

The Surratt Courier

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Louise Oertly, Editor

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President's Message

The **2024 Annual Meeting of the Surratt Society** took place on April 13th and was opened by Surratt Society President Louise Oertly at 2:05 p.m. William Binzel declared that a quorum of the membership was present. Noting that there was little change, Louise asked unanimous consent to waive approval of the reading of the minutes of the previous annual meeting and the Treasurer's report. There was no objection, so both were considered as read and approved.

Next on the agenda was the election of officers. As there were no nominations from the floor, Louise moved to elect the following slate of candidates.

President	William Binzel
Vice President	Louise Oertly
Treasurer	Tom Buckingham
Secretary	Rebecca Morris

The motion was seconded and unanimously approved.

Announcements:

There will be no Booth escape tours this Spring. Future tours are still under discussion.

Currently, the Society is not collecting dues from the membership and the Surratt Courier is available for free to the public. The Board is working on ways to provide more exclusive benefits for members.

As there was no future business a motion was made and seconded to adjourn

the business meeting. It was approved by unanimous consent.

William Binzel, the newly elected President, introduced the first speaker, **Timothy Good**, author of *We Saw Lincoln Shot: One Hundred Eyewitness Accounts*.

Mr. Good began his presentation by noting that his research had come across over 100 eyewitness accounts, but he limited the book to just 100. He reviewed the agreed upon facts of President Lincoln's assassination and related the actions of John Wilkes Booth on the fateful night. Booth, who was very familiar with the play being presented, deliberately waited until Act III, Scene 2, when the funniest line of the show would be delivered. Taking advantage of the audience's laughter, he fired a single shot into the back of Lincoln's head. When one of Lincoln's guests in the box that night, Major Rathbone, leaped up to attack Booth, the assassin slashed him in the arm with a knife. Booth then jumped from the box to the stage, raised the bloody knife over his

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Contact us at surratt.society@gmail.com or by mail at: Surratt Society, 9201 Edgeworth Drive #3853, Capitol Heights, MD 20791-3853.

The Surratt House Museum, a historic property of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission. The Surratt House Museum's phone number is (301) 868-1121.

head and shouted “Sic Semper Tyrannis” before running out of the back of the stage.

Most of the eyewitness accounts of that night agree on these basic points, but as time distanced the events of the assassination, recollections began to vary. Good found that the later an account written, the more the stories strayed from the original accounts. He stated that the first memory of an event is always the most accurate; subsequent retelling of the story just adds to the original account.

For instance, there is controversy over whether Booth’s leg was broken when he jumped onto the stage or during his escape, when his horse fell on him. Later accounts stated that Booth was limping when he ran off the stage but accounts from 1865 make no mention of a limp. In the 1930’s, Mrs. Nelson Todd even related that she saw a bloody bone sticking out of Booth’s leg on stage before a rope descended from the ceiling and whisked him away. Contemporary accounts said that Booth presented a card and was admitted to the Presidential box; latter accounts recalled that he pushed his way in. And the exact words he uttered on the stage were later embellished beyond the words, “Thus Always to Tyrants.” Apparently, several knives were recovered from the Presidential box that night and it is unknown which Booth used in his attack on Rathbone.

Mr. Good stated that when he had varying accounts of the events, he generally relied on those given most closely in time to that night. Sometimes, he went with the majority of recollections. When asked where he collected all these stories, Mr. Good said that many had come from Ford’s Theatre, some from newspapers, from the testimony at the trial of the conspirators and some from university collections.

Even the tragic events of that night did not lead to increased Presidential security. It was still widely believed that

assassination was a European thing, an act of the people against non-elected rulers. After the assassination, Secretary Seward even stated that the American president was elected as a man of the people and was safe from them. It was not until the attempted assassination of Theodore Roosevelt that the Secret Service was established to protect the Chief Executive.

The second speaker of the afternoon, **Dave Taylor**, is a long-time friend of the Surratt Society and has been a frequent speaker at events. He now runs a blog called Lincolnconspirators.com. He spoke to the meeting about reactions to Lincoln’s death.

The assassination was a seismic event across the country. Every home displayed signs of mourning even if the occupants had only days previously stated their animosity towards Abraham Lincoln. It was safer to keep those thoughts to oneself. Pastors rewrote their Easter Sunday sermons to reflect the correlation between Lincoln’s death and Christ’s crucifixion. One person in New York made a book recording all the mourning displays including sketches of temporary monuments erected. This book has been digitized and is available online from Brown University.

Booth thought he would be acclaimed a hero in the South for his actions, but he lived long enough to understand that the assassination was universally reviled there. Many southerners believed it was a calamity for the south. They knew that the new president, Andrew Johnson, did not have the forgiving nature of Lincoln and expected him to exact retribution.

While Maryland, Washington D.C. and Virginia were ostentatious in their displays of sorrow, the further away a state was from the site of the assassination, the less likely they were to hide their true feelings in mourning displays. Newspapers

in Texas and California, in particular, did not condemn the assassination and instead compared it to the killing of Caesar by Brutus. While they mostly escaped reprisals by the Federal government, one newspaper which sympathized with the assassin was seized, its owners arrested and imprisoned in Alcatraz.

In closing, Mr. Taylor recommended several books that deal with the aftermath of the assassination: *When the Bells Told for*

Lincoln by Carolyn Harrell, *Beware the People Weeping* by Thomas Turner and *The Darkest Dawn* by Thomas Goodrich.

President William Binzel closed the annual meeting by thanking Louise Oertly for her years of service as head of the Surratt Society and expressed the hope that the Society would continue to grow into the future.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:09 p.m.

In Memoriam

John C. Fazio (1938-2024)

On March 8, we lost another Lincoln assassination historian, John C. Fazio.

John had a B.A. and J.D. from Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland. He retired in 2015 after practicing law for fifty years. He was a student of history, with an emphasis on European and American history and with an even greater emphasis on the most defining event in American history, the Civil War. He was a member of the Cleveland Civil War Roundtable and had been its president. He was also a member of the Lincoln Forum, the Surratt Society, the Cleveland Grays and the Western Reserve Historical Society. He taught Civil War history at Chautauqua Institution, frequently spoke on the war and other subjects before Roundtables and other groups and had written and published numerous articles on the war and other subjects. In 2016, he wrote *Decapitating the Union: Jefferson Davis, Judah Benjamin, and the Plot to Assassinate Lincoln*, after five years of research and writing. In October 2023, just months before his death, his book, *The Assassination of Abraham Lincoln: Four Smoking Guns*, was released. John will be missed.

On July 2, 1881, President James Garfield was shot by Charles Guiteau, and interest in the Lincoln assassination was regenerated. Philadelphia reporter Frank A. Burr wrote a series of articles based on interviews he had gathered in the hope of publishing a book on the Lincoln assassination. As far as I can tell, the book was never published. Also, keep in mind that these interviews took place 16 years after the Lincoln assassination, so the memories are no longer fresh.

BOOTH'S BULLET.

Reprinted from *The Evening Star* [Washington, D.C.], December 7, 1881, page 6.
From the *Philadelphia Press*

Chapters from the History of Lincoln's Murder.

- VISIT TO THE GRAVE OF JOHN WILKES BOOTH
- JOHN T. FORD'S STORY OF THE CRIME
- BOOTH'S Demeanor ON THE DAY OF THE DEED
- AN ACTOR'S STORY
- HOW THE PRESIDENT WAS TO BE CARED FOR IF CAPTURED
- THE LETTER OF JUSTIFICATION ENTRUSTED TO HIS FRIEND JOHN MATTHEWS
BY THE ASSASSIN A FEW HOURS BEFORE THE TRAGEDY
- HOW IT WAS DESTROYED.

I.

Chance found me in Baltimore a few days ago. I had just taken a quiet breakfast and walked out upon the street, when I came upon two gentlemen standing by the monument on Calvert Street, near the public building. One of them was an ex-Confederate general of distinction whom I knew. The other was a stranger whom he was evidently showing the interesting points in and about the Monumental City. I joined the couple just as the soldier was explaining to his friend that the monument commemorated the battle of North Point, fought during the War of 1812.

"You have been in Washington," said the ex-Confederate soldier to me. "Did you attend the Guiteau trial?"

This reference to the absorbing topic of the day naturally turned the conversation upon it. The question of the assassin's sanity was discussed and some points of the crime, when the general remarked:

"John Wilkes Booth was born not far from this spot, and his body was buried in this city."

"Where?"

"In Greenmount Cemetery, out on the York Road, which is called Greenmount Avenue until the cemetery is passed."

An hour later found me at the gate of Greenmount, so named for the very natural reason that it is literally a green mound, or rather mound. The growth of improvements is fast encroaching upon it, and in a short time it will be well within the closely built limits of the city, and surrounded by new dwellings, and possibly noisy factories, instead of the open fields and wooded spots which furnish the quiet seclusion one always associates with a home of the dead. Greenmount was once

an ideal locality for a cemetery, and it is still beautiful. Rising in the center of what was not many years ago a lovely vale is the great mound which overlooks the whole city. Upon all its slopes the rich white marble shafts gleam among the trees, and upon its apex a pinnacled chapel of carved brown stone is the crowning monument. A man was engaged, as I passed in, in cleaning the graves of the dead and the paths for the living of the leaves which fell as fast as removed.

“Where is the Booth Monument?”

“Booth, actor?” and he pointed to that side of the slope which faces the busy city. Here, midway on the incline and in company with a number of polished shafts, urn and figure crowned, a white marble monument in obelisk form, could be seen, upon the front of which in bold relief is cut the word: BOOTH.

The Booth Monument.

Three rough faced and massive blocks of granite sustain the shaft, around the base of which, almost hiding the stone foundation, a mass of creeping ivy springs up from a mound at the foot of the monument. A single rosebush grows before this grave, which marks the resting-place of the elder Booth. It had been nipped by the frost, and a solitary flower drooped as if just ready to fall from its stem. Upon the face of the marble, in base relief, is the medallion head of him to whose memory this stone was erected. Below is the inscription:

Behold the spot where genius lies.
O, drop a tear when talent dies!
Of Tragedy the mighty chief,
Thy Power to please surpassed belief:
Hic jacet, matchless Booth.

Further down, and near the granite base: BOOTH.

Upon the face of the shaft, to the left are the words: JUNIUS BRUTUS BOOTH
BORN MAY 1st, 1796.

And upon the right face: DIED NOV. 30, 1853

It took further search to find the grave of this gifted man’s son, who inherited much of his father’s genius. At the back of the lot, on the fourth side of the marble obelisk bearing the above inscriptions, is this simple announcement:

TO THE MEMORY OF THE CHILDREN OF
JUNIUS BRUTUS & MARY ANN BOOTH.
JOHN WILKES
FREDERICK
ELIZABETH
MARY ANN
HENRY BYRON

[Editor’s Note: Joseph Adrian Booth’s name would be added in 1902.]

At the foot of the monument is a second ivy-covered mound. Upon it grows a rosebush bearing a single flower—counterpart of the grave already described. How singular that the graves of both father and son are so similar. Nature seems to have conspired with loving hands to show respect alike to the people’s favorite actor and his assassin son. The single line, John Wilkes, to the list of children is the only record telling that the man who aimed the fatal shot at Abraham Lincoln is buried here. There are no other words, not even the date of birth or death. There is no

more recognition of him than of the other children, whose names are cut upon the monument and who died in childhood.

The lot containing these graves is framed by a low stone coping with granite posts in each of the four corners. Close to each post grows a beautiful pine tree, nicely shaped and trimmed showing evidence of careful attention. To the right of the monument, and within this same enclosure, are an old marble headstone and footstone showing the ravages of time. They mark the grave of the father of Junius Brutus Booth. The headstone bears the inscription:

SACRED to the Memory of
RICHARD BOOTH
who died December 29th, 1839
Aged 76 years & 42 days.

The First Assassination.

A visit to this spot which contains the earthly remains of the departed members of this fortunate and yet unfortunate family, naturally gives rise to a long train of thought, and the mind goes back sixteen years and more and rests upon the thrilling events which then startled the world, and with the name of John Wilkes Booth is inseparably welded. From here the city of Baltimore stretches out to the waters of the river which joins the great Chesapeake Bay in earning the commerce of a busy port out to the sea. It makes a broad panorama of busy life, and it was in the midst of this that John Wilkes Booth was born about forty-two years ago. A look over the scene naturally recalls many of the striking points of his early life, and even a glance toward the water of the basin wherein the ships lie revives the story of the crime for which he died. There upon one of the wharves John H. Surratt, who joined Booth in his desperate scheme to kidnap President Lincoln, now earns a livelihood as a clerk for the Old Dominion line of steamships. [Editor's Note: The company's name was actually the Baltimore Steam Packet Company, nicknamed the Old Bay Line.] He is the only survivor of the conspirators. I saw him but a short time since, busy with his duties. He is a rather tall, young-looking man for his years, and of slender, wiry build. He has not a particularly striking face, but looks like a stirring businessman. He has a cold and firm expression of countenance, with strongly marked features. His face is rather thin, and his restless blue eyes seem to be set far back under his heavy eyebrows. A rather prominent Roman nose does not add particularly to his appearance. His hair is quite red, and he wears a mustache and goatee, which gives him something of a military look. He is spoken of as a quiet man who shuns society, and never alludes to the conspiracy with which his name is so closely connected. His sister Anna, the poor girl, who suffered so terribly as to make her old while she was yet young, also lives in Baltimore. She is the wife of Professor Tonry, its leading chemist.

While busy with the thoughts, which a visit to the grave of Booth would naturally invite, a gentleman evidently familiar with Baltimore and acquainted with the history of this family approached.

"This Booth Monument," said he, "formerly stood in the old Baltimore Cemetery, where it marked the resting-place of Junius Brutus Booth only. Toward the close of the war, Edwin Booth and his mother, who is still living, bought this lot and removed the remains and the monument to this spot. Later the remains of the children were brought from the old Booth homestead in Harford County. As soon after the assassination and the death of John Wilkes as the family could get permission from the government to remove the body, his remains were brought here and buried with the other children, and his name carved upon the marble."

Visitors to Booth's Grave.

“Did his friends ever view his body after death?”

“Oh, yes, and quite a number of people have locks of his hair cut from his head after the body was brought to Baltimore. There was a great fuss made about the burial of the body here at the time it was brought over, but as this cemetery is free to anyone who may purchase a lot here, except colored people, his burial could not be prevented. The remains of Richard Booth, whose grave you see to the right, were also brought from Baltimore Cemetery. The elder Booth, that is Junius Brutus, moved into Harford County, a short distance below Baltimore, in the early part of the present century, and nearly all of the family were born there. The whole of them have had a queer and eventful history. [Editor’s Note: See the May/June 2022 issue of *The Surratt Courier* for more information on the family. Also, Bel Air in Hartford County, Maryland, is northeast of Baltimore.] The elder Booth, when at home, was in almost constant trouble with his neighbors. He was a most vindictive opponent of slavery and was often accused of assisting runaway slaves and with advising the negroes to seek their freedom. He named the son, who killed Lincoln and who, by the way, was the only member of the family who sympathized with the Southern cause, after John Wilkes, the great English agitator. Indeed, the whole family, from Richard down, might be called man-worshippers. The tragic characters of Shakespeare were their idols. Their study, their habits of thought, and their ambitions sprung from dead heroes, and it is not at all surprising, considering the passions engendered by the war, that this young man took upon himself to enact the character of Brutus, whom he had been taught to revere.”

The superintendent of the cemetery, Rev. Mr. Heffner, coming up at this moment, I inquired:

“Do many people visit Booth's grave?”

“Not many. Now and then some actor or theatrical people come.”

“Do many ask for the grave of John Wilkes Booth?”

“Now and then people ask to see it out of mere curiosity. Edwin Booth comes sometimes—whenever he plays in this city, I suppose. He was here with his wife once, as nice a little lady as you would want to see. I see she died recently. I like Mr. Booth very much, and do you know that, if you did not know he was an actor, you would take him to be a clergyman. He was here with his mother when they first bought the lot, and it was the first time I had ever seen him. I have known a good many actors, but old as I am I have never yet witnessed a theatrical performance. I am quite well acquainted with John E. Owens, who lives just out the road here.”

I plied the old clergyman-superintendent with questions about Booth, but he had exhausted his information in the few lines given. I then turned from the grave and soon left Greenmount behind and was again in the heart of the busy city. The visit to Booth's grave excited in me a great and renewed interest in the history of the great crime, which fell like a pall upon the people of the north as they were preparing to celebrate in joyous festivities the coming of peace, and determined me to go over the old ground and rewrite the story. I have done so, and in a plain way now tell what I saw and heard.

II.

John T. Ford's Recollections.

Not far from the graveyard where the Booth family are buried, lives John T. Ford, the veteran theatrical manager, who for many years had close relations with all the Booths who were

actors. Under his management Junius Brutus, Edwin, and John Wilkes Booth played some of their most successful engagements. It was Mr. Ford who attended to the removal of the remains of John Wilkes from Washington to where they now lie, notwithstanding that the crime he committed in Mr. Ford's theater caused that gentleman great trouble and a vast amount of money. I met him the other day at his opera house in Baltimore and the assassination of Mr. Lincoln became the subject of conversation as in contrast with the assassination of General Garfield, and the difference in the character of the men who committed these two great crimes.

"I was not in Washington when Mr. Lincoln was killed," said Mr. Ford. "I had lived in Richmond some years before the war and had friends and relatives there. Fearing that they might be suffering for the necessities of life, immediately after the surrender I started for that city. Colonel Forney also went down at the same time. I arrived the morning of the day the President was killed, and on the next morning started home. When on the way, I first learned of the crime. When I reached home, I was arrested and kept in prison for thirty-nine days."

"When do you think Booth first conceived the idea of killing the President?"

"It is morally certain that he never had such a thought until late in the day upon which he committed the assault. The facts in the case are that he never knew the President was to attend the theater until nearly noon of that day. He was always a late riser. He came down to breakfast about ten o'clock on that morning, and his fiancé, who also boarded at the National Hotel with her parents, met him. They had a short conversation, and after breakfast he walked up to the Surratt mansion, on H street, as is supposed from the direction in which he was first seen coming by the attaches of the theater that morning. He was walking down 10th Street from toward H Street. He was faultlessly dressed in a full suit of dark clothes and tall silk hat. He wore a pair of kid gloves of a subdued color, had a light overcoat slung over his arm, and carried a cane. My brother Harry, who was standing in front of the theater with some other gentlemen, first saw him, and turning to his companions said:"

The Adonis of the Stage.

"'Here comes the handsomest man in the United States.'

"He came directly to the theater, went to the box office, got his mail, went out and sat down upon the front steps of the theater to read it. One of his letters was a very long one, so lengthy as to attract my brother's attention. When he had finished reading it, he arose and approaching Harry, said:

"'What's on to-night?'

"'Our *American Cousin*, and we are going to have a big night.' replied Harry. 'The President and General Grant are going to occupy the President's box and General Lee is going to have the adjoining one,' said he, by way of chaffing Booth.

"'I hope they are not going to do like the Romans—parade their prisoner before the public to humiliate him?' bitterly responded Booth.

"Harry replied that he was jesting about Lee, but that Mr. Lincoln and General Grant would certainly attend the evening performance; that a note had been sent from the White House engaging the box. As Harry said this, Booth was thoughtful a moment, and then turned and walked down the street toward Pennsylvania Avenue. Just as he reached the Avenue, he met Mr. John F. Coyle, then one of the editors of the *National Intelligencer*, and Booth's very warm friend. He shook hands with him and said:

"'John, what would be the result if someone would put Lincoln and the Cabinet out of the way?'

“Coyle laughed and said, ‘We don't have any Brutuses in these days.’

“Booth turned and walked down the street, and after that time, which certainly must have been nearly noon, the arrangements for the assassination were hurriedly made. I do not believe that any reasoning man no longer doubts that there was no thought of killing Mr. Lincoln until the day upon which the crime was committed. Until Booth came to the theater that morning, he had no knowledge that the President intended visiting the theater in the evening. That afternoon he wrote the letter justifying the assassination. This letter he gave to John Matthews, who is now engaged in New York. He was then playing at my theater. The letter was intended to be published in the *National Intelligencer*, and it was well on toward night when he gave it to Matthews. He was riding down Pennsylvania Avenue toward the National Hotel when he met Matthews and handed him the letter. Matthews destroyed the paper immediately after the shooting, and no one ever saw it but he.

Booth as an Actor

“Was Booth a good actor?”

“Yes, sir. Doubtless he would have made the greatest actor of his time had he lived. Besides being the handsomest man I ever saw, he was an athlete. He put into all his impersonations the vitality of perfect manhood. He added a fine physical organization to his marvelous mental powers. His *MacBeth* and *Richard* were different from any other I have ever witnessed. In the scene in *MacBeth* where he enters the den of witches, Booth would not content himself with the usual steps to reach the stage, but had a ledge of rocks some ten or twelve feet high erected in their stead, down which he sprang upon the stage. His *Richard* was full of marvelous possibilities, and his fighting scene was simply terrific. I have paid him \$700 a week, and he could have easily earned \$20,000 a year, and he was only twenty-six years old when he died. He was very fine in *Apostate*, and his Raphael in the *Marble Heart* was simply matchless. He was the ideal Raphael. When we were in Boston, he doubtless made the greatest success of any actor of his day. People waited in crowds after the performance to catch a glimpse of him as he left the theater.”

“Was he acting at all the winter he was in Washington?”

“No sir, not at all? He had given out that he had made a great deal of money in oil speculations, and I suppose he had, for he showed me a pamphlet—sort of prospectus of oil property for sale—in which it was mentioned that the land adjoined the very successful property of J. Wilkes Booth. He told my brother, Harry, that he was only going to act twice that winter—once in a performance for John McCullough's benefit, who had not then become famous as an actor, and once for Harry's benefit. McCullough and Booth were great friends, and Booth played the *Apostate*, I think, for McCullough's benefit, when he told Harry he would play for his. I believe he was going to repeat the same play for my brother's benefit. Booth came to Washington evidently bent upon the single errand of capturing the President.”

“Finding that all his plans for abduction had failed, and the end of the war was growing nearer and nearer, he, at the very last minute, determined to take the desperate chance of assassination. Booth was a very gifted young man and was a great favorite in society in Washington. He was engaged, it was said, to a young lady of high position and character. I understand that she wrote to Edwin Booth after the assassination telling him that she was his brother's betrothed, and would marry him, even at the foot of the scaffold.”

III. A Thrilling Recital.

“My God! My God! I have no longer a country! This is the end of constitutional liberty in America.”

These are the words spoken with startling emphasis on the evening of the 14th of April 1865, by John Wilkes Booth. He was passing down Pennsylvania Avenue, in Washington, and near the corner of 13th Street had met John Matthews, a fellow actor and a boyhood friend, whom he thus addressed.

“He was pale as a ghost when he uttered those words,” said Mr. Matthews to me a day or two since while relating the occurrence. “There were quite a number of Confederate prisoners passing along the avenue as he spoke, and when he said, ‘This is an end to constitutional liberty in America,’ he pointed feelingly towards them. He looked at them for a moment, after they passed, and was thoughtful. He then turned to me quickly and said:

“‘I want you to do me a favor.’

“‘Anything in my power, John,’ I replied. He thrust his hand into his pocket and drawing out a letter, said: ‘Deliver this to the *National Intelligencer*, tonight by eleven o’clock unless I see you before that. If I do, I can attend to it myself.’

“I took the letter, saw it was sealed, put it into my pocket and walked on. Booth, who was on horseback, rode rapidly down the street, and I never saw him again until he jumped from the box at Ford’s Theater to the stage after shooting the President. I was then playing at Ford’s, the piece being *Our American Cousin*. Laura Keene was the star. Booth almost ran against me as he leaped across the stage on his way to the door. There was, of course, a great commotion, and I at once went to my dressing room and picked up my wardrobe, passed under the stage, out through the orchestra and the auditorium and into the street with the audience. My room was directly opposite at Mr. Petersen’s, the house in which Lincoln died. I walked quickly across, locked the door of my room, and began at once to change my clothes. In picking up my coat the letter Booth had given me upon the street that evening before the theater opened dropped out of my pocket upon the floor. I had almost forgotten it in my excitement. I quickly picked it up, tore it open, and read it very carefully. ‘My God,’ thought I, ‘this self-condemnation of my friend shall not be found in my possession,’ and I threw it into the fire, watched it till it burned to cinders, and then mix the atoms with the coal ashes. In the excitement and horror which followed the shooting the Archangel could never have explained the possession of that letter. I did not then realize, however, by what slender thread my life hung. My impulse when I burned the letter was that the evidence to condemn my friend should not remain with me.”

“Who else saw that letter besides yourself?”

“No other living man after it came into my possession. It was sealed and directed to Mr. John F. Coyle, one of the editors of the *National Intelligencer*.”

“Do you recall its contents?”

“Almost as vividly as though I had just committed it to memory. It began:

Booth’s Last Letter.

Washington, D.C., April 14, 1865

“To My Countrymen:

“For years I have devoted my time, my energies, and every dollar I possessed in the world to the furtherance of an object. I have been baffled and disappointed. The hour has come when I

must change my plan. Many, I know, —the vulgar herd—will blame me for what I am about to do, but posterity I am sure will justify me. Right or wrong, God judge me, not man. Be my motive good or bad, of one thing I am sure—the lasting condemnation of the North. I love peace more than life. Have loved the Union beyond expression. For four years have I waited, hoped, and prayed for the dark clouds to break and for a restoration of my former sunshine. To wait longer would be a crime. My prayers have proved as idle as my hope. God's will be done. I go to see and share the bitter end. This war is at war with the Constitution and the reserved rights of the states. It is a war upon Southern rights and institutions. The nomination of Abraham Lincoln four years ago bespoke war. His election forced it. I have ever held the South were right. In a foreign war, I too could say 'country right or wrong.' But in a struggle, such as ours (where brother tries to pierce the brother's heart) for God's sake choose the right. When a country like this spurns justice from her side, she forfeits the allegiance of every honest freeman, and should leave him untrammelled by any fealty soever to act his conscience may approve.

“People of the North, to hate tyranny, to love liberty and justice, to strike at wrong and oppression was the teaching of our fathers. The study of our early history will not let me forget it and may it never!

“I do not want to forget the heroic patriotism of our fathers who rebelled against the oppression of the mother country.

“This country was formed for the white, not the black man. And looking upon African slavery from the same standpoint held by the noble framers of our constitution, I, for one, have ever considered it one of the greatest blessings, both for themselves and us, that God ever bestowed upon a favored nation. Witness heretofore our wealth and power; witness their elevation and enlightenment above their race elsewhere. I have lived among it most of my life and have seen less harsh treatment from master to man than I have beheld in the North from father to son. Yet, Heaven knows no one would be willing to do more for the negro race than I, could I but see a way to still better their condition.

“But Lincoln's policy is only preparing the way for their total annihilation. The South are not, nor have they been, fighting for the continuance of slavery. The first battle of Bull Run did away with that idea. Their causes since for war have been as noble and greater far than those that urged our fathers on. Even should we allow they were wrong at the beginning of this contest, cruelty, and injustice have made the wrong become the right, and they stand now before the wonder and admiration of the world as a noble band of patriotic heroes. Hereafter, reading of their deeds, Thermopylae would be forgotten.

“When I aided in the capture and execution of John Brown (who was a murderer on our western border, and who was fairly tried and convicted before an impartial judge and jury of treason, and who, by the way, has since been made a god), I was proud of my little share in the transaction, for I deemed it my duty, and that I was helping our common country to perform an act of justice. But what was a crime in poor John Brown is now considered (by themselves) as the greatest and only virtue of the whole Republican party.

“Strange transmigration! Vice to become a virtue simply because more indulge in it. I thought then, as now, that the abolitionists were the only traitors in the land, and that the entire party deserved the same fate as poor old Brown. Not because they wished to abolish slavery, but on account of the means they have ever endeavored to use to effect that abolition. If Brown were living, I doubt whether he himself would set slavery against the Union. Most, or nearly all the North, do openly curse the Union if the South are to return and retain a single right guaranteed to them by every tie which we once revered as sacred. The South can make no choice. It is either

extermination or slavery for themselves (worse than death) to draw from. I know my choice and hasten to accept it. I have studied hard to discover upon what grounds the right of a State to secede has been denied, when our very name, United States, and the Declaration of Independence provide for secession. But there is now no time for words. I know how foolish I shall be deemed for undertaking such a step as this, where, on the one side, I have many friends and everything to make me happy, where my profession alone has gained me an income of more than \$20,000 a year, and where my great personal ambition in my profession has such a great field for labor. On the other hand, the South has never bestowed upon me one kind word; a place now where I have no friends, except beneath the sod; a place where I must either become a private soldier or a beggar. To give up all of the former for the latter, besides my mother and sister whom I love so dearly, (although they so widely differ from me in opinion), seems insane; but God is my judge. I love justice more than I do a country that disowns it; more than fame and wealth; more (heaven pardon me if wrong) more than a happy home. I have never been upon a battlefield, but oh! my countrymen, could you all but see the reality of effects of this horrid war, as I have seen them in every state save Virginia, I know you would think like me. and pray the Almighty to create in the Northern mind a sense of right and justice (even should it possess no seasoning of mercy) and He would dry up the sea of blood between us which is daily growing wider. Alas! I have no longer a country. She is fast approaching her threatened doom. Four years ago, I would have given a thousand lives to see her remain (as I had always known her) powerful and unbroken, and now I would hold my life as naught to see her what she was. Oh! my friends, if the fearful scenes of the past four years had never been enacted, or if what has been had been a frightful dream, from which we could now awake, with what overflowing hearts could we bless our God and pray for His continued favor.

“How I have loved the old flag can never now be known. A few years since and the entire world could boast of none so pure and spotless. But I have of late been seeing and hearing of the bloody deeds of which she had been made the emblem, and shudder to think how changed she has grown. Oh! how I have longed to see her break from the mist of blood and death so circled around her folds, spoiling her beauty, and tarnishing her honor. But no; day by day has she been dragged deeper and deeper into cruelty and oppression, till now (in my eyes) her once bright red stripes look like bloody gashes on the face of heaven. I look now upon my early admiration of her glories as a dream. My love is now for the South alone, and to her side I go penniless. Her success has been near my heart, and I have labored faithfully to further an object which would have more than proved my unselfish devotion. Heart sick and disappointed I turn from the path which I had been following into a bolder and more perilous one. Without malice I make the change. I have nothing in my heart except a sense of duty to my choice. If the South is to be aided it must be done quickly. It may already be too late. When Caesar had conquered the enemies of Rome and the power that was his menaced the liberties of the people, Brutus arose and slew him. The stroke of his dagger was guided by his love for Rome. It was the spirit and ambition of Caesar that Brutus struck at.

*O then that we could come by Caesar's spirit
And not dismember Caesar! But alas!
Caesar must bleed for it!*

“I answer with Brutus. *He who loves his country better than gold or life.*”

John W. Booth.

Story of John Matthews, the Actor.

“Following Mr. Booth's signature," Mr. Matthews continued, "which was evidently written in great haste, were the names of Payne, Harold [sic] and Atzerodt, all in Booth's own handwriting, given as the men who would stand by him in executing his changed plans. Booth wrote John S. Clarke, the actor, his brother-in-law, in the November preceding the assassination a letter identical in many respects with the one he left with me as a justification for his act. The arguments were all the same, the changes in the letter I destroyed being those which would naturally follow the change of plan from kidnapping to assassination. The material alterations are in the first part of the letter, where he indicates the change in his purpose. The most striking difference between the letter he gave to me, and the one he wrote to Mr. Clarke, is his reference to Brutus and the quotation from *Julius Caesar*. The body of the letters were identical. Of course, there may be some immaterial omissions, but you may imagine how such a letter, carefully read under the circumstances which surrounded me when I perused it, would impress itself upon one's mind. My profession has, of course, trained my memory to retain a great deal of matter without much study, so that I feel justified in saying that the letter I have given you is practically a correct copy of the one poor John handed to me in the streets of Washington upon that fearful night. I am glad to say that it is positive evidence that the murder of the President was neither born of malice nor even contemplated until within a very few hours of the time the fatal shot was fired.”

“How did the fact that Booth left such a letter become known?”

“When John was killed a diary was taken from his person containing the entry that he had left a letter to the *National Intelligencer*. About the time of the impeachment of President Johnson, the other Washington papers made an assault upon the *National Intelligencer*, calling it the organ of John Wilkes Booth, and rather insinuated that President Johnson was in some way cognizant of the letter, if not of the killing before it occurred. I felt compelled then to speak out and announce that it was I who received the letter from Booth and destroyed it. I had at the time of its destruction, as a Catholic, told the Reverend Father Boyle, of Washington, all about the letter and the circumstances under which I received it.”

“Were Booth and you often together during the winter preceding the murder?”

“A great deal. He and I were boys together, you know, having both been born and raised in Baltimore. Often during the winter, he had talked to me of the feasibility of kidnapping the President, but never confided to me any of his plans. He often seemed to me to be brooding over the war and seemed to have his heart set upon the relief and exchange of the Confederate prisoners. He once told me that if he could capture the President, carry him within the Confederacy and hold him as a ransom, it would compel the exchange of prisoners, man for man. By that he meant white man for white man, not recognizing the negroes as soldiers. That was his plan and aim until within a very few hours of the time he fired the fatal shot.”

“Do you know when his plans for the abduction of the President were formed?”

A Remarkable Story.

“Yes, sir, very well. The elder Wallack, the late E. L. Davenport, and I, walked into my room one day, and found Booth lying upon my bed studying the part of Marc Antony in *Julius Caesar*. By-the-by it was in the same room and on the same bed upon which Mr. Lincoln died. Mr. Davenport and Mr. Wallack began talking of the war. They had been to visit some of the hospitals about Washington, and both of them seemed very much affected by

the scenes they had witnessed, Booth joined them in the talk about the conflict, and all of them expressed more or less feelings against the war. It was a feeling not of bitterness but of sorrow, that brothers should be engaged in killing each other. The pathos and power with which both Davenport and Wallack expressed their desire for peace is beyond description. It made a great impression upon my mind as I know it did upon Booth's. It had been arranged that Mr. Wallack, Mr. Davenport, myself, and some others were to go out to the Soldiers' Home to play for the benefit of the soldiers, and this subject was discussed. Booth made his arrangements to go with us and said he would be one of the audience. He knew Mr. Lincoln intended to be present, and at once set to work arranging his plans to capture him after the play was over. We played *Still Waters Run Deep*. At the last moment Mr. Lincoln was detained by pressure of business and did not attend the performance. Booth was very much disappointed, as I afterwards learned. The minuteness with which every detail of Mr. Lincoln's transportation within the Confederate lines had been arranged and the care and attention which Booth intended to bestow upon him after his capture can be read from a transaction which unwittingly I had something to do. A few days before we played at the Soldiers' Home, I was going over to Baltimore. Booth asked me to carry a trunk which he would have at the depot and deliver it to a gentleman living in Baltimore, whom I knew. I took the trunk with me to Baltimore and delivered it to the gentleman named by Booth. I did not see him in person and left the following note:

"My Dear Mr. —:

"Please deliver this trunk to Mr.—, who will see that it is delivered to Mr.—, who will have it safely shipped to its destination, of which he is informed. Be careful.

"Very truly,
John Matthews."

"I do not fill the blanks in that note for the reason that the gentleman to whom it was addressed, as well as those who were to handle the trunk, are still living.

"This trunk was filled with potted meats, sardines, the finest kind of crackers, some flasks of brandy, and other comforts, even down to toilet articles necessary for a gentleman's use. This trunk was to be shipped to lower Maryland, where Booth went when he attempted to escape. It was intended for the comfort of President Lincoln on his journey to the Confederate lines. It was Booth's intention to show the President every attention after his capture, for he had great respect for him, notwithstanding he abhorred the manner in which he was forced to use his power. He never had a thought of taking the President's life until the last moment, when it seemed to him necessary for the object he had nearer his heart than anything else in life—the release of the Confederate prisoners."

"When did Booth form his determination to kill the President?"

"Not until late in the day on which the deed was committed. He had spent the whole winter in Washington in the endeavor to kidnap him, and the failure of his every effort, followed by the surrender of Lee, decided him at the last moment to resort to extreme measures to accomplish his object. The very argument he uses in that letter about the killing of Caesar by Brutus shows the state of his mind and the exalted method of reasoning which brought him to commit the act."

Booth's Sweetheart.

"Was Booth acting any that winter?"

"No, he was devoting himself entirely to his scheme for the release of the Confederate prisoners. He boarded at the National Hotel and was courted by the best society in Washington, and, indeed, in the country. After his failure to capture Mr. Lincoln at the Soldiers' Home, he

seemed very much depressed. He had had some words at the National Hotel upon the subject of the exchange of prisoners with a United States Senator and coming up to my room he spoke of the subject with great feeling. Finally, he threw himself upon my bed and seemed to be a good deal distressed. He lay for a moment in deep thought and then, quickly turning to me, said:

“John, were you ever in love?”

“No. I never could afford it,” I replied.

“I wish I could say as much. I am a captive. You cannot understand how I feel. What are those lines in *Romeo and Juliet* describing love? I have played them a hundred times, but they have flown from me.”

“Will you stand a bottle if I’ll give them to you?” I asked.

“I will—two of them,” replied Booth.

“Here are the lines,” I answered:

O! anything, of nothing first create!

O! heavy lightness! Serious vanity!

Mis-shapen chaos of well-seeming forms!

“That’s it,” replied Booth. “If it were not for this girl, I could feel easy. Think of it, John, that at my time of life—just starting, as it were—I should be in love!”

“Did he mention the lady’s name?”

“Oh, yes; but that shall be sacred with me. She is married now, and it would serve no good purpose either to his memory or to the truth of history to revive it. He loved her as few men love. He had a great mind and a generous heart, and both were centered upon this girl, whom he intended to make his wife. Her picture was taken from his person after he was killed.”

“Were you upon the witness stand in the trial of the conspirators?”

“No, sir; I was simply held for a time, as were all the other actors and persons connected with the theater. Poor John T. Ford was kept in prison more than a month when there was not the faintest suspicion of his complicity, but St. Michael himself could not have escaped arrest in those days.”

Mr. Matthews is now an actor in the Union Square Theater in New York, where I met him and listened to the story above retold. His recollection of Booth is naturally very vivid. He has retained as relics the wardrobe he wore on the night of the assassination, as also some trinkets which were the property of Booth.

“Do justice to poor John,” said he, speaking of his friend. “He thought he was doing right and brooded so much over the terrors of war that he had reached a point where he looked upon his act as patriotic. He was a brave man. There was something exalted in his courage. Think of his begging simply for the chance to fight for his life when the soldiers had surrounded him in the barn. I do not believe that the cranky soldier who is credited with killing Booth ever shot him. That he shot at him there is no doubt, but my theory’ is that when John found he could not get a chance for his life, and either had to die by fire or be killed by his enemies, he himself fired the shot which ended what had been so promising a life.” F. A. B.

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BOOTH AT BAY STORY OF THE ASSASSIN'S DEATH

Graphic Tale of the Capture of Two of the Murderers of President Lincoln
by a Lady Who Was a Child of Nine Years at the Time

Frank A. Burr, of the staff of the *Philadelphia Press*, contributes an interesting five-column article to that paper on the capture and death of John Wilkes Booth, evolved from the different members of the Garrett family, living on the old farm in Virginia where the tragedy occurred. Lillie Garrett, a little girl of nine years of age when the affair took place, remembered distinctly the stirring scenes of the occurrence. In a graphic manner she told of the arrival of Booth at the house as a pretended wounded Confederate soldier. Harold [sic] came two days afterwards and joined him. Booth was standing near the porch of the house when the soldiers, who afterwards arrested him, passed down the road toward Bowling Green. He then seemed very much worried. "I was standing," she said, "on the porch, near my father who said to him: 'You seem very much excited. Have you done anything that makes you afraid of those soldiers? If you have, you will have to find some other place to stay than here.' 'Oh no!' replied Booth, 'I did get into a little difficulty over in Maryland, and one man I believe was killed, but it was nothing with which the soldiers could possibly have anything to do.' He seemed restless, however, that it caused remark, and in a few moments after the soldiers had passed, he and Harold walked off toward the woods and did not come back until near dusk."

"I suppose you know nothing of what happened that night?"

"Oh, yes. I saw everything nearly. I was the first one of the children out after father was arrested. Father and brothers slept in this very in this room where we are now sitting, and he was awakened by a noise at the door which lends out toward the servants' quarters. He opened the door, and the soldiers at once grabbed him and pulled him out into the yard. They stationed a soldier in the door, and they would not let any of us out or would not let us hand father any of his clothes, for fear, as they said that we would pass him a revolver. I watched my chance and slipped by the soldier who stood at the door with a pistol in his hand. He cursed me most violently, and, pointing his revolver at me, ordered me to return. I said, 'No, sir; I'm going to see that fire.' The barn was then burning, and in a few moments after I got out, the fatal shot was fired and Booth was brought up and laid upon the porch with his head near the door through which you came in. They tried to lay him upon a mattress, but he would not let them. Neither would he allow a pillow to be placed under his head. He seemed to suffer a great deal, especially just before his death."

The Death Scene.

"Did he talk?"

"He could not talk much as the wound was through his throat. I heard him say: 'Tell mother—' and the detective who stooped over him said the balance of the sentence was, 'that I died for my country.' The detectives would not let us come very near him. They were constantly bending over him, so as to catch any word he might utter, for he was very frequently muttering. The detectives would call for what they wanted and my two older sisters, who were then young ladies, would get it. They would constantly ask for brandy for him, and sister would

saturate a piece of cloth, which the detective would place to Booth's lips, and he would suck it eagerly. This would revive him for the time being, but of course, nothing could help him then. I can never forget the sad scenes of that night. They fixed themselves indelibly upon my mind. I remained around during all the bustle that attended them and looked on, little realizing the meaning of what was passing. Booth died as the sun came up."

The bright young lady gave these interesting details of Booth's last moments in a graphic and intelligent manner, and as I arose to go both sisters walked out upon the porch with me, and, at my request, pointed out the various objects connected with the story. One of them, as she cast her eyes over the scene, said rather sadly. "The old place looks desolate enough now that there are no men folks here to keep it up."

The young lady spoke truly indeed.

"There," said she, pointing to a rough crooked Georgia locust tree which stood only a few feet from the porch to the right of the path leading to the gate, "is the tree to which Harold was tied from the time he surrendered until after Booth's death. It must have been a painful position. For he was tied back so that his body was shaped to the bend of the tree, as you see it. There," she continued, pointing to the left of the porch, between a great cherry and a towering Lombardy poplar, which stood near it, "is where Booth and Harold held their long conference before the soldiers passed by on their search for them."

"Where was the barn in which Booth and Harold were secreted, and where Booth was shot?"

"Yonder, to the left of the orchard," she replied, "and here is where he was brought and laid upon the porch," said she, pointing to the spot near the door where Booth breathed his last.

Looking in the direction in which she pointed, the stains or the blood which gurgled from Booth's throat as he lay in the death agony, were still plainly visible.

"They say that a murderer's blood can never be washed out," she said. "It seems to be true. For years the stains upon the porch where he died remained very distinct, and you see that they can yet be easily traced."

The Funeral Pile.

Turning from the point where he died to the spot where the barn stood in which he was shot she said: "That charred post you see yonder is one of the four original corner posts of the old barn. You see it has been chipped and hacked near the bottom. That has been done by people who have visited here, and pieces have been taken away as relics. A gentleman who was here last summer told me that he saw in Baltimore a piece of the wood from that post, made into the shape of a cross and tipped with gold, offered for sale for \$5, and announced to be from the building in which John Wilkes Booth was killed. Think of it! Five dollars for a piece not as big as your little finger from that post!"

A minute after this talk, I stood by the side of that charred and blackened pillar, half cut to pieces by relic hunters. It has stood there through all these years as a grim and silent sentinel over the pile of ashes which mark the spot where John Wilkes Booth, the brave, gamely received his death wound. It stands as a hideous monument, designating the place where a bright life was given up as the result of an act at which all civilized people still stand aghast. With the exception of this funeral pile, the old place looks much as it did when Booth first came here. Within a hundred feet of the barn stand the corn-cribs, filled today with the gathered grain as they were that memorable night in April 1865, when sparks from the burning barn caught here and there in the dried and curling shingles of their roofs, and the light from the blazing structure painted each separate nubbin and ear with its red glare, and made each crib look as though a host of

separate eyes were looking out upon the tragic scene. Behind the old cattle-shed stands, as it did then, fast crumbling into decay, and nearer still to the house is an old barn, which seems to remain upright with an effort. Near the fence a wooden mill for crushing sugarcane stands in idleness, and the servants' quarters, on the other side of the dwelling, are next to tenantless, and are fast following the old house and out-buildings into desolate decay.

The sun was fast going down behind the trees touching their frost-bitten foliage with crimson glory, casting its last golden glances over the scene, and bathing the gable roof of the old house with a flood of light as I rambled over the grounds. I walked in the very places where Booth and his low companion skulked when the officers of the law and the soldiers were scouring the country with a vigilance which a prospective reward of \$100,000 added to their desire to revenge the death of the murdered President. If it were springtime now, as it was then and the trees and shrubbery were clad in their fresh garb of rich green, and the buds and blossoms of a new year were starting, I imagine that the old place would look today much as it did then. The fields are still fenceless, and a look over the country does not show much relief from the desolation which immediately followed the war. The scene is not an encouraging one. The same rows of spruce and pine trees skirt the road, and the same old oxcarts travel the lonely way. The hand of improvement has not often been laid upon the land, and the single farmhouse that stood within sight of the Garrett homestead in 1865 is the only one that stands near it today. It sits out upon the main road, and both buildings and fences are fresh in a new coat or whitewash, bringing it strangely into contrast with the somber surroundings of its only neighbor.

A Retrospect.

Standing upon the porch of the old house and looking north, many of the incidents of Booth's flight to this place are vividly recalled. The knoll upon which it stands is high enough to overlook nearly all the country, which slopes off toward the river. Near the house, and stretching out on either side, are forests of scrub oaks and struggling pines, here and there relieved by a clear patch, the home of some freedman, who since the war has got a foothold for himself. At one point the view leads off over a beautiful valley, and a stretch of the Rappahannock River can be seen, like a broad mirror reflecting the fleecy clouds, which fleck the sky. A few white sails of the trading boats, which do service along the stream, now and then dart into view. It was through the stretch of country which fades in the distance beyond the Rappahannock, and, still further beyond, the Potomac, that Booth made his perilous journey to the point where he met his death. Down through the sterile and desolate lands of lower Maryland and through its tangled swamps, he wandered with Harold as his companion, until the friendly Potomac bore them across into King George's County, Virginia, which makes the neck of land between the Potomac and Rappahannock Rivers. A night's journey brought them to the point on the latter stream that can just be distinguished from the porch upon which Booth died. The crossing to Port Royal was not a difficult task, for Captain Jett and the other friendly Confederate soldiers who joined the fleeing criminals here lent a helping hand. Booth's last earthly journey from Port Royal to the Garrett farm, along the Bowling Green road, was easily accomplished and I could imagine, standing upon the same spot where he grew restless at the sight of the soldiers, that his eye frequently glanced off in the direction from whence he came, through the broad stretch of country, blighted by the degradation of slavery and mutilated by war, and that his thoughts often reverted to the act which caused his flight from the civilization of Washington, where money and social position were his, and from which he was now an outlaw.

The Garfield Assassination

On July 2, 1881, Charles Guiteau shot President James Garfield at the Baltimore and Potomac Railroad Station in Washington, D.C. At first it seemed that Garfield would survive the assassination attempt. However, as with President George Washington, the accepted medical practices of Garfield's time would ultimately result in his death on September 19, 1881. In Garfield's case, it was an infection caused by the lack of sanitary conditions and some other dubious treatments by his primary doctor, that contributed to Garfield's death. At the time, many doctors were skeptical about the theory that something called germs caused illness and infection, and that something as simple as washing your hands could prevent infection. It is estimated that as many as a dozen doctors used their fingers and special probes, both likely unwashed, to try to locate the bullet in Garfield's body. Ironically, Guiteau, during his trial, argued that "he couldn't be convicted because the doctors, not his bullet, caused finished Garfield off." [Carson, Brady. *Dead Presidents*. New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2016. Chapter 3.]

The following articles appeared on the front page of the July 8, 1881, issue of *The True Northerner* [Paw Paw, Michigan]. They were four separate articles regarding the aftermath of Guiteau's attempt to assassinate Garfield and are arranged in a more logical order.

Our citizens were shocked on Saturday morning on hearing of the shooting of President Garfield. As the news was caught [sic] off the wire by our operator, the excitement ran high, and business was almost suspended. Men stood around in small groups and talked in low tones, and the look upon their faces showed how deeply they were affected. The days of our murdered Lincoln came back fresh in their minds, and could the assassin have fallen into their hands, no judge or jury would have been needed.

To America belongs the unenviable distinction of having furnished to the world three of the greatest villains who ever cursed the earth: Benedict Arnold, John Wilkes Booth and Charles J. Guiteau—and the last of these is the most infamous of the infamous trio.

Benedict Arnold betrayed his country during war which most other countries regarded as a rebellion which they hoped would be subdued, and had their hopes been gratified he would not have been looked upon as the double-dyed traitor that he was.

J. Wilkes Booth murdered one of the no blest and most pure minded rulers the world ever saw, but he at least had the excuse of four years of bloody war and thought by his dastardly act to aid the section of the country with which he sympathized.

But not one extenuating feature can be imagined to mitigate the awful, horrible crime of this modern assassin, this most infamous of all infamous villains who ever cursed this earth Guiteau. It is absolutely inconceivable that any human being could become so lost to every trait of humanity as to deliberately murder in cold blood so eminent, so good, so kind and so noble a man and ruler as our beloved President. In a time of profound peace—in an era of national

prosperity—without the pitiful excuse of personal injury, real or imagined, with no sentiment of hatred or revenge in his heart, this hardened wretch, for six long weeks, deliberately plans the most causeless, horrible and dastardly assassination which the world ever witnessed or the mind of man ever conceived; and then as coolly and as deliberately executes his diabolical intent, but not without first having prepared beforehand his means of escape, and having deliberately planned for a plea of insanity in case of capture. But we trust this plea may prove of no effect in his case, for although a man who is capable of devising and executing such a revolting crime may not be sane like the mass of mankind, there is so much method in his madness that it is evident he is sane enough to be held entirely responsible for the consequences of his awful crime.

Let him hang higher than Haman! is the judgment of the American people, and all the civilized world will cry Amen!

Guiteau, the assassin, is reported as becoming restless and uneasy. He is seriously disappointed in not becoming a hero. He is now regarded more in the light of a political fanatic than as an insane man. It is said that he will certainly get his desserts if tried in Washington, as he must be. He has a haggard appearance, and his eyes are bloodshot. We could earnestly wish it was his head that was bloodshot, a few feet from his body at that.

The people of this nation never knew how well they loved their Chief Magistrate until the news of his assassination was flashed over the country on Saturday morning last. At first it was scarcely credited, but when confirmatory dispatches were received, they fell with crushing weight on the entire nation. Politics and partisanship were forgotten, and all men—with a few, and thank God only a few infamous exceptions—were stricken with sorrow and grief. Strong men clasped each other by the hand and wept as men have not wept since the murder of Lincoln, sixteen years ago. Continually since the news of the attempted assassination have the prayers of the nation and of the world been ascending to God that the life of one so dear to all might be spared, and while we have been hoping against hope, at the present time it almost seems as if the fervent petitions of a grief-stricken people were to be favorably answered. There is but one feature lacking of the whole horrible crime which could have intensified the magnitude of its infamy, and that is, that it was not the result of any political ambition or intrigue on the part of any man, or set of men. Bitter things have been spoken and written concerning our Vice President, Mr. Arthur, in connection with this lamentable affair, words entirely unwarranted and uncalled for, and for which the facts of the case afford no basis. It is entirely possible that the assassin stands wholly alone in his infamy. There is no political significance of the slightest kind or character in the attempted murder, and for this all men should be thankful.