his theory for the treatment of yellow fever, he never neglected on all possible occasions to advocate the cause of the rebels, after remaining here about one month he returned to Halifax, some three weeks since a person intimate in the Office of N. W. Walker<sup>2</sup> confederate agent here, sent me word he wished to see me confidentially, as he had some information of importance to communicate. I soon after had an interview with him. When he informed me that Dr. Blackburn's expenses for his visit here were paid with funds from the Confederate Treasury; that the sole object of that visit was to collect clothing from the dead of yellow fever to be sent to New York, and other Northern cities during the coming sum-

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Luke Pryor Blackburn, a Kentucky physician and expert on yellow fever. Blackburn attempted to carry out a program of germ warfare against the North by distributing contaminated clothing taken from individuals who died from the disease during an epidemic in Bermuda in the summer and fall of 1864. The fact that yellow fever was not contagious was unknown to medical science at the time, and the plot went forward as planned, targeting the cities of Washington, DC; Norfolk, Virginia; and New Bern, North Carolina. Blackburn was eventually arrested and tried in Canada for violating the Neutrality Act. He was acquitted when the prosecution failed to prove that his infectious materials had ever been on Canadian soil. Godfrey Joseph Hyams, Blackburn's agent who distributed the contaminated clothing, testified at the trial of the Lincoln conspirators under a grant of immunity (PW, Poore II:409-19, Pitman, 54).

<sup>2</sup> Major N. S. Walker was the commissary agent in charge of the Confederate office and wharf in Bermuda.

mer; That while here he, Blackburn, collected three large trunks full of such clothing which were then in these islands in the care of a person employed by Blackburn,<sup>1</sup> to take charge of them until next June, for which service he was to receive \$150 per month, and in June he was to be paid \$500 to take them to New York. My informant refused to furnish any further information without I paid him for it, and demanded \$500 for full exposure, as by so doing he would lose his position here and would be compelled to leave these islands. After repeated interviews finding I could get by no other means than money available information, I finally agreed to pay him the sum of \$200, provided the trunks were found and circumstances proved to be as he had represented; He then informed me in whose possession the trunks were, gave me a perfect description of them, and a minute detail of all the transaction connected with them. After getting all necessary information I made known the transaction to the health officer at this port (St. Georges) who taking some other officer with him, went to the house in which it was alleged the trunks were stored and demanded the trunks left there by Dr. Blackburn; The person in whose keeping they were finding the facts had been revealed, denied nothing, but acknowledged much, and gave up the trunks, which were taken yesterday to the Quarantine Station, opened and found to contain wearing apparel and bedding, made up in small packages, decently clean, with dirty flannel drawers and shirts on the outside, all evidently taken from a sick bed, intermixed with these packages were poultices, and many other things which could have been placed there for no legitimate purpose, were found; The whole of which were burned by direction of the health officer, from the evidence before me, I believe the facts in relation to these trunks and Dr. Blackburn's visit here were well understood by Confederate Officers here, and that they have paid money to carry out the diabolical scheme. I hope to get a thorough investigation of the matter and I believe I am prepared to produce the necessary evidence to show the affair in its true light. I shall use my utmost endeavors to have the contents of the trunks taken up at once and thoroughly destroyed, as I believe there are parties here who would not hesitate to remove them, if possible, in order to carry out the original intent.

Trusting my action in this matter will be approved.

I remain Sir,

Your Obedient Servant

C. M. Allen

Consul

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<sup>1</sup> Blackburn hired Edward Swan, a hotelkeeper on St. Georges Island, Bermuda, to care for the trunks of soiled clothing. Bermuda officials arrested Swan, and he confessed his role in Blackburn's plan.



**HON. WM. H. SEWARD**

Secretary of State  
 Washington D. C.  
 Secretary's Office  
 September 26, 1864

Dr. Blackburn, a visitor from the Southern States of America having announced his intention of inviting a meeting of the Medical Officer and Practitioners in Bermuda, for the purpose of discussing the nature, treatment, be of the prevailing epidemic Fever, His Excellency the Lieut. Governor believing that such discussions may be highly beneficial to these islands both now and in the future requests the attendance of the Medical Officers of the Army and Navy and of the Civil Practitioners as fast as their occupations will permit.

The meeting will take place at the Hamilton Hotel on Thursday evening next the 29th Inst. at 3 o'clock PM.

By Command

James Tucker  
 Acting Colonial Secretary

**GEORGE D. ALORY**

(3:62-64)

"E" 382 (IAO) 1865

Evidence

Letterhead: Office of Provost Marshal, Hdqrs Mil. Dist. Of the Patuxent Port Tobacco Md. May 15th 1865

Deposition of Mr. G. D. Alory, citizen of Newport, Charles Co. Md. in reference to three men who stopped at the hotel of Mr. A. Adams in Newport,<sup>1</sup> on account of which Mr. Adams and wife were arrested and taken to Washington on suspicion of harboring Booth and his accomplices, which latter the above mentioned three men were supposed to be.<sup>2</sup>

This deponent saith:

I, G. D. Alory of Newport, Charles County, Maryland, on Wednesday night just after the Easter holidays, on arriving home in Newport from Allen's Fresh, saw three mounted men at Mr. Adams door, asking for accommodations for the night which Mr. Adams denied them stating that the soldiers had been there for several days previous, had foraged on him and taken all his provisions. They however insisted on remaining, halting me as I rode up, asked if Mr. Adams was telling the truth, and if there was not such a house kept there. I replied that Mr. Adams had kept a hotel but whether he could accommodate any at present I could not say. I then went home. The men staid all night at the hotel, & were there the next morning. How it was arranged I cannot say. Descrip-

<sup>1</sup> Austin Adams.

<sup>2</sup> Two of the men are believed to be Confederate agents Thomas Harbin and Joseph Baden. Harbin aided Booth and Herold in their attempt to escape by providing horses and a guide, who led them to Dr. Richard Stuart's house on Sunday, April 23.

tion of the persons as seen the next day the one that I was talking with and who interrogated me the evening previous, was a large man, light complexion, sandy whiskers, blue eyes (I think) light brown hair, weight about 175 or 180 lbs. The other present was of light build, dark complexion, no beard, dark hair, tall, spare, straight form. The other was not seen by me but was described to me by a young lady, a niece of Mr. Adams, as a medium sized man, dark complexion, black whiskers, dark hair, of average height, of about 5 feet 8 inches.

There was no suspicion in the least of the men being connected with the assassination of the President, although it was well known several days previous to the arrival of these men at Mr. Adams House.

We supposed them to be government detectives as they wore officer's caps and blue overcoats. One had dark blue pants with stripes.

I am by occupation a merchant. Have resided in Newport one year; was born and raised in Charlotte Hall District, St. Mary's County Md. Took and subscribed to the oath of allegiance May 3rd, 1865, at Newport Md.

The above was not given in my testimony at Bryantown about two weeks since

Geo. D. Alory

Sworn and Subscribed to before me at Port Tobacco, Md. this 15th of May 1865

M. Y. Dempsey

Lieut. And Provost Marshal

## FREDERICK AMTHOR

(2:1180-83)

"G" 356 (JAO) 1865

Envelope: Postmark #1 Nassau #2 New Orleans (?) May 12 Address Frederick Seward, Esq., Washington D. S. U. St. N. America

Nassau, N. D.

May 8, 1865

Mister Frederick Seward Esq.<sup>1</sup>

If you will examine your fathers and A. Lincoln's private papers you will find the key to the late Washington tragedy. The first letter dated Dec. 12, 1860, Clinton, Ill, Jan 1861, Feb 1861, March 1861, April 1861, which Chase<sup>2</sup>—answered my letter but your father and Lincoln never did. Had they taken my advice the country would not be in so deplorable condition, but ah!!! (convince a man against his will) had I wrote about this last tragedy they would not have believed it. It will not be the last. So I will say no more. I know what I know, if I am only a tailor. Young man, look out for yourself. Say nothing to A. Johnson. Take my advice! The worst is coming. I remain yours respectfully,

Frederick Amthor.

Please Deliver to Bearer my suit and the bill.

Yours truly

Gustave Rensnard

<sup>1</sup> Frederick Seward was the middle of three sons of William Seward and served as his father's assistant in the State Department.

<sup>2</sup> Secretary of the Treasury Salmon P. Chase.

**J. R. ANDERSON**

(7:383-84)

*F-76*

Letter from Anderson  
 Sunday Night

My dear Sir,

Should you find an opportunity to send a small package from Baltimore, do me the favor to send for Mrs. S. some gloves;

|                         |     |
|-------------------------|-----|
| Say, 6 pairs black size | 6 ½ |
| 4 pairs purple          | 6 ½ |
| 2 pairs brown           | 6 ¼ |
| 2 pairs brown           | 6   |

Good luck to you

Yours truly

J. R. Anderson

Company prevented my getting to see you tonight. I will look anxiously to hear from you.

**MARY JANE ANDERSON**(3:488-92, PW, Poore  
I:235, Pitman 75)*"A" 527 (JAO) 1865*

Anderson, Mary Jane

Mary Jane Anderson, (colored), being duly sworn, says she lives in the brick cottage at the rear of Ford's Theater.

I know J. Wilkes Booth; have seen him about in Alley of Ford's Theater for about three months. About that time back, Ned Spangler<sup>1</sup> built a small stable for him on the alley & he kept a horse & buggy there. He & Spangler & Maddox<sup>2</sup> were all very intimate together. They used to have good deal of private conversation together and seemed to have a good deal of business with each other that they did not want other people to know. I think they are all a lot of great rascals.

On the day of the President's murder, I saw him down by his stable about midday. Two or three hours later I saw him standing in the small back door of the theater talking to a pretty young lady who had on a black silk coat & dress & white bonnet. They were engaged in earnest conversation. He seemed to be pointing up & down the alley & to the right & left as if explaining to her something about the locality. She also pointed toward F Street and in other directions, as if she understood what he was telling her. They staid there about 20 minutes, then went into the theater together. She was a stranger to me. Never saw her before.

<sup>1</sup> Edman Spangler worked as a carpenter and sceneshifter for John Ford. Spangler had worked on the construction of the Booth home, named Tudor Hall, near Bel Air, Maryland, in 1852.

<sup>2</sup> John Ford employed James Maddox as property manager.

About 7 or 8 o'clock in the evening<sup>1</sup> I saw Booth lead a horse up to the stage door & heard him call in a loud voice, "Ned!" three or four times. John Myers, a colored man employed at the theater looked out of the window & called into the theater, "Mr. Ned, Mr. Booth wants you." Ned Spangler, the assistant carpenter, then came down to the door, & I heard Booth say in a low voice, "Tell, Maddox to come here." Maddox came & Booth took the horse from Booth. He led him up & down, as the horse appeared restless & stamped on the ground whenever he let him stand still. A little time afterwards, Maddox gave the horse to some other person who came out and then went into the theater. The horse was standing there altogether about an hour & a half. ~~I was at the window all the while~~ At the end of this time I was looking through the open door & noticing the people moving about behind the scenes from time to time, when all of a sudden I saw Booth burst into the passage as if coming from the stage, & rush to the back door like lightning. He had his right arm up above his head and held something in his hand that glittered in the gaslight. His other arm seemed to be held out back of him. He had no hat on. As he came out of the door to his horse, I saw him strike at somebody<sup>2</sup> & then leap on his horse & gallop down the alley. I thought the horse had run away with him. There was immediately a great excitement and people ran out into the alley.

I saw Maddox come out of the theater, looking as if he was scared to death. Spangler, too, but Maddox did not come outside. I went up to Spangler & said to him, "Mr. Ned, you know Mr. Booth called you out." He said, "No he didn't" in a sneaking sort of way as if he didn't want anybody to hear what he said. I said, "Yes he did & there's no use of you saying so, for I heard him & you must know something about this." He said nothing then but sneaked away down the alley putting on his coat and looking as guilty as he could.

X

Mary Jane Anderson

## MARY ANDERSON

(3:545-47)

"H" 538 (JAO) 1865

Mary Anderson

May 11, 1865

Mary Anderson testifies as follows:

I reside at 28 Church Street, on the hill, Baltimore. I have been living with a woman by the name of Mrs. Rosin; she lives at No. 134 Fayette Street. There is a young man by the name of Edward Small who is an associate of Mrs. Rosin's son, George; he lives on Fayette Street, but I cannot give the number; he left Baltimore the week before the assassination of the President, and came to Washington. I don't know where he stopped. He came back to our house in Baltimore

<sup>1</sup> Booth rode up to the rear of the theater a little after 9:00 P.M.

<sup>2</sup> John "Peanut" Burroughs, an employee of John Ford. Burroughs did odd jobs around the theater, including guarding the stage door.

on Saturday evening after the President was shot. I don't know who came with him. I heard him say that he was in the theater when the President was shot. I did not hear him say anything more. I heard Mrs. Rosin's son, George say on Saturday at 2 o'clock, after the assassination, "Thank God that Old Abe Lincoln in gone to hell boiling." That was all I could hear him say. George Rosin went away the Saturday before the assassination somewhere, but I don't know where he went to. Mrs. Rosin said that this plot was made before the President took his seat, but they could not get a chance to do it. Sam Arnold, George Rosin, Ned Small and Booth were all associates together.<sup>1</sup> Small is a very handsome man with black hair and black mustache, is about five feet six or seven inches high. I think Mr. George Rosin is about five feet eight inches. These people are all very strong secessionists and abuse me because my children are in the Federal army. All these people met at Mrs. Rosin's house & had great rejoicing over the President being killed. They said, "Thank God he is killed." That is all I heard. They begged me not to go among the old Yankees. They said I was a fool to let my son go in the army.

**“ANNA”**

(3:1227–28)

*“A” 720 (JAO) 1865*

“Anna”

Philadelphia, June 23/65

To Andrew Johnson

President of the United States

Sir,

There is a scheme to assassinate you; far deeper than the one laid to entrap Lincoln, be on your guard against bearers of dispatches and know who is in your kitchen.

I expect you will laugh over this, as he did, but it is nevertheless true; this is all I dare do,

Your Friend

Anna

Private

---

<sup>1</sup> There is no known association between Booth and George Rosin or Ned Small.

**ANONYMOUS**

(6:355-56)

*"A" R.B. (JAO) P84 1865*

Anonymous

Addressed to E. M. Stanton, Esq.

Postmarked New York, May 29, 1864

One theater manager is in prison, why should not another be. Grover<sup>1</sup> then under the name or that of Percival which he then bore was Lieut. Col. or Maj. J. Johnston Guerrillas of Baltimore named by the [illegible]. The guerrillas to oppose Lincoln and the troops passing through in April 1862, They would readily have killed anybody. If you want to know more address me through the personals in the Herald.

Justice

**ANONYMOUS**

(2:40-41)

*"A" 20 (JAO) 1865*

Anonymous

April 21, 1865

Hon. Mr. Stanton, Sec. of War

Sir,

David Herold's sister<sup>2</sup> married a Mr. Maddox just before the war. Maddox was, I think, from Georgia or Alabama.

David Porter was arrested as a rebel sympathizer about the first of the rebellion & confined in the Old Capitol. Said Porter is the brother of Mrs. Herold, mother of David Herold. I understand that one or two of Herold's sisters have recently married union naval officers. I give the above items, feeling it to be my duty to communicate any thing that may lead to the capture of the villains who have been connected with the foul conspiracy.

Yours loyally.

---

<sup>1</sup> Leonard Grover, part-owner with C. Dwight Hess of Grover's National Theater located on E Street three blocks west of Ford's Theatre, was in New York at the time of the assassination.

<sup>2</sup> David Herold had seven sisters: Mary Alice Nelson (1837-1917), Elizabeth Jane Herold (1839-1903), Katharine Virginia Brown (1846-1917), Emma Francis Leil Holtz (1848-74), Alice King Earnshaw (1852-1930), Georgia Isabell Earnshaw (1854-1904), and Margaret Cecilia Rockwell (1831-1904).

**ANONYMOUS**

(2:180-81)

*"A" 69 (JAO) 1865*

Anonymous

Phila. April 20/1865

E. M. Stanton

Honored Sir,

I feel it a duty involving upon me to write and inform you of a certain individual of my acquaintance who bears a striking resemblance of the person described as the attempted murderer of Mr. Seward. His name is Samuel Dubois, stock actor, engaged either at Ford's theater or at one of the theaters in Baltimore at the time of the murder. I suspicioned this man at the first on account of severe language I have heard him use against the parties attacked. Now I think if you will send someone that was an eyewitness in Secretary Seward's room or find the man so they may see him. I doubt not you have the assassin recognized. If you cannot find the man, and circumstances leaves you to believe him guilty, Then if I should his name given to the public I will then give all the aid I can in searching him. I will not subscribe my name but I am sincerely yours.

Anonymous

**ANONYMOUS**

(2:196)

*"A" 78 (JAO) 1865*

Anonymous

Phil. April 25th 1865

Hon E. M. Stanton

Dear Sir,

If you will have every person who are attached to the theater in Washington arrested and then have every secret recess examined therein, you will find J. Wilkes Booth the assassin of President Lincoln. If you fail to find him there, have every dwelling house in Washington examined and you will certainly find him. He is not outside of Washington City. His purchasing a horse to escape upon was to throw his pursuers off his track; act promptly and success will crown your efforts.

Yours Truly

L

**ANONYMOUS**

(2:210–11)

*"A" 81 (JAO) 1865*

Anonymous

New York

April 15, 1865

Hon. E. M. Stanton

Mosby guerrillas<sup>1</sup> must have done the work of assassinating the President. Offer a reward of one million dollars & have every one of those men caught & hung. With tears in my eyes I think it your duty to hang every rebel caught. I feel as bad as if was my own mother or father & will be one to volunteer to try & shoot every Southern man. May God have mercy on the man's soul that done such a deed. Although I was a copperhead, I can safely say that you cannot find a copperhead in the whole North today.

I will be one to give 25 Thousand Dollars to any person who will assassinate Jefferson Davis.

With much Respect for our Country,

I remain

Weeping

My address can be found through the personals of the Herald.

**ANONYMOUS**

(2:249–50)

*"A" 90 (JAO) 1865*

Anonymous

Through deep and holy love for my country and its rights, prompted by heartrending sorrow for our departed leader and statesman, may I trust the following lines will be acceptable to you.

The fiendish deed, the most atrocious crime ever committed on our land of freedom, demands redress—yes the most bitter revenge a people can execute.

Allow me to place before you a few suggestion. The demon still lurks within your city, watching an opportunity to hurl another deadly blow. The horse discovered near a bridge, a few miles from Washington was intended to delude or lead to a fruitless search. Until within a short time, not many blocks from the scene of the horrible tragedy has the offender been concealed. Never having visited Washington I cannot give you his direct covert, but sufficient that he has been secreted in your city.

Trembling for your personal safety, I have presumed to address these lines to you. If this should stimulate to research, may I ask for a reply?

It may be for a time he will remove but only to return again to complete his work of death.

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<sup>1</sup> Colonel John Singleton Mosby. Mosby commanded the 43rd Battalion, Virginia Cavalry that operated as partisans. Often referred to as guerrillas, Mosby's men were regular soldiers who often operated behind enemy lines.



I am a native of R. I. and am personally acquainted with its senator and representatives. Have a brother and only son now fighting for his country, and has been since the beginning of hostilities.

I give these as my thoughts.

Direct to M. Y. A. M.

New York

To Andrew Johnson

President U. S.

Washington, DC

April 20th

**ANONYMOUS**

(2:433-35)

"A" 111 (JAO) 1865

Canada April 26

To the Hon E. M. Stanton

Dear sir

I have the pleasure of addressing you I am the fellow that put the bullet through Old Abe's head on Good Friday night in Washington and I have got to Canada safe & sound. Of course you will think me a fool for me to let me know I am here but you will be mistaken. I have good reasons in letting you know that I am in Canada. I might also tell you that I have seen Jake Thompson<sup>1</sup> since I came here. So now you can send your detectives to Canada and search for me & see what the result will be. See will they catch me or not. I cannot finish this without letting you know how I crossed at Buffalo. I dressed myself up in woman's clothes & painted my cheeks and escaped splendidly. Got over to Hamilton from there to Toronto from there to a place that will be nameless

I am with pleasure, the assassin of Old Abe

J. W. Booth

Per R. S. P.

Booth is sleeping while I am writing R. S. P. an accomplice

He told me to ~~do it~~ write this ~~to you~~.

**ANONYMOUS**

(2:469-73)

"E" 120 (JAO) 1865

Endorsements: Referred to Col. J. A. Foster April 29th 1865.

O. S. C. No 82 Franklin St. NY May 5th, Respectfully returned to Col. John A. Foster with a report from two of my officers which show that disloyal language or culpable action cannot be proven against Miss Kate McDonald or that she know of the assassins.

H. L. Olcott.

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<sup>1</sup> Jacob Thompson, former U.S. congressman and secretary of the interior under James Buchanan, was sent to Canada in April 1864 along with Clement C. Clay to head up Confederate secret service operations.

**ANONYMOUS**

Orange, NJ April 27 1865  
Edwin M. Stanton Esq.

Sir, the mother of Augustus McDonald of Canada notoriety resides in this town. Her son and her granddaughter visit her. This granddaughter, Miss Kate McDonald is a violent Secesh. She has been to Canada and while there entertained the hotel burners and now wears a set of jewelry presented to her by the distinguished Confederates. She intimates that she knew all about the assassination. I think if she were arrested that there could be a great deal of light thrown on this horrible crime. Honest union people in this vicinity have too long had these prophecies told and now they see them too well fulfilled. Such people should not be allowed to run at large; this Miss Kate McDonald resides in Brooklyn NY I do hope you will put one of your detectives on her tract and if not satisfied that this statement is true there can be no harm done.

Respectfully yours,  
Justice

**ANONYMOUS**

(2:604-6)

"A" 175 (JAO) 1865

Anonymous

Dear Sir,

You will find one of Booths friend at Willard Hotel<sup>1</sup> on Monday or Tuesday night.

He dres will to black coat, pants and hat with bead on it; long beard or with [unintelligible word] & come from New York then [?]

I am a soldier for Lee Army. I shall not trouble any of you but ther is 7 of my company sworn to kill 1 man a peace. Look out for them.

A Rebel soldhier.

You will find me on Friday night at end of Long Bridge beneath exchange in cloth with a woman [rest unintelligible]

My friend be on your garde for they will kill you if they get a chance. I tremble for you. This if from your friend. A rebel soldier.

I shall know if this do wat I hope it will.

**ANONYMOUS**

(2:614-15)

"A" 177 (JAO) 1865

Anonymous

A man called Wellington acted with J. W. Booth  
An honest confederate  
Tyler- James

<sup>1</sup> The Willard Hotel was located at Fourteenth Street and Pennsylvania Avenue.

**ANONYMOUS**

(2:619–21)

*"A" 179 (JAO) 1865*

Anonymous

Envelope: Addressed Hon. Wm. H. Seward, Washington DC Postmarked  
Lewistown Ill. May \_\_\_\_

Mr. Wm. H. Seward

I wish I had cut your dam head off while I was at it instead of only half doing it. If I only had you and Johnson and Stanton out of the way I would feel as if I had done my duty to my country, but knowing that I could not get at Stanton as he did not come out of the house until I saw someone come for him and know that my partner had done his part of the work. I thought it best to "light out" of that dam abolition hole as soon as I could and now I have got here I am not afraid of being caught by your damed hirlings. I may not be seen in this part of the world again but one thing sure you will never see me alive for I will put a ball through my own head before I will be taken.

The South is avenged and one of the U. S. Presidents gone to hell or some other seaport with a ball through his head.

Sic Semper Tyrannis<sup>1</sup>  
'Jorgen'

**ANONYMOUS**

(2:690–93)

*"A" 202 (JAO) 1865*

Anonymous

Envelope: Postmark: Cincinnati, April 24. Addressed William H. Seward,  
Secretary of State at Washington, marked Private official business.

Recd 26 April

Cincinnati, April 24

Wishing to inform you as soon as possible that you and the goddam Yankee government their detectives, spies, searchers can save themselves the trouble and expenses and perhaps also their lives that any further searches is unnecessary, and will all amount to nothing for Booth was dearest and best friend. J. W. Booth is now safe forever. He is by far over 500 miles from Washington with my friends with our company is yet over 800 strong in the dam Yankee states and will commence to operate very soon and will soon clean entirely the god dam sonofabitches Yankee government and of Washington & will rip you open soon the war is not yet over you may put that down book.

N. Q. of K of G C

Duly answer me

you sonofabitch

black heart

---

<sup>1</sup> The Latin motto of Virginia, "Thus always to tyrants." Booth shouted these words from the stage of Ford's Theatre after leaping from the Presidential Box.

**ANONYMOUS**

(2:845-47)

"A" 244 (JAO) 1865

Anonymous

14th May 1865

As it is the duty of all loyal members of the community to impart information to the authorities which may lead to disclose the plot for the assassination of our late President. I beg to inform you that from all I can learn the plan was concocted by Know Nothings<sup>1</sup> and spread widely till it imbued others not belonging to that body or to that portion of it at least called the Knights of the Golden Circle. Ford, nominal owner of the Theater was and is with Marshal Kane of Baltimore,<sup>2</sup> the head and front of the party, a party to which Ford and his Corporate offices in Baltimore and much of his patronage here. He went to Richmond on a flimsy insubstantial excuse to be out of the way.<sup>3</sup> These men obtained the State for Fillmore<sup>4</sup> and he true to his party and obedient to its secret behests, refused to drape his house in mourning but the enraged people bespotted it with ink. Booth and the elder Herold were of the same circle and order, as also one Geddes. Surratt and the late chief clerk of the sixth Auditors who published the K. N. organ in Baltimore, Atley formerly the Sec. of the Order here and assistant editor of Desponan Elliso paper, The Organ are all concerned more or less. The ticket seller<sup>5</sup> at the Theater who imputed Booth to do the work and around on the moment he did that he had done so and was watching for him through a small window in the parquette. The carpenter who forced the lock and made the peephole in the door.<sup>6</sup> The lamp cleaner; The ushers who left the theater that night before the first act was over and ignorant of many circumstances such as the reason the boxes opposite the President were left empty and closed and parties who were willing to pay for them refused.<sup>7</sup> They could give a great deal of information on the subject.

I cannot, for obvious reasons give my name. The dark [unintelligible word] party would have revenge.

---

<sup>1</sup> The American Party (Know-Nothing Party) formed in 1854 in opposition to immigrants, mostly Irish and German, and Roman Catholics. The party supported Millard Fillmore as president in 1856 and vied with the Republican Party for votes.

<sup>2</sup> George P. Kane, commissioner of police in Baltimore. Kane was an ardent supporter of the Confederacy. He was arrested in 1862, and after his release from prison he made his way to Canada, where he joined other Confederates, including Confederate agent Patrick Charles Martin, in plotting to free Confederate prisoners being held in the Union prison camp on Johnson's Island.

<sup>3</sup> John Ford was in Richmond on business at the time of the assassination. He later said that he did not learn of the assassination until Sunday, two days after it happened.

<sup>4</sup> Millard Fillmore was the American candidate for president in 1856.

<sup>5</sup> Joseph S. Sessford was the ticket seller (and taker) on the night of the assassination.

<sup>6</sup> James J. Gifford, the chief carpenter at Ford's Theatre. While most historians believe that Booth cut the hole in the door leading into the box, Frank Ford, the son of Harry Clay Ford, maintains that his father cut the hole to allow Lincoln's guard to view the president without having to open the door. This seems unlikely, because there is no evidence that Lincoln had a body guard posted in the vestibule leading into the Presidential Box.

<sup>7</sup> The boxes opposite the Presidential Box were not sold as a matter of policy on those nights when the president attended the theater.

**ANONYMOUS**

(2:848–50)

*“A” 246 (JAO) 1865*

Anonymous

New York, May 13th 1865

To the honorable Secretary Stanton or A. Johnson

My dear Sir,

I notice that you have ordered the body of Booth that brave man to be thrown in the middle of the Potomac River<sup>1</sup> and you have also his head and heart in a museum. Why have you. Then and there answer me that, if not I will tell you. Because he was a brave man. It was the best thing ever was done. For Lincoln was a plague to the country. It ought to have happened 4 years ago. With him and his niggers and for Corbett who shot Booth, if ever I see him his life is short and I am well acquainted with the officers who sunk Booth's body. May the Lord have mercy on Booth's soul, Amen  
Publish this if you like for I wish you would.

**ANONYMOUS**

(2:851–52)

*“A” 247 (JAO) 1865*

Anonymous

Edwin M. Stanton

Secretary of War

Sir,

Let me direct your attention to Document 38 of the 1st volume of the Rebellion Record, 1860–61 (published by G. P. Putnam New York) giving an account of Mr. Lincoln's journey from Philadelphia to Washington in February 1861 and of the plot to assassinate him at that time.<sup>2</sup> Perhaps the account may be useful in the trial which is now going on, and afford hints and clues.

Probably, all the facts contained in the Document are already known to you, but I have thought it my duty to bring the account to your notice.

New York, May 11

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<sup>1</sup> Lafayette C. Baker, head of the National Detective Police (secret service) staged a fake burial of Booth's body by dumping a weighted sack into the Potomac River. Booth's body was placed in a wooden gun box and buried beneath the floor of the deputy warden's quarters in the Washington Arsenal.

<sup>2</sup> There was a plot to assassinate Lincoln in Baltimore on his stopover en route to Washington. The plot was thwarted when Allen Pinkerton convinced Lincoln to alter his schedule, and the president thus passed through Baltimore nine hours earlier than originally planned.

**ANONYMOUS**

(2:879–81)

*"A" 258 (JAO) 1865*

Anonymous

Hon. E. M. Stanton

Secretary of War

My dear Sir,

I may be mistaken but I think the following persons are more or less in the secret of the murder of our late President: Isaiah Rindery, James Brooks, August Belmont, Fernando Wood, Benjamin Wood, George B. McClellan, John H. McCun, John H. Pendleton, Valindingham, C. C. Burr, Thos. Seymour, Horatio Seymour.<sup>1</sup> The wife of the editor of the New York Daily News told the daughter of Mr. Hooper, looking glass manufacturer in Nassau NY near Arm St. that she was glad when she heard of the President's death and that she would like to have his brains made up into soup. I do not know the husband's name but it can easily be found out by making the inquiry. I would not be surprised if M. L. L. Barlow knew something about it. McClellan and Wood who are in Europe intended to be absent at the consummation, and I have no doubt but that the conspirators in order to clear Davis from all agency in the plot would if their plans were carried out, declare for McClellan to be President after the manner of South American Republics and further, Belmont made a bet that the war would not be closed during Mr. Lincoln's administration. He went to Europe with McClellan and he is by marriage a connection of Slidell. It is most likely that he told him of the plan. It is said that he intends to reside in Europe. It would be no harm to subpoena the Jew, as that would probably hurry his exit. I of course, omit the Canada Rebels, as that is well known. When I come to Washington, I will call on you and if possible confirm some of my statements. I withhold my name, because as you would see the propriety of it, fearing that it possibly might get into the hands of some of your subalterns; and the names I have mentioned, some of them, would inflict the same on me as on Mr. Lincoln. Suffice it to say, I know most of the parties for a number of years. When the war first commenced, Rinders made a speech saying he hoped that any Northerens that went to interfere with the South, he hoped their bones would be bleached on Southern soil. I trust you will see the propriety of my secrecy.

New York, May 5, 1865—If you think this information of any service to you, take the names but destroy the letter, not, from any fear, but assassins are not to be trusted.

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<sup>1</sup> The list of names reflects a group of Northern Democrats who opposed the war as well as Lincoln and his policies. Such persons were called Copperheads, a derogatory name equating them with the venomous snake.

**ANONYMOUS**

(2:923-24)

*"A" 271 (JAO) 1865*

Anonymous

Hon. E. M Stanton

Dear Sir,

I wrote you a few days since giving some names that I thought were engaged in the murder of our late beloved President. Since then I have learned something further. Fitz John Porter,<sup>1</sup> who swore vengeance against you in New York, McClellan's friend, also the Doctor Tumblety, who was lately arrested in St. Louis; the yellow fever poisoner;<sup>2</sup> he was on Gen. McClellan's staff under another name. I believe I see Belmont and Barlow have given money to the nurse of Mr. Seward with several other good Union men, for his rescuing Mr. Seward from the assassin, Payne. This is a mere blind. When Rinders who got up the riots in New York applied to the city government for a guard to protect his house from his own friends, it was a mere dodge and the people thought so at the time. I mention this as a parallel to Belmont and Barlow. You were one of the victims to be sacrificed. I have no doubt and you can draw your own conclusions how far it would have extended if, as Payne says, it was badly managed. God only knows.

Truly,

Union

May 9, 1865

**ANONYMOUS**

(2:933-35)

*"A" 276 (JAO) 1865*

Anonymous

Hon. Edwin M. Stanton

Sir,

Being most desirous of having justice meted out to the foul conspirators in the murder of our beloved President, yet declining any publicity for myself in connection with the trial.

I have to give you a few hints (which if properly used) will not fail to develop some strange facts which I think the government has not yet dreamed of.

The poison administered to Andrew Johnson on the 4th of March was Hashish.<sup>3</sup> (A preparation of the Indian hemp)

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<sup>1</sup> Major General Fitz John Porter. A Union Army general who was tried by court-martial for disloyalty and disobedience. Found guilty, he was dismissed from the army. He was later exonerated and reinstated on army rolls in 1886.

<sup>2</sup> The writer confuses Luke P. Blackburn, "the yellow fever fiend," with Francis Tumblety, the "Indian Herb Doctor."

<sup>3</sup> Andrew Johnson appeared intoxicated at his inauguration as vice president on March 4, 1865. He was apparently recovering from a mild case of typhoid fever and had taken a drink of brandy to fortify himself. His speech was slurred and incoherent, leading many to conclude that he was drunk.

Have your witnesses closely examined as to what transpired previous to George B. McClellan's<sup>1</sup> departure for Europe, and how far "Little Mac" was engaged in this horrid tragedy; let no one know that you have received this letter, for my life would not be worth a straw if it was known I gave you one breath of suspicion of this latter party. I would to God I could speak out boldly, but I dare not for the sake of those dear to me. I can only pray that right may triumph, and all will be well.

**ANONYMOUS**

(2:952-53)

*"A" 285 (JAO) 1865*

Anonymous

New York, May 10th 1865

Hon. Edwin M. Stanton (Sec. of War)

Sir,

The writer has information that a certain person residing in New York City, a rebel sympathizer & one who rejoices in the death of our late lamented President might know something of this conspiracy & no doubt, but one of the leaders in this city. If he is immediately arrested & taken to Old Capitol prison, parties will come forward & testify. He must have no chance to leave orders or memorandums for his friends to get hold of, but should be taken off on the instant. The name of this individual is "L. W. Maries" proprietor of a gymnasium No 20 St. Marketplace. NY

He is a dangerous man to be at large and it is the earnest wish of many that this man may be arrested & taken to Old Capitol forthwith. The writer will not sign his name, but when this person is in Old Capitol will come forward & show himself.

**ANONYMOUS**

(2:977-78)

*"A" 297 (JAO) 1865*

Anonymous

Baltimore, May 7th

Hon. E. M. Stanton

Sir,

I must inform you of a man by the name of Theadore Lache, a lithographer of Baltimore living on 196 Montgomery Street, between Charles and Hanover.

This man said to a friend of mine that there would happen something in this country that the whole world would be astonished. This was said two weeks before our beloved President's death.

Gentleman that told me is the most reliable person in the city and this Lache is the greatest rebel. I know he say now yet the rebel confederacy is not

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<sup>1</sup> Major General George B. McClellan, former commander of the Army of the Potomac. McClellan became the presidential candidate of the Democratic Party in the 1864 election.



lost yet and denounces the government. This Lache is a friend of mine so I am doing this secret. Myself and the gentleman that told me of him we want to keep quiet, not leave him know who did it.

Your Obedient servant,  
Union [illegible]

**ANONYMOUS**

(2:978–81)

"A" 299 (JAO) 1865

Anonymous

Alexandria, May 17th 1865

Mr. Stanton

Last night near the roundhouse I overheard a conversation between two men, which I will give you, hoping that it may lead to the detection of some more of the murderers of the President. The one man was a tall man about 6 feet with dark looking whiskers; the other the same height but stouter with mustache. I heard them say that if Sergeant Foster had not failed in bringing the horses or sending them beyond the Seminary, they could easily have had them at the river before Booth crossed. From what I could learn this sergeant is, I think, in the army near Alexandria and I think he is connected with the quartermaster Department or I heard them say something about attending to the commissary and from what I heard I think he is still near this place. My name I withhold on account of my family and I fear none of them would give any such information if they knew ten times as much hoping this may be of some service to you I will sign myself,

A Union Woman

R. S.

P. S. I think if that sergeant is caught he could give some important information that would lead to the arrest of some that should not be running at large in this place.

**ANONYMOUS**

(2:983–85)

"A" 301 (JAO) 1865

Anonymous

14th May, 1865

Andrew Johnson

President United States

By your infamous bribe, the hirelings of your government have captured President Davis.<sup>1</sup> He is in your power; in no idle spirit of threatening I say to you, Chief Magistrate of the United States, beware of how you exercise that power.

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<sup>1</sup> Federal cavalry captured Confederate president Jefferson Davis near Irwinville, Georgia. Davis was taken to Fort Monroe, Virginia, where he was kept prisoner for two years until his release on May 13, 1867.

Mr. Davis is in no way responsible for the death of your predecessor nor is he responsible for what you call the Rebellion. His part in it has been the servant of the people, of whom I am one. He was made so by their will and that will would today uphold him if untrammelled by your horde of bayonets. It had upheld him to the death of the noblest and bravest men the world ever saw. The few remaining would still give their lives for the cause; which he has so nobly and conscientiously sustained and many (I for one) would give their lives for his and I will if his is taken. You dare not hang that man! Do so, and your life shall be the forfeit. Guarded at every step as your craven life is, It will not always be so. There will come the time when you think even the spirit of our people is crushed and exterminated, as are our rights, and you have nothing to fear from a rebellion so dead and buried. For that time I will watch and wait, with a resolve as firm & fixed as the Heavens, to avenge my President and my country, with my life as the sacrifice. From this purpose your hanging of the alleged "conspirators" and a hundred times that number will not intimidate or turn me.

Pro Patria et Preside

**ANONYMOUS**

(2:998–99)

"A" 306 (JAO) 1865

Anonymous

Honorable sir,

Since you have had the reins of the government in your hands you have not been long in showing yourself a monster, a despot.

I shall hold you to a strict accountability for the lives of David E Herold and Michael O'Laughlin who are innocent men and I defy you to prove them otherwise. My motto is Sic Semper Tyrannis

I am I C Pro bono publico

To Hon. Andrew Johnson

**ANONYMOUS**

(2:1000–1005)

"A" 307 (JAO) 1865

Anonymous

Columbia, May the 13th 1865

Mr. A. Johnson

Tak this I will not burn you but will be a good friend to you in those words. I understand that there is three young men that has lusty filings against the President of the U.S. that is A. Johnson. I can learn that from them that Mr. Johnson will die not in his bed. So far as I am able to learn from them the name of one is Lew Walls. Was the name he told me the other two is Jenney Collens and William Daum, as I learn by being in Nashville on the 6 of May being in company with them in the saloon on Church St. I had had great convers with them but I am not able to learn how they wer nor how they is but well address in

fine class. I went out on the Tenn. and Ala. Road. Whare I belong to Columbia and I see two of them in Columbia had shake hands with them ask them was whare they war going. They said that they was going to Huntsville, Ala. What is you going to do thar. one of our friends lives and we is going to east Troy in NY I am not the great time with them.

Mr. A. Johnson, I ask a young officer at the dikes in Columbia how I wood send a letter to you and he told me but said What is it you want of him & not anything P. T. Well he had it in his had that would shine lake the moon.

John McLaughlin

I am not able to give you all right by pen but [unintelligible] down.

A. Johnson not one or two everybody and the will wack officers cannot hear anything.

Mr. Johnson I am a young man that come to U.S. in 1839 on the 14 of Aug.

I hope for you with all the power that is in my body.

I will give you what dis one they ask me what St. I was from. I told them that I belong south so that was plenty you and me you no then.

Could give you all but I am to work on the bridges every day on the road. If they is any power to be but on the earth, Walls will give A. Johnson his supper some night.

John McLaughlin

I am not able to do as I ought.

This won't mean any thing

Post office Columbia

I will find it.

I thought I would tell you about these lads.

Mr. A. Johnson, you will pleas to keep in this for the peple in Nashville wood no that I mak you wise they wood shoot me this is so I no it.

**ANONYMOUS**

(2:1006-7)

"A" 308 (JAO) 1865

Anonymous

May 12, 1865

Mr. Jonston [*sic*],

There is a plot formed in Philadelphia to poison you. If you will send your detectives there and arrest them and if they ask any questions tell them not to answer them. In the plot they is concerned in it is as follows. It is to be secret. G. Hartenstun, H Leonhardt, E. Fisher, H. C. Durst arrest him particular. Who is a gone to make the poison. Arrest them on Monday morning 7 ½ o'clock at 48 S. 4th St.

Yours truly,

A friend

**ANONYMOUS**

(2:1048-51)

*"A" 319 (JAO) 1865*

Anonymous

Envelope: Address: Colonel, M. S. "Ret"  
Tremont

Dear Colonel

I have got things pretty nearly completed, Sall has got the fruit put up. The apple is marked with the compliments of a lady as Old Chase likes nice things and coming from a lady of ensure he will take it. One mouthful will send the cuss over Jordan. Bill had on his female attire last night, it was quite becoming to him. How are you getting along. Will you get ready this week? Wont Old Mass Grace think if her two nigger worshipers go under, it is time they went to find their nigger President.

Meet me tomorrow night at the usual place.

I send this by Dan, as I hear that the dam black abolitionists open all of the letters now.

Farewell until we meet

Dff

Sam

**ANONYMOUS (J.S.R.)**

(2:1065-67)

*"R" 325 (JAO) 1865*

Anonymous

Envelope: No address: N.B. This letter is from no office seeker, but from a friend of President Johnson; and the subject matter, though of pressing immediate importance to the President, is of strictly a private character, and must be opened by the President himself and not one else. His private secretary will please deliver without a moments delay.

(2:1068-71)

*"A" 325 (JAO) 1865*

Anonymous

P. S. not knowing but your own private secretary may be a catholic, I have taken the precaution to enclose in a double envelope.

New York May 20th 1865

My beloved Brother &amp; Honored President,

Beware of the Military Pageants of Tuesday & Wednesday next!<sup>1</sup>


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<sup>1</sup> The "military pageant" refers to the Grand Review of the Union Army during May 23-24.

Beware of Stanton (who is a Jesuit)<sup>1</sup> and of his Jesuit coadjutors (and ^yet not all perhaps^ co-conspirators) Weed, and Seward and Meade, and Ord and Sherman and Gillmon and Schofield and Halleck.

Though seeming enemies to each other, Stanton & Halleck & Sherman (and Fremont too) are Jesuit friends and brothers in a wicked cause.

Again, I implore you, for God's sake, for our Country's sake, beware!

Not you alone, my beloved and honored brother, but Grant and Chase; beg them, too, Beware!

Grant is their dupe, but Chase, thank God, is not; at least I do not think he is, or has been.

Do not, I beseech you, expose yourself to the assassin's bullet, or the "friendly "poisoned cup" or viands on those days, and so, leave our country's destinies in the hands of plotting Jesuits who ^will^ hold the army in their grips when Grant is murdered, and who even today wield ^almost^ supreme authority, in nearly every military department in the nation, as well as ^at^ its head of almost every army and army corps.

Could the secret archives of ^the catholic^ archbishopric of New York this diocese be seized, together with the private papers of the Jesuit Bennett of the N. Y. Herald,<sup>2</sup> and of the heads of the War and State departments at Washington, they would ^not only^ furnish the clue to the Jesuit conspiracy which now in a nuo form threatens to overwhelm our democratic institutions in the very hour of our country's victory, but they would also expose to view the details of other plots ^included together the War Departments treachery to our starving captives^, which during the past four years have been defeated by Almighty God through the unexampled & unexpected patriotism of a betrayed people.

It would disclose the Jesuitical mainspring of our foreign diplomacy, which sung a "lullaby" to Mexico, whilst proffering to the aristocratic assassins of Europe a foothold within her borders. It would do more; It would demonstrate the fact to all who yet require demonstration that the "slave holders rebellion", so called, was instigated, fomented and controlled by the secret power of Jesuitism, exerted through the confessions and the bullet, the lobby and the legislature, the executive and the judiciary, the army & the navy, "the north" and "the south", and that this heaven protected people have marched steady on to victory over the bloody battlefield of the past four years, even under the treacherous political and (too often) military leadership of the secret Jesuit allies of their ^armed &^ open enemies.

Our darkest hour is yet to come. Would to God, that you had summoned Congress to meet, if not for legislative deliberation, then ^at least^ as a safeguard to yourself and the nation against this threatened terrible emergency, now alas, some imminent.

\*\*Beware the military pageant of the coming week.

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<sup>1</sup> Stanton was baptized and raised in the Methodist church.

<sup>2</sup> James Gorden Bennett, editor of the New York *Herald*. Although Bennett supported the war once it began, he did not support Lincoln in either the 1860 or 1864 elections.

Consider for one moment: Yourself, Grant, and our beloved chief justice assassinated. The Judiciary (even such as it then will be) effectually silenced by the Jesuitary contrived precedents of needless the past four years of needless, yea, damaging executive usurpation through the military arm; the army, navy and State Department in the hands of Jesuit conspirators and then ^powerfully &^ effectually supported by their perhaps more innocent, yet religiously obedient military protégés of the catholic faith in civil and military authority; the patriot, millions bewildered and deceived back as to the perpetrators and their motive, and the “radical” portion, ^white & black^, perchance turning to the already cut-and-dried ^Jesuit^, “radical Fremont” as their ^political^ champion and military leader; ^The Jesuit^ Stanton, ^just^ freshly endorsed by Grant, himself through the committee on the conduct of the war whose [illegible] report Stanton’s ability etc. appears in this morning’s papers. Seward ^with^ his “bell”<sup>1</sup> new tongued, rendered more audaciously confident than ever, by reason of his “crown of martyrdom” so recently received in the “cause of the Union”; and with their powerful co-conspirators in Europe, both Jesuit and “Protestant” crowned and titled aristocrats who today are vigilantly waiting their expected signal to strike home at the very heart of the monster heresy “Democracy”. More, oh where shall this betrayed people turn for salvation. O, God! But to thee, the all powerful, all-wise, all-merciful dispenser of the destiny of nations?\*\*\*

I ask you to show this letter of warning to Chief Justice Chase and to Gen. Grant, whom I love; that who I know has been duped into advancing into positions of military authority catholic generals whose sole secret of success has been that they have not, as have Protestant Generals, been systematically thwarted by the War Department, as well as by their own subordinate officers. Beware of the Military Pageant! Veritas,

**ANONYMOUS**

(2:1137–39)

“A” 347 (JAO) 1865

Anonymous

Envelope: Postmark New York, May 15, Address; E. M. Stanton Sec. of War, Washington City, DC “Private”

New York, May 15, 1865

E. M. Stanton Esq.

Sec. of War

Dear sir,

The writer has information, which makes him feel very confident that Gen. McClellan, A. Belmont, Fernando Wood, Charles H. Haswell, and Jeremiah Laroque were all cognizant of the conspiracy to murder President Lincoln,

<sup>1</sup> For the first eight months of the war, Seward was in charge of the government’s program to arrest disloyal persons in the North. He kept a bell on his desktop that he used to summon his clerk, leading to the story that Seward need only ring his little bell to have any citizen arrested.

yourself, and Sec. Seward. These parties I learn through a servant in Belmont's employ were all together at a supper at Belmont's house with J. Wilkes Booth in November last.

**ANONYMOUS**

(2:1173-77)

"A" 355 (JAO) 1865

Anonymous

Envelope: postmark New York May 15, Address Hon. E. M. Stanton, Secretary War, Washington DC Private

History of the Assassination New York May 13, 1865

President, Vice President, Secretary of War, Navy, Interior, Treasury, Post office, Secretary of State; S. P. Chase, Lt. General Grant and some others that do not now occur to the writer were to be killed, on a certain day or a few days after the time when the work commenced. Sherman to have command jointly with Lee and they were to be military dictators for the time being. The army to declare for McClellan and Pendleton, and a deputation to be sent to Europe for McClellan. The 4th March was the time the plot was to culminate, but fell through on a want of a united want of action. Belmont and Wood were to be in Europe; Belmont returned after the 4th March supposing the plot had been consummated. Wood was to remain in Europe. It was understood that Davis was to resign all claim for the Presidency and in his place McClellan was to be President to appease the North. All United States and Confederate debts was to be merged in a new loan, interest to be 4 pct. Slavery was to be guaranteed to the south in the states that slavery existed before the war, but all the slaves lost during the war was to be a loss to the owners without any redress to the new government. The Dred Scott decision was to be reenacted and the District of Columbia was to be free; 15 cents per lb. on tobacco & cotton was to be laid on export, and 10 pct on home consumption, the public lands were to be free to settlers of soldiers and \$1.50 per acre to others. All confiscated property was to be given back to the original owners and the mineral lands, now owned by individuals was to be repossessed and the new government was to pay the debts in part from that source. I do not recollect the other items, but the following were in part in the plot: Davis, Stevens, Hunter, Breckinridge, Mallory, Trenholm, Lee, Johnson, Wigfall, Vance, Brown, Harris (of Ten) Moore, Smith of Va., Wise, the two Wood (of New York), Rinders Valindingham, Sanders, Tucker, Clay, Mason, Slidell, McClellan, Pendleton, Pugh, Belmont, Ciscoe, Brooks, Fitz John Porter, Soulie, Ewell, Tousey, Salisbury, Kirk, Smith, Powell, Ould Hatch Morse Barlow, Fillmore, Pierce, Buchanan, Carrington, All the Governors of the slave states and many others that not now occur to the writer.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Like so many wild conspiracy theorists, this writer gives no source for his seeming facts of a wide conspiracy.

**ANONYMOUS**

(3:208-9)

*"A" 431 (JAO) 1865*

Anonymous

Washington May 30th 1865

Mr. President,

I think the ladies ought to be excluded from the trial of the conspirators. It appears in this city they are admitted into every place. It has a demoralizing effect upon women and the court. There is every effort being made by the Catholics, no matter how heinous the crime committed by one of their members to clear this damn harlot and assassin, the ringleader of this cutthroat band, Surratt from the law. The loyal people demand of you the hanging of the whole crew as an example for the future, and then we will have no more Presidents murdered. We have good laws in this country but the great trouble is they are seldom put in execution. Let us in this great crisis show to the world that America and Andrew Johnson are in earnest in punishing traitors and assassins, and my word for it we will have no more rebellions or assassinations.

A Loyal Virginian

**ANONYMOUS**

(3:215-16)

*"A" 434 (JAO) 1865*

Anonymous

May 29/65

E. M. Stanton

Secretary of war,

Dear Sir,

In the act of Blackburn's<sup>1</sup> villainy to spread the yellow fever & I notice the name of one Myres,<sup>2</sup> a sutler as connected with peddling the fever business. I am very well acquainted with a man by the name of G. L. Myres, who has been a sutler a length of time in the Potomac army & a rank copperhead. After leaving the sutler business he was foreman in the manufactory of Browns in Annapolis Maryland. But his home is in Wellsburg N.Y. 6 miles east of Elmira. Thinking that possibly the above information might be of some use I send it. Claiming to be a well-wisher to the cause of truth, justice & freedom. Yours, In loyalty

R. C. B.

PS could get my communication addressed R. C. B. Williamsport, Pa.

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<sup>1</sup> Luke Pryor Blackburn.

<sup>2</sup> No such person is known to have been associated with Blackburn and his "yellow fever plot."



**ANONYMOUS**

(3:281–83)

*“A” 455 (JAO) 1865*

Anonymous

Philadelphia, June 5, 1865

To the Hon. Ed Stanton

Kind sir, there is some of the conspirators here in the city making there bost of having accomplit som of there plot—three of them was arrested the tenth of last October and taken before one of the alderman in this city—it was to have bin sent to cort for trial but Mr. J. Cline was afraid tha would be fond out before they got there with some of ther plot so he paid the alderman to say tha could not be held for trial, so tha were discharg—now they are laughing how nice they got off—Hennery White is policeman. William Shaffner, Eveline B. Beach; these are the one that was arrested last fall—tha are Booth frends, when he bording in Chestnut Street below Tenth St.

Lew Beach 131 Regiment New York VO, George Miller, Pheba Walker, Martha Toglas, Mrs. John Rapp, Ann Rutter; these are all the helpers of Booth and meny others whos names I have not heard. Tha have been watching me. Tha have intercepted my letters. Tha have threaten to shoot me or murder me in som way or other if I ever complain of them—ther has bin mor put to deth then the publick is aware of and more will be put to death if these men and woman left run at large—as soon as tha are arrested I will tell all I know and will point the others out—you will then know my name.

Yours Truly

**ANONYMOUS**

(3:294–96)

*“A” 461 (JAO) 1865*

Anonymous

Endorsement: Can you recognize the hand?

The President                      Canada June 1/65

US Am

Sir,

If you attempt to do anything unbecoming the justice of the free country over which you rule to either Jeff Davis or General Lee, I swear that your life as well as others will be the penalty we of Canada will exact. I will shoot you & others and will not run as my poor friend Booth did. This is true; it is a shame after taking their parole you arrest them for treason; disgrace to the North that they should not act honorably. Be just; be merciful; & your reward will be hereafter.

A Southerner for life.

**ANONYMOUS**

(3:383–87)

*"A" 496 (JAO) 1865*

Anonymous

Seaford, Del. May 30th 1865

I write to you on a subject that I want light on. Please have it attended to. We have a family here, residing in our town by the name of "Martin", one of whom is a young lawyer by the name of Edward L. He has been convicted already in the US Circuit Court in this District for aiding the Rebellion and sentenced to pay \$1000 fine, and not to ever hold any office of honor or profit under the U. States Government. The father is intensely disloyal. He (E. L.) has a brother, a doctor, who was in the early part of he rebellion sent over the lines for disloyalty and has not yet returned; While he has still another brother who has been engaged during the war in blockade running, etc. etc. If you will refer to the published proceedings of the Court Martial now going on in your city against the assassins, you will find that in the proceeding published on Saturday last, the testimony of "John C. Thompson" of Charles Co. Md. in which he speaks of a letter of introduction to Dr. Queen by a man by the name of "Martin" in Montreal, Canada.

Now this E. L. Martin was in Canada about October or November last. It is said with an ex Governor of this state by the name of Wm. H. Ross, a notorious Rebel, who ran away in the early part of the rebellion and has not yet returned. He left about the time that the telegraphic dispatches were taken charge of by the Government.

We believe here that the "Martin" alluded to is the same E. L. Martin of our town.<sup>1</sup>

**ANONYMOUS**

(3:462–68)

*"A" 519 (JAO) 1865*

Anonymous

Letterhead: Union League Club, Union Square, (No. 26 East Seventeenth Street) New York, June 10th 1865

Sir,

I have been consulted today by an ardent friend of the government and yourself in regard to the case of treason and Court martial with a view of communicating with you. I cannot imagine, however that the views I communicated to him would be other than those familiar to yourself and on that subject I only hope you and the President will be firm and energetic in a purpose to try all villains by a military court.

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<sup>1</sup> The writer is mistaken. The man who gave Booth a letter of introduction to Drs. Queen and Mudd of Charles County, Maryland, is Patrick Charles Martin, a Confederate blockade-runner and secret service agent operating from Montreal. Martin was an agent of the Confederate Treasury Department.

Being consulted upon this subject, it has occurred to me that I might give you some clue by which you could obtain important testimony.

### Developments

The family of Philips, Davis, Cohen & Levy all related & originally from Richmond know a great deal about the secret history of the Rebellion. Mrs. H. Davis was an intimate friend of Gov. Bower of Mississippi and Gov. Brown & Jeff D. were not very friendly towards the finale. I think Brown could prove that Jeff ordered the cruelties to our prisoners & he might prove other things. The Cohen's have a brother, a Capt. or Lieut. in the Marine Corps.

These Cohen's were from Norfolk and the two girls strong friends of secession. They knew intimately a Capt. Montgomery who fought with Jeff in the first battle of Bull's Run. He was afterwards taken prisoner and escaped. I saw him on the ground here on the celebration of our capture of Charleston. He was Irish. I think he was on detached service. I don't know where he is now but the Cohen's would be apt to know.

Mr. Edward Fry connected with the Tribune, an invalid, knows all these parties and would be glad to give you all the information in his power. In fact it is as from him I took the idea of communicating with you added to my great anxiety to have these base scoundrels punished with death in some form for all the blood & sorrow brought upon the country.

George Davis is a brother (& loyal) of Ben Davis of Richmond or Petersburg. He would tell you all he knows. He resides in New York and if you think this clue worth anything or worth pursuing you can find out all the threads by writing either to Jno. C. Hamilton Esq., Major Gen. H. father in law is Mr. Fry as before stated. H. H. Goodman ~~And J. M. Guthrie~~ or John S. Dickerson Esq.

Should you hand this letter to Major L. C. Turner, Judge Advocate,<sup>1</sup> he can surely telegram who is the author by the words "Robt. P. Campbell Key West" J. C. Knight Curtin.

I believe the proof can be obtained to prove that Jeff ordered the cruelty to our prisoners and that being clearly a violation of the laws of war, a court martial clearly has jurisdiction. The fact that the war is over is no reason why Jeff should not be tried before a court martial. Greeley & all his class of minds ought not to move you. He has lost his influence for good & can only go now with those who were disloyal, not that he is exactly disloyal, but that he is weak.

B. of the H. who was once really disloyal is now strong and right. The Post is not to be trusted and the Times does not yet know positively what is right or expedient. The rest of the press, of course, you do not regard.

Respectfully

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<sup>1</sup> Levi C. Turner, judge advocate of the Union Army. Turner was involved in investigating the Knights of the Golden Circle and other subversive organizations. After the war Turner's papers, along with those of Lafayette C. Baker, were arranged and indexed by the Bureau of Military Justice in Record Group 94 and are known as the Turner-Baker Papers.

**ANONYMOUS**

(3:469-70)

*"A" 520 (JAO) 1865*

Anonymous

Philadelphia, June 11, 1865

Honorable Edwin M. Stanton

Sir, Do not think that the plotting is over. I warned General Peck<sup>1</sup> of this last fall in New York and now I warn your honorable self. It is the Roman Catholics to which I belong that is trying to overthrow this government. They will strike another blow. Be on your guard. If I were known to do this I would be slaughtered to death in the most horrid form but God being my helper I will watch for you and tell you all.

From a true Roman Catholic; one that expects to stand at the judgment seat of Christ without the help of priest or virgin only through the blood of my redeemer.

**ANONYMOUS**

(3:482-84)

*"A" 524 (JAO) 1865*

Anonymous

State of Indiana,

May 20, 1865

Secretary of War,

It seems strange that while so many startling events are crowding upon each other and many evil persons are under arrest awaiting their merited punishment, one of the most prominent and active participants has been so long overlooked. I refer to Capt. T. H. Hines of Kentucky, who was part of Morgan's robbers and the same who engineered that notorious raider out of Columbus Penitentiary. It is a well known fact that said Hines has for several months past been operating through the northwestern states as secret agent and ^rebel^ spy with his headquarters in Toronto, Canada,<sup>2</sup> under assumed names, one of which is Hunter & perhaps Dr. Davis & others. It is a notorious fact in the west that he was a prominent one among the Sons of Liberty and was the instigator of the contemplated raid on Chicago and anticipated release of the rebel prisoners at Camp Douglass. I have heard an escaped prisoner say that he had seen him in the prison as a visitor arranging the plan for their concerted action. He was in

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<sup>1</sup> Major General John James Peck. In July 1864 Peck was placed in command of the Canadian frontier in the Department of the East.

<sup>2</sup> In March 1864 Thomas H. Hines, a captain serving with John Hunt Morgan's raiders, was sent to Canada to organize the Order of American Knights into a paramilitary operation in the northwestern region of the United States. Part of this operation called for freeing the Confederate prisoners being held in Camp Douglas near Chicago.

New York at the time of burning the hotels<sup>1</sup> and was no doubt a party to if not originator of that scheme and in him you will doubtless find the author of the letter found by a lady in the streetcars in New York.<sup>2</sup> He was present acting with and the born companion of Geo. Sanders, Thompson<sup>3</sup> & others in the Niagara Falls peace overtures last fall. It is supposed he has all the time been in communication with the rebels at Richmond while in Canada and was no doubt one of the chief actors in the horrid plot which resulted in the assassination of our lamented President. H. figured extensively on the streets of Chicago during the setting of the convention last summer and was recognized by many acquaintances. He is now in Canada somewhere in the western border ready for any incursion in some of the states; while other rascals are receiving their dues let not this guilty one escape. I am told he opened his rebel career by arresting three of his neighbors, and keeping two of them in jail for two years without even a form of trial. He was the leader of rebel raid first made north of the Ohio river into the border counties of this state.

Look him up and let him have justice. I give no name for prudential reasons but the facts can and will be established whenever necessary to do so.

Union.

**ANONYMOUS**

(3:486-87)

"A" 526 (JAO) 1865

Anonymous

Washington April 21, 1865

General Augur

In every house from the Old Capitol to the tollgate on Maryland Avenue should be searched. There is a John Wilson lived in the South some time ago. He resorts his sister, Mrs. Connolly on 9 or 10 St. near the gate. I think he is a spy. There is a great many suspicious characters resorts the house on Sunday nights. His father lives fourteen miles in Prince George County likely a resort for Rebels.

A Citizen

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<sup>1</sup> Among the many plots hatched by the Confederate operation in Canada was the burning of certain Northern cities, including New York City. While attempts were made and fires were started, none of the attempts succeeded.

<sup>2</sup> Mrs. Mary Hudspeth claimed to have found a letter on a New York streetcar calling for Lincoln's assassination. She testified as a witness for the prosecution (PW, Poore I:25, Pitman, 39).

<sup>3</sup> Jacob Thompson and Clement C. Clay were in charge of the Confederate secret service operations in Canada. George Nicholas Sanders was an agent working under Thompson.

**ANONYMOUS**

(3:531-34)

*"A" 536 (JAO) 1865*

Anonymous

Endorsement: Probably important

Phila. Pa. April 16th 1865

My dearest Jeddie,

Since you left me I have spent my hours very lonely. On Saturday morning I heard of the assassination of the president old Abe; My next fear was that they probably caught the men that did it. The paper gave a full account of all. I saw that your name was not mentioned in the party, yet I know you had the managing of some of it. The report is that they caught the murderer, but I guess it is not true. They are not smart enough for that. You told me when you left that you was going to get Grant too but you missed it. He didn't happen to be there. However, you got old Abe out of the [unintelligible] and you can watch your chance for Grant. Ed was here this morning and he said that he thought Grant would visit this city and he says that they are on the lookout for the best chance, almost every house in the city is draped in mourning everybody seems to be so sorry and of course I must act like the rest does here in the house or they would say I was Secesh but they don't know me sure. Sallie and her man is going up to Camp Cadwalader this morning. He knows a fellow up there. I am going to walk along to what I can see. I will probably write more when I come back. I have to go out anyhow to get some envelopes. Ed says that two of the boys would come to Washington between this and Thursday. He says keep quiet as possible, as he thinks everything is all right. I will mail this when I come back from [unintelligible]. So it will go tonight or tomorrow eve. You just ought to see how the Yankees mourn for the loss of old Abe. If you can only get yours yet Jeddie my dear I will write more when I get back this afternoon and kill them all if you can; bully for Booth; he is all right.

**ANONYMOUS "T. E."**

(3:572-73)

*"A" 543 (JAO) 1865*

Anonymous "T. E."

19th April

John,

I take the present opportunity to write you a few lines. I am well today but there are so many rumors that we are all unhappy. I hope you may be able to get to N.Y. as there would be more room for you. I saw Mary off yesterday. The things were sent as you requested. Thru Mr. F. I have been trying to find where H. went but cannot yet. I was at the White House on Tuesday, the old tyrant looked very natural.

I shall send this by Jim as he is the only one whom the detectives would not suspect. Send me a reply by him and tell me if you will try to go to N.Y. this

week. I think you had better keep still for a few days, as you know your head is not worth much if they ever get you. Hoping you may get out of this place soon, I remain

Your Friend,  
T. E.

**ANONYMOUS (TO J. W. BOOTH)**

(3:581-84)

"A" 546 (JAO) 1865

Anonymous to J. W. Booth

Envelope: Postmark N.Y. 17th April '65, Address From his mother to J. W.

Booth National Hotel, Washington DC

New York, April 10th 1865

To J. W. Booth,<sup>1</sup>

Dear,

I have sent word to Harry to be on the watch for Seward. He has changed his name, his first name to James. You watch the box book of Ford's theater. Laura Keene<sup>2</sup> being a great favorite there, there is no doubt but the President and acquaintances will wish to see her performance. Do it either way. Let me know if you got the pistol. Be careful that Laura does not see you as she has a deadly hatred to me and you have the thing fixed different among the other actors. George has the plan fixed for the Secretary and for Stanton.

If the four are assassinated our wrongs are avenged. I am all right about my victim. I could have killed him a week ago, but I am waiting for yours. We had a meeting the other night. I was elected Captain of the gang. There is one man to every one in the Cabinet. I shall see you in a few days. I shall board near Johnson's house.<sup>3</sup> I have wrote on the back of the envelope from your mother for fear of detection.

We are all armed

Yours Truly

T. I. O. S.

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<sup>1</sup> The date of this letter predates the assassination, while the postmark is three days after.

<sup>2</sup> Laura Keene, a famous stage actress who starred in her own benefit performance at Ford's Theatre the night of the assassination.

<sup>3</sup> Refers to Vice President Andrew Johnson, who was staying at the Kirkwood House located at Twelfth Street and Pennsylvania Avenue.

**ANONYMOUS**

(3:590-91)

*"A" 548 (JAO) 1865*

Anonymous  
 Washington DC  
 April 17th, 1865

Gen. Augur,

Sir,

I'm still in your midst. I will remain in this city.

God will'd that I should do it.

I defy detection

J. W. Booth

Actor and the Assassin of President Lincoln

PS the ways of the Most High are past finding out.

**ANONYMOUS**

(3:592-95)

*"A" 549 (JAO) 1865*

Anonymous to Nora Fitzpatrick<sup>1</sup>

Envelope: Address Miss Nora Fitzpatrick, No. 541 H. St. between 5th and 7th

Washington City DC

Baltimore, April 17th 1865

My dear Nora, As a proof of my good nature, I seat myself to have a little chat with you today. Really! I think you treated me shamefully! But I cannot believe that my dear kind little Nora did it of her own free will. I am sure some malicious person must have instigated her to the performance of the cruel act. I shall not retaliate in kind, Nora, no, I shall nobly revenge myself by communicating a piece of good news.

Father Dougherty will be in Washington on Wednesday!!! Ain't you glad? Go down to St. Patrick's<sup>2</sup> about one o'clock and you will see him. Don't put off going at the specified time, because he will only remain in the city long enough to take his dinner.

Now, have not I been very kind? Nora, I expect to see you in Baltimore very soon. We told Lis, (don't you remember?) that you were coming back at Easter. Come soon. Ma and I want to go shopping this afternoon, so I shall have to terminate our chat a little earlier than I would otherwise wish. Ma sends you much love. Minnie would have a message for you, were she at home, but she has been in Howard Co. for nearly two weeks. Father Dougherty sends a kind

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<sup>1</sup> Honora (Nora) Fitzpatrick was an seventeen-year-old girl who boarded at the Surratt boarding-house in Washington. She was arrested along with the other occupants of the house and became a witness for both the prosecution (PW, Poore II:89, Pitman 121) and defense (DW, Poore II:185, 466, Pitman 132).

<sup>2</sup> St. Patrick's Catholic Church located on F Street between Ninth and Tenth Streets in Washington, D.C. Mary Surratt regularly attended St. Patrick's.



remembrance. Camilla feels much affection for Nora and wished her a great deal of happiness.  
'Tis True

**ANONYMOUS**

(3:603-5)

"A" 551 (JAO) 1865

Anonymous "J. Wilkes Booth"

Envelope: Hon. Edwin M. Stanton Sec. of War, Washington DC Postmark New York April 24th 1865

Mr. Stanton,

Dear Sir

If you want me you had better send for me

J. Wilkes Booth

New York

April 24th

1865

P.S. What do you say. JWB

**ANONYMOUS (J. W.)**

(3:606-8)

"A" 552 (JAO) 1865

Anonymous "J. W."

Washington DC, April 24, 1865

Gen. C. C. Augur

Comdg Dept. Washington

Sir,

On Pennsylvania Avenue at the house next the northeast corner of 20th Street west lives a Mrs. Duvall whose language has become offensive to Union people. Her house is, or was draped with mourning, ostensibly in remembrance of the death of President Lincoln, but you can judge how deep her grief was on this account when you learn that she wept over the fall of Richmond and the surrender of Lee.

She has been in communication with the south since the outbreak of the rebellion and a paroled rebel prisoner now visits her family and she boasts of having known Early's<sup>1</sup> intentions long before he appeared before Washington.

For a corroboration of my statement you might inquire of Captain Webster (late of Grant's staff, I believe) who with his wife are staying at Mrs. Duvall's.

Or you might ask Sam. P. Crowley, 2nd Lieut. 4th US Infty., or John Crowley Paymaster (or Paymaster's clerk) U. S. A. I have sent to Col. Baker (chief of

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<sup>1</sup> Confederate general Jubal A. Early, commanding the 2nd Army Corps, attacked Washington on July 11, 1864. He was halted at Silver Spring, Maryland, and withdrew to the Shenandoah Valley.

Detectives) a letter similar to this with which he can do as he pleases and you with this.

Very Respectfully yours,  
J. W.

**ANONYMOUS**

(3:621-24)

"A" 556 (JAO) 1865

Anonymous

Envelope: address Washington DC, Major General Augur, postmark New York, April 17

Monday April 17, 1865

I do not think Booth done the deed. There may be parties concerned with it as well as Booth. Cannot hang on circumstantial evidence only persons guilty of the deed of murder. There were sufficient evidence at the time of deed. If detected, he may not been in the theater. He may not been on the stage that night not engaged for the stage. engagements for evening he may been at Grover's theater on [illegible]. Examine Booth & Surratt, you will find out the person done the deed.

I think the parties done Secretary Seward was the guilty person done Prest. Lincoln Murder.

The one person done both deeds, John Surratt. I believe. The person say Sic Semper Tyrannis South is avenged was the guilty person.

Answer to the Press Advertisement. I write as follows.

The person that said "Sic Semper Tyrannis. South is Avenged" was the guilty person. Done the deed. Prest. A. Lincoln Murder & Secretary Seward's family. Murder.

**ANONYMOUS**

(3:625)

"A" 556 (JAO) 1865

Newspaper clippings enclosed with letter

Mr. Surratt, of Maryland, is believed to be the man who visited Mr. Seward's house.<sup>1</sup> The best data that can be obtained shows that there were not over five or ten minutes difference between the time of the assault on the President and Mr. Seward, showing that it was not done by the same person.

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<sup>1</sup> John Surratt was in Elmira, New York, at the time of the assassination. Lewis T. Powell was the attacker of Secretary of State William H. Seward.

## THE MURDER OF THE PRESIDENT ANNOUNCED TO HIS BOY

The murder of the President was at once announced at Grover's theater.<sup>1</sup> Little Tad Lincoln was in attendance there,<sup>2</sup> and the moment that he heard the statement he seemed to go almost crazy, shrieked and sobbed in heartrending manner. The poor boy was taken to the White House, and was soon quieted when it was ascertained that his father was still alive.

The person who made the attack on Secretary Seward and his family was supposed to be John Surratt, of Prince George County, Md. It is believed that Mr. Stanton was to have been one of the victims. He had intended accompanying President Lincoln, but absented himself to attend to business. Two gentlemen who called at his house to inform him of the condition of Mr. Lincoln, met a man in the vicinity of the Stanton's house, who moved rapidly away when accosted.

Day before yesterday Booth called upon the treasurer of Grover's theater (Mr. Hess), and asked him if he intended to illuminate that night. Mr. Hess replied that we should not until Friday night; he considered that the proper day. "Well," said Booth, "why don't you put on some new and exciting play for Friday evening, and invite the President and other officials, and get up a sensation?"

## THE ASSASSINATION

But a moment before the attack was made, the President was leaning forward, resting his head on his hand in his accustomed careless way, his eyes bent upon the stage, and enjoying a hearty laugh. A noise was heard and the form of a person descended from the box occupied by the President. With one leap he planted himself upon the stage and assumed a tragical posture, flourished a dagger, turned and faced the audience, shouting "Sic Semper Tyrannis!" also "The South is Avenged!" in a tone sufficiently distinct to be heard in all parts of the theater. The audience, of course, were shocked and dumbfounded. The suddenness of the affair and the melodramatic manner in which the desperado went through his performance gave to the whole thing the appearance of being part of the play. As quick as a flash, he disappeared at the rear of the stage, followed by J. B. Stewart, a lawyer of this city, who only missed him by about four feet, as the door was closed by the assassin in Stewart's face. The delay in getting it open again gave him a few seconds start, and he made his escape.

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<sup>1</sup> Leonard Grover's National Theatre located on E Street between Thirteenth and Fourteenth Streets three and a half blocks west of Ford's Theatre.

<sup>2</sup> White House doorman Alphonso Donn took Lincoln's twelve-year-old son Tad to Grover's Theatre to see the play *Aladdin! Or His Wonderful Lamp*. Young Tad learned of his father's assassination when it was announced from the stage.

## STATEMENT OF MISS HARRIS

Miss Harris, who was in the box with the President makes the following statement:

Nearly one hour before the commission of the deed the assassin came to the door of the box, and looked in to make a survey of the position of its occupants. It appeared [illegible].

## THE ASSASSINATION OF MR. SEWARD

Simultaneously with the tragic events at Ford's theater, and, as near as can be ascertained, at the precise moment another fiend entered the house of Secretary Seward, after some parleying with the servants, and it seems there dealt out his blows in all directions. Some six or seven persons who were in attendance upon the family during the night have made their positive statements of the manner in which the assault was made here, but no two of them agree. It is well established that he applied at Seward's residence as the pretended bearer of a prescription of medicine. Having succeeded in evading the servant at the door he rushed to Seward's chamber, but was confronted by Fred Seward, when he had quite a parley for a moment about the medicine, which he had been directed to deliver in person. Finding that he could not succeed in this way he made an attack upon Fred Seward. The desperado was a large and powerful man. He was determined to enter the bedchamber, and drew his pistol and snapped it twice, but did not succeed in discharging it. He struck Seward twice upon the head with such force that it not only felled him to the floor and crushed his skull in two or three places, but also breaking the pistol, separating the chamber from the barrel. He then immediately rushed into the room and applied his knife to Secretary Seward, who was lying prostrate in bed. It is evident, from the wounds, that he tried to cut the Secretary's throat. He succeeded in inflicting severe gashes upon the face, laying open both cheeks; but his blows were partially warded off by the bedclothes about the Secretary's neck and by the additional fact that Mr. Seward rolled out upon the floor. A soldier by this time had entered the room and sprang upon the assassin's back. He stabbed the soldier in the side and succeeded in breaking away, and, after wounding Major Seward, another son of the Secretary, and an attendant, succeeded in making his escape from the house, mounted his horse, and rode away, shouting "Sic Semper Tyrannis" as he sprang into the saddle.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> In all, five people were injured by Lewis Powell: William Seward; Frederick Seward and Augustus Seward, sons of William Seward; George Robinson, an army nurse assigned to care for Seward; and Emrick Hansell, a State Department messenger who was present at the time of the assault. Witnesses claim that Powell shouted "I'm mad! I'm mad" as he rode away, not "Sic semper tyrannis."

**ANONYMOUS**

(3:626–28)

*“A” 557 (JAO) 1865*

Anonymous to President Johnson

Envelope: To the Hon. Andrew Johnson, President of the United States,  
Washington DC

[Postmark illegible]

Thursday April 20th

Honored Sir,

You will, I know, pardon a humble individual for taking the liberty of addressing you. My motive is to inform you that whilst you are having the country searched for Booth, the murderer of our lamented President, he is in Washington se-  
creted beneath Ford’s theater.<sup>1</sup> He never left it but dropped through a trap door  
& the one that rode away on the horse only done so to mislead justice. If your  
honor will surround every side of Ford’s theater with soldiers that no escape can  
be made & thoroughly search that place you will find Booth, but don’t let no  
one know where you are going to search till the word of command is given to  
march or you will never find him. Pray do not despise this hint & may God in  
his mercy spare your life, but never leave your apartment door without guards  
stationed at it.

I must not sign my name.

From a woman

God bless &amp; protect you.

**ANONYMOUS**

(3:629–30)

*“A” 558 (JAO) 1865*

Anonymous

Dear Sir,

No theater to be permitted for some time.

It is only my opinion.

**ANONYMOUS**

(3:631–32)

*“A” 559 (JAO) 1865*

Anonymous “Truth”

General C. C. Augur

Aaron Van Camp has left the city to reside in Brooklyn or New York, to throw  
off the scent and where he can, he thinks, be lost in the crowd of a large city, as  
well as be near to the workers with whom he has heretofore been operating with  
as also to be able to enjoy the ill gotten gains he has amassed.

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<sup>1</sup> There is a cellar beneath the stage of Ford’s Theatre that is accessed through two trapdoors on op-  
posite sides and in the rear of the stage area. When Booth first entered the rear of the theater he used  
the cellar to pass from one side of the stage to the other.

There would have been too much espionage on him here and too many questions asked. How he became rich so very, very suddenly from comparative poverty. See to him. Perhaps you may find him knowing to the late murder of our president and the assassin of Sec. Seward. His son is at Zimmerman's No. 71 Street near D.

“Truth”

**ANONYMOUS**

(3:639-41)

“A” 561 (JAO) 1865

Anonymous

Washington DC April 22

To Gen. Augur

General

You ought to arrest Matlock & Chapin, G St. between 6 & 7. He loned mony to Surratt & Atzerodt for Port ale etc. His native state is Virginia. Booth was conceled in his stabl Mondy night last<sup>1</sup> & his son-in-law, Ed Weaver was an accomplice of Booth

You can find something out by arresting Chapin.

Yours Truly

\_\_\_\_\_ C\_\_\_\_\_ [illegible]

**ANONYMOUS**

(3:653-55)

“A” 565 (JAO) 1865

Anonymous

Envelope: Address, Hon. Joseph Holt, Judge Adv. Gen. Washington DC

Postmark Dover May 20, 1865

Dover NH

May 20/65

Newspaper clipping, Manchester Mirror, April 24 [pasted on note paper]

Known in Canada that the President was to be assassinated. Miss Hannah M. Gillespie of Huntingville, Canada, seven miles from Sherbrooke, writes to her sister in this city as follows: “A copperhead, a species of humanity, came here the other day. He said there was a plot laid to put Abraham Lincoln out of the way. I immediately told it to a Union man. His reply was that he had heard of the plot, and he had no doubt they would put it in execution if they could. I proposed having this fact sent to Washington, but ere our conversation ended the dispatch came and like an electric shock told us the plot had been consummated.

Union

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<sup>1</sup> On Monday night last, Booth and Herold were hiding in a pine thicket in Charles County, Maryland.

**ANONYMOUS**

(3:918-21)

*"A" 648 (JAO) 1865*

Anonymous

Envelope: Address Judge Holt, Washington DC, Postmark May 19, Hudson NJ  
 Hudson City,  
 Hudson Co.  
 New Jersey

Judge Holt,

Honorable Sir,

The Professor McCullough of whom Joshua T. Devlin gave evidence was last engaged in the North in Columbia College as Professor of Chemistry & Natural Philosophy.<sup>1</sup> While occupying that chair he was (if report be true) much engaged upon the improvement of gun cotton as a military material & when his experiments were satisfactorily concluded he resigned his professorship, proceeded to Richmond with his discovery & his friends reported that Jefferson Davis made him a Brigadier General for his services.<sup>2</sup>

His wife & daughter have resided at the north, I understand, ever since his departure from New York. I think he spells his name McCulloh. He has a brother on Wall Street who is a lawyer.

He did not leave New York, I believe, until 1864 or certainly not before 1863.

A great and apparently secret friend of his was & is Dr. C. C. Schieferdecker, a hydropathical physician. I do not believe the Dr. guilty of any complicity as he is too passionate & open to be trusted with deep things, but he could give information as to where secret information, news & gatherings were had among secessionists during 1861 & 1862, in New York City.

I withhold my name for the present, hoping that some clue may result from the above information that will unmask a monster.

Respectfully Yours,

Jasper

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<sup>1</sup> Richard Sears McCulloh, a professor of natural and experimental philosophy and chemistry at Columbia College (later Columbia University). He resigned his position on September 25, 1863, and went to Richmond to further the cause of the Confederacy. He was assigned to the Nitre and Mining Bureau, where he used his chemical knowledge to develop an improved formulation of Greek fire, and a form of lethal gas. Captured on May 17 in Florida while trying to escape, McCulloh was brought to Washington and imprisoned along with the eight Lincoln conspirators at the Washington Arsenal.

<sup>2</sup> McCulloh never received a commission in the Confederate Army.

**ANONYMOUS**

(3:995–96)

“A” 660 (JAO) 1865

Dr. Mudd, the Englishman

3 miles north of Bryantown

Colored man who saw Booth and who directed him [to the] residence of Henry L. Mudd<sup>1</sup>**ANONYMOUS**

(3:1198–1210)

“A” 710 (JAO) 1865

“B”

Extract from the proposition of \_\_\_\_\_ [sic] sent for<sup>d</sup>

He promises by showing me to my entire satisfaction, that the parties whom he represents, and is connected with, are powerful and influential with the US Govt., of the US.

He says “Through the influence of the parties referred to, I have arranged to get at least one half supplies (meat) the other half greenbacks, for all the cotton your (our) government may feel disposed to part with;<sup>2</sup> the first five or ten thousand barrels of Pork or bacon to be landed at any port Mr. Sec’y. Seddon<sup>3</sup> may designate on the East side of the Mississippi, or as much more on the West side, if Gen. Kirby Smith<sup>4</sup> or any other Confederate Commander needs them. After this delivery, the way is perfectly clear to deliver anywhere within Gen. Butler’s<sup>5</sup> Department. It must of course be obvious to you (me) that a concession so great, was made only with the understanding that it should be kept with the most sacred secrecy, and although it presents upon its face a general rule, for the sake of protecting the executive (Mr. Lincoln) to whom alone we are indebted, the main intention is that it should be carried out by my own friends and such others as only will be useful to us. In order then that we may have the fullest benefit from the arrangement, I would suggest that what may be done, shall be done in the name of a single individual, or his agent, so far as the delivery of supplies and the receipt of the cotton are concerned; touching the disposition of the portion paid in funds, this can be received and disposed of as you (the department) may determine, either in the United States, or in Europe, or in the Canada’s, by instant conversion into sterling. To show how thoroughly the enterprise has been

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<sup>1</sup> Henry Lowe Mudd, the father of Samuel A. Mudd. The father and son’s farms were adjacent to one another, the houses being approximately a half-mile apart.

<sup>2</sup> Certain individuals were given permission by Lincoln to enter into special trade agreements with the Confederates exchanging Union meat for Southern cotton. The reasoning behind such trade was that it removed the cotton from Confederate control so that the Confederacy could not use it in exchange for weapons or gold, which were badly needed. The trade soon became corrupt, and Lincoln’s advisors persuaded him to stop issuing certificates, thus ending the trade.

<sup>3</sup> Confederate secretary of war John A. Seddon.

<sup>4</sup> Confederate lieutenant general Edmund Kirby Smith. He commanded the Trans-Mississippi Department from 1862 to 1865.

<sup>5</sup> Union major general Benjamin Franklin Butler.



arranged, there are now 10,000 bbls. of pork purchased and ready for shipment the moment the details are perfected, etc. etc.

It was then proposed to get me a pass to go through the lines, but in this I fear they have failed, and that the alternative course has been adopted, to wit; sending the proposal by the hand of Mr. D. Preston Parr<sup>1</sup> or Mr. Inlocs. With respect to the plan, I would urge through you upon the department 1st that the only objectionable feature in it consists in the receiving greenbacks, for one half of the cotton, instead of provisions for the whole, for the reason that it is the policy of the Government (ours) not to trade in the currency of the enemy, or countenance such trade by the people. The wisdom of the regulation in the abstract is clear. Indiscriminate barter in this money would of course, be seductive and dangerous, but this objection does not obtain with the same force in operations of Government, and if it did, the evil is weakened, if not wholly removed by the fact that these funds need not & would not enter into the circulation of our own country, but could be paid over to agents designated by our govt. either in the United States, Canada, or Europe, and at once converted into sterling. Thus their possession and immediate conversion would place foreign funds at any point desired, either for purchase, payment of interest, etc., etc., Again the program submitted commends itself to favorable consideration, in that it is endorsed by the highest official in the US Government. Certainty of execution and expedition are thus secured. Our abilities and facilities for producing this kind of provisions are daily becoming more circumscribed and precarious, by the presence of large armies and their destructive raids in the rural districts. We are left then mainly to rely upon what may be introduced through the blockade, and we may be said now to have only one port, where the success of blockade running is at all commensurate with or superior to the risk incurred. This port is Wilmington<sup>2</sup> and we have it from the most indubitable source that Herculean efforts will presently be made to capture Wilmington, or failing this to be sealed far more rigorously her port. Where then are we to look for these indispensable supplies if not through the cupidity and avarice of our enemies. To gratify these is as hateful to me, I think trust, as to any compatriot in my land, but starvation or even scanty or uncertain rations to our patient, enduring, & gallant army is as more fearful & abhorrent alternative. Under these circumstances, I think it behooves us to embrace the opportunity offered to supply ourselves with the great necessity. I believe it is if not the only, the surest and most expeditious mode of accomplishing the object upon sufficient & safe certain scale.

The provision question, in this terrible struggle for our national existence, is one if not the greatest we have had to solve, and if my mission shall result in the inauguration of a plan for the certain subsistence of our noble armies, I shall be as thankful to God as if I had achieved a successful military campaign. Should it, on the other hand be attended with failure (albeit no fault of mine, if

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<sup>1</sup> David Preston Parr, owner of a china shop in Baltimore used as a Confederate safe house and mail drop. John Surratt used Parr's shop while traveling as a Confederate courier.

<sup>2</sup> Wilmington, North Carolina, was the major port that remained in Confederate hands until February 1865.

these plans are not accepted) I shall never feel happy I had not remained to share the discomforts, dangers & trials of the humblest soldier in our ranks!

Independent and outside of this, I have made a contract with a party by which supplies of meat will be furnished at Mobile by written permission of the President of the US to the free passage of the blockading fleet at that port. The first steamer has already sailed but she only carries 300 bbls of pork, the rest assorted cargo, but I am assured by the party "that if there is no delay or difficulty at Mobile, the steamers trips will be hereafter from New Orleans, where cargoes of meat provided from St. Louis, will go rapidly in & receive cotton upon the terms of my order—pound of cotton for a pound of meat". He then proceeds to say, "If this arrangement fails, it will be because of difficulties on the other side!" Meaning with us!! My contract with this party is for the delivery of 5,000,000 of pounds and this is in accordance with the order. But there are other important considerations in this plan. The President authorizing the breaking the blockade; What complications may not be produced by this with foreign governments. I gave the party a letter to the military, naval & civil authorities, requesting "safe ingress & egress for any ship or steamer or vessels of any character, with cargoes under the provisions of my contract."

Under these circumstances & Judge C. desiring to send a special messenger home, I have united with him in sending at much expense a young man, whom we believe to be sound & trustworthy. His engagement is to go directly through, deliver these & other papers & return to us with replies. Accordingly I send him at once to you believing that public & personal considerations will impel you to lay them before the Sec'y with great promptness; reading them to him yourself, suggesting that he advise the authorities at Mobile without delay, of such an arrangement, that their aid & cooperation will be given to such deliveries etc. etc. You will know by a reference to boyhood days at the conclusion of this, that it is genuine & that the party who bears it is "all right". ~~And~~ Any replies you have to send let them be written on as thin paper as possible & sealed with your large seal that I may be equally secure that the communications are genuine & have not been tampered with. God bless you and yours and all ours! And deliver us & our bleeding country from the hands of our enemies!

Do you recollect the Harrison and how much like me you thought him, because he was "rough"? "Oh but no rougher than you, no [illegible] but big"

You had better get dear J. & M. to copy this distinctly; and in large writing. I have written it thus for obvious reasons.

Oct. 31/ 64

I have seen with my own eyes Old Abe's written permission to pass the blockading squadron at Mobile, with vessels to take in supplies (meat) & bring out cotton.

"A" 710 (JAO) 1865

"B"

Feb. 13th 1865

Answers have been received from the Govt. agents in France and England to the letters of Messrs. Clay and Thompson<sup>1</sup> in reference to the proposition sent here from home and hence to England: viz.: "What terms, assistance or recognition could be obtained", and enclosing Judge C's direction here before he left; we send the purport.

Both agree with Judge C. in disapproving of any concession to European power, even accepting protectorate; also agree in believing better terms could be obtained in the manner suggested by him (Judge C.) and acting in accordance with authorities, endeavoring to learn what would be their action should the course proposed be followed.

The matter was treated in England in the usual unsatisfactory noncommittal manner, but in France, M. B. "very promptly remarked that no such alliance and course between the two American countries would be permitted by Europe" "and again few days afterwards in confidential interview said his sovereign would punish any attempt on the part of the US to pursue the Monroe Doctrine and that if it could be made sure the Federal Govt. would accept such an offer from the states in revolution and there were sufficiently fair prospects of the inauguration of such course, and this made the issue of nonintervention; his sovereign would not hesitate to recognize our country as a nation.

In fact the bait seems to have been taken there just as Judge anticipated. The letters urge that proposition of this nature be made to the Yankee Govt. and efforts made to draw them into such negotiations to their delay.

The letters almost reiterate argument sent by C. who certainly must now have nearly reached home and will be with you to explain so we refrain from sending original documents fearing capture.

Acknowledge receipt by advertisement. I now sign this by numerical combination

67.942.453

**ANONYMOUS "A PASSENGER"**

(7:364-66)

F-71

Letter to Stanton from "A Passenger"

Saturday 22nd

Hon. E. M. Stanton

Secretary of War

Sir,

I was a passenger yesterday on the railroad from Corry to Phila. and at some station between Corry & Williamsport, a Captain in the US service entered the

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<sup>1</sup> Clement C. Clay and Jacob Thompson were sent by Jefferson Davis to Canada to head Confederate operations emanating from that country.

cars, who stated to some of his friends that he was on his way to Washington to get his discharge. During the trip & before reaching Lock Haven, I think, he exhibited a very fine full length photograph of J. Wilkes Booth, which he said Booth had presented to him in 1862 while in Baltimore. He further spoke of Booth as his intimate friend. I thought at the time I overheard the conversation that perhaps the gentleman was on his way to Harrisburg to attend the funeral observances there today, and that he would give to the Governor the photograph and all the information he had about Booth. I think from his uniform (a jacket) that he must be in the Cavalry service. I regret that I did not inquire the name of the Captain so that some inquiries might be made of him on his arrival in Washington. He wore a reddish moustache and a tuft of reddish hair on his chin and his cap and clothes were not very clean.

A Passenger

### ANONYMOUS

(7:385-91)

#### Anonymous Letter

It being generally believed that the assassination of the President was the result of a large conspiracy, the writer of this feels it his duty to submit the following for consideration. During the year 1862 the writer of this made the acquaintance of a man by the name of Geo. Shiel, late a member of Congress from Oregon. This man was very violent in his denunciations of President Lincoln; not only politically so, but also personally so. His language was uncommonly bitter; denouncing the President as "a dog" and as "a disgrace to the country". After Shiel's term in Congress had expired,<sup>1</sup> he returned to Oregon, where having remained probably nine months, or a year, he visited the city of New York and met his bosom friend Ben Wood.<sup>2</sup> Previous to the reelection of Mr. Lincoln, Shiel was heard to say, that Lincoln would never be reelected; such "a dog" ought never to be reelected, and if he should be, he (Lincoln) would not be long in office. Mr. Shiel is the confidential friend of traitor Valandingham.<sup>3</sup>

On the 4th of March last, Shiel was in Washington when the inauguration was over he at once disappeared. He returned to Washington about eleven days previous to the assassination; ventured out into the streets only after dark; his manner betraying mystery and agitation. He avoided giving the address of his lodgings. S. has no occupation in Washington whatever, except drinking whiskey very freely. His regular stopping place when not in Oregon, is in New York. This scoundrel is a member of the K. of the G.C. and must belong to that hellish plot which planned the destruction of one of the best men that ever lived.

<sup>1</sup> George Knox Shiel, a member of Congress from July 30, 1861, to March 3, 1863. Shiel was disbarred for refusing to take the Oath of Allegiance.

<sup>2</sup> Benjamin Wood, editor of the *New York Daily News* and brother of New York mayor Fernando Wood.

<sup>3</sup> Clement L. Vallandigham, a Democrat from Ohio, considered the most notorious Copperhead in the North.

Let him be watched. It is said that he went to New York a few days ago with Mary Hall of "The island notoriety".<sup>1</sup>At the proper hour the writer of this will repeat verbally and in person the foregoing.  
Metropolitan or Jane McCord's a noted House of ill fame.

**ANONYMOUS**

(7:515-18)

*F-94*

Unsigned note relating to Booth

I have opened my note to say one more word.

How startling the news I have just heard after having written as I did before dinner.

Booth has shot or he was shot in a barn in Virginia; his accomplice or his friend is taken.

Even while I am writing his spirit knows the entrance of the great unknown; the untried scenes of the spirit work the mysterious eternity of an invisible existence. Oh how many strange coincidences of the last few weeks could I relate but dare not write.

Did you witness for instance the wondrous sunset on the 7th of April? The American flag hung aloft; the American eagle with its wings extended over the earth and the sea of blood; the sea of glass beautifully transparent just above it; the cannon and the bands of soldiers resting near the common at the right of the heavens and the golden purple angels presiding over the scene. Never, never can I forget that most gorgeous mysterious sunset; but I must not write more. I have changed in my wish since I wrote about the birds. I prefer to have the hen, likewise, as I fear the consequence on the temper if alone. So please send the male & the mate.

**ANONYMOUS***F-95*

Lewis Payne is a native of Fauquier County Va., in the neighborhood of Manassas Junction. His mother resides there. His family was reputable and [obliterated by ink] his connections have been killed in the war. You told me you thought he was the hired assassin of the conspirators. I think he was more. By sending a prudent detective to Warrenton, you will be able to trace ^him^. My information is reliable, but I don't deem to put it in writing and will tell you all (which is not non-important that you should know for the purposes of justice), when we meet which might be when I return from N. York, where I am compelled to be this week.

Addie will hand you this, which you will please destroy after reading.

[Obliterated signature]

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<sup>1</sup> Mary Hall operated a house of prostitution located at 459 Maryland Avenue on the Island, the area south of the Tiber Canal.

**CHARLES LEE ARMOUR**

(4:85-87)

*"A" Evd. B. (JAO) P5 1865*

Washington April 26th 1865

Affidavit of Charles Lee Armour.

Charles Lee Armour, Central City, Colorado, had seen a man at a public House called the "Ruby" whose name he does not know but who is familiarly known as James. That he has heard him make use of seditious language to the following ~~remark to the~~ substance and effect: "that he hoped General Butler would be the next person that would be assassinated." I have heard him declare three times, after my contradicting it on each occasion that Booth was a Union man and he denounced Lee bitterly for his surrender and complimented Johnson in the highest terms, and said "you would laugh if they gained their independence yet." He wrote a letter to the editor of a paper, which he had been taking, requesting him to stop his paper, because it <sup>^which^</sup> had an editorial on the death of the President. I told him the last issues of the paper (the Times) had been loyal but he denounced it as unintelligible paper; the next day he came in and as the paper was lying on the cigar case he tore it up into pieces and scattered them over the floor; his whole manner was sulky when we received the news of the recent victories, as though his feelings were depressed. At one time I remarked that I presumed the surrender of all the southern armies would be received on the same terms as Lee's surrender except guerrillas such as Mosby: but that I presumed the government would declare him an outlaw; and he said that declaring him an outlaw would not make him one.

Charles Lee Armour

**CHAS. LEE ARMOUR**

(4:88-89)

*"A" Evd. B. (JAO) P5 1865*

Office of Pro. Mar. D. C.

Wash. DC Apr 20 1865

Chas. Lee Armour

Makes statement in regard to one "Jeems".

Jeems (James)

Endorsement: Commit this man (W. P. James) to Old Capitol arrested by Col. H. H. Wells to be sent before the Military Commission Capt. G. K. W.

Charles Lee Armour of Central City, Colorado deposes and says that at different times at a public house known as the "Ruby" in the city of Washington D C he has heard a man known as "Jeems" make use of and utter language of a seditious character in relation to the US Government. To the effect "That Gen. Butler should be the next person murdered" and other language of a violent character. That the said Jeems, is presumed to be a southern refugee and from

the facts above stated the said deponent believes the said Jeems to be a disloyal person and should be dealt with accordingly.

Charles Lee Armour  
Late Associate Justice Supreme Court Colorado  
Witness S. Otis Clapp

**SAMUEL B. ARNOLD**

(Defendant, 3:611–17)

“S” 554 (JAO) 1865

Sketches of Samuel B. Arnold, Michael O’Laughlin, Edward Murphy, J. B. Early, William Williams, alias “Pomp” (colored)

Samuel B. Arnold was born at Georgetown, DC of highly respectable parents on the 6th day of September 1834. He was first sent to be educated to Georgetown College, from there he was sent to the Reverend J. H. Dashiels at Govinstown, Baltimore County. His parents having removed from Georgetown to Baltimore. He was one year in Rockingham County, Va. under the charge of the Rev. Mr. Gibbons and afterwards was sent to Saint Timothy Hall, Catonsville, Baltimore County, Md.<sup>1</sup> and placed under the Rev. L. VanBokelin; afterward became engaged in farming, lately was engaged in clerking.

He is now between 30 and 31 years of age, on his approach to manhood he was a restless and wayward youth, inclined to bad association. He had been in the Rebel army.<sup>2</sup>

He was arrested at Fortress Monroe, April 17, 1865.

Michael O’Laughlin, was born in the city of Baltimore, of respectable parents, in the month of June, 1840, and is therefore between 24 and 25 years of age. He was educated at a school conducted by a highly respectable teacher at the corner of Front and Fayette St., and after leaving school learned the trade of manufacturing ornamental plaster work and also acquired the art of engraving. The company he was in the habit of associating with was not of a character that a person indisposed to evil would have made choice of. His personable appearance was generally of a genteel character.

He left Baltimore on the afternoon of the 13th of April in company with Lieut. Henderson of the Navy, B. J. Early, and Edward Murphy for Washington, in the 3 ½ o’clock train and continued there, until the afternoon of the 15th and left for Baltimore arriving in Baltimore at 5 o’clock same afternoon; went to his mothers house but did not stay there, but went uptown to a relatives and stayed there on the night of the 15th and on Monday the 17th was arrested. He had been in the Rebel Army.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Arnold and Booth were fellow students at St. Timothy Hall in 1852.

<sup>2</sup> Arnold served four months in Company D, 1st Maryland Infantry, CSA.

<sup>3</sup> O’Laughlen served in Company C, 1st Maryland Infantry.

Edward Murphy,<sup>1</sup> one of the company composed of O'Laughlin, Early, Murphy and himself, who left Baltimore on the afternoon of April 13th 1865, is a man about 25 years of age, is said to be a plumber by trade. He, a few years ago was unfortunate in causing the death of a young lad named Patterson. He has been in the habit of keeping bad company and has the appearance of being fond of drink. The Statement obtained from him, places him in company with the above named parties from the time they left Baltimore in the 3 ½ o'clock train for Washington, up to the hour that O'Laughlin and Early left Washington on the afternoon of the 15th April., going the rounds about Washington with them, visiting hotels, restaurants and houses of ill fame, etc., and remained in Washington, O'Laughlin and Early left him there.

B. J. Early is a man about 25 or 26 years of age, is a tailor by trade, and one of the party consisting of O'Laughlin, Murphy and Henderson, who left the city on the afternoon of April the 13th to go to Washington and continued with them up to the evening of the 15th of April, and then left in company with O'Laughlin for Baltimore, in the 3 ½ o'clock train. He was known to keep the company of what is termed loose young men or fast young men.

His statement is of the same nature as that of Murphy's.; that he had left the city in company of O'Laughlin, Henderson and Murphy on the evening stated above, and after frolicking about Washington, drinking and visiting various places, returned to Baltimore in company with O'Laughlin, and went with him to his mother's house on Exeter Street, and afterwards accompanied O'Laughlin uptown in a hack from Monument Square. O'Laughlin getting out uptown upon a corner, and Early returning to the Square and then walking home to Oldtown Gay Street, his home.

William Williams, (alias) "Pomp", a colored man is aged about 22 or 23 years. Small in stature; when a boy, was put by his mother to live with the Booth family. He has been known for the last 9 or 10 years in this city, engaged in selling flowers, frequenting public places, as well as business, and private ones, disposing of his bouquets and distributing cards, notes, etc. when engaged to do so. In his statement he makes the acknowledgment that he had delivered letters for Booth, two or three weeks previous to the murder, to Arnold House and to a man he met on Gay Street, who he knew by sight from the time he was a boy, and had played with him frequently, but could not recollect the name, but would know him if he saw him, this man received the letters from him, and said it was his. The man he said lived in Exeter Street. Mike O'Laughlin was the man.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Edward Murphy testified on O'Laughlin's behalf (DW, Poore II:202, 216, Pitman 229). Benjamin Early testified for both the prosecution and defense (PW, Poore I:149, Pitman 224; DW, Poore II:196, Pitman 228).

<sup>2</sup> When Booth was a young boy his father bought a house on Exeter Street in Baltimore. O'Laughlin lived across the street, and the two boys became friends.



**GEORGE M. ARTH**

(2:42-44)

*"A" 25 (JAO) 1865*

April 21, 1865

Washington, D.C.

George M. Arth

General Hardee U. S. A.

Respected Sir,

I beg of you to grant me a permit to enter Ford's Theater & bring from it my double bass viol & bow belonging to me & used by me as one of the orchestra at said theater, as it is very necessary to me in my profession & I am suffering for its use.

I am humbly

Your servant

George M. Arth

**MAJOR E. R. ARTMAN**

(2:1059-60)

*"H" 321 (JAO) 1865*E. R. Hartman [*sic*]<sup>1</sup>

Monocacy Junction

May 16th 1865

Sergt Z. W. Gammell, Co. D. 1st Del Cav. Will proceed to Clarksburg Montgomery. Co. Md. and find James W. Purdem<sup>2</sup> and a Mr. Metz Brown<sup>3</sup> and with them proceed to Washington DC and report to Col. H. S. Burnett at the War Dept. without delay.

By Command

E. R. Hartman

Major 213 Up C

Comdg Post

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<sup>1</sup> Major E. R. Artman (213th Pennsylvania Volunteers) was the commanding officer in charge of the unit stationed at Monocacy Junction near Frederick, Maryland, that arrested George Atzerodt.

<sup>2</sup> Gemmill was in charge of the cavalry troop that arrested George Atzerodt. James W. Purdom, a local Montgomery County, Maryland, farmer, provided the information of Atzerodt's whereabouts and led Gemmill and his men to the Richter farm where Atzerodt was arrested.

<sup>3</sup> The man taken into custody (as a prosecution witness) was named Hezekiah Metz.

**WILLIAM P. ASHBY**

(3:1217-18)

*"A" 714 (JAO) 1865*

Ashby Wm. P. also memorandum of persons living in different cities.

Memorandum

Wm. P. Ashby

Lachriel House

Harrisburg

Gave order for 1000 on G. W. Johnson &amp; Co. No 132 D St. Washington, marked "all right" by R. C.

Who lives at 25, 4 ½ St.

Who is W. F. Cochran, No 425 C St. betw 7th &amp; 8th

Who lives at No 83 Front St. near Gay Balt.

Who is O. D. Madge, Cor 17th &amp; G St. upstairs

Who lives at 131 Vine St. Phila.

Who is George Kramer, Winchester Va.

Who is J. W. Kislen, Lachriel Hotel Harrisburg

Who lives at 486 11th St. Washington bet E &amp; F

Who is Mrs. Rinehold, Cor 4th &amp; Broadway NY

**WILLIAM P. ASHBY**

(3:1219)

*"A" 714 (JAO) 1865*

Harrisburg Pa, April 8th 1865

G. W. Johnson &amp; Co.

Pay to Clem H. Pearson One thousand (1000) dollars and charge to my act.

Wm. P. Ashby

No 132 D Street

Washington DC.

Illa ightr. K.G.

**J. HUBLEY ASHTON**

(3:648-52)

*"A" 564 (JAO) 1865*

J. H. Ashton

Envelope: Address Brig. General J. Holt, Judge Advocate General, Winder's building, Return Address Attorney Generals Office, Official business

Letterhead: Attorney General's Office, Washington June 5th 1865

Brig. Gen. J. Holt

Judge Advocate General

Sir,

A letter to the President by James R. Gilmore, alias Edmund Kirke, has been referred to this office, in which the writer states as follows:

“Further, I was at Camp Douglass in 1864, and there met Lt. Col. Langhorne of the 31st Arkansas, who in Aug./64 was sent by Seddon and Davis to Thompson (Jacob) with dispatches. The substance of what he said to me is embodied in the enclosed extract from proof sheets of an article on the “Chicago Conspiracy” which will appear in the “Atlantic Monthly” for July (about 20 days hence). I think Col. Langhorne would be an important witness to show Davis’s connection with the whole Canada iniquity; which, as you will see from the extract I enclose, contemplated assassination and every other diabolical instrumentality”.

The enclosure referred to is herewith transmitted.

This information is communicated for such use as you can make of it. I will thank you to return the enclosure when you have read it.

Mr. Gilmore writes from the office of the Tribune.

Very respectfully

Your obt. Servt

J. Hubley Ashton

Acting Attorney General

“A” 564 (JAO) 1865

Proof Page from Atlantic Monthly for July

The Chicago Conspiracy

Captain Hines, who had won the confidence of Thompson by his successful management of the escape of John Morgan, had control of the initial movement against Camp Douglas; but Colonel Grenfell, assisted by Colonel Marmaduke and a dozen other Rebel officers, was to manage the military part of the operations. All of these officers were at that moment in Chicago, waiting the arrival of the men who were to come in small squads, over different railroads, during the following three days. The rebel officer had known of the plot for months, but its atrocious details had come to his knowledge only within a fortnight. They had appalled him; and though he was betraying his friends, and the South which he love, the humanity in him would not let him rest till he had washed his hands of the horrible crime.

He was a slim, light haired young man, with fine, regular features, and that indefinable air which denotes good breeding. Recognizing the Commandant by the eagle on his shoulder, he said, “Can I see you alone, Sir?” “Certainly,” answered the Union officer, motioning to his secretary to leave the room. “I am a Colonel in the Rebel army,” said the stranger, “and have put my life into your hands, to warn you of the most hellish plot in history.”

“Your life is safe, sir,” replied the other, “if your visit is an honest one. I shall be glad to hear what you have to say. Be seated.”

The Rebel officer took the proffered chair, and sat there till far into the morning. In the limits of a magazine article I cannot attempt to recount all that passed between them. The written statement the Rebel Colonel has sent to me covers fourteen pages of closely written foolscap; and my interview with him on the subject lasted five hours, by a slow watch. He disclosed all that Judge

Holt has made public, and a great deal more. Sixty days previous he had left Richmond with verbal dispatches from the Rebel Secretary of War to Jacob Thompson, the Rebel agent in Canada. These dispatches had relation to a vast plot, designed to wrap the West in flames, sever it from the East, and secure the independence of the South. Months before the plot had been concocted by Jeff Davis at Richmond; and in May previous Thompson, supplied with two hundred and fifty thousand dollars in sterling exchange, had been sent to Canada to superintend its execution. This money was lodged in a bank at Montreal, and had furnished the funds which fitted out the abortive expeditions against Johnson's Island and Camp Douglas. The plot embraced the order of "American Knights" which was spread all over the West, and numbered five hundred thousand men, three hundred and fifty thousand of whom were armed. A force of twelve hundred men, Canadian refugees, and bushwhackers from Southern Illinois and Missouri, was to attack Camp Douglas on Tuesday night, the 8th of November, liberate and arm the prisoners, and sack Chicago. This was to be the signal for a general uprising throughout the West, and for a simultaneous advance by Hood upon Nashville, Buckner upon Louisville, and Price upon St. Louis. Valindingham was to head the movement in Ohio, Bowles in Indiana, and Walsh in Illinois. The forces were to rendezvous at Dayton and Cincinnati in Ohio, New Albany and Indianapolis in Indiana, and Rock Island, Chicago, and Springfield in Illinois; and those gathered at the latter place, after seizing the arsenal, were to march to aid Price in taking St. Louis. Prominent Union citizens and officers were to be seized and sent south, and the more obnoxious of them were to be assassinated. All places taken were to be sacked and destroyed, and a band of a hundred desperate men was organized to burn the larger Northern cities not included in the field of operations. Two hundred Confederate officers, who were to direct the military movements, had been in Canada, but were then stationed throughout the west, at the various points to be attacked, waiting the outbreak at Chicago.

**GEORGE A. ATZERODT**

(Defendant, 2:655-59)

*"A" 195 (JAO) 1865*

Affidavits

Washington City, May 10, 1865

R. R. Jones, Bookkeeper at the "Kirkwood House" says:

That Atzerodt must have come to the house before 8 o'clock A.M. April 14th (Friday); thinks so because the night clerk was on duty. He goes off about 8 or before 9 o'clock. He is not now in, but will be at 11 o'clock.

Atzerodt had no baggage and therefore paid one-day board in advance. He signed the register in his own handwriting & "Charles County". No one about the hotel recollects his being at breakfast.

I think I saw him next, which was between 12 & 1 o'clock. He came up and pointing to his name on the books, asked if anyone had called to see him. I told

him no, or not since I had been in. He hesitated a moment and then said that if anyone came he would be back in fifteen minutes and wished them to wait for him.

As he turned to go away, a young man came up. He was dressed in light clothes; apparently a German. Did not seem to be more than 17 or 18 years old; was dirty, rough looking, like a grocery clerk.<sup>1</sup> He said how do you do to Atzerodt, who replied, "I was just going away" I supposed he was the person Atzerodt was expecting. They walked away together and I saw no more of him. I observed him for the reason that we do not generally room anyone on the 2nd floor unless they are customers of the house. By the 2nd floor, I mean the 2nd above the office. His room (No. 126) was on the floor above President Johnson's, but the room is not immediately over Mr. Johnson's.

I think I took the card left for President Johnson by Booth, but am not positive.<sup>2</sup> I did however give the card to Col. Browning.<sup>3</sup> Can't be positive as to the time when the card was left, but it must have been as late as two or three o'clock in the afternoon of Friday.

Think Col. Browning got the card in the evening, perhaps as early as six or seven o'clock. I don't know whether Atzerodt asked anything about Mr. Johnson or his room, but some person, a tall, rough looking man, one that looked like a carpenter, did ask if Mr. Johnson roomed here and was in? He was very tall, had on a black slouch hat and I think a light colored coat. He was a light complexioned man, without beard. He asked in a rough way. I answered him rather shortly, because I judged from his appearance that he had no business with Mr. Johnson. I told him he was not in.

I have an indistinct impression that he asked the number of Mr. Johnson's room, but I cannot be positive. I do know, however, that some one did ask the number of Mr. Johnson's room and think he was the man. I did not see Booth or Herold in the house that day. I think Mr. Spencer gave Atzerodt the key of his room about four or five o'clock. Specer is an assistant in the house. He is not in right now. The key was taken away and never brought back. Captain Gregory, at Farrell's Store, had room No. 127, says he heard two persons talking in that room (126) about 9 o'clock of Friday night, April 14th.

Taken by me May 10th 1865 at 9 ½ o'clock.

James Kipp

The night clerk at the "Kirkwood House" says:

He gave the room referred to above, to Atzerodt at half past seven or eight, on Friday morning.<sup>4</sup> Atzerodt said I have no baggage and better pay one day in

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<sup>1</sup> This was most likely David Herold, who spent part of the day knocking around the city before meeting with Booth and Lewis Powell around 7:00 P.M. in Powell's room at the Herndon House. Herold was twenty-two years old and was working as a pharmacy clerk at the time he joined Booth's plot.

<sup>2</sup> Booth stopped by the Kirkwood House on the afternoon of the assassination and left a small card with the message "Don't wish to disturb you; are you at home?"

<sup>3</sup> William A. Browning, Vice President Andrew Johnson's private secretary.

<sup>4</sup> Atzerodt's reserving a room at the Kirkwood House at 8:00 A.M. on the morning of the assassination suggests that plans were already in place for Booth's assassination plot.

advance. He did so. He did not go to his room, nor go to breakfast. He asked no questions.

Mrs. Jones

Wife of R. R. Jones, at "Kirkwood" says:

That a little after 10 o'clock, of Friday night, she heard a person running rapidly past her room in the direction of Atzerodt's room. He tried to open the door of three different rooms or at three different times and not succeeding in opening the room he came back on a run and went downstairs.

H. H. Wells

Col. & Pro M. Gen.

Def. S of P.

**GEORGE A. ATZERODT**<sup>1</sup>

(Defendant, 4:20-22)

The prisoner, George A. Atzerodt

In his confession, stated substantially that between 1 and 2 months ago he was called on by John H. Surratt who informed him that he wanted him to go into a great scheme by which a large sum of money was to be obtained; getting him to understand that it was a very extreme plan of blockade running without giving any further details. He stated that John H. Surratt introduced induced him to come to this city to engage in this blockade running scheme. He came here and boarded at the house of Mrs. Surratt for a few days, during which time he was introduced to a man by the name of Wood, and also to Booth, and met David Herold whom he had previously known and that they all of them had several interviews in his presence. In all of which references was made to this scheme of blockade running; but on none of the occasions were there any details given. Nor did he have any idea how the scheme was to be completed until late in the afternoon of the evening of the assassination, when he was called to the room of Wood, at that time boarding at the Herndon house, corner of 9th and F; that he found there Booth, Wood, Louis ^alias^ Payne, and Herold: and then Booth told him that he was going to "kill Lincoln", and Wood said that he was to kill Mr. Seward and; and they proposed to him that he should kill Mr. Johnson Atzerodt said that he refused to do so, but agreed to pilot them, which they requested him to do, as he was familiar with the country toward Port Tobacco.

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<sup>1</sup> Atzerodt was assigned to assassinate Vice President Andrew Johnson, but lost his courage at the last minute and fled.

**GEORGE A. ATZERODT**

(Defendant, 3:596–602)

“W” 550 (JAO) 1865

Confession of George A. Atzerodt<sup>1</sup>

April 25, 1865

George A. Atzerodt Says:

I live at Port Tobacco. John H. Surratt came after me in the winter.<sup>2</sup> I was at work & could not leave. It was after Christmas. He said he was going to get a great prize and he wanted me because I was acquainted with the Potomac to go with him. Said he was going to run the blockade; came again three weeks after; we came to Washington together; he took me to his mother's and I staid one week; told me the other parties were over in New York and others were in Baltimore; gave me no names there.

I returned home again; went home and stayed one week and he wrote for me to come on. I came up in the stage; stopped at Kimmel House and Pa. House, 357 C. Street. John Surratt came to the hotel to take me to his mother's house; here I was introduced to Booth in Com. Gen.'s ^of Prisoners^ office. Nothing of importance was there said. We were to meet again at an early day; the day was not fixed. We met again but Booth went to New York before I saw him again, as I understood. After he came back he came to Penna. House and asked me how I would like to go into the oil business. I said I would like it if I had the capital. He said, “don't mind the capital, I have that.” I said I would as soon as not go into business. I was drinking hard and he asked me not to drink so hard. He then went to New York again. J. Surratt came and borrowed some money of me. He was going to New York with a lady.<sup>3</sup> Surratt had two horses at Howard's stable. One or both of the horses came from down near Bryantown. He claimed to own them. One of them had a blind eye.<sup>4</sup> It was a large bay horse. The other was a smaller bay horse. Surratt wrote to me from New York to sell the horses. This was, I think, in March. I sold the small horse about a week after I got the order. Booth then returned from New York and he took me to a lady's house near the Patent Office. It is on the Corner of 9th & F St.; it is a Hotel or Boarding house (probably the Herndon House) He took me into the room and introduced me to a young man he called James Wood.<sup>5</sup> This was after the fall of Richmond and two or three days before the President was killed and proposed to go to Richmond to open a theater if we could get passes. After that was over we took a walk on the Avenue. He told me to meet him that night at the same place. David L. Herold came there that night. I came in at half past 7 o'clock and told them I wanted to meet a young man on the street who wanted me to go the theater. I took him to the Street by the house, left there and went in alone; they said they

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<sup>1</sup> Statement taken down by Colonel H. H. Wells aboard USS *Montauk* on April 25, 1865.

<sup>2</sup> January 1865.

<sup>3</sup> Sarah Slater, a Confederate agent who worked as a courier.

<sup>4</sup> Booth purchased the horse with one blind eye during his December visit to Dr. Mudd's house. Lewis Powell rode the horse on the night he attacked William Seward.

<sup>5</sup> James Wood was an alias used by Lewis Powell.

were going. Booth told me I ought not to bring any person near the House. We did not have much to say. We went out, parted & went to the theater. Booth and Herold said they were going out; don't know whether they did go or not; before we parted we agreed to meet the next day at the National, where I could call or he would meet me at this House again. I went to the National at ½ past 10 o'clock A.M. I think it was Thursday; he took me to his room. He then spoke to me again about drinking so much. I asked what he meant by it; he laughed and said never mind. He then told me to go to the Kirkwood and get a pass from V. President Johnson. He said he would be there with a man to recommend me. I went there registered my name and got a room and paid for one days board; that was on Thursday.<sup>1</sup> About 3 o'clock, Herold came there after me. He said Booth and Wood wanted to see me. Wood is a tall man with black hair; straight. He is a strong stout-made man; no hair on his face; rather poor; he is rather a good-looking man. I can't remember faces or features well enough to describe them. He had a wild look in his eyes. Saw him clean his teeth. He carried a toothbrush with him; think he had long legs; saw a bottle of hair oil on his nightstand; think his arms was long. He was a large well-built man. He wore boots; wore a soft hat, lead color, I think, not black, I am sure. We walked down the St.; we were to have met in a restaurant, but Booth was not there and we met down at the National. He was not there. Herold went off & said he would find him. We were to wait. I got tired of waiting and left afterwards into Seventh St. and stopped and drank at different restaurants. About half past five or near six o'clock, I went to the Kirkwood House and they told me a young man had called there for me. I took a chair and Herold came in and said Booth and Wood wanted to see me immediately. He then asked me if I had my key. He wanted to go to my room and show me something. We went to the room and drew a large knife and a large pistol out of his boot and said let us go and see Booth and Wood. We went to their House on 9th St. (Henderson House<sup>2</sup>) and they then proposed the murder to me. Booth proposed that we should kill the President; said it would be the greatest thing in the world. This was about half past six or seven o'clock on Friday; that Wood would go up to Seward's House and kill him. That he and Herold had been and seen Andrew Johnson and found out where he was. He then asked if I was willing myself to assist them. I said that I did not come for that and was not willing to murder a person. They said they did not want me to do any act but only to show them the road into the lower part of Maryland and if I did not I would suffer of it. I said I would do all I could on the road. They said "will you" and I promised that I would. Booth then told me to get a horse and stop near the Eastern Branch Bridge. We then came out; Herold wanted me to go to the Kirkwood House and asked me if I had the key of the room. I told him no. I did not go to the hotel and we parted then & I have never seen them since. Some time in the morning Herold came and wanted I should go down to

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<sup>1</sup> Atzerodt claims that he registered at the Kirkwood House on Thursday afternoon (not Friday morning).

<sup>2</sup> Herndon House located at Ninth and E Streets a block and a half from Ford's Theatre.



Surrattsville. He said he Booth, had something there and wanted me to see after them. They were in Mr. Surratt's old house; kept by Lloyd and I agreed to go. I went and hired a horse. At 1 o'clock, I got a small bay horse at a stable on 8th St. above Franklin St. about one o'clock and rode him till about three and then put him in Naylor's Stable and left him there till between six & seven o'clock, then I took him and rode out to the Navy Yard, then back again to the Avenue, where I got some Oysters and rode down to the Kimmel House. He took the horse away from the stable about ½ past 7 or 8 o'clock and did not take him back; I did not go to Surrattsville because I could not see Booth that evening.

They wanted I should show them the road to Indiantown over Maryland Point. They were to go to Surrattsville around Piscataway and to strike the Potomac. They were to go through Bumpy Oak; to go to Bumpy Oak you have the road leading from Washington to Bryantown at Teebee, which is about six miles from Surrattsville. You turn off to the right. It is about 25 or 30 miles from Teebee<sup>1</sup> to Maryland Point; the road leading from Teebee is not much traveled. I don't know anyone at Maryland point that would aid them to cross. I suppose after they got to Virginia they would go to the Confederate lines; Seminary Creek runs down by Maryland Point.

Herold was well acquainted with the shores of the Potomac and I think if he got over to Piney Church or to the bridges on the Port Tobacco Road near Bryantown, I would go to Maryland Point, for it is the most direct and there are many crossroads.

I understood that Woods came from Virginia, but don't know the County. I heard him speak of Warrenton and Fauquier Co. Woods was to kill Seward, Booth the President and Herold V. P. Johnson.<sup>2</sup> I last saw Surratt about a week before the murder; don't know where he is but think he had gone to New York. I went up to Woods to the Navy Yard about 12 o'clock after the assassination; went in a streetcar; got in near the National & went up to the end of the road and then rode back to the depot and then walked up 4 ½ Street and there met a stranger who asked me where he could find a hotel to stop at and I told him to come to the Pa. House and he did so. He was a stranger to me and I never seen him before and have not since; do not know his name; don't know whether Mr. Surratt was in this business or not. I stopped in Mrs. Surratt's house for three or four days, I think. They called me "Port Tobacco". Booth and Herold sometimes spoke of Mosby<sup>3</sup> and asked where he was; they also spoke of going to Canada after the assassination, when Booth went to New York last, he said he was going to Canada.

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<sup>1</sup> A small crossroads community that took its name from a stone boundary marker inscribed "T B" for Thomas Brooke, the original landowner.

<sup>2</sup> Atzerodt attempts to place the assignment to kill Vice President Andrew Johnson on David Herold. Atzerodt claims that his only role was that of a guide in crossing the Potomac River.

<sup>3</sup> Nickname given to Lewis Powell. Powell served with Mosby's partisans late in 1864.

**GEORGE ANDREW ATZERODT**

(Defendant, 7:1-3)

*F-01*

Andrew Atzerodt, Esq.

Dear Sir,

I send John down for my buggy today as I am in immediate want of it, and hope it is done. My damn horse and mares are all here. If Albert Posey wants to trade he had better come up this evening. Suppose you come along with him. If he can't possibly come today and will be certain to come Monday morning I will try to wait till then for him. I would rather he would come today if he can.

Yrs. raptly

J. A. Brawner<sup>1</sup>

Nov. 28th 1863

**GEORGE A. ATZERODT**

(Defendant, 7:7-9)

*F-03*

St. John's

Oct. 25th 1859

Mr. Atzerodt

Dr. Sir,

When I was at yr shop<sup>2</sup> on Friday the 21st 7 in yr absence talked with yr brother about the old buggy. I told him distinctly that I would not think of such a thing as taking it away if you were not willing & I waited to see you, but could not & yr brother told me positively that he had not the least doubt that I might take it & you would think nothing of it & as I failed to see you I supposed that he would communicate to you our conversation, before I sent for the buggy.

I write this because I heard you did not like my sending for it. As to myself, I don't care much anyway about keeping or parting with it & went to yr shop to see you on the subject on account of my wife's desire to keep it if it could be done consistently with any understanding I had with you abt it.

In haste,

Yrs Resp.

Fred. L. Brown

PS I didn't get my right harness in full &amp; not bridle at all.

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<sup>1</sup> James Brawner, together with Richard Smoot, sold a large flat-bottomed boat to John Surratt to ferry a kidnapped Lincoln across the Potomac River to Virginia.

<sup>2</sup> George Atzerodt and his brother John operated a carriage painting business in Port Tobacco, Maryland.

**GEORGE ANDREW ATZERODT**

(Defendant, 7:10-12)

*F-04*

Washington July 24, 1864

Mr. Atzerodt

I heard from Mrs. Bous that John was up & looking for me so I wrote to him and he wrote me word that he had not been up hear for a month, so it must have been you. I should of wrote to you first but I particular asked if it was you and she said it was John. John said in his letter that he had not made no inquiries about me but he was going to Baltimore and would come through here as went home and said what arrangements we could make so that I would write to you right away. I suppose you want me to write and if so, I would like to know on what terms you would like me to come. I am at work in the Navy Yard and got a job as long as I am mind to keep it for \$2.75 a day but I don't like here and would like much better the country. You must write to me as soon as you get this for I would like to know for certain before the 12 of next month for that is payday and I would not like to set in for another month and then leave. I will not give John a positive answer until I hear from you. Write by the next mail no more.

Yours with respect

A. G. Soper

**GEORGE A. ATZERODT**

(Defendant, 7:13-15)

*F-05*

Washington Dec. 2, 1859

Messrs. J. C. Atzerodt &amp; Bro.

Gentlemen,

We hold a note of yours which we were compelled to take up; we sincerely hope you will attend to it; we are extremely hard up; we will esteem it a great favor if you will make some arrangement regarding it. Please send us some money, ever so little will be acceptable.

Please do not delay the matter any longer; also you will find the balance of you're a/c \$8.55.

Trusting to hear from you

We remain

Yours truly etc.

G. R. Thompson &amp; Bro.

**GEORGE A. ATZERODT**

(Defendant, 7:513-14)

*F-93*

Certificate from Miller relating to Atzerodt

This is to certify that Mr. George A. Atzerodt is a subject of Prussia;<sup>1</sup> has been a citizen of this country for ten years and has never made a declaration of intention to become a citizen of the United States, nor has he ever attempted to vote at any election.

Thomas Miller  
 Depy. Pro. Marshal  
 Chas. Co. Md.

**HENRY ATZERODT<sup>2</sup>**

(7:4-6)

*F-02*

Direct to  
 Co. K 7 Div. Prisoners camp  
 Point Lookout Md.  
 Prisoners camp Point Lookout, Md.  
 April 5th

Dear Brother,

I am now a prisoner at this place. I was captured on the 3rd of this month near Petersburg Va. and am doing very well. I was treated with all the kindness I could expect as a prisoner of war. Dear Brother you certainly must write to me. I am very anxious to hear from you all at home. You must give my love to all of my friends and acquaintances and tell them they must write to me. I received a letter from Tommy Scott a few days before I was captured. He was then very well. If you can send me a little money it would be very acceptable as I am very much in need of some here. I must now conclude as I am limited to half sheet. I remain as ever your affect. Brother,

Henry Atzerodt.

**JOHN C. AND GEORGE ATZERODT**

(Defendant, 7:506-12)

*F-92*

Atzerodt Papers

Envelope: Address Mr. George A. Atzerodt, Port Tobacco, Charles Co. Md.

Postmark

We the undersigned have, this 4th day of Feby 1861, come to the understanding that we will call the named property of each his own as it is signated below, each

<sup>1</sup> George Andrew Atzerodt was born at Dorna, Thuringen, King of Prussia, on June 12, 1835. He immigrated to the United States on June 26, 1844.

<sup>2</sup> Younger brother of John C. and George Andrew Atzerodt. Henry served in Company K, 1st Maryland Infantry, CSA.

one to work every day when able to do so, or if private business calls him away he may do so until one month from the above date, after which all such work is not finished each one to finish his own work. One new top buggy to be finished within the above time and when done and sold each one to have one half of the sale.

One second hand buggy to be G. A. Atzerodt.

Two second hand carriages not finished to belong to J. C. Atzerodt.

One second hand buggy to be finished to belong to G. A. Atzerodt.

One second hand wagon to belong to J. C. Atzerodt.

All materials which not used up in the above named jobs to belong to J. C. Atzerodt, also all blacksmith tools to go to J. C. Atzerodt.

And one set of woodworking tools to go to him the balance of woodworking tools to go to G. A. Atzerodt.

G. A. Atzerodt to have also one bed & bedstead complete and one bedstead also.

One feather bed to sold and divide it between us both, one half of the chairs in the house and one half of the washstands also are to go to G. A. Atzerodt, the balance of the furniture to belong to J. C. Atzerodt each one to pay his own individual expenses from this date and when the above agreement shall not be carried out by either one of the undersigned this shall then be gone by according to law. If any custom work should come to the shop during the time it shall be done and the pay divided between us both each to pay one half of John Beadley's wages during the time each to pay one half of Henry Atzerodt expenses during the above time, all accounts up to date due us divided by money, bonds or accounts given under our hands & seal this 4th day of Feb. 1861

John C. Atzerodt

George A. Atzerodt.

Test. John Bentley

### JOHN C. ATZERODT

(3:557-67)

"A" 541 (JAO) 1865

Atzerodt, John C.

April 18th, 1865

John C. Atzerodt testifies as follows: I live in Baltimore, 91 Sharpe Street. I am with Mr. McPhail, and am down in this part of the country <sup>^</sup>on duty<sup>^</sup> of Mr. McPhail.<sup>1</sup> We came from Point Lookout. Started down there last Saturday week; had nothing to do with this matter of the President. We were at St. Ingall's when we got the news. We were after blockade-runners. I have a brother by the name of George A. Atzerodt who goes by the name of Andrew, the A standing for Andrew. He looks like me; favors me a great deal; he looks more sickly. Is inclined to be consumptive. Has had a cough for several years. Is sallow; not pale,

<sup>1</sup> John Atzerodt was a detective on the staff of Maryland provost marshal James L. McPhail. It was Atzerodt's tip to McPhail that he should look at the Richter house in Germantown for his brother George.

but yellowish. I had a conversation with my brother about four weeks ago, when I saw him. I met him at Surratt's. I was going down to Charlotte Hall. Surratt's, I think, is about 10 miles from here on the Teepee road.<sup>1</sup> I merely asked him how he was and what he was doing. He said he was not doing any business in particular. He asked me where I was going and I said to Charlotte Hall and wanted to go to Port Tobacco from there, and he said perhaps he would meet me on the road at Teepee and take me down. He did not say anything else. He has never had conversation with my family that I have heard of. I heard my sister say that he had made boasts as to what he was going to do. He would either hear of his being hung or making a good deal of money, a fortune, or something like that.

He did not state with reference to what it was. I saw him at Surratt's. Surratt was there; they had taken the Post Office away from there and a man by the name of Roper keeps it now, and the stage has to go about half a mile and return and the passengers generally get out till the stage comes back. So I found this party there. As soon as I walked in ^he^ called Surratt aside.

My brother has always been suspecting me. He took Surratt one side; not long. Surratt went out & got his buggy and drove off, & I remarked to my brother "Where is Surratt going?" And he said up to Morton. A young man by the name of Herold was there also. He lives in Washington. I don't know where. Herold is a little chunky man, quite a youth and wears a very thin mustache, for he is quite young<sup>2</sup> (The picture of Herold was shown and the witness identified it as the man he saw). Those are the only persons there that I knew. There were some farmers there, ^living^ in the neighborhood, waiting for the mail.

I know a man by the name of Marcellus Bailey; he lives at Port Tobacco. He is a barkeeper there. I think he was in company with my brother when I was last there; either Marcellus or Cornelius Bailey. I don't know which now. We left on Friday and he was in Baltimore on Monday. I have understood that he was with my brother there. Barnes and Bailey and my brother were there together. They never came to my house. When Bailey first moved to Port Tobacco he moved there as barkeeper. Since that he has been in the Confederate army and returned. I think he was there 12 months. He returned a couple of years ago. I believe he went in '61, I believe.

Barnes lives at Allen's Fresh. It is two miles below Port Tobacco in Charles County. I do not think he is doing anything this year. Last year he was in partnership with a man by the name of Martin as ~~hotel~~ hotel keeping. Both of the Baileys are his friends. That's the reason I cannot make up my mind which it is. Cornelius Bailey is a tall fellow, a little taller than Barnes is. Barnes is a small fellow. Cornelius Bailey is a small fellow; looks red in the face and has a light mustache and generally blacks it. One of his arms are ~~thrown~~ ^drawn^ up with rheumatism. I forget which arm it is. I think his right; He's narrow-shouldered. Marcellus Bailey is about 5 feet 8, broad shouldered, light complected, has a Roman nose. Has a light sandy mustache. The last time I saw him he had whiskers on the side of his face, but none on his chin. His hair is light. He wears it short.

<sup>1</sup> The small community is known as Teebee or TB.

<sup>2</sup> David Herold was twenty-two years old at the time.

Barnes is small, has black whiskers; wears nothing but a mustache and an imperial, but he carries a good set of whiskers for his age. His hair is black. I suppose he is about 22 or 23; eyes dark and pretty large.

Surratt is a tall, thin-faced man, five feet 6 or 8. The last time I saw him he had whiskers. I forget whether he had a light mustache or a little imperial, but what he might have had. I do not remember now. He has light hair, it is thin; his shoulders are square; complexion pale, and white, complexion clear, but face thin. I think he has long fingers and a small hand. Last I saw him he was not dressed very well but wore a shawl. Had a gray suit on and a plaid shawl on. I think his cheekbones are prominent. His face is broad on the upper part and thin on the lower. I cannot tell whether his forehead is straight or receding, but think it is flat. He walks straight.

The last time I saw my brother he had on a brownish speckled coat and pants also and a sack coat; I forget whether it was split up behind; it had flaps on the pockets, a very nice genteel coat, made at Port Tobacco. A man by the name of Hawkins made it for him.

I understand my sister to say he had a very nice overcoat on in Baltimore; she said a long gray overcoat. I never knew of his having a black coat. He had a pistol with him but I don't know what kind it was. I only saw the butt of it as it was in the scabbard. It was a good-sized pistol, a revolver. I should think for I do not know. It was apparently a long pistol.

He smoked a short briarwood pipe. I do not think there was a silver plug in the bottom of the bowl. I do not remember whether he had any gloves on, but while I was down to Port Tobacco he generally wore a pair of buckskin gauntlets. He had a black slouch hat; a pair of cavalry boots with enameled leather, stitched with white; he wore No. 7's. His hair is rather light brown; whiskers very much scattered.

As well as I can recollect I think I have seen Booth once.

(The witness was shown Booth's likeness and recognized it)

My brother is 29; speaks with a little German accent; carries his head on one side in walking, and one shoulder higher than the other. Saw my brother last at Surratt's ^about^ four weeks ago.

I saw him at Port Tobacco two weeks after Christmas; he was riding around with a tall man with black whiskers. He went down to the river shores several times. He would go away in the morning and return at night. He stopped there at the hotel. I tried my best to find out the gentleman's name but the proprietor told me he could not find out what his name was; they kept no register there. The man is tall, I suppose 5 feet 10, perhaps five feet eleven; pale faced; a pretty large face; light whiskers; no mustache. Did not hear him talk; did not ask my brother what his name was. After this man went away my brother came to me & asked me if I did not want to buy his mare.

(Witness was shown Booth's likeness and asked if it resembled this man's and he said it did not)

**CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS AUGUR<sup>1</sup>**

(2:111-13)

*"A" 44 (JAO) 1865*

The original of this letter was shown to the late President and retained by him about Jan'y 7, 65. If that letter were found, it might be of service in the present investigation.

C. C. Auger

This letter was addressed to E. [a portion of this letter is torn]

And would \_\_\_\_ therefore is [unintelligible]

St. Louis, Mo.

December/64

January 6, 65

Tear [*sic*] Aunt,

It is with a sigh that I take my plume \_\_ grown nerveless by a sorrow, which, though \_\_\_\_ has become a never-ending joy to my existence. \_\_\_\_ who grew up like the stately oak, should fall. \_\_\_\_ the acorn cup be buried in the cold ground, \_\_\_\_ up some time or another, life, and I among \_\_\_\_ would now take my leave of you, grieving for my \_\_\_\_ forgiveness, for though I bear the scepter I \_\_\_\_ must not wear the crown. The Tyrant who \_\_ must lie low. I can at length utter \_\_\_\_, the dream no opened into certain irr\_\_\_\_ for the martyrs of earth shall be rewarded hereafter.

Jude Elliot

I can make it a *felo dese* to the cheated millions.

I write as you perceive, under great excitement, and what wonder that I hear my heart pulsating, when ere long, another, through my means shall cease to beat. Aye! That is my answer. Aye! When one hundred thousand deaths have been sacrificed to preserve the life of our Goddess, shall the vilest man who ever lived, as the Arch Fiends elected still survive when his death would be her life? Courage! Bide your time now! Be brave—himself until you have the signet. We are progressing finely and all is well. Courage! Courage still! And wait. The Ides of March shall come to these states before the month is here. But caution! My heart is steeled and my soul knows no master, save a will that cannot die, and a calmness that no thought no future anguish can shake, is mine.

**C. C. AUGUR**

(2:1046-47)

*"A" 318 (JAO) 1865*

Letterhead: Head Quarters Department of Washington, Office of Provost Marshal General, Defenses North of Potomac, Washington DC May 1st, 1865  
Special Orders No. 88 (extract)

Special Office C. Merrill and one (1) assistant on duty at these Hdqrs. will at once proceed to the convent Cor. Of 10th and "G" St. this city and examine the

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<sup>1</sup> Commander of the 22nd Army Corps defending Washington.



baggage of Miss Annie Ward,<sup>1</sup> Teacher and arrest her & proceed to War Dept. and deliver her & all letters and papers found in her possession, to Col. Burnett, without delay.

By Command of Maj. Gen. C. C. Auger,  
 T. Ingraham  
 Col. And Pro. Mar. Gen.  
 Def. N. O. P.

(7:596-98)

*F-105*

Special Order No. 68, HQ, Dept of Washington, April 16, 1865  
 Headquarters, Dept of Washington, Office Pro. Mar. Gen. Def. No. of Potomac,  
 Washington, D.C.

April 16th 1865

Special Orders  
 No. 68 (Extract)

Special Officers James A. McDevitt, George Hollebaw and Lewis J. Wiechmann are hereby ordered to proceed to New York City on important Government business and after executing their private orders, return to this city and report at these Hdqurs.

The quartermaster Department will furnish the necessary transportation  
 By command of Maj. Gen. Augur

(sgd) T. Ingraham  
 Col. And Pro. Mar. Gen. Def. N. of Potomac

(3:415-17)

*"A" 508 (JAO) 1865*

Major Gen. C. C. Augur

Endorsements: Respectfully referred to Brig. Gen. Holt, by whom the within named persons were recommended for discharge, for any information he may have of their place of confinement. W. A. Nichols, Asst. Adj. Gen. return and report.

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<sup>1</sup> Anna Ward was a teacher at St. Mary's Female Institute, where she came to know Anna Surratt (a student) and her mother Mary Surratt. Ward later worked as a teacher at the Visitation School for Girls located at Tenth and G Streets in Washington. Ward and Mary Surratt both attended St. Patrick's Catholic Church on F Street between Ninth and Tenth Streets. Ward's connection to the conspirators emerged during her testimony (DW, Mary Surratt, Poore III:219, Pitman 135) in which she admitted being a mail drop for John Surratt while he was in Montreal. She also inquired at the Herndon House about an available room ostensibly for Lewis Powell at the behest of John Surratt.

CCU Edwin Middleton, H. M. Bailey, N. B. Crangle, Sheetz has been released.  
W.A.H  
War Department  
Adjutant Generals Office  
Washington June 3, 1865  
Major General C. C. Augur  
Comdg Dept. of Washington

Sir,

The Secretary of War directs the release from custody of the following named persons now held as prisoners within the Department of Washington. Viz.:

James R. Ford  
Miss J. Ross  
Harry Clay Ford  
Frank Roth  
Oscar Hough  
Walter M. Barnes  
S. T. Sheets  
Mrs. Charles Robbin  
Thomas Green  
C. H. Pearson  
William Gabriel  
Margaret Rosier  
J. D. Reamer  
Samuel Cox<sup>1</sup>  
Miss Mary A. Cook  
M. B. Ruggles  
W. P. James  
A. R. Bainbridge  
Richard Williams  
Nicholas B. Crangle  
Edwin Middleton  
Lizzie Batchins  
Henry M. Bailey  
Mrs. Thomas Green  
Robert Kinder  
John Harrison

All these parties will be required to take the oath of allegiance before being discharged.

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<sup>1</sup> Samuel Cox gave shelter and food to Booth and Herold during their escape. Cox instructed Confederate signal service agent Thomas Jones to hide the pair in a pine thicket before sending them across the Potomac River to Virginia.

Please report the execution of this order.

I am Sir, very respectfully

Your Obt. Servant

E. C. Townsend

Asst. Adj. General

(3:418-19)

"A" 508 (JAO) 1865

Form Document: Headquarters Department of Washington, 22nd Army Corps., Washington June 3rd, 1865, To Wm. P. Wood, Esq.

Superintendent of the Old Capitol Prison

You will immediately release the persons of S. T. Sheetz, Edwin Middleton, H. M. Bailey, N. B. Crangle now in your custody on oath of allegiance to the US Govt.

C. C. Augur

(3:422-23)

"F" 509 (JAO) 1865

Endorsement: AGO May 7, Mr. Sidney Ramond, the detective charged with the execution of the within order, informs me that he found "Squire Gardner" a very aged and feeble old man confined to his bed by a recent attack of fever. After some conversation with the family, he determined to arrest the nephew Thomas L. Gardner<sup>1</sup> and did so, delivering him to me last night, and I sent him to the Old Capitol as per accompanying order Lew Foster, AA Gen.

Letterhead: Head Quarters Department of Washington office of Provost Marshal General, Defenses North of Potomac, Washington D. C. May 5, 1865  
Special Order

No. 94 Extract.

II. Captain J. T. Potts will at once cause the arrest of a certain Squire Gardner who lives near Doctor Mudd's near Bryantown, Md. & deliver him to H. L. Burnett, Col. & Judge Advocate, War Department, Washington.

By command of

Major Gen. C. C. Augur

Geo. R. Warbling

Capt. & Asst. Pro. Mar.

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<sup>1</sup> Thomas L. Gardiner, Squire Gardiner's nephew, delivered the one-eyed horse to Booth on December 20 at the Bryantown tavern where Booth was staying. Thomas Gardiner appeared as a witness for both the prosecution and the defense (PW, Poore I:361, Pitman 71; DW, Poore II:422, Pitman 196).

(3:1171-97)

"A" 710 (JAO) 1865

Augur, C. C. Maj. Gen.

Letterhead: Headquarters Department of Washington, 22nd Army Corps,  
Washington DC Nov. 12, 1864

Hon. E. M. Stanton

Sec. of War

I have the honor to enclose you a report of Colonel Wells, Provost Marshal @ Alexandria, detailing his arrest of a bearer of dispatches from persons in Canada, to the Confederate authorities in Richmond. The man "Peterson"<sup>1</sup> has been committed to the Old Capitol Prison.

In conjunction with Colonel Wells I have examined the papers found upon his person, and herewith transmit them for the consideration of the War Department. They are as follows: viz. Two envelopes and enclosures; the first of these envelopes has no address written upon it, but bears upon its reverse a seal in red wax impressed apparently by an ordinary signet ring. Though the wax has been somewhat broken the letters "C. C. C. Jn"<sup>2</sup> or the main portions thereof can be made out. This envelope contains two enclosures; the first is a letter upon a single sheet of white notepaper of a very thin description like the envelope which contains it. This letter is dated "St. Catherine's, Canada West" and is addressed to "My dear Ginie".

It is also marked "Hdqrs." at its head, but has no signature. At the bottom on the fourth page is a sort of postscript marked H. L. C. and urging that an immediate answer should be sent. There is also posted at the head of the note a "Personal" cut from some newspaper addressed to "Mrs. Caroline V. Tracy" and signed "T. E. Lacy". The second enclosure in the envelope is a letter written upon one and a half sheets of thin blue letter paper, also dated at "St. Catherine's Canada West", Nov 1st addressed to the "Hon. J. P. Benjamin Secretary of State Richmond Va." It relates to the recent attack upon St. Albans Vt. And also to one Capt. Cole,<sup>3</sup> a rebel officer captured on the steamer Michigan, and appeals to the Confederate Government to recognize and acknowledge the acts of these parties. This first envelope and its two enclosures I have marked letter "A". The second envelope is also of thin white paper but bears neither seal or address. It contains three enclosures. First a thin piece of blank blue paper covering two letters. The first of these letters is dated "Oct 31st 1865, without the name of the place at which it was written. It is addressed at the top "My own dearest" and is signed "your devoted husband" but without the name of the writer.

This letter as well as its companions in the same envelope is written upon thin blue letter paper precisely like that contained in the envelope marked "A".

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1 George Peterson, a Confederate courier operating between Canada and Richmond.

2 Clement C. Clay.

3 Charles H. Cole, a ringleader in the plot to capture the USS *Michigan* anchored off of Johnson's Island. Once captured the ship would be used to free the twenty-five hundred Confederate prisoners held on the island. The plot failed, and Cole was arrested.

The other letter in this second envelope bears neither date or address at the top but is headed "Extract from the proposition of \_\_\_\_\_[sic] sent forward". It relates to the proposition of a party in the United States to furnish provisions for the rebel Army in the Mississippi River and at places within General Butler's Department. The second envelope and its enclosures I have marked B.

I have the honor to be  
 Very Respectfully  
 Your Obt. Servant  
 C. C. Augur.  
 Maj. Gen. Comdg

"A" 710 (JAO) 1865

Headquarters Pro. Mar. Gen. Defenses South of the Potomac November 11,  
 1864

Gen. C. C. Augur  
 Commanding Department of Washington

Sir,

I have the honor to report that information having reached me today that an agent giving a description of his person, would arrive at Alexandria during the evening having upon his person written correspondence of the agents and emissaries of the Confederate Government, which was to be secretly and clandestinely passed through our lines. I arrested at the time and place indicated for his arrival, a young man giving his name as "George Peterson". He answered the description given, and upon searching him I found concealed upon his person two packages of papers which are delivered herewith. And I have the honor to turn over the prisoner for confinement. The papers sewed into the leg of his pants. I remain, General, your obt. Servant

H. H. Wells  
 Col. & Pro. Mar. Gen.  
 Def. South of the Potomac

"A" 710 (JAO) 1865

"A"

Newspaper clipping: Mrs. Carolina V. Tracy, care of Major Comer, Macon, Ga. Don't sail or join me, unless Lawson says I must stay. I hope to return in November. I have written weekly. None from you since June 30; have seen Jennie. T. E. Lacy

Richmond Inquirer and Macon Telegraph please copy.

1864 St. Catherine's C. W. Tuesday Nov. 1st No. 20 "A"

My dear Ginie: I am disappointed, mortified, distressed, & almost distracted this morning at receiving not one line from you or any other friend in Dixie. It is 8 o'clock AM. I arose one hour ago, dressed & went to the PO for letters, as our

mails from Halifax was due. I returned with 3 for Bev Tucker<sup>1</sup> from his wife, of 13th, 20th, & 20th ult. one from his daughter & two from friends and 6 letters from home. And thus it has been ever since I reached here. He gets his regular monthly mail with 3 or more letters from his wife & as many from others; I have rec'd one letter from Lawson & two from you since I reached Canada; the last dated 30th June. These are all I have gotten in Canada and 6 letters from you since leaving you six months ago are all ever rec'd. Now am I not encouraged to write to you & to write often by tender appeal or mentions for intelligence of me. Am I not well repaid for writing regularly every week or ten days to you; determined to take every chance of communicating with you? The only thing I have heard from you, save thru others, since yrs. of 30 June, which reached me 15th Sept. was yr personal of 20th Sept. which reached me at Quebec, whither I had gone on business, on 13th October. I immediately enclosed to Jennie my answer to it & \$10 to pay for yrs. & mine. It did not however appear in the news till 29th Oct. I know not why. It was then addressed to Carolina Tracy. I enclose it but I hope you will get it & understand. I have also since sent a personal to Col. H. L. Clay, which I hope he & you will see, inquiring "can I return at once? If not let my wife come to me by Flag of Truce boat via Washington City, if she can; not otherwise."

I was surprised & distressed by your personal. As I told you the Prest. did not expect me to stay longer than the early part of this month, & you knew it would require quite a month under favorable circumstances to get to me. I could not understand why you should come to me to go back immediately. I inferred either that you had learned I was to stay here all winter, or that you did not hear from me or that some fresh affliction had come upon you that made you feel like flying to me for comfort. Oh! What anxiety & suspense I have endured. Money cannot compensate for it. If I could only have had a personal every two weeks of about two words only—all well, I should have been quite cheerful. As it is, in utter ignorance of the condition of those I love best, whether living or dead, sick or well, in comfort or in want, contented or miserable, I could but feel disquieted, anxious & rather unhappy.

God grant you & all my dear kin life, health, comfort & content until we meet again on earth is my nightly prayer.

I sent you, immediately after getting your letter by Ben Young,<sup>2</sup> all the articles you wrote for & several more for yourself, dear Listia & Matt. They reached Halifax. Were sent by the Ellen, which got into the port of Wilmington. I therefore trust have been long since delivered to you by the Express Co. by whom they were to be carried thence. I also sent a magnificent fan, a present from Geo. N. Sanders & two very superior pairs of winter shoes some six or 8 weeks since. I again sent you about 2 weeks ago a package of flannel, balmorals, dresses, stockings, gloves, collars, cuffs etc. among them the best black silk, I could find here.

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<sup>1</sup> Former U.S. consul in Liverpool, England, Tucker was sent to Canada in 1864 to further bolster the Confederate underground operating there.

<sup>2</sup> Lieutenant Bennett Young, leader of the Confederate raid on St. Albans, Vermont.

Accompanying each I have written to you at length. The last was the most valuable of the packages sent. I hope you may get them all & enjoy them very much. Some of these last articles were for dear Listia as you will see if they ever reach you. Now I shall send this by an underground railroad, addressed to Lawson, who will open read & forward to you forthwith. I hope too if you are in Ga. He will telegraph you on rec't of letters, that he has it; that I am well & that he has forwarded it by express, for I distrust the mails. My health continues very good notwithstanding my anxiety & distress & I certainly look better than for many years. I intend if I am not instructed to remain, to leave here for Halifax by the 20th inst. At farthest, and to try my best to get to you as soon thereafter as possible. But Wilmington is so closely blockaded now that it is very hard to get in & I may be captured in trying to do so. And if Forts Fisher & Caswell are taken, or the enemy get over the bay with their war vessels, I may have to go to Galveston, Texas, or even to Mexico & across the Rio Grande. Which may require some months before you can hear from me. I think I shall try Wilmington if any blockade runner ventures in after I get to Halifax. If it is desired that I stay here thru the winter, you must try to get a safe conduct & come to me by flag of truce thru the U.S. I cannot endure the thought of staying here till spring without you. I trust I shall get an answer to my last personal to Lawson, from him saying "you can return" or "you must stay", so as to settle my purpose. Jake<sup>1</sup> says he means to stay till March, but I won't unless desired by the Prest. Something may turn up to change my views. I trust Lawson will answer this by the bearer, sealing it as this is, so as to show if it is tampered with, I write on this thin paper & put in as thin an envelope and seal with a friends seal (CCC Jr).<sup>2</sup> Let Lawson say what seal he puts on the answer & urge the Sec to give the bearer these answers as soon as possible. L's answer need not be signed by him & may be addressed to J. Bevins Giles, St. Catherine's, C. W. Now I am sure you have written to me at least twice a month. Try now personals & letters one page long, by flag of truce to Mrs. R. E. Corse (wife of our friend) Poughkeepsie NY and sign your name distinctly Caroline V. Lacy, so that Mrs. Corse may know who you are. With love to you & my kin & servants(?), & invoking Gods blessing on you all, I am as ever yrs., with more love & reverence than should be given to any earthly creature. Farewell, I hope not a long farewell, my precious, darling Ginie.

H. L. C.

Hand the within as directed immediately and try and send answer of Sec. within 24 hours from delivery.

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<sup>1</sup> Jacob Thompson.

<sup>2</sup> Clement C. Clay Jr.

"A" 710 (JAO) 1865

Newspaper "American and Commercial Advertiser" Baltimore May 27, 1865  
article bracketed

Probable Accomplice of Booth in New Haven—Sudden Disappearance of the  
Stranger—He is supposed to be John H. Surratt  
(From the New Haven Journal)

The public will doubtless be surprised to learn that there has been in this city a man who, there is good reason to believe, was connected with the plot which resulted in the assassination of the President. On the Sunday after the death of the President a man, whose name was afterwards discovered to be Lemos, stopped at the Central Hotel in this city. He appeared to be about thirty years of age, was about five feet seven inches in height, of light complexion, had light and very busy hair, a hawked shaped nose, gray eyes, a heavy scar on the right side of his neck and another on the face, supposed to have been saber cuts, was well dressed, and was taken for a German Jew.

During the night he stole what change there was in the money drawer and decamped. In the morning the robbery being discovered, he was chased and overtaken at Milford by the proprietor of the hotel and the stolen money was recovered. The man begged hard to be released, and produced and offered as an inducement a gold watch, worth fifty dollars which was accepted and he was suffered to go at liberty. On being released he told the proprietor he had left a carpetbag at the hotel, which he desired to be sent to one Myers at Southport.

The carpetbag was given to the police, who on opening it examined its contents and found that it contained some very singular articles, which at once made further acquaintance with the runaway seem highly desirable. There was found, first, a carte de visite of a lady, apparently about thirty five years of age, plain looking, rather fleshy and wearing a stylish dress. This photograph was contained in an envelope and on the back of the photograph was written these words:

"Meet me in Washington on the 10th"  
(signed) "J. W. Booth"

On comparing this signature with those made by Booth on the books of the New Haven House, it was found to be genuine.

There was also found in the carpet bag a card of the Ogden Hotel, New York, with the name of Jane Tipping on the back; also a card of the Morton Hotel, Liverpool England, with the following written on the back "John Morton, care of John Merley." Underneath "J. W. Booth" which also proves to be the genuine signature of the assassin. There was also a card of the Albion Hotel, New York, with the name of Jen Schliesner, DC, written on the back; also a discharge of Samuel Tirnery from the British ship New Brunswick, and last, but not least important, there were two passes signed by H. S. Parsons, Gen. Sheridan's Adjutant General, one of which bore date December 9, 1864, and was to permit M. Lemos, a scout, to pass out of the lines and return; while the other bore date December 9th, and was to permit M. Lemos, a scout, to pass out of the lines with two men and led horses, to go to Charlottesburg and return.



Upon finding these suspicious papers, the police started in pursuit of the man; going down on the New York Railroad as far as Southport, but failed to find any traces of him. Returning they informed Capt. Clark, Provost Marshal, of the facts, and he immediately went to New York and set the detectives to work. They found that the man had hired out as clerk to the proprietor of the Albion House, and was to come on duty on Saturday, the day on which he came up here. Learning nothing else satisfactory, Captain Clark returned and set his force at work.

They succeeded in tracing him to Derby, and thence to Zoar Bridge, across the Housatonic. On the opposite side are four roads, leading off in different directions, and no one knew which road he took. All the roads were thoroughly searched, all the local authorities about that whole region were set to work, the inhabitants were roused to action by the rumor that the man was John Surratt, for whom a large reward was offered: the whole country was completely raked over, so to speak, but strange to say, not the least trace of the man after he crossed Zoar Bridge has yet been found.

Officers continued the search into New York, Massachusetts and Vermont, but without avail. Six or seven different men were arrested, one in Pauline on the Harlem Railroad, and two or three were brought to this city, one securely handcuffed, but none answered to the description, and some of them had no resemblance at all. After two weeks of unremitting search, all hopes of securing the fellow were given up. But the sudden disappearance of the man is one of the most unaccountable things on record. There appears to be no doubt among those acquainted with the facts that the man was in some way connected with Booth in his terrible plot.

We believe that in another instance, as the evidence shows, the back of a young lady's photograph was used by Booth to write a similar message. Possibly a comparison of the two may cast further light upon the matter. The signature, which is pronounced to be unmistakably genuine; the time, the lack of money, and the possession of a fine gold watch together with his anxiety to get away, the strange papers left behind, and his still more strange disappearance, all indicate that his capture would have been highly desirable.

About two weeks after the man left this city a soldier called at the Provost Marshal's office and asked for transportation home, saying that he was a scout in Sheridan's army. On being asked if he knew a scout by the name of Lemos he replied that he guessed he ought to, for he had spent two months in prison with him in Richmond. He then gave a correct description of the man. It is thought, judging from the other facts, that this man became a Union scout in order the more readily to accomplish a treacherous purpose.

[line illegible due to fold in paper] far withheld in the hope that the suspicious persons might be captured. The papers left by him with a full statement of the case will be sent to Washington.

**R. WINSLOW AYER**

(3:176-79)

*"A" 426 (JAO) 1865*

Ayer, I. Winslow, MD

Letterhead: Chicago Throat and Lung Institute, McCormick's Building, Corner Randolph &amp; Dearborn St., I Winslow Ayer, MD, Chicago, Ill. May 24, 1865

To His Excellency

Hon. Andrew Johnson

President of the United States

Sir, I beg to enclose the documents herein contained & to solicit a moment of your attention.

I had the assurance of our dearly loved lamented President Lincoln that I should have his recognition the moment we had broken up the conspiracy. The work is done. He can not notice the service. Will it be forgotten or may I hope that you, sir, may even by a few words acknowledge that I rendered some little service to our country?

Your Obt. Svt.

I. Winslow Ayer

An autograph expression from yourself would be ever gratefully remembered.

*"A" 426 (JAO) 1865*

Newspaper article

DAILY TRANSCRIPT

Saturday morning May 20

## A BIT OF HISTORY

In 1860-61 every member of the United States Senate from the seceding States turned traitor save one. Those traitor Senators are now either homeless outcasts and proscribed criminals, or are in the hands of justice to be tried for their treason, while the one loyal Senator is President of the United States, the proud Chief Magistrate of a powerful nation triumphant over all its foes. Thus treason goes execrated to its doom, while loyalty, amid the plaudits of a grateful people, is called to take its place at the head of the State. In view of this striking exemplification of the justice the Almighty Power let no one say hereafter that treason does not find its punishment nor patriotism its reward.

## TREASON AND PERJURY

Either Dr. I. Winslow Ayer and Robert Alexander of Chicago, are perjurers seeking to take the lives of their fellows, rob them of their reputation and their means and restrain them of their liberty, and these men are consequently deserving the ignominious punishment of the law to its fullest extent, or they have been instrumental in bringing to light the formidable conspiracy concerning which the investigation was recently made by the Military Commission in Cincinnati. Either malice, hatred, revenge or hope of reward, or some other motive

equally potent must have been the mainspring of their conduct, or these gentlemen have exhibited a self sacrificing devotion to country; the highest degree of patriotism, true heroism, utter disregard for self interest, even of life itself and stand out among the most prominent of our country's defenders in the darkest days of the Republic. Either they are scoundrels deserving the death of would be assassins and their names should go down to posterity on the black catalogue of conspirators and assassins, or they should be emblazoned upon the tablet of honor, to which men of the present day and our children who may follow us shall recognize as those of men who in their country's dark hour of peril rendered a noble and most important service, the memory of which should live in the hearts of a grateful people, of if they have rendered any service at all they have not merely saved Chicago from being a blackened and charred waste, but they have saved several of the western and border states from the rule of the enemy. It is apparent to any who know the position of the Federal and Southern armies on the 8th of November, 1864; that had the prisoners been released from Camp Douglas (and as a consequence a general release of prisoners from Rock Island, Johnson's Island, Camp Morton, Camp Chase, and all the Northern posts) an army of formidable proportions, desperate in the extreme, flushed with success, goaded by Grant's advance upon Richmond and joined by the treasonable secret societies, would not only have devastated our facilities but would have given our State and neighboring States into the power of the enemy.

If there is any truth in the charge of conspiracy against any of the prisoners lately on trial in Cincinnati, then this is all true. If there was any conspiracy, then this is its proportions for at that time had Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky and Missouri yielded, it would have been fatal to the cause of the union. That there was such a conspiracy none who have read the evidence in the Cincinnati trial can for a moment doubt, and the conviction of the defendants for their complicity with it was just. There can be no doubt as to the parties who first apprised the government of the existence of this plot, for the grateful acknowledgment of Major General Hooker, commanding the Northern Department, the letter of Brig. Gen. Payne, our noble and patriotic Governor, Hon. Richard Yates, Hon. I. N. Arnold, Col. Sweet's letters to the Secretary of War, all stand to tell how handsomely Dr. I. Winslow Ayer and Robert Alexander have served the government. Regardless of what the motives of these gentlemen were, all who admit that there was a conspiracy will concede that they have rendered a most important service.

But let us analyze the motives of these men. Dr. I. Winslow Ayer, a physician in Chicago, has ever been a Clay Whig, and an earnest out and out Union man. On the breaking out of the war he gave several months of his time to raising Union regiments; he is represented in the Second Ohio Cavalry by a good soldier, to whom the Doctor paid the bounty; for one year he supported two entire families of Union soldiers who by his inducement enlisted; he was ever an ardent supporter of the administration of President Lincoln, and made everything second to his love of country; for the past seven years he was a justice

of the Peace, and had been offered the position of Brigade Surgeon under Secretary Cameron;<sup>1</sup> although but two years a resident of Chicago, he was universally esteemed. Robert Alexander is well known in Chicago, and for the past twelve years has been recognized in that city as an earnest Republican. Every act of his life, in his official and private capacity, he has proved himself an uncompromising advocate of the Union, and has won host of friends. These gentlemen had no acquaintance or relation of any kind with the defendants who have been convicted by the tribunal and could not, therefore, have been prejudiced or actuated by malice in regard to them. Dr. Ayer having a lucrative and extensive practice, without political ambition, and Mr. Alexander in a position where he was amply satisfied; there being no reward offered no provision for the payment of such services as they rendered, except the trifling compensation of detectives, which neither of these gentlemen needed and of which neither would have been willing to accept, Dr. Ayer steps aside for several months from his profession and peaceful avocations of his life to hazard all, even life itself, in a most difficult and distasteful branch of science of his country; he calls to his aid Mr. Robert Alexander, who from pure patriotism enters upon the task and it is at length successful, accomplished; the conspirators are foiled, the city is saved, and the disaster to the country averted.

If there is any confidence to be placed in the testimony of Messrs. Ayer and Alexander, it is all entitled to implicit credence, as they testify the results of their own observation and personal investigation. If their evidence is true in relation to one of the prisoners, it is worthy of entire credit in its relation to the others. If their testimony is false, they are perjurers and ought to be hung. If it be true, why we ask is B. S. Morris, and C. W. Patten, and J. A. Wilkinson, and J. L. Rock, (of the Times) and L. O. Morrison, and Obadiah Jackson Jr. and James Geary and L. A. Doolittle and C. C. Strawn at large today? They should be in the penitentiary or on their way to execution as the blackest traitors, or Ayer and Alexander should suffer such penalty. We submit that unless the testimony of Ayer and Alexander [illegible] guilty, tenfold more guilty than Semmes, now in the penitentiary; if so, they are as guilty as Walsh, or more so, and as guilty as Bowles, Milligan or Horsey.<sup>2</sup> They are guilty as Ayer and Alexander are. There is no halfway state of things here. Let the truth be known and justice be done. Let the guilty suffer. No compromise with crime, especially with treason or perjury. Meet the issue squarely. Give Ayer and Alexander to the penitentiary or the halter, or to those places be consigned the blackest hearted traitors that pollute the South. Either Ayer and Alexander are heroes and men whom all loyal citizens should delight to honor, or they are demons whom 'twere base flattery to call men; there was or there was not [illegible line].

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<sup>1</sup> Union secretary of war Simon Cameron (1861-1862). He was replaced with Edwin M. Stanton (1862-1868).

<sup>2</sup> Dr. William A. Bowles, Lambden P. Milligan, and Stephan Horsey, tried by military tribunal in Indianapolis for plotting to overthrow the Indiana state government and simultaneously free thousands of Confederate prisoners being held in Camp Morton located on the outskirts of Indianapolis.

But the evidence of the guilt of the defendants does not rest upon Ayer and Alexander alone; it is supported by the admission of many who were arrested and lodged in Camp Douglas.

We call upon Brig. General B. J. Sweet, commanding Camp Douglas, to give us information of Rock's written statement, of C. C. Strawn's confession, of the statement of Obadiah Jackson, Jr., and of the confessions of others, and tell us of the disposal of James A. Wilkinson, when he was brought to Camp Douglas; and if L. A. Doolittle was ever called from his hotel in Gilmore; On the presumption of their innocence, why do not those men, who were shut up in Camp Douglas, obtain redress for false imprisonment. Why not arraign Ayer and Alexander for perjury? They have not, they will not, they dare not. When the defendants had raked creation over for witnesses, how signally did they fail to impeach the testimony of Ayer and Alexander. It could not be done. Conviction followed. Why Judge Morris was acquitted the tribunal best know.

But till Dr. Ayer and Robert Alexander shall be in the penitentiary for perjury, and the gate closed after them, their testimony will be believed, and being believed, the people will record the verdict.

Messrs. Ayer and Alexander having broken up this formidable conspiracy, having saved Chicago from ashes, and the country from a terrible disaster, we have no doubt the magnanimity of the citizens, the gratitude of the people of that city and of our State and the whole country, will be evinced toward those men. Let us either endorse and approve the Sons of Liberty and other secret traitors, who killed our President, or commend the noble services of the men who have broken up these organized bands. One or the other we must do. We presume that ere now the citizens of Chicago have moved in the matter of proper recognition, and their example should be followed by the loyal people of our state, and of the entire Union, who cannot but feel the highest admiration for such noble patriotism.

(3:180-82)

"A" 426 (JAO) 1865

Printed Pamphlet

"To the Union Citizens of Chicago"

At the request of prominent citizens of this city the author of this publication respectfully submits the following facts without comment and solicits careful perusal and impartial judgment of the same.

From the Chicago Tribune

The Chicago Tribune in copying the letter of Hon. I. N. Arnold, said:

"The following letter from Mr. Arnold is a justly deserved tribute to two gentlemen who at the risk of their lives have rendered our city a service which we hope will always be gratefully remembered.

Dr. Ayer advised one of the proprietors of the Tribune of the existence of a conspiracy to release the rebels from Camp Douglas, at the time he was so fortunate as to discover it, and his subsequent course in ferreting out the affair, was in part, owing to the encouragement given him."

Testimonial from Hon. Isaac N. Arnold

"Chicago, May 10, 1865.

"Dr. I. Winslow Ayer:

"Dear Sir: Constant and pressing engagements have prevented my acknowledging at an earlier day, my appreciation of the great service you have rendered the country.

"I remember that last summer you called upon me and stated your belief in the existence of a wide-spread conspiracy, having its agents, some of them in our very city. So startling were the disclosures that it was difficult to believe that anything so infamous could exist.

Subsequent events and the terrible tragedy, developing such fiend-like atrocity at Washington, have shown that we were all too slow in guarding against traitors and their barbarous plots.

My intercourse with you impressed me with your sincerity and patriotism and sincere desire to serve the country. For the courage, vigilance and activity you have displayed, you are entitled to the gratitude of the people.

"Your associate, Robert Alexander, I have known for several years, and always regarded him as a most active and efficient man, of great skill as an officer. Both of you are, in my judgment well entitled to the favor of the Government.

Very respectfully yours,  
Isaac N. Arnold"

Testimonial from Governor Yates

Jacksonville, Ill. May 6, 1865

I. Winslow Ayer, M. D.,

Dear Sir: Yours of April 29th, is just before me, on my return from Springfield. I will only say just now, I remember you are entitled to the greatest consideration and highest gratitude, for your conduct in bringing to light the dangerous conspiracy, and it is very strange that due credit has not been given you long ago. I have wondered why your agency in the matter has been kept so still. The most pressing duties have kept me from watching the progress of the trials and parties who have been connected therewith. Mr. Arnold and I can say much for your effective agency in the premises.

In haste, Truly Yours,  
Richard Yates, U.S.S.

Letter from Brig. Gen. H. E. Paine  
 Headquarters District of Illinois  
 Springfield, Ill, Aug. 27, 1864

Colonel,

Be kind enough to express to I. W. Ayer, my sincere thanks for his report and for his private letter to me. The composition certainly indicates talent of a high order. I have written to Department Headquarters on his behalf, and if his services afford a tangible basis of recommendation at all commensurate with present promise, I shall urge him at Washington for a staff commission.

Very Truly Your Obedient Servant

H. E. Paine, Brig. Gen. Commanding  
 Col. B. J. Sweet, Commanding Camp Douglas

From Brig. Gen. B. J. Sweet  
 Dec. 1864

Dear Doctor:

I have been, and am ill; have not forgotten you. I received your long note and have taken good care to arrange so that in no event you will suffer. Gen. Hooker, Gen. Paine, Gov. Yates, Jenkins and Hodges, my letters to Secretary of War, all will stand to tell how handsomely you have served the Government, if I die. Time at last makes all things even. Be of good cheer. Of course we want to know all we can about "our friends" (Sons of Liberty) in this State. Maj. Burnett has ere now your report about the "address" verbatim. Don't think I forget you or your admirable service if I am silent from any cause.

Ever Yours,  
 J. Sweet

Recent Letter from Brig. Gen. Sweet  
 Camp Douglas, April 14, 1865, 9 AM

My Dear Doctor:

Your note was received late last evening. Its despondent tone pains me. Be of good cheer—inasmuch as you have done right. You will be sustained. All will be well. Right on in the path of duty, though the heavens fall. Serene and confident in the condition of mind and heart which always ensures success and honor in the end.

Your Sincere Friend,  
 B. J. Sweet

Certificate of Service by Brig. Gen. B. J. Sweet  
 Headquarters Post, Camp Douglas  
 Chicago, Ill., May 9, 1865

I hereby certify that Dr. I. W. Ayer, of Chicago, Ill., from and after the 1st day of July 1864, up to the 1st day of January 1865, furnished information, concerning the general nature, character and purposes of the "Sons of Liberty," as

developed in the meetings of the local branch of that order, and the statements of its members of Chicago, Ill., by written reports to me.

Very respectfully submitted,

B. J. Sweet, Bt. Brig. Gen. Commanding Post

Deposition of I. Winslow Ayer, M. D.

I, I. Winslow Ayer, upon my oath depose and say that on or about the first of July 1864, I accidentally learned of the existence of a formidable conspiracy against the General Government, having for its object the subversion of the Government, and a revolution which was to be inaugurated in the Northern States. I instantly apprised Hon. I. N. Arnold, M. C. from this congressional district and W. H. Rand Esq., one of the proprietors of the Chicago Tribune: these gentlemen expressed an earnest desire for me to communicate the facts to the Chief Executive of this State, and gave me letters of introduction to Gov. Richard Yates, and I accordingly visited Springfield. Gov. Yates appreciating evidently the importance of the information, placed me by personal letter of introduction in communication with Brigadier General H. E. Paine, then commanding the District of Illinois. Gen. Paine fully appreciated the importance of the information, and of having a thorough and complete knowledge of the conspiracy, and expressed an earnest desire for me to obtain further information by every means in my power. I stated to him plainly that while I was willing to aid my country to the extent of my ability, at any and all hazards, I would not enter upon the work of a spy and informer, at any rate whatever, and that though without wish or taste for military life or rank, I would undertake the work as an officer of the United States, and with the commission of a staff officer in my possession, that I would be fully sustained by the General Government, and if need be, have power to call out a detachment of soldiers from Camp Douglas, to arrest, if expedient, the band of traitors in Council, that I would then arrange all my plans for a successful expose of the order throughout the State and the west, and would thus avoid the odium of a spy and informer, and detective, in the general sense of the word. Gen. Paine readily admitted the justice and expediency of my holding such position, and I further remarked to him, that the work successfully accomplished, I would resign my position and office, and left Springfield with the confident belief based upon my interview with Gen. Paine, that so far as Gen. Paine had power to arrange, an arrangement was definitely concluded. I also arranged to report to him in cipher, and in such manner as might be expedient. I returned to Chicago, and entered upon the work, and made my reports to Gen. Paine, direct, but as it was deemed more safe to communicate with the commandant of this Post, and as he was highly commended by Gen. Paine, I consented to do so, and for many months furnished Col. B. J. Sweet with regular dispatches, for which he expressed his deepest sense of gratitude. Early in pursuing my investigations, I secured the cooperation and active services of Robert Alexander, of this city, and so apprised Col. Sweet. During the autumn, Col. Sweet introduced me to Maj. Gen. Joseph Hooker, and gave to that officer a statement of my relations to the Government. During



the summer and autumn, Col. Sweet and I were in private communication by letter and personal interviews, at least, as often as once or twice a week, and sometimes oftener. He was fully aware of my relations to the Government, and expectations from Gen. Paine, as I had fully informed him. During the month of August, he (Sweet) placed in my hands a letter from Gen. Paine, which is hereunto annexed, marked "A" and expressed his fullest confidence that the appointment would be made; and at a time subsequent to the arrest of parties tried in Cincinnati, he stated to Judge Advocate Burnett, in the Sherman House, in my presence, and in presence of others, the important services I had rendered, and expressed the hope that should he be promoted to a Brig. Generalship, I should be placed upon his staff. If this had been done, I should have gone upon the witness stand in Cincinnati, in quite a different character from what I did. In the interim between my interview with Gen. Paine and the Cincinnati trial, Gen. Paine had been elected to Congress, and hence was no longer in command of the District of Illinois, and there was no one to whom I could look for a fulfillment of the arrangement with Gen. Paine; and stating in a note to Gen. B. J. Sweet, in December, my great disappointment, he addressed to me a letter marked "B" herewith annexed.

During the interviews I had with Col. Sweet, he never failed to consult with me in regard to the information given and its consequences. He made few if any moves whatever without previous consultation with me, and with a single exception I was consulted in regard to the expediency of the arrests of Sons of Liberty in this city, and I was desired by him (Col. Sweet) to furnish him a list of names of parties whom he should arrest, and we agreed upon this list, I having full power to add to and strike from the list of persons to be arrested. This list was brought to me by one Lieut. Jenkins, and after revision by me was returned to the officer and arrests made in accordance therewith. I was consulted and my wishes followed in regard to who should not be arrested. While I was in Cincinnati waiting to be called to the stand as a witness, Sweet telegraphed to his Orderly Sergeant (so I was told by Sweet) to have all my dispatches which were then in headquarters in Camp Douglas sent to Cincinnati as matters of reference to me, to enable me to fix dates, etc. These dispatches, embracing very many of those I had addressed to Sweet, came, and were placed in my hands, together with a list of Sons of Liberty in Chicago, and the list of persons to be arrested, and who were arrested after consultation and concurrence between Sweet and myself. All of these papers are at the date of this instrument on deposit in the city of Chicago. In our interviews, Sweet never failed to gratefully acknowledge the immense importance of my services, and has said to me repeatedly that the citizens and the country should know how faithfully and well I had served the country, and if there was anything on earth, either by writing, speaking, or any other manner, in which he could express the debt of gratitude he felt, by all means I should call upon him and he would regard it as a privilege to do so. He has also expressed himself in unqualified terms of commendation to W. H. Rand, John A. Sleeper, Gov. Yates, Lieut. Jenkins, Rev. E. W. Hagar and others, as I learn from these gentlemen themselves. He has also repeatedly,

while dining at my table at my own residence stated again and again, the great importance of my services. I furthermore swear that after I had been upon the witness stand in Cincinnati, and had testified to the part I had taken, which testimony was in nowise contradicted or denied by Gen. Sweet, and I had thus appeared upon the stand, not with a commission or other evidence of my true relation to the government, and had drawn down upon myself the hatred of the party adverse to the government, and the distrust and contempt of lukewarm Union men, who failed to understand my true position, and either evidently regarded me as a reformed copperhead who had crept out of the treasonable organization and turned upon my companions to save myself, or was a rebel who had taken the oath of allegiance—as some of the important witnesses were, and had done, I applied to Gen. Sweet for a certificate of a few lines, for publication in the papers of this city, as a matter of self-defense, inasmuch as the reports and unjust versions, by various parties in the city had caused a most damaging effect upon me socially and professionally, and I felt morally certain that a knowledge of the facts by the people, would instantly dissipate false theories, and at once establish my former status. Bt. Brig. Gen. Sweet promised repeatedly such a letter, but to this hour has given none, but expressed his desire for me to preserve “all serenity though the heavens fall,” as will be seen by his letter marked “C” hereunto annexed.

I furthermore swear that Gen. Sweet was applied to by me to certify to an account against the government by which means I might have been reimbursed for the money which I had expended from my own pocket at least, while in this most perilous service of my country, and not one dime of which has ever been refunded by any person whatever; and although I left the sum wholly optional with him if he was not satisfied with the sum named, and Gen. Sweet positively refused to certify to any account whatever, and only furnished me with a certificate, marked “D” to the effect that I had rendered services for six months, which so far as being a basis for recovering money from the government is as worthless as blank paper, as all who have had government accounts well now. I further state that I have not received a dollar from the government or from any source whatever, either as compensation for the six long weary months services by day and by night, at the peril of my life, and which peril it is supposed still exists, nor have I reason to expect such compensation; nor have I received a dollar to reimburse me for my own money expended in the investigation which is the subject of this deposition. My reward is the consciousness of having discharged my duty, and that a few friends appreciate the importance of the services rendered, to all of which I solemnly swear.

I., Winslow Ayer

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 16th day of May, A. D. 1865

W. L. Schrader, Notary Public

Deposition of Robert Alexander

I, Robert Alexander, who being duly sworn do hereby depose and say, that while I was in Cincinnati, in or about January 1865, I had a conversation with Col.

B. J. Sweet, in which, he (Col. Sweet) made the following voluntary statement, substantially, and in nearly or precisely the following language: "Mr. Alexander while you were aiding the government I always thought well of you; now I respect you. You have stood by the government in a most honorable manner. You are aware that I had a present of one thousand dollars and promotion, and must acknowledge that it was through your and the Doctor's agency that this was accomplished. I have the credit of this matter now too long. It does not belong to me and I will see that it be put upon those to whom it justly belongs, you and Dr. Ayer. If there is ever anything I can do for you, I shall consider it not only a duty, but a privilege in doing it for you." I furthermore state upon my oath that subsequent to this time I made application for a recognition of my agency in this matter, and have never received it.

I furthermore swear that the credit to which Col. Sweet alluded in Cincinnati, as belonging to myself and Dr. Ayer, and which he had worn too long, was the discovery and breaking up a formidable conspiracy against the general government, of which Dr. I. Winslow Ayer has spoken in his deposition.

Robert Alexander

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 23rd day of May 1865

W. L. Schrader, Notary Public

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# B

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“B”

(7:112-15)

*F-27*

Letter to Mr. H. from B. June 13, 1864  
Montreal, June 13/64

My dear Mr. H.

I can write now more hopefully of your matters but not so [illegible] as I could wish. The enclosed correspondence will lay the business before you to the present time & if I learn anything before the steamer from Halifax for Bermuda leaves on the 27th I will advise you by telegraph from this place to Halifax. The due course of mail taking quite a week between these two points.

You may well imagine my surprise to find C. C. had accompanied J. T. on the business, with which I had the assurance of S\_\_\_n, Ben\_\_\_ & others I was to be connected; so it is, & not a line from yourself. It was a mortification to me as well as disappointment. I hope to hear you give some explanation by the steamer now nearly due; If not, please write me on receipt of this, and say if I am to be placed in ^that or^ any similar positions. I shall in a few days know whether I can do anything in the other business. The prospect is good but still if it fails I cannot reconcile it to ^my^ sense of duty to be a day longer from home. While if it succeed, I will still have to be here, with the power (I think) to help in the other matter but not the authority.

My expenses have been necessarily large in bringing in parties to me and in sending others to different parts of the country. Up to today our accounts are most exciting coming in from the Va., Ga., & southwest campaigns. God be praised.

My hand is not yet well & you see I write with difficulty and scarcely legibly. Love to all at your home and at mine.

Your very Truly

B

You will perceive by the note No 2 how much damned the party had become, but No. 3 is better. I write as directed & am daily expecting a reply in nature of which do I say more, I will telegraph you if we [sic] in time. My offer was 15000 gold with privilege to party to fall to 10,000 ditto.

“B”

(7:295-97)

*F-61*

No. 320

29

United States Consulate

London, June 14, 1865

W. Hunter, Esq.

Acting Secretary of State

Sir,

I herewith enclose copies of further letters in reference to the conspiracy plot which will explain themselves. Permit me to ask your careful attention to them. If the information communicated by my correspondent can be relied on, they are so much afraid that Tomlinson, alias Johnston, will fulfill his threat to them, and make a full disclosure to our government, and surrender certain very damaging letters from Jeff Davis and his Secretary of State Benjamin, that Mr. Slidell's secretary Mr. Eustice will leave next week for Canada to compromise with Tomlinson and try to get him back here. My correspondent thinks he can easily induce Tomlinson in his doubtful and dissatisfied state of mind to make a full disclosure of all he knows and surrender the letters, etc. if he could see him. He also knows Donelson and other members of the order of assassins now in Canada. After reflecting on the whole matter, I have come to the conclusion that it is my duty to send him to you with all possible dispatch, that the proper persons may arrange a plan of operations with him and send him to Canada, with as little delay as possible, so that he may get hold of Tomlinson and send him to Washington before Eustice reaches Montreal, and them, if thought of sufficient importance, he Bunting can stop in Canada with the conspirators and gather up all he can of them and their plans.

B. will leave Queenstown on the Cunard Steamer for Boston on Saturday next the 17th. Eustice will leave the Thursday following on a steamer for Quebec. If you approve and carry out my plan of procuring Tomlinson and attempting to get further information in regard to the assassins and their designs, I hope you will be prepared to give my agent a speedy audience and ready dispatch as he must reach Canada as soon as possible.

In the hope that my action in this case will meet your approval

I remain your obedient servant.

F. N. Morse

Consul

PS I made a mistake in saying B. would leave by the steamer for Boston, there is no steamer for Boston this week. We will go to New York and direct to Washington.

“ B ”

(7:298-300)

F-61

Paris, Saturday, 7 June 1865

Dear Sir,

I wrote you yesterday and gave you particulars of the threatened disclosures of Johnston against the rebels here, as well as against those in Canada, if they did not pay him and his accomplices a specified sum, which he had demanded. The meeting took place last evening as I had stated it was intended and the only matter discussed was how to silence Johnson. Some were for paying him the money at once, awhile others said that if the money was paid, what security had they that he would not again make a second like demand on them and continue to do so. McLelland denounced the whole affair as bad and indiscrete to entrust Johnson with such an errand. This caused a deal of angry discussion with high words. McCulleck stated that all were implicated in the affair and they had not come there to create disturbance or make unpleasantness. It was a bad affair and they must make the best of it. His opinion was that if Johnson could be depended upon they had better compromise with him, as they had sufficient funds in the treasurer's hands. This caused another

[missing page]

Did not seem to return to Europe. So it is agreed that if he will not come out here, that Eustace will go out to Canada and arrange with him so as to get him back here. He is in possession of a letter, which gives them more trouble than all the rest. If that letter was in the hands of our government it would be a bad affair, as it would implicate Jeff Davis and the others and be most unfortunate at this time. He it appears is known in all the Booth's plots and I wrote you that he was in Washington at the time and said that he must leave Yankee Land as it was getting too hot for him. This fellow has been in the Rebel Army. His real name is Charles Johnston Tomlinson and while here I was in the most intimate terms with him and he is now in my debt 75 francs. If you remember the first of last winter I told you or rather wrote you that there was a Lieutenant Tomlinson had just arrived here from the South, and brought some papers for Slidell; but I was not aware that he was the man Johnston, who I told you had gone out on the assassination mission. You will perceive he has left out the last of his name and taken that of Johnston. This is when I was off my guard, as to the person, but it's the same man and I am on the most intimate terms with him, as we were constantly together while here. He must be got hold of by some means <sup>^as^</sup> he would be of the utmost importance to our government, and if I can only succeed reaching him before he returns to this country, I have no hesitation in saying he will be guided by me, especially when I tell him what is to be his fate if once in the hands again of his would be friends, and more especially if our government would give him a bribe which I have no doubt they would be glad to do under the circumstances.

I shall finish this tomorrow.

B

"B"

(7:301-2)

*F-61*

Sunday 10 June 1865

Dear Sir,

I wrote a couple of sheets yesterday and would have mailed it, but it could not reach you before Monday so I resume it for today. I stated then that Tomlinson, alias Johnston (he is a spare built man, black hair, black eyes, wears a moustache only, rather a large mouth, teeth very white) is one and the same person, as I had never heard him called by the name of Johnston I was not aware I had ever seen him or knew such a person, but when I was told it was Charles Johnson Tomlinson who was the man and that I knew him well, you may believe my astonishment. I remember now that he did disappear from here suddenly, but I supposed he had gone to Savannah with some other parties who went out there about the same time. We have but a week to go and come, so what day next week or this does a steamer leave for Boston. That way I could go to Washington and then return back to Portland and from there go into Canada by the Atlantic and St. Lawrence Railway. This could be done without suspicion.

I would not dare to cross the line west of that from the simple fact I have led them to believe that I would not be safe in New York. It would be almost necessary that I should go to Washington before I went to Canada, so as to come to some understanding as to future movements while out there. I will come to you on receipt of your answer. We can then arrange together what is best to be done.

Yours truly,

B

"B"

(7:303-4)

*F-61*

Paris June 13, 1865

Dear Sir,

Yours received. I shall be all ready to go by Saturday's steamer, as it would be impossible for me to catch the steamer of tomorrow. Eustace will leave on Thursday of next week, 22nd. I was told last evening by McCollouch, he would have gone this week could he have procured a state room, its fortunate for me that he does not go until next week, as this will give me a week's start of him. I am in possession of all the information I require as to where to find him (Johnson or Donaldson) as well as some others. I have not seen Eustace since Sunday evening and then he was very high. He had been to the races. I must go to Cork to take the Steamer as I would not dare risk it at Liverpool. There are so many rebels there that I might be seen going on board. I shall write you again before I come, but on Friday morning or evening I shall be at your hotel. They must not detain me at Washington more than a few hours, so as to give me full time at

Montreal before Eustace gets there. Be sure to state this, so that it will not take me long to arrange with them my plans.

Yours truly,

B

**JOHN JACOB BABCOCK**

(3:703-6)

"B" 581 (JAO) 1865

John Jacob Babcock

Envelope: Hon. Judge Jolt, Judge Advocate General, Washington DC, Postmark Ashaway RI May 31

Ashaway, R. I. May 30/65

Judge Holt

Honored Sir,

I address you to inform you of a young man now in this place named Edgar W. Irish, a member of the 85th NY Vols. who was taken prisoner by the Rebels at Plymouth N. C. in the battle by which they won the fortifications of that place and who I think may have some papers and documents which will add to the testimony being furnished at the court now sitting.

He was imprisoned at the Andersonville prison, for the first two or three months in the stockade, after which till the 24th of March of this year he was taken to duty in the hospital as clerk, during which time he was often employed to write by dictation of the surgeons, their reports, a copy of one of which he has precisely a facsimile so to speak of the original, as he wrote it all even to the signature; in which the surgeon reports the prisoners starving etc. Another surgeon's report he secured and has in his possession at the present time, which was written by and signed by the surgeon himself, Act. Asst. Surg. Wm. J. Reeves. In this the surgeon reports the prisoners suffering greatly for want of clothing and firewood, etc. I thought these reports might be of some benefit as why I address you upon the subject.

Mr. Irish was allowed many privileges outside the prison, about the immediate vicinity of the village and may have knowledge beyond what prisoners ordinarily have of the conversations, etc. of Rebel officer. He heard the speech of Howell Cobb to the conscripted militia, saw prisoners shot dead for a mere pretext of an offense, and while he was in the stockade, was Captain of company in the so nearly successful undermining plot of the prisoners. As to his veracity, I have only to say that his best friends and those who know him best and have known him longest, never doubt a letter of his statements.

I think he would gladly furnish his papers or attend himself by addressing him at this place for two or three weeks should you deem his knowledge or papers of any consequence to the investigation.

I am, sir, Most Resp,

John Jacob Babcock



**AUGUST BACHUS**

(3:836-37)

*"B" 623 (JAO) 1865*

August Bachus

Washington

August Bachus 508 11th St. between Pa. Ave. and E Street reports that his mother in law, living in same house with him, had observed since Sunday April 23rd at about the dawn of the day a person dressed in ladies clothes, gray dress & grayish cloak, come down (in a southern direction) 11th St. and went into United Hall on 11th St. opposite the house of Mr. Bachus.

April 26, 1865

Wm. M. W.

**HENRY M. BAILEY<sup>1</sup>**

(4:53-57)

*"B" Evid. B. (JAO) P3 1865*

Washington D. C.

Statement of Henry M. Bailey

I live in Port Tobacco and have lived there since 1858. I was one year away in the service of the Confederate army. Did not desert, but served out my time then. Went back to Maryland to live between July and October 1863. I was with my aunt near Newport in Charles County Maryland. My aunt's name is Elizabeth Bailey. Did not visit Washington City for five years before I entered the rebel service. Came here since in March 1865. Started from Port Tobacco then in company with Atzerodt, did not come to Washington to stay but a short time, came up on Tuesday and went back on Saturday. In Washington I stopped at the Pennsylvania House with Atzerodt. There I met Mr. Walter Barnes whom I know, he is from Allen's Fresh Maryland. I also know Atzerodt well, did not have much conversation with him and what I did have was only commonplace, about the news of the day etc. We occupied Room 50 or 51 can't say which. I came from Port Tobacco in a buggy, but don't know to whom it belonged. Atzerodt had charge of it. We returned by the stage on the Saturday following. Atzerodt rode with us about a square from the hotel can't say what was the subject of the conversation during the time we were in the stage with Atzerodt. I came to Washington to take a little "turn around". I was out of business. I met Herold once while we were in Washington, he was then in our Room at the Penn. House. Don't know what the conversation between Herold, Atzerodt and Barnes, in our Room was about. Don't know what Herold came there for. The three days I was here we knocked around town; only visited hotels and our rooms, am not much acquainted in the city, part of the time I went around with Atzerodt. Can't say whether we visited any other hotel than the National or not, can't tell

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<sup>1</sup> Bailey was a known associate of George Atzerodt and was suspected of involvement in Lincoln's assassination. Bailey was arrested and held for several weeks before he was released. His role, if any, died with him.

what barrooms we visited; was not with Herold but little, mostly with Atzerodt except when alone. I have relations here, but did not go to see them because I was here but three days. I intended to see them but did not; this is usual with me. Have been here in all four or five times and never visited them but once when I stayed a week or more. That was four or five years ago. When I left Washington this last time, I went home to Port Tobacco, where I remained from Saturday to the following Sunday and then went to my aunt's near Newport which is two miles from Allen's Fresh. Stayed at my aunt's one week and about the 10 of April I went to Cobb's Neck. Done nothing while at my aunt's saw no one while there until on the day they had a sale, when I saw several persons. I have a very good memory and don't intend to have it fail me when asked questions. Atzerodt did not go to Port Tobacco with me. Met Herold first, some twelve months ago at Port Tobacco. I last saw him in Washington, one of the days I was here between Tuesday and Saturday. Atzerodt is a resident of Port Tobacco, am intimately acquainted with him. Never met Booth at Port Tobacco. Had no particular place then of meeting Atzerodt. Can't say where I most frequently met him, probably saw more at the Brawner House than elsewhere where I was keeping bar. From my aunt's I went to my cousins and stayed one night and then went to Simms's about two miles from my cousins where I stayed nine or 10 days, and started for Port Tobacco on the 20th of April on foot and was arrested at Allen's Fresh all alone. When I left Port Tobacco and went to my aunt's my object was to get into some other business as I was tired of barkeeping. Left the Brawner House at Port Tobacco on the 27th or 28th of March; had no dispute with my employer; I have a little money invested in promissory notes; the interest pays me about \$30 per year I had about \$30 when I left the Brawner Hotel and had no prospect of any situation at that time. Left the Brawner House on Tuesday and arrived here the same day with Atzerodt I paid my fare at the hotel. Atzerodt and myself occupied the Room while there; met no one whose names have been mentioned in connection with the conspiracy but Herold and Atzerodt. Mr. Barnes ^stayed^ there one night all I know of him is that he is a young fellow who lives at Allen's Fresh. I was intimate with him and have met him before seeing at this hotel. Atzerodt's character is good at Port Tobacco. I think he has no spunk. He is a carriage painter by trade; don't know how steady he has worked while at Port Tobacco; did not see him have much money while here with me.

**THOMAS L. BAILEY**

(6:330-31)

*"B" R.B. (JAO) P84 1865*

Washington April 26th 1865

Thomas L. Bailey

Thomas L. Bailey, saddler, states:

That he lives on Pa. Av. No. 392; is employed there by F. A. Lutz as a saddler. States that he knows Jno. H. Surratt, has known him six months, adds. I do not remember seeing him in the store since I have been there which is about

six weeks. Since in that employ I have been in the store constantly except on the Monday preceding the murder, the Saturday following it, and the day of the funeral. I work in the back part of the store. Surratt might have come there and I not have seen him, the store being a long one. I don't think however that he came there.

Thos. L. Bailey

**COLONEL JAMES HEATON BAKER<sup>1</sup>**

(2:407-16)

"B" 105 (JAO) 1865

Headquarters Dept. of the Mo.  
Office Provost Marshal General  
Saint Louis, Mo. April 24th 1865  
Hon. C. A. Dana  
Assistant Secretary of War  
Washington DC

Sir,

Your telegram of the 22nd inst. directing me to make a thorough search of the premises of Miss Blanche Booth<sup>2</sup> and Ben DeBar for any correspondence of J. Wilkes Booth, etc., was received Saturday evening.

In reply I have the honor to state that I immediately directed my Chief of Police to arrest the parties named and bring them to this office, which was done without delay and their sworn statements were then taken to ascertain what their relations with Booth had been; whether they knew or had reason to believe he meditated the murder of the late lamented President, etc. These examinations are herewith forwarded, marked A and B.

In the meantime two of my officers with a sufficient police force seized and held possession of the residence of Ben DeBar, when the house was searched from garret to cellar and all the papers of whatever nature were brought to this office, where they were examined.

From these papers and effects, and from the statements of the parties, I learn that Miss Blanche Booth, alias DeBar, is an adopted daughter of Ben DeBar, proprietor of the Saint Louis Theater, Saint Louis, and of the Saint Charles Theater, New Orleans.

She is the daughter of Junius Brutus Booth, Jr., from whom, when she was but a child, her mother procured a divorce, he having previously gone to California, in company with a prostitute by the name of Harriet Mace, by whom he has had children. Harriet Mace has since died.

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<sup>1</sup> James H. Baker was appointed Union provost marshal of St. Louis in 1863 and later for the Department of Missouri. His report to Charles Dana gives an accurate summation of the relationship of the DeBar and Booth families and especially of Blanche Booth DeBar and John Wilkes Booth.

<sup>2</sup> Daughter of Junius Brutus Booth Jr. and Clementine DeBar Booth and niece of John Wilkes Booth. Blanche Booth became an actress and after her parents' divorce adopted her mother's maiden name of DeBar.

It appears, from the papers, and from information obtained from DeBar, that all intercourse between Blanche Booth and her father long since ceased. Her mother, whose maiden name was Clementine DeBar, and who was a sister of Ben DeBar, has for a long time lived in Richmond, Va. and has been connected with the New Richmond Theater. Although Ben DeBar was instrumental in procuring a divorce for his sister from her husband, there has been a bad feeling existing between them for some time, and he will not allow Blanche to have any intercourse with her mother, whose character it is alleged is decidedly questionable.

At the breaking out of the rebellion Miss Blanche Booth (DeBar) was in New Orleans, where she had for some time previously resided. She was educated in Memphis, and has been an unmitigated rebel, as indicated by her papers, by poetry addressed by her to rebel officers, by correspondence received by her from the same parties, and by various expressions of sentiment found in her writings. The two first portraits in her album were those of Jeff Davis and Semmes, the pirate; and exact and minute map, sketched in pencil, of Island No. 10 with explanations of the positions of Federal gunboats and fortifications, was found among her papers. Many of the letters, pictures, mementos, scraps of poetry and extracts from newspapers found in her possession, indicate, unmistakably her rebel sentiments. She is a young lady of 24 years, of fine appearance and bearing the Booth family likeness in a very distinct manner. She is possessed of considerable personal attractions, of a vigorous mind and marked histrionic ability. She recently made her debut on her uncle's stage and was quite successful. She is continuing her preparations for a stage career and informs <sup>me</sup> that it is still the purpose of her life. She avows she has a deep abhorrence for the act of her uncle. She admits it is true that in the outbreak of the war, being in New Orleans, surrounded by young rebel officers, her sympathies were warmly with the South, but that since her return North, her mind has been entirely changed with regards to the contest, and she says she now thinks the South is wrong and that the old flag of the Union should be sustained.

A large number of family letters were found among the papers of Miss Blanche Booth, but no communication of any character from her uncle, John Wilkes, with the exception of a card on which was written in pencil the following:

“Dear Blanche,  
Excuse me this evening for not keeping my word. Will see you tomorrow.  
Your Nunkee  
John”

The other papers from him were in the possession of Ben DeBar, but they were simply three short notes relative to his engagements at the St. Louis Theater. The following copy of one is a sample of the rest:

“Sept 22nd /63

B. DeBar, Esq.

Dear Ben

Yours of 20th Rec'd. All right. Book me for the two weeks to begin Jan. 4th 64. Share after \$140 per night, and benefit each week.

With regards to all,

I am Truly Yours,

J. Wilkes Booth”

Both Ben DeBar and Blanche Booth state that John Wilkes was exceedingly fond of money, that he was niggardly and avaricious and they never knew him to squander money in rioting or excesses of any kind, except possibly with women. They had noticed this as a marked trait in his character.

The letters of Edwin Booth are numerous. They breathe a kind and amiable spirit, and contain no allusion to political matters or public men.

He married a Miss Mary Develin, a woman of extraordinary beauty and amiability, to whom he was devotedly attached. She died about four years ago, since which time Edwin has lived with his mother.

There were some letters from Asia Booth, the aunt of Blanche and next elder to John Wilkes. She is the wife of Mr. Clark, low comedian and joint proprietor with Edwin Booth of the Winter Garden Theater, New York. Asia's letters evince a high order of intellect, combined with an amiable disposition and heart. There are no references in any of them, or in any letters found in Blanche's possession, to John Wilkes, except that Asia once incidentally refers to John as her “brother” and to Edwin as her “darling”.

Ben DeBar is an Englishman and though he has lived in this country over 30 years, still claims the protection of the English Government. He has been connected with the Saint Louis Theater in this city for a number of years, and has the reputation of being a sympathizer with the rebellion. At the outbreak of the war he was several times admonished by Provost Marshals for pandering to rebel tastes on the stage of his Theater. There is no question whatever that all his inclinations were that way then, but he has lately, to protect his pecuniary interests, modified his demonstrations.

DeBar, also, has separated from his wife. Misfortunes of this kind seem to attend every member of the family, sooner or later.

In a letter of characteristic vigor and elegance from Asia to Blanche entreating her not to make the stage a profession, she relates that Eliza Mitchell, a cousin of hers who married well and then made her appearance on the stage giving every indication that she would excel “had unfortunately gone the wrong way, has parted from her husband (William Ward) and is now a miserable creature.”

Blanche Booth lives with her uncle Ben Debar, in his house adjoining his theater.

It may not be inappropriate to state here that this office gave warning in the summer of 1864 of the threats made in the Lodges of the Order of American Knights<sup>1</sup> throughout this Department to assassinate the leading civil and military officers of the Republic.

That organization was thought to have been broken up then, but recent facts have come to my knowledge which convince me that it is again at work here more secretly than ever, and its present leaders clearly intimate that they were cognizant of, if they did not participate in the plot which resulted in the dreadful tragedy at Washington.

I am sir

Very Respectfully

Your Obedient Servant

J. H. Baker

Col. & Provost Mar. General

Dept. of the Mo.

**J. HEATON BAKER**

(2:450-58)

“S” 115 (JAO) 1865

Head Quarters Dept. of the Mo.

Office Provost Marshal General

Saint Louis, Mo., May 5th 1865

Hon. C. A. Dana,

Assistant Sec. of War,

Washington, DC

Sir,

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt by reference from the Sec. of War, of a letter addressed to His Excellency the President, by one Robert Smith, of Saint Louis, in relation to plans “for the assassination of President Johnson” and for “keeping the Presidential chair vacant” etc.

Upon the receipt of this letter I caused Smith to be brought to this office and examined, and I herewith forward his sworn statement, marked “A”.

Smith states that, although unable to identify any of the persons engaged in the conversation in front of his saloon, at midnight on Sunday, April 23rd, he believes he has met one of the parties on the street. Since then and will be able to recognize him. I have instructed him, if an opportunity again occurs to find out who this man is and report him to me.

The only other possible way I can see of obtaining a clue, is by finding the man alluded to in the conversation as “Dock” who had gone to Washington at the time this conversation took place. I have notified my own police and also the Chief of the City Police to use their best exertions to find him.

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<sup>1</sup> The Order of American Knights (OAK) was a spin-off of the Knights of the Golden Circle. OAK members supported the Confederacy in a variety of ways, including the use of violence.

The assassination of President Lincoln has furnished occasion of sympathizers of the rebellion to express their gratification and to applaud the murderers. They are, however, very cautious, and it is only the boldest and most imprudent who have committed themselves in such a manner as to be brought to my notice.

Whether or not any parties here have had any direct connection with bringing about this dreadful occurrence I am not prepared to say, but the reports of my detectives show that there was a knowledge of the plot before it was put into execution. I am still pursuing my inquiries in this direction as far as possible with the limited means at my command.

Recent developments in this city satisfy me that the old rebel order of American Knights or Sons of Liberty, has been reorganized, and is at work in this Department, if not throughout the United States, with some vigor and more secrecy than ever before.

Its members appear to be principally those who have persistently adhered to the rebellion from the beginning and its object, still, is to paralyze or impede the operations of the Government. Its highest officer that we have been able to approach is William S. Pollard, of this city, a prominent member of the old order.

When Lee surrendered it circulated the report that his veteran troops, his effective artillery and ammunition, his best wagons, horses, etc. had been sent to Johnston and the balance, which had been surrendered to the Government, was good for nothing.

On Saturday, April 15th the day after the assassination of the President, a secret meeting of the leading men of the order was held at a house in North St. Louis, but for what object I am unable to say. John Morgan, one of my detectives, and the only one who has been able to accomplish anything with this set of men, was at the house while the meeting was in progress, but was not admitted, and was not even informed of its proceedings. In a conversation, however, with Pollard, the chief of these men, after the meeting broke up, Morgan was informed that he (Pollard) had expected this sooner; that there were others provided for at the time; that there was a man there for Grant, and it was intended that Stanton and Johnson should meet the same fate, that the thing had just now begun and it would be all over the country in a short time. "God Almighty has commenced to do the work for us at last." At the close of this conversation, Pollard and Morgan left the house in North Saint Louis, and proceeded towards the city. What transpired afterwards is best told by the following extract from Morgan's report to this office.

"On our way down we talked considerably, Pollard expressing a good deal of satisfaction that Mr. Lincoln was "put out of the way" we went into the Ruby Saloon, and were there about an hour and a half, fixing up some accounts between ourselves and while so engaged a gentleman came in and said, "Mr. Babcock has just told me that a couple of men were talking on the corner of Washington Avenue and 4th Street and one of them said, he didn't care if Lincoln was shot, it ought to have been done 3 years ago. A Lieutenant, Mr. Babcock believed, pulled

out his revolver and shot him on the spot. I also understand there have been a good many arrests made by the Provost Marshal General.

“Our books and papers were strewn all over the table and Pollard jumped up instantly, greatly excited and said, “I must go, I don’t know what I may have to do!” I gathered up the books and papers quickly as he appeared in such a hurry to get away. The gentleman whose remarks had so startled Pollard invited us to take a drink, but Pollard replied, “I can’t, I haven’t any time.” Then he turned to me, “I will meet you tomorrow morning, at 10 o’clock, or Monday” I told him I proposed to take a drink, as I was tired and needed it and I urged him to do the same. “Very well,” he said, “Only hurry up” So we took a drink. Pollard swallowing his all at once and rushing out, me after him. He appeared considerably excited about something. We went up Olive, toward 5th Between 4th and 5th he halted a moment and said to me, “Look here, there may be an outbreak tonight, if they do anything out of the way. We (referring I suppose to the O. A. K.) won’t notice what has been done just now, but if there is anything else there will be an outbreak. I want you,” he added, “to go right straight home. I have a place for you, and will dispatch you as soon as I find out you are needed, and if you hear anything of importance, let me know. There is soon going to be an attack all over the country. These assassinations will immediately be followed up, and” says he, “before this war is over, I pledge you my word that every state in this Union will be obliged to recognize slavery.”

Some 8 or 9 months ago a resolution was offered in one of the O. A. K. Lodges, in St. Louis, to provide for the raising and arming of a secret force to carry out the designs of the order in assassinating obnoxious parties.

Question: Did you understand that these assassinations were the signals or beginnings of what is to come?

Answer: Yes, sir, Pollard said it was so, and I have reason, now, to believe he knew about the time they were to take place. That he knew an attempt of the kind was to take place, I have no shadow of doubt, for he had repeatedly told me that all the head officers of the Government were to be assassinated at the proper time; and lately he has a great deal to say in regard to an attempt being made to assassinate Major General Dodge and certain parties in the Provost marshal General’s Dept. The organization of American Knights extends all over the country. Pollard has told me repeatedly that Lincoln would never serve his time. He now says the assassin could never be caught; that it was all arranged, and he had friends along the route to help him, as soon as he got started from Washington he would be safe.

I have taken no action against these parties as yet; further than to watch them and to introduce my agents into their society. They have, as yet, attempted no overt act to my knowledge sufficient to warrant their arrest and I consider that the true interests of the service, will, for the present, be best advanced by allowing them their liberty and extracting from them what knowledge they possess.



In January last one of my detectives reported that Dr. Jermaine and Thomas Parks, this city, were industriously and secretly at work on a new style of pistol, the object being to get up one that could be discharged without making a report, to be used for assassinating Army officers, Detectives, and prominent loyal citizens who were obnoxious to Southern sympathizers. It was to be charged with a poisoned needle. My agent saw the pistol, examined it, made a sketch of it and tried it on a pine plank. A correct sketch is herewith forwarded, marked "B".

Dr. Jermaine told him it would go through a two-inch pine plank, but would not inflict a wound sufficient to kill unless the needle was poisoned. When the Detective tried it, the needle passed over a space of about 20 feet and then lodged firmly in a pine plank.

In the latter part of February I ordered the arrest of Jermaine and Parks. The former was absent from the city at the time and his house was searched for the pistol, but as it could not be found, it is probable he took it away with him.

Parks was arrested and examined, but protested his innocence and was lodged in Gratiot Street Prison to await further developments.

On the afternoon of the 14th of April, the day of the assassination at Washington, my chief of Police reported that Dr. Jermaine had returned from the East. He was accordingly arrested, but indignantly denied all knowledge of the pistol, and no amount of questioning would induce him to commit himself in the slightest degree. Jermaine claimed to be a loyal Union man, and to sustain this position, stated (in confidence) that he was in partnership with Colonel Hilliard, of Lieut. General Grant's staff, in certain cotton speculations that Hilliard managed things at Washington while he (Jermaine) transacted the business and was the only party known to the public; that his recent trip to the East had reference only to this business, and was not for the purpose of procuring projectiles for the pistol, as had been reported to me. In proof of this he produced a telegram containing certain instructions about "cotton", "transportation" and "Red river", signed "C. L. Hillyard" and dated at either New York or Washington and directed to "Dr. Jermaine, care Hendell Drug Store, Saint Louis". Under the circumstances as no clue whatever could be obtained to the pistol, Dr. Jermaine was allowed to give his parole, and Parks was released from prison. I am still in hopes, however, of arriving at the truth of the matter, as I am confident the detective who is an intelligent, reliable man, and moves in the best class of rebel society, reported what he saw and knew to be true.

I am, Sir, Very Respectfully,

Your Obedient Servant,

J. H. Baker

Col. & Provost Marshal General

Dept. of the Mo.



Figure 1. Schematic diagram of a poison dart gun.

**J. D. BAKER**

(2:887–88)

*“B” 261 (JAO) 1865*

Baker, Col. J. D.

Letterhead: Headquarters, Department of the Missouri, Office of the Provost Marshal General, St. Louis, Mo. May 6th 1865

Special orders No. 112 extract

A. B. Converse, Asst. Chief USA will take charge Dr. Francis Tumblety<sup>1</sup> and proceed with him to Washington City in compliance with telegraphic orders from the War Dept., of this date. Upon his arrival at Washington, Officer Converse will report to Hon. C. A. Dana, Asst. Sec. of War, make such disposition of the prisoner as may be directed and return without delay to this office. Transportation will be furnished by the QM Dept.

J. D. Baker, Colonel and Provost Marshal General

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Francis Tumblety, the “Indian Herb Doctor,” was suspected of involvement in the assassination. David Herold had briefly worked for him at one time.

(2:889-91)

*"B" 261 (JAO) 1865*

Endorsement: Let the Indian Doctor tell all he knows about Booth & Booth's associates.

Bureau of Military Justice, May 10th 1865

Brig. Gen. Holt

General,

In compliance with Secretary Dana's directions, I send Dr. Tumblety, in charge of an officer of police, to you together with two (2) communications relating to him.

The Secretary thought the prisoner should be confined in the Penitentiary.

Very Respectfully, Your obdt. servant

AA Hosmer,  
Major & J. A.

(2:892-93)

*"B" 261 (JAO) 1865*

Baker, Col. J. D.

Letterhead: Headquarters, Department of the Missouri, Office of the Provost Marshal General, St. Louis, Mo. May 6th 1865

Hon. C. A. Dana

Assistant Sec. of War

Washington DC

Sir,

I have the honor to forward herewith, in compliance with your telegram of this date, Dr. Tumblety, alias Blackburn.<sup>1</sup> All his papers had been carefully examined previous to the arrival of your order, but nothing was found in them tending to implicate him with the assassination, or showing him to be in any way connected with Herold or any of the supposed assassins.

Tumblety's papers and his own admissions show that he has tramped the continent from Quebec to New Orleans, in the character of an "Indian Herb Doctor", has gained an extensive notoriety as an impostor and quack; has been compelled to leave several towns and cities in Canada for his rascality and tricking and is being continually importuned and threatened by those whom he has deluded and swindled.

Tumblety's principal associates in Saint Louis have been one J. W. Blackburn, his assistant in the "medical profession" and one Oregon Wilson, an artist.

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<sup>1</sup> Baker is mistaken in believing that Tumblety was "alias Blackburn" (Luke Pryor Blackburn, "the yellow fever fiend").

There appears to be nothing against them, except that they belong to a class of adventurers that encumber and prey upon society.

I am Sir,

Very Respectfully, Your obdt. Servant

J. D. Baker, Col. & Pro. Mar. Gen.

### LAFAYETTE C. BAKER 1865

"B" 240 (JAO) 1865

Baker, Col. L. C.

Letterhead: War Department, Washington City, May 6th

Col. H. S. Burnett

Judge Advocate

War Dept.

Sir,

I send you for examination Dr. Stewart,<sup>1</sup> Lieut.'s Bainbridge & Ruggles, Joseph Baton,<sup>2</sup> Wm. Bryant, Wm. Rollins, and Wm. Lucas. Bainbridge & Ruggles were formerly of Mosby's Command. It will be recollected that Dr. Stewart is the person to whom J. Wilkes Booth had the letters of introduction, Ruggles & Bainbridge held long conversations with Booth & Herold immediately after B. & H. crossed the Potomac.<sup>3</sup> Allow me to suggest the necessity of eliciting from these witnesses a full statement, as I fear they are disinclined to testify in this case, fearing they may criminate themselves, particularly Dr. Stewart.<sup>4</sup>

I am Colonel

Your Obt Servt

L. C. Baker

Col. & Agent War Dept.

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Richard Stuart. Booth's letters of introduction were to Samuel Mudd and William Queen, not Richard Stuart. Booth and Herold came to Stuart's summer home, Cleydael, on April 23 seeking help.

<sup>2</sup> Joseph N. Baden, a private in the Confederate Army, worked closely with Confederate agent Thomas Harbin.

<sup>3</sup> Booth and Herold met up with Ruggles, Bainbridge, and Jett at the Rappahannock River, not the Potomac.

<sup>4</sup> Of the prisoners listed, none testified at the trial although all seven had contact with Booth and aided him in his effort to escape capture.

(2:843-44)

*"B" 243 (JAO) 1865*

Baker, L. C.

Letterhead: War Department, Washington City, May 8th 1865

Col. H. L. Burnett

Judge Advocate General

War Dept.

Sirs,

I forward you this morning, as witnesses, D. Thomas, Samuel Cox, and colored girl Mary.<sup>1</sup> The man Thomas is the witness who says he will swear that Dr. Mudd told him some 3 weeks previous to the assassination that the President and other Cabinet officers would be murdered. I am Colonel, your obt. Servt.

L. C. Baker, Col. & Agt War Dept.

(2:914-17)

*"R" 266 (JAO) 1865*

Letterhead: War Department, Washington City, May 10th 1865

Col. H. H. Wells

Pro. Mar. Defenses of Washington

Sir,

I have the honor herewith to forward a list of all persons arrested by me in connection with the recent conspiracy to assassinate the President and Sec. of State. These persons were all arrested by direction of the Sec. of War, and are now confined in the Old Capitol Prison. John Celestino, arrested April 18th Emile Jarboe Apl 19th, J. W. Wharton Apl. 21st, George Jarboe April 21st, Jacob Miller & Oliver Brown Apl 24th, Edward Chelsey April 25th, R. Condon April 26th, Lewis J. Wiechmann April 30th, Joseph Barton, Wm. Bryant Wm. Rollins Wm. Lucas Willie J. Jett Dr. Stewart A. R. Bainbridge M. B. Ruggles John M and Wm. H. Garrett, H Clay Ford, Gifford ^and^ Jake (carpenters at Fords theater.)<sup>2</sup>

Reply yours

L. C. Baker

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<sup>1</sup> Daniel J. Thomas was a prosecution witness against Samuel Mudd (Poore I:135, III:306, Pitman 173, 174). Samuel Cox, a Confederate agent, had Booth and Herold hidden and placed under the care of Thomas Jones. Mary Simms, a former slave of Samuel Mudd, was a prosecution witness against Mudd (Poore II:150, Pitman 170).

<sup>2</sup> James Gifford and Jake Ritterspaugh.

(2:950-51)

*"B" 284 (JAO) 1865*

Baker, L. C.

Letterhead: War Department Washington City, May 10, 1865

Col. H. Burnett

Dr. Sir,

Your wishes respecting Mrs. H. shall be complied with.

I am yours etc.

L. C. Baker

Col. &amp; Agt. War Dept.

(2:1187-88)

*"B" 357 (JAO) 1865*

L. C. Baker

Letterhead: War Department, Washington City, May 17th 1865

Brig. Gen. J. Holt

Judge Advocate General

U. S. A.

Sir,

In talking with the two men sent to Bryantown some days since in search of witnesses to prove that Dr. Mudd was in Bryantown the Saturday following the assassination,<sup>1</sup> I find that any further search for witnesses to prove the above would be useless, a thorough and most searching examination, having been by my direction already made.

Respectfully Yours

L. C. Baker

Col. &amp; Agt. War Dept.

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Mudd acknowledged in his written statement (see 5:212-25) that he visited Bryantown on Saturday, April 15, shortly after one o'clock. Both John F. Hardy (PW, Poore III:431, Pitman 218) and Francis Farrell (PW, Poore III:418, Pitman 218) testified that Mudd told them he had learned of Lincoln's assassination while in Bryantown and that the assassin was a man named Booth.

(3:314-15)

*"B" 467 (JAO) 1865*

Col. L. C. Baker

Letterhead: War Department, Washington City, June 1st 1865

I hereby certify that the bearer of this, Wm. Jett<sup>1</sup> of Westmoreland Co. Va. was arrested on 1st of May.

Reply

L. C. Baker

Col. &amp; Agt War Dept.

(3:1285-86)

*"B" 745 (JAO) 1865*

Col. L. C. Baker

Endorsements: War Department, Bureau of Military Justice, June 7th 1865, respectfully returned to Col. L. C. Baker, Agt. Etc., with the suggestion that this application be addressed to the Secretary of War, in whose custody the papers desired are now held. A. A. Hosmer, Major and Judge Advocate, War Dept. July 1, Referred to Colonel Burnett with directions to comply with the request of Colonel Baker by order of the Secretary of War, C. A. Dana, Assist. Secretary of War

Letterhead War Department, Washington City, June 2nd, 1865

Judge Holt, Judge Advocate General

Sir,

In presenting claims to the Sec. of War for the payment of Bounty, offered by the government for the capture and conviction of the assassins, I would like to have the affidavits, or copies, of Col. E. J. Conger & Lieut. S. B. Baker<sup>2</sup> taken before you on board of the Gunboat, the morning after Booth's body arrived at the Navy Yard, as these affidavits form no part of the testimony taken before the commission. I thought it would not be improper to ask for them.

Resp Yours,

L. C. Baker

Col. &amp; Agt War Dept.

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<sup>1</sup> Private Willie Jett was one of three Confederate soldiers who accompanied Booth across the Rappahannock River on Monday, April 24, and found Booth lodging at the home of Richard Garrett. Jett was initially arrested on April 26 at the Garrett farm along with Herold but escaped and was rearrested on May 1.

<sup>2</sup> Colonel Everton J. Conger and Lieutenant Luther Byron Baker were among the group of soldiers that captured Herold and killed Booth. Conger received fifteen thousand dollars and Baker received three thousand dollars of the reward money for their part.

(3:1291-93)

*"G" 748 (JAO) 1865*

Col. L. C. Baker

Endorsement: Certificate for attendance from May 12th to May 26th issued  
Aug. 19th

Letterhead: War Department, Washington City, July 18th 1865

Maj. Hosmer

Asst. Judge Advocate Gen.

Sir,

John M. Garrett,<sup>1</sup> the bearer of this, was subpoenaed as a witness in the late conspiracy case by direction of the Secretary of War. He attended the court as a witness, but failed to get a certificate of attendance, will you please give him one, in order that he may draw his witness fees.

Respectfully yours,

L. C. Baker

Col. &amp; Agt. War Dept.

(7:91-94)

*F-21*

Letter to Eckert from Baker, July 2, 1865

Letterhead: War Department, Washington City, July 2nd 1865

Hon. T. E. Eckert<sup>2</sup>

Asst Sec. of War

Sir,

I have this moment received a letter from the Detective Officer I sent to Boston some days since, to watch the movements of the alleged conspirator, Geo. W. Wortman. Deeming said letter of some importance, I herewith send you a copy

Boston

June 30th

Col. Baker

Dear Sir,

I arrived in Boston on Sunday morning and found George W. Wortman the same evening walking out with his wife. Monday and Tuesday he was strolling around with his brother-in-law; Wednesday and Thursday he was going about the city alone, making calls on his friends. Friday I met with him purposely to have a conversation with him and it was a success. He gave me his history since last April. He knows Herold; has played billiards with him; knew Payne, by the

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<sup>1</sup> John M. Garrett, the son of Richard Garrett. Booth and Herold stayed at the farmhouse of Richard Garrett on April 24 and 25. John M. Garrett did not testify at the conspiracy trial.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas T. Eckert, assistant secretary of war and head of the War Department telegraph office.



name of Wood;<sup>1</sup> He says there is a plot in hand to murder the President, Secretary Seward, Stanton and General Halleck; if he had not gone to Richmond. He says that meeting was to have taken place in the Navy Yard Odd Fellows Hall, on the twenty sixth day of June. He further says the news of the meeting leaked out and his name connected with it frightened him to leave for home. He says he has been looking in the Washington Correspondence for the news of the attempt of the assassins. He says he was going to attend the meeting and then give the full particulars to the War Department. The Principal plotters are men living near the Navy Yard and if you want him to come to Washington, he thinks he can work the whole plot up for you. Send me word what I shall do.

(signed) D. V. Coldazer

Direct your letter to the Hancock House, No. 15 Court Square, Boston  
L. C. Baker  
Col & Agt War Department

(7:95-97)

F-22

Letter to Eckert from Baker, July 28, 1865 with enclosure April 24th 1863  
Envelope: address Mons. H. B. De Ste Marie, Ellengowan P.O. Baltimore Co.  
Maryland, Postmark Surratt's Md. April  
Surrattsville, Md.  
April 24th 1863  
Mons. H. de Ste. Marie<sup>2</sup>

Dear Sir,

I received a letter from Mr. Wiechmann yesterday, stating your intention to leave by the first of May. I spoke to Mr. Hill about a teacher. He said he wanted one and was willing to have you as our teacher, but he could not build his schoolhouse for some time.

If you have made up your mind to go Texas<sup>3</sup> I can send you all safely. Do not have the least doubt of it. Times are better than they were. All you have to do is to let me know what day you will be in Washington, and I will meet you. You can carry a hand trunk with you.

There will not be the least difficulty, only perhaps you will have to remain among us some two or three weeks. Still we can easily make the time pass agree-

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<sup>1</sup> Lewis Thornton Powell used the aliases Lewis Paine, Lewis Payne, and Reverend Wood.

<sup>2</sup> Henri Beaumont de Ste. Marie. In 1862 Ste. Marie was hired by Father William Mahoney to teach in his Catholic school near Texas, Maryland. While teaching at Father Mahoney's school, Ste. Marie met John Surratt and Louis Wiechmann, then students at Saint Charles College in Ellicott, Maryland (later Ellicott City). Wiechmann, at Ste. Marie's urging, found him a teaching position at Saint Matthews School in Washington.

<sup>3</sup> The reference is to Texas, Maryland, a small community approximately twenty miles from Baltimore.

ably. I suppose Texas looks as dreary as possible. My kindest regards to Father Mahoney. Do not fail to come to Washington.

Your Friend,

J. Harrison Surratt  
Mons. Ste Marie  
Ellen Gowan PM

(7:98)

*F-22*

Letterhead: War Department, Washington City, July 28th 1865

Major T. T. Eckert

Ass. Sec. of War

Sir,

The person who was living in the mountains in Pennsylvania, supposed to be John H. Surratt, has been arrested.

He claims that his name is Eugene T. Naines.

Enclosed are three letters found in his carpet bag. I deem the matter worthy of a further investigation.

Respectfully Yours,

L. C. Baker

Brig. Gen. and Agt War Dept.

**D. J. BALDWIN**

(7:205-7)

*F-48*

Letter to Stanton from Baldwin, May 1865

Washington City, DC Tuesday 30 May 1865

Hon. E. M. Stanton, Sec. War

Among seven prisoners captured the other day on the Florida coast in a boat appears the name of Frederick Mohl. I know him. He is of Houston Texas, born at New York of German parentage. Early in the rebellion he entered into confidential relations with Jeff Davis and made several trips across the Atlantic and doubtless has valuable information if he would disclose it. He is quite a capable and a very active man and most friendly besides. I am temporarily at 434 Eleventh Street North in this city but until I return to Texas my address is Belleville Essex Co. New Jersey. As to who I am refer to Gov. A. J. Hamilton now in this city.

I have the honor to be very respectfully your obedient servant,

D. J. Baldwin

Of Houston Texas

**BENJAMIN BARKER**

(4:30)

*"B" Evid. B. (JAO) P2 1865*

Benjamin Barker

Is the proprietor of a pistol gallery—knows Booth, says he was in the habit of coming to his place to shoot. Came there in August or September of last year, but he did not know his name. Says he shot very well—would practice to shoot with accuracy in every possible position. ~~John came with him~~ Generally two others came with him—but he was always the man. Did not know the other men—they did not know anything about shooting. Booth would ring the bell on the target every other time. He was always silent and reticent.

(3:656–58)

*"B" 567 (JAO) 1865*

Benjamin Barker

April 25, 1865

Benjamin Barker, proprietor of Pistol Gallery corner of 11th St. & Pa. Ave. states:

I know Booth. He was in the habit of coming to my place to shoot. He first came there in August or September, I think of last year. I did not know his name then. He shot well, and practiced to shoot with accuracy in every possible position. Others, generally two came with him. He was always the man. Don't know the other men. Never spoke of anything but of shooting. One of the men was taller than he. He would ring the bell on the target more than half the time. He was a quick shot; always silent, reticent.

Benj. Barker

**JAMES V. BARNES**

(2:292)

*"B" 101 (JAO) 1865*Blank envelope<sup>1</sup>

Jas. V. Barnes

Care of T. Zigina

Box 1364 New York

No 10 South Wm. St.

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<sup>1</sup> Found among Booth's papers in his room at the National Hotel in Washington.

**WALTER M. BARNES<sup>1</sup>**

(4:98-108)

*"A" Evid. B. (JAO) P6 1865*

Statement of W. Barnes

April 28th 1865

Walter M. Barnes says;

I live at Allen's Fresh, Charles County, Md. Have lived there three years, was raised in Charles County and have lived there all my life. I keep a restaurant. Have been keeping it nearly three years. Have seen a man by the name of Atzerodt, and know him. Have known him about 6 years.

Last saw him on the 31st March 1865.

I came up to go to Baltimore, went into the Kimmel House in this city<sup>2</sup> and he was in there or came in directly afterwards. I do not know which. I spoke to him. We had no more conversation other than this: he asked ~~him~~ me to take a drink with him. He seemed to be pretty sober then. He was not intoxicated, or did not seem to be. There was no one with him at the time. I took a drink with him. Just before we took the drink he asked the landlord if a man named Bailey was in. He said he would send up to his room and see whether he was in or not. Bailey came down and took a drink too. He did not do anything else that I know of. I do not know where they went to then. I went up to my aunts. I had just come from home and was on my way to Baltimore to buy my groceries for my restaurant. I was tired of riding, & thought I would stop over night and see my relations. I went to see my aunt, who lives in the first ward. Her name is Mrs. Clemons, her husband's name Alexander Clemons is a policeman. I have no other relations in the city save my uncle's wife. She lives on the Island.<sup>3</sup> I do not know how the streets run, I think it is on G. Street.

(Note; Witness is evidently mistaken; and by his description of the locality, it is on 7th Street, or near 6th Street, one or two blocks toward the avenue this way from the wharf.)

Have not seen ~~Surratt~~ Atzerodt since December. I was at Port Tobacco. It was at December Court. Bailey is barkeeper at Port Tobacco for Brown. The next morning after going to my aunts, I went to Baltimore. Got to my aunts in time for supper. That night after supper I went up to Canterbury Hall. I did not see anyone there that I know more than my friend from the country. Saw a man by the name of Donlan & young Dix who came up with me. Do not recollect of seeing anyone else. Do not recollect of seeing Atzerodt there. Did not see Bailey. Saw a young man named Briscoe, a clerk in town. After that I went to the Pennsylvania House and stayed there that night. Did not stay at my aunt's, only went to take supper.

Could not tell who I saw at the Pennsylvania House when I returned from Canterbury. Do not recollect of seeing Atzerodt that night. He was stopping there. Did not see Bailey that night. Saw him next morning. I got up and got

<sup>1</sup> Walter Barnes, a friend of George Atzerodt, was taken into custody but eventually released.

<sup>2</sup> Washington, D.C.

<sup>3</sup> The Island was an area immediately south of the canal (now Constitution Avenue).

a drink and ~~started to~~ my breakfast, and started to Baltimore on the 11 o'clock train. I might have seen Atzerodt. I cannot recollect that I did. Do not know John Surratt. Did not see Herold. When I drove up I saw a man come downstairs, but did not know his name or who he was ~~except~~ ^until^ the other day when the Provost Marshal showed me a photograph and asked me if I had seen the man it represented and after thinking, I found he was the man that came down with Bailey. He did not introduce him to me.

Atzerodt & I were talking about nothing at all that day. I had no talk with him. He asked me if I did not want to buy a horse. I think there was a boy holding his horse at the door. But I told I did not want to buy because I had horses of my own.<sup>1</sup> Did not see him riding on it. Did not see Booth. I may have seen him but did not know him. Never heard his name before this.

When in Baltimore, I went to Major Skinner's private boarding House. I was acquainted with young ladies there. After staying there a few days I went around to attend to my business. I was there three weeks. Do not know Mr. Parr; did not go to his house or his store that I know of; though I went into & bought some tumblers at a crockery store. I do not know whose. I left Baltimore last Tuesday-week (April 16th). About two or three days after I got there, I came home to Washington with a young lady. Miss Lafitte, the landlady's daughter. She stayed at the Kimmel House and went back the next morning. I did not see Atzerodt there. Saw him the next morning. He came in the office before I was going to start. I went there to pay my bill & he came in & went out again. Where he went I don't know. I went back to Baltimore that day. Stayed at Baltimore then until Tuesday, and started down in a boat. I started to go home about two weeks ago last Tuesday, but a friend of mine came up and asked me if I would stay and go down with him in his boat. I told him as I was not in a hurry I thought I would. His name is Capt. Thomas Hubbard. So I started a week ago last Tuesday. The Tuesday succeeding the murder. I heard of the murder the next morning at the house where I was boarding. That night I went to the Holiday Street Theater with this same lady who came to Washington with me. We ~~called there~~ ^got home^ about 12 o'clock. After our return a couple of naval officers boarding at the house went out with me and we got something to drink and afterwards went to bed. The next morning the young man with whom I was sleeping & whose name is George Davis, got up fairly early, at 6 o'clock, went downstairs, and after a while came running upstairs & asked me if I had heard the news. I told him no. He said the President was shot. I said "Certainly that is not so". He says "It is true".

On Tuesday, as I have said, I started on the boat to go home. Got down near the mouth of the Patuxent & there the steamer overhauled and boarded us & examined the crew, & said that they had orders to arrest me. ~~I told~~ I then went aboard the steamer. This was on Thursday evening. I believe the steamer went up to Baltimore, and got there about six o'clock in the morning.

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<sup>1</sup> John Surratt told Atzerodt to sell Booth's horses that were kept at Howard's stables.