

# The Lynching of Mary Surratt

By Don Thomas



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*How did Mary Surratt earn the title as the first American woman to be executed?*

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Some have argued that the United States military was wrong to convict a profoundly religious, working-class, single-parent-widow to be hanged by the neck until dead. But, after all, wasn't Mary Surratt a spy, plotting to overthrow the United States government to avenge the Union victory after a long and bloody Civil War?

Was it not indeed in the best interest of the nation to have her executed?



*Mary Elizabeth Surratt*

Isn't it true that Mary Surratt, John Wilkes Booth, Lewis Powell, George Atzerodt, David Herold, Samuel Arnold, Michael O'Laughlin, Ed Spangler and Dr. Samuel Mudd were all conspirators who participated in a treasonous political plot to assassinate Abraham Lincoln, as well as the attempted assassination of Secretary of State William Seward?

As 21<sup>st</sup>-century United States citizens can we now look back to the first assassination of an American president and proudly say that truth and justice prevailed over evil and tyranny?



*This depiction of the assassination conspirators is incorrect.*

Over the many decades since the Lincoln assassination, thousands of historical publications have offered many different theories as to why Lincoln was murdered. But among most all revered scholars, Mary Surratt still endures as the mother hen who hatched the conspiracy eggs.

With all those facts considered, it would be unpatriotic to claim that Mary Surratt was unjustly condemned, not granted due process of law under the American legal system. If all the available evidence has proven beyond a shadow of a doubt that Mary Surratt was truly deserving of the hangman's noose, then why do so many people, including myself, still have severe reservations about the crime and punishment of America's first executed woman?

I can only speak for myself when I say that the most significant reason there are so many books, YouTube videos and TV documentaries still being presented about the Lincoln conspiracy is that mainstream history allows only one point of view regardless of all else. If any scholars wish to be recognized as an authority on the Lincoln assassination, they must not challenge the findings and decisions handed down to us by Edwin Stanton's military tribunal judges.



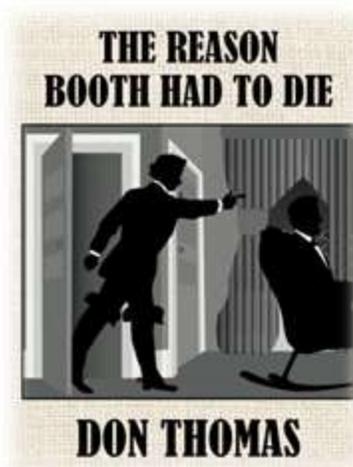
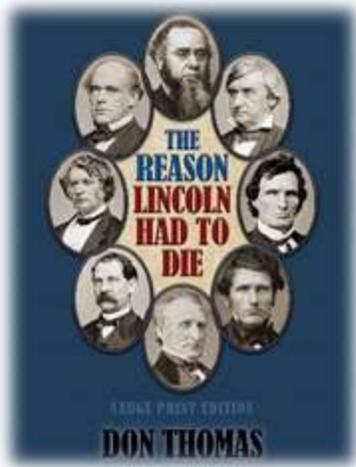
*Secretary of War Edwin Stanton*



*Judges John Bingham, Joseph Holt  
and Colonel Henry Burnett*

I am not recognized by mainstream history as a legitimate authority on the Lincoln conspiracy, even though I have published two books documenting the only historically valid reason Lincoln was assassinated, which also includes my unarguable and unchallenged FBI forensic analysis of Booth's diary confession.

However, for this article, I would like to highlight a few National Archives documents collected during the original investigation that have suspiciously been left out of Mary Surratt's journey to the gallows.



In my latest book entitled, The Reason Booth Had to Die, I do not bother to rehash all the events that led to the arrest of Mary Surratt and Lewis Powell, but instead, I chose to present the evidence my contemporaries on this subject have neglected to include.



*Do you know what has been covered up about the coat and boots in this photograph of Lewis Powell?*

In chapter 4, *The Capture of Lewis Powell*, I recap the second search of Mary Surratt's boardinghouse at the point where Mary and everyone in her house were arrested, along with a curiously suspicious, late night visitor named Lewis Powell.

Mainstream historians claim that on the night of Mary's arrest Secretary of War Edwin Stanton, along with his military investigators, still did not know the identity of Secretary Seward's assassin. However, in my chapters 3 and 4, I provide documented evidence that Stanton and everyone under his command knew all about Lewis Powell well before his capture.

Military officer Henry Warren Smith testified during the John Surratt trial, and he gave credence to the suspicion that a person of interest would show-up at Mary's house:

*On Monday the 17<sup>th</sup> day of April... I received orders from General Augur to go to Mrs. Surratt's house and arrest her and any suspicious personages I might find there. I had a party of three men detailed to go with me.*

New York City detectives R.C. Morgan and Thomas Sampson were also sent to Mary Surratt's house on the night of April 17 but under separate orders by commissioner Colonel Olcott. Morgan's directive was to take charge of the search party and collect evidence.

National Archives document (2:1077-84) is a military report given by Thomas Sampson, one of Colonel Olcott's arresting officers. Two days after Powell's arrest Sampson stated:

*The moment I saw him [Powell] I was convinced that he answered the description given to me by Col. Olcott of the man who attacked Mr. Seward, and I said immediately that is the man who assassinated Mr. Seward. Mr. Morgan coincided with me at once that he was the man.*

Sampson's statement confirms that before the second search, Stanton's commissioners already knew that Mary's son did not attack Mr. Seward. Olcott also had information that John Surratt was in Canada, so he instructed his detectives to be on the lookout for Mr. Seward's assassin, who he described as being a very tall, clean shaven, black-haired, young man.

General Augur, Colonel Olcott, Colonel H.H. Wells, and Colonel L.C. Baker had already been informed that Powell had been persuaded by Louis Wiechmann and Metropolitan police Detective James McDevitt to seek refuge at Mary Surratt's boardinghouse on the night of April 17, which proves Powell's arrest at the Surratt house was a prearranged War Department set-up.

Detectives Morgan and Sampson were sent explicitly to Mary's house to arrest Mr. Seward's assassin, and arresting Mary was just an excuse to explain why the detectives just happened to be at the boardinghouse when Powell showed up.



*Louis Wiechmann*

Having Mr. Seward's assassin arrested at the Surratt boardinghouse was very important to the commissioners because it would validate Stanton's Confederate conspiracy theory. Mary's son John Surratt was a known Confederate agent, but John Surratt escaped capture, so in desperation, his innocent mother was executed in his place.

The actual reason for the second raid on Mary's house can be found in chapters 3 and 4. My book provides full, unedited statements given by Louis Wiechmann, Daniel Gleason, James McDevitt, John Holohan and all the detectives associated in the capture and arrest of Mr. Seward's assassin Lewis Powell. My

book will also prove how much Stanton knew during the investigation, and most importantly when he knew it, and why he had to cover up so much of the accumulated evidence.

Any historians who wish to be popularized as an authority on the Lincoln assassination subject must only publish narratives that support Stanton's assertion: that the Lincoln conspiracy was a Confederate plot. But in truth, the entire historical re-creation concerning the motive to have Lincoln killed is one long disgraceful American history cover-up.

The documented fact is, Mary Surratt never lied to the military police about anything. Stanton's entire military investigation and conspiracy trial was an elaborate charade to conceal the Washington coup to remove Lincoln from office.

Mary was just one of many victims murdered along-side President Lincoln and by the same treasonous political coalition within Lincoln's party, which included two cabinet members from his administration, Edwin Stanton and Salmon Chase. The objective of these sanctimonious, hypocritical traitors was to remove a duly elected United States president from office by whatever means necessary, and they did not care about the truth, law, or justice.

It has long been said that history repeats itself, but I disagree. History does not repeat itself; the past is repeated by the ignorant. Those who do not remember the past are destined to repeat it. But no one can remember events that have never been taught.

Abraham Lincoln was not the only United States president removed from office by whatever means necessary. Nor will any president be freed from the threat by a rogue team of latter-day political rivals who may conspire (yet again) to remove a duly elected president from office.

Those who don't remember the past will never recognize current events that have already taken place many times before.

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