
Congress Investigates Booth's Diary Confession

**It takes only one fact check to prove the John
Wilkes Booth diary, now on display in Ford's
Theater, is a forgery.**

The question is: Were these four sheets of Booth's diary glued and rebound out of chronological order before or after Booth was shot to death?

Sheets: 28

29

30

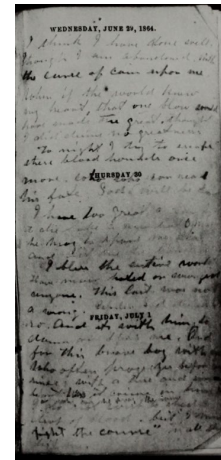
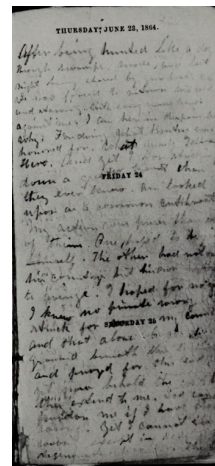
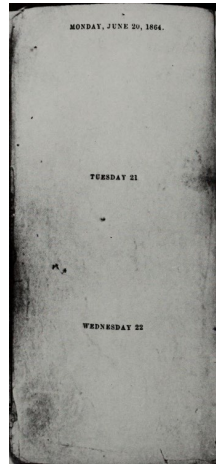
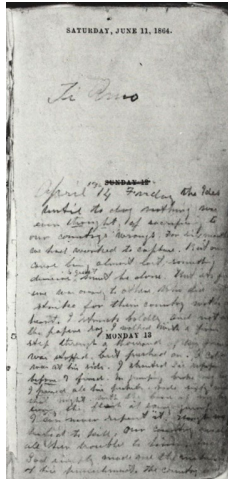
31.

Dated: (June 11)

(June 17)

(June 23)

(June 29)



In 1977, the FBI found that the four sheets now in the diary could not be Booth's original sheets because the examined pages were written before being glued and rebound. That can only have been done after Booth was dead and before Congress reviewed the book.

The FBI exam definitively proves the book has been altered from its original condition after Everton Conger recovered it. Pictured are the four sheets of paper containing Booth's confession written in the diary section of an old memorandum book he never used as a diary. As far as anyone knows, John Wilkes Booth did not keep a diary for 1864 nor 1865.

The top of each page begins with a preprinted 1864 heading date; however, those dates have no reference to the day or year Booth made his 1865 entries. The sheets are not numbered but dated, and the original sheets were in a chronological dating sequence. The examined pages cannot be originals because sheet 28 is rebound out of chronological order. Additionally, both replacement sheets 28 & 29 are secretly cut and glued to the wrong replacement sheets 30 & 31.

Sheet 26, dated May 30, 1864, and sheet 27, dated June 5, are now removed from the book with their leaf edges secretly concealed. The last visible cut-out sheet stub is number 25, dated Tuesday, May 24, 1864, but the next sheet is not sheet 26 or 27. The first full sheet after stub 25 is number 28, with a preprinted Saturday, June 11, 1864. Its original Sunday date is scratched out and replaced with an April 1865 date.

This very brief synopsis of the John Wilkes Booth diary exposes those who secretly altered the pages after Booth died. These facts also explain why everyone who read Booth's original diary confession had to lie about the condition of the diary pages Congress reviewed.



Detective Everton Conger

Facts: Detective Everton Conger was first to see the diary immediately after capturing Booth, and Colonel Lafayette C. Baker viewed the book before Booth's body was brought back to Washington.



Colonel Lafayette C. Baker



Conger recovering Booth's diary

The next people to view the diary in April 1865 was Secretary of War Edwin Stanton, his assistant Thomas Eckert along with Judge Advocate General for the conspiracy trial Joseph Holt.



Edwin Stanton



Thomas Eckert



Joseph Holt

Stanton and his War Department prosecution withheld Booth's diary confession from trial evidence during the conspiracy trial. The book remained secretly locked-away in the home of Joseph Holt until Congress subpoenaed it for a review.



The altered Diary of John Wilkes Booth.

In 1867, a House Judiciary Committee reviewed Booth's diary and asked Joseph Holt why he did not present the book as evidence during the conspiracy trial and why the War Department kept Booth's confession about murdering Lincoln hidden from the public.



1867, Congressional Investigation into the missing pages of Booth's Diary.

Congress also questioned Conger and Baker about the condition of the diary first viewed in April 1865, but their accounts did not agree. Even more suspiciously, Joseph Holt argued against both Baker and Conger, who had captured Booth and were Holt's War Department investigators and witnesses for the Lincoln conspiracy trial. All who saw the book in 1865 told a different story about the condition of Booth's book when examined in 1867. The Congressional investigation into the missing pages of Booth's diary concluded unsolved.

THE WASHINGTON POST

Wednesday, August 3, 1977

Jack Anderson and Les Whitten

FBI Probes Lincoln Assassination

The FBI has quietly entered the investigation of another presidential assassination — this one the 112-year-old shooting of Abraham Lincoln while he watched a performance at Ford's Theater in Washington.

In many respects, the 1865 murder of Lincoln remains even more controversial than the 1963 killing of President John F. Kennedy. Murky questions hang over both tragedies.

The belated FBI inquiry into Lincoln's death may help to resolve such mysteries as these: Was Lincoln the victim of a secret conspiracy reaching into his own cabinet? Was Frederick Douglass, the Martin Luther King Jr. of the Lincoln era, also marked for murder? Did the assassin, John Wilkes Booth, actually escape and leave another man's body in his place?

New light on these questions is contained in some 18 pages that mysteriously disappeared from Booth's diary but may now have turned up. The diary reportedly was delivered intact to Lincoln's arrogant Secretary of War, Edwin M. Stanton, who has been linked by rumors to the assassination plot.

When the diary was later introduced into the Andrew Johnson impeachment hearings, it was missing some pages that had been neatly excised. Now an indefatigable American expert, Joseph Lynch of Worthington, Mass., has found what appears to be the missing pages.

He made the discovery while appraising some historical artifacts belonging to Stanton's heirs. The pages were locked in a box in the attic. The heirs had never opened the box; in fact, they had no key.

The pages give a fascinating account, presumably written by Booth, of his intrigues with Lincoln intimates shortly before the assassination. Some of the most prominent politicians of the period, including Stanton, are implicated.

Referring to a plot perhaps unrelated to the murder, Booth allegedly writes that he may be working for the Secretary of War himself. At another point, he declares: "I swear that I shall lay the body of this tyrant dead upon the altar of Mars." Apparently, Lincoln is the "tyrant," and "Mars," the god of war, could have been a code name for Stanton.

For years, the Booth diary, shorn of its mysterious pages, has been on display at Ford's Theater museum. But the Interior Department, which runs the museum, has now turned over the diary to the FBI. Its handwriting experts, with their ultraviolet scanners, microscopes and other detection devices, are trying to determine whether the diary itself is genuine.

They have made two important tentative discoveries. The diary contains no writing in invisible ink, as some people have suspected for more than a century. The text also hasn't been altered, as others have thought. But the big question, whether the diary is entirely in Booth's handwriting, remains to be settled.

The FBI's findings may establish whether the 18 newly discovered pages are authentic. Lynch gained considerable credibility by insisting that the missing pages were lined. Most experts had thought the diary was unlined. But the museum's curator, Michael Harman, has now in-

spected the diary more scientifically and has confirmed that its pages are those of Lynch's discovery, are lined.

Along with the missing diary, Lynch also found hundreds of intriguing items in the possession of the Stanton heirs. One is a letter newspaper, in which Booth reportedly outlined why he killed Lincoln.

A film company, Sunn Class, also been investigating the Lincoln assassination for a feature movie "The Lincoln Conspiracy." One researcher, Lawrence Moore, Alexandria, Va., has turned up missing Booth letters and other Nooney believes he has evidence: Booth escaped and that another body was put in his place.

Another researcher, Prof. Ray of Indiana State University, has produced material which he believes shows Booth escaped at Garrett's where most experts believe he been killed by pursuing troops.

Still another ingredient has been injected into the mystery by Lynch has "discovered" what looks like name of Frederick Douglass, a leader, in the Booth diary. This the possibility that Booth may have intended to kill Douglass, too.

Meanwhile, Curator Harman, government expert on the assassination, is taking an historian's view about the renewed controversy. "It's the original can of worms," said. "The government didn't conduct a thorough investigation at the time. I don't know whether we'll ever get the answers."

By Charles Rodri

It took one hundred twelve years before this historical mystery concerning Booth's confession was once again revisited with an FBI forensic exam of Booth's infamous missing diary pages. The report was issued in October of 1977, yet the Lincoln conspiracy theory still lives on, even though the FBI exam solved the mystery many years ago.

Any person claiming that Booth's diary pages are the same original untampered pages Everton Conger recovered after capturing Booth, and before Congress reviewed the book, must first account for all the alterations made to the diary after Booth was dead.

The people who plotted and covered up President Abraham Lincoln's assassination are of the same political ideology as those trying to remove the current U.S. President from office by whatever means necessary.



Plotting the capture of Booth.

From left to right: Luther Byron Baker, Colonel Lafayette C. Baker and Everton J. Conger, seen posing for the camera.

The Congressional committee Chairman asked both Everton Conger and Lafayette Baker a very straightforward yes or no question: *Is the diary in the same condition it was when you took it from the body of Booth?*

On May 14, 1867, Conger replied, *"I think it is."* However, Conger also admitted that he made a transcript of Booth's confession and added that the text he copied in 1865 did not read the same as the pages in the diary Holt turned over to Congress in 1867.

On May 20, 1867, Lafayette Baker answered the same question Conger was asked, and Baker replied: *There were no leaves missing when he turned the book over to Secretary Stanton.* (Both witnesses who first read Booth's diary gave a different answer.)

Joseph Holt and Secretary Stanton agreed that Booth's diary was in the same condition as when they first saw it but denied knowing anything about Conger's copy.

The 1867 testimonies given by Conger, Baker, and Holt became completely irrelevant after October 3, 1977, when the FBI Forensic Department proved that the pages in the diary now cannot be the same pages Everton Conger recovered from Booth's body.

The six pages of missing text from Booth's confession are not from the first 25 visible sheet stubs. All of Booth's original twelve confession pages were secretly removed from the center of packet five and replaced with only eight glued and rebound transposed copies.

Below are excerpts from page 458 of the Congressional investigation of Lafayette C. Baker concerning the missing pages of Booth's diary.

Q: Did you count the absent leaves, or stubs? Baker answered:

No, sir; I never saw any stubs until I saw them here.

Q: Do you mean to say that at the time you gave the book to the Secretary of War, there were no leaves gone?

A: "I do."

"I examined the book, and I am very sure that if any leaves had been gone, I should have noticed it."

"It did not require careful examination to discover the absence of so many leaves."

Baker then makes an excellent point!

Q: Were there any observations or remarks made on [the missing leaves] when you and Mr. Stanton looked it over?

A: No, sir; that is the reason I think the leaves were not gone. I think Mr. Stanton would have asked me what had become of the missing leaves, if any had been missing.

imony Taken Before the Judiciary Committee of the House of Representatives in the Investigation of the Charges Against Andrew Johnson - United States Congress

A. No, I think not.

Q. Did you count the absent leaves, or stubs?

A. No, sir; I never saw any stubs until I saw them here.

Q. Do you mean to say that at the time you gave the book to the Secretary of War there were no leaves gone?

A. I do.

Q. That is still your opinion?

A. That is still my opinion.

Q. Did you examine it pretty carefully?

A. I examined the book, and I am very sure that if any leaves had been gone I should have noticed it.

Q. Did you examine it carefully?

A. It did not require careful examination to discover the absence of so many leaves.

Q. I ask you whether you examined it carefully?

A. I ran it through and looked over it.

Q. Where did you examine it first?

A. I examined it at Mr. Stanton's house. My impression is I looked at the book at my office before I left, but I am not altogether clear upon that point. My impression is I did examine it at Mr. Stanton's house, and I am satisfied in my own mind that there were no leaves missing at the time.

Q. Were there any observations or remarks made on that subject when you and Mr. Stanton looked it over?

A. No, sir; that is the reason I think the leaves were not gone. I think Mr. Stanton would have asked me what had become of the missing leaves, if any had been missing.

Not only did Secretary Stanton make no effort to inquire about the missing pages, but he also kept Booth's confession secret from the public until its existence was revealed in Lafayette Baker's book, *History of the United States Secret Service*.

The FBI forensic exam is definitive proof that the diary pages recovered by Everton Conger are not the same diary pages that Congress reviewed two years after it was taken from Booth's body.

Annotated facts uncovered during the FBI Forensic Department exam.

P. 1: Cover sheet information for the FBI forensic exam of Booth's diary.
Published, October 3, 1977.

P. 2: "*The diary is glued in place in the middle section.*" (The report explains why.)

Answer: The exam found that all four laminated sheets were glued and rebound after they were written. That could only have been done after Booth was dead (April 26, 1865) and before Congress reviewed Booth's diary (February 1867.)

Alterations made to Booth's original diary sheets:

- The first 54 pages (27 sheets) have been cut out of the diary section, but only 25 sheet stubs are visible.
- Missing sheets 26 & 27 are secretly cut from connecting sheets 30 & 31, with the express purpose to hide the stubs of the two removed sheets.
- The laminated sheets 28 & 29 are now cut and glued to the cut and glued sheets 30 & 31. Two leaves are currently missing from the center of packet five, with their edges secretly hidden.

Fact: Only four laminated diary sheets (8 pages) were rebound, replacing the original unbound 12 pages. Two diary sheets or (4 pages) have been completely removed from the center of packet five, and sheet 29 is blank. A total of six pages of the original text is now secretly removed from Booth's confession.

Fact: The two hidden sheet stubs 26 (dated May 30) and 27 (dated June 5) were initially connected to sheets 30 and 31. However, *at an earlier date*, replacement sheet 28 (dated June 11) was cut-in-half and glued out of chronological order to sheet 30. The single blank sheet 29 (dated June 17) was glued to sheet 31, replacing the original sheet 27.

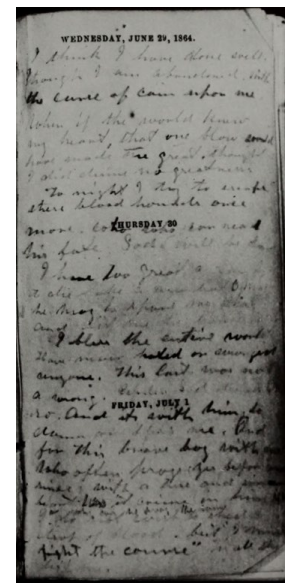
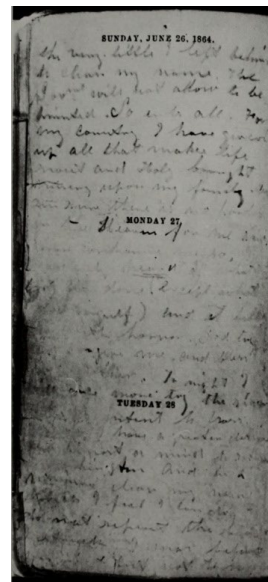
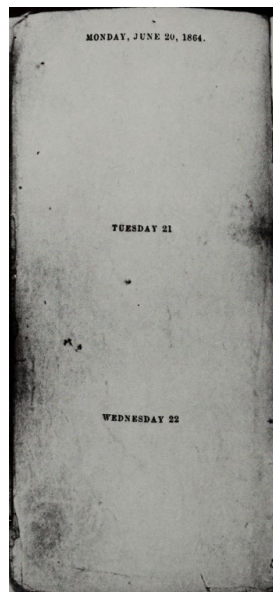
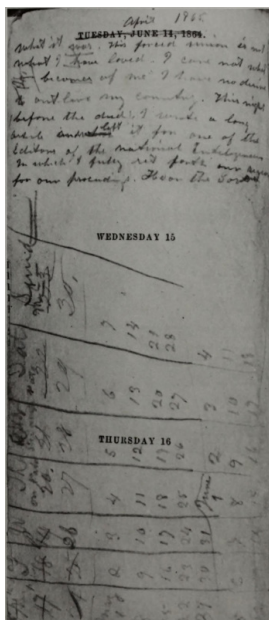
Most of the original text from sheets 26, 27 & 28 are now missing from the four rebound sheets. The eight forged pages on the four glued, rebound sheets contain only five pages of text. Glued replacement sheet 29 is rebound but left void of any writing.

P. 4 (paraphrased): *What appears to be text (invisible writing) is actually transferred text from the surrounding pages. This transference of text is exhibited on all the laminated (glued) pages. The original writing produces indentations on one side of the page and raised characteristics on the reverse side in mirror image.*

Fact: Only sheets under the top page can show impressions from the writing, yet the glued sheet 29 shows images from both the top and bottom sheets. (The report explains why.)

Back pages of sheets:

28	29	30	31
June 14	June 20	June 26	June 29



Fact: Impressions from the second-page writings (diary sheet 28, dated June 14) show-up on the blank sheet 29. Additionally, impressions from the last written page of sheet 31 (dated June 29) also show-up on the blank sheet 29.

P. 5: Fact: The indentions from replacement sheet 31 show-up not only on original sheets 32 and 33 but also on replacement sheets 29 and 30. That discovery proved that the four sheets in packet five of the diary are now altered transposed copies from Booth's original pages.

P. 2: Fact: 1864 was a leap year, and each diary page contains three dates. [366 leap year days divided by three dates = 122 diary pages.] The diary section now has only 118 diary pages. Packets 1, 2, 3, 4 & 6 consist of eight sheets or 16 pages, while packet 5 has only six sheets or 12 pages. (The report explains why.)

P. 3: Fact: *“In total, there are forty-three full sheets (eighty-six pages) missing from the diary.”*

Fact: A total of thirty-one sheets or sixty-two pages are missing from the diary section, and some of the twenty-five cut-out sheet stubs have visible text.

Sheets heading, Jan. 1 – June 8 = Twenty-seven consecutive cut out sheets or fifty-four pages. July 17 + Aug. 22 + Aug. 28 + Dec. 3 are also missing. Four sheets + twenty-seven sheets equal thirty-one missing diary sheets or sixty-two pages. Twelve missing sheets or twenty-four pages are not from the diary section. (62 diary pages + 24 miscellaneous pages = 86 missing pages.)

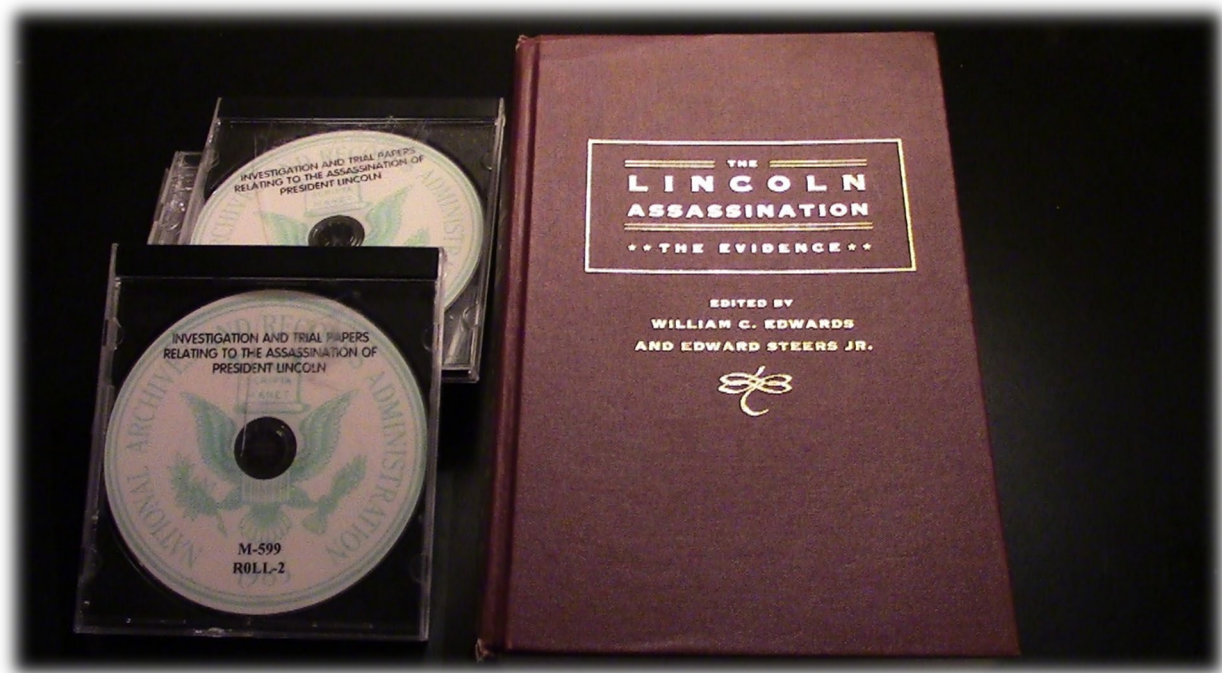
Exam conclusion:

Replacement sheets 28, 29, 30, and 31 are forgeries glued in place and rebound into the book after Booth was dead, and during the time, Stanton’s War Department had the book hidden from the public.

Article Research Source

For more than seven decades, the War Department kept a large volume of secret files collected during Lincoln's conspiracy investigation classified and locked away. Even after their release, the old filing system made those documents almost meaningless to a history researcher. Classified evidence about the conspiracy investigation did not become orderly, easily accessible public information until 2009.

Those old War Department files are no longer random and unrelated but edited and published in ***The Lincoln Assassination: The Evidence [E&S]***. Moreover, those old documents reveal a whole new and different story from the old 1865 version of Lincoln's murder by exposing the people responsible for his death.



On the left: CD microfilm reels M599, 1-7 photocopies of the entire NARA evidence file.

On the right: The NARA microfilm reels M599 1-7 that are now edited by William C. Edwards and Edward Steers JR. in, *The Lincoln Assassination: The Evidence*, [E&S].