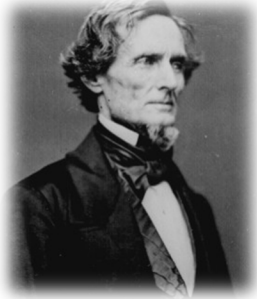

Did Jefferson Davis or Secretary Edwin Stanton plot Lincoln's Murder?

Most accept the theory that Lincoln's murder was a Confederate plot from Richmond, Virginia. Yet, to this day, there is still no evidence of a Richmond conspiracy.



Jefferson Davis and his entire administration did not escape. They were all captured, investigated, and released, never going to trial because their accusers had no case against them.

The blame for Lincoln's murder places the burden of proof on the accuser.



I emphatically state that the plot to kill Lincoln originated in Washington under the direct supervision of Secretary Edwin Stanton, and I accept the burden of proof for my declaration.

In this publication, I have put together a series of heavily documented examples of how Secretary Stanton covered up people and evidence collected during his conspiracy investigation.

Evidence that will expose Lincoln's real murder motive and why a political movement is trying to erase all memory of how that turbulent American tragedy came to be.

Booth was not the only person running from Ford's Theatre after shooting Lincoln.



An old drawing of John Wilkes Booth riding away from Joseph B. Steward. The white boy standing at Ford's Theater backdoor is depicted as being John "Peanuts" Burroughs.

In truth:

John "Peanuts" Burroughs was a young black man who sat on a carpenter's bench and held the horse just before Booth shot Lincoln.

The person seen at the back door was a white man in shabby clothes, with a black mustache. Witnesses reported seeing him holding the back door shut until Booth rode away.

Booth's Signal Whistle

One significant piece of evidence is a report filed nine days after Lincoln's murder. Military investigator Colonel John A. Foster told about witnesses hearing whistles signaling back and forth from the streets and alleys around Ford's Theater, just before the President was shot [E&S p. 539]. Those same witnesses also heard three shrill whistles and several men riding rapidly away immediately after the murder [E&S pp. 138, 139, 1042 & 1195].

The whistle pictured on the right was among the many items recovered from Booth's body after his capture. Combining Colonel Foster's report, together with this old whistle evidence, verifies unidentified accomplices were helping Booth kill Lincoln.

Stanton's military police never investigated.



Another Stanton Bait & Switch

By Don Thomas

Who Was Atwood?



On the night of Lincoln's assassination, Samuel Thomas approached George Atzerodt just as both men were about to check into the Pennsylvania House Hotel. Two weeks later, during his infamous lost confession, Atzerodt stated that he first met Samuel Thomas on the way to the hotel and that Thomas was a "complete stranger."

Pennsylvania Hotel manager John Greenawalt described Samuel Thomas as having a black mustache, about 140 pounds, and believed his shabby clothing was a disguise [Pitman, pp. 146-47]. Greenawalt's testimony was significant because Samuel Thomas also closely fit the description of the man who helped Booth escape Ford's Theater by holding the back door shut until Booth rode away [Pitman, pp. 79-80].



The evidence and witnesses presented during the conspiracy trial proved that the suspicious shabby dressed man with a dark mustache could not have been Ed Spangler. Yet, Stanton's prosecutors still convicted Spangler of helping Booth escape, sentencing him six years in prison.

Edward Spangler was just another bait and switch victim Stanton used to cover-up the Washington plot to kill Lincoln.

Stanton's military Investigator, Colonel John A. Foster, issued his report, on April 23, 1865, stating:

- George Atzerodt and Samuel Thomas occupied the same room at the Pennsylvania House, and at 6 AM on April 15, took the Rockville stage out of town. Foster added that two days later, soldiers traced Atzerodt to a point near Monocacy Junction and arrested him under orders from General Tyler [E&S, p. 537, 555].

The fact is: Monocacy Junction is nowhere close to where soldiers captured Atzerodt, five days after the assassination. Also, the sergeant who arrested Atzerodt followed orders from Captain Townsend. The man soldiers captured near Monocacy Junction, two days after the assassination, followed orders from General Tyler [E&S, p. 589].

- An annotation in E&S is a contradiction of Colonel Foster's report: *Samuel Thomas met George Atzerodt on the street as they both were walking to the Pennsylvania house. Thomas had no connection to Atzerodt nor Booth and was arrested but later released* [E&S, p. 614].

The fact is: Samuel Thomas was very much connected to Atzerodt and Booth.

Samuel Thomas was a suspect who stayed the night of the assassination in the hotel room with Atzerodt, and he fits the description of an accomplice helping Booth. Soldiers later arrested Thomas as a possible assassination suspect, who would have made an important witness. Still, he never testified at the

trial because Secretary Stanton ordered his release. Oddly, there is no report about his arrest nor surviving interrogation statement from Thomas to explain why Secretary Stanton let him go.

Soon after Foster issued his report, the Secretary of War aggressively took steps to cover-up Samuel Thomas by accusing that George Atzerodt was the man on the Rockville stage using an alias, *Atwood*. Any one of four witnesses could have identified the man calling himself *Atwood*, quickly ending any question about which man, Thomas, or Atzerodt boarded Howard's stagecoach escaping to Rockville. But a positive identification was the last thing Edwin Stanton would allow.

Before the assassination, Atzerodt had no escape plan and stayed the night of Lincoln's murder in Washington. The next morning Atzerodt checked out of the Pennsylvania House and honestly told the hotel manager that he was headed north to Montgomery County. Samuel Thomas left the hotel just ahead of Atzerodt, also leaving town **[Pitman, p.146-47]**.

The fact is: On the morning after the assassination, the Washington stage left Howard's stable toward Rockville at 8 AM. Francis Kerns was the usual driver, but on Saturday morning, April 15, the stagecoach driver was a substitute, identified only as Webster.

The next day Webster reported to Kerns that he left Washington at 8 AM, but the military police in Georgetown stopped the stage and would not allow anyone to leave town without a pass **[E&S, pp.777-78]**. The guards at Georgetown took four passengers out but, for some unknown reason, allowed Webster's last remaining passenger (*Atwood*) to continue out of town **[E&S, p. 537]**.

Why would the Union soldiers remove four passengers from Webster's stage, yet allow *Atwood* to travel out of Georgetown? Did *Atwood* have a military pass?

At 8 AM, as Webster was leaving Washington, George Atzerodt was already in Georgetown, having breakfast with Lucinda Metz **[E&S, p. 895]**.

Was the man on the stage leaving Georgetown with Webster, Samuel Thomas, or George Atzerodt? At this point, only someone with a military pass could have gotten through the first roadblock **[E&S, pp.777-78]**. Colonel Foster explained why the other passengers were taken off but did not explain why soldiers allowed Webster's last passenger to continue **[E&S, pp. 537, 555]**.

By 9 AM, Saturday morning, the stagecoach carrying only Webster and *Atwood*, soon approached a massive 50 wagon traffic jam, bringing it to another stop on the narrow road leading into Tennallytown. There, a second military roadblock was searching every wagon looking for Booth. **[E&S, p. 777]**.

During this same window-of-time, George Atzerodt, (having finished breakfast) left Lucinda's house toward Cunningham's Tavern, hoping to reach Germantown before nightfall **[E&S, p. 895]**. However, he had no money, so he first visited Matthews & Wise Co. Store at 49 High Street. While at the store, Atzerodt left his gun with John Galdwell in exchange for a \$10 loan and was not found by military police until five days later **[Pittman, p. 148]**.

The fact is: When the stage pulled out of Washington at 8 AM, Atzerodt was already in Georgetown having breakfast with Lucinda Metz. When Howard's coach met the massive traffic jam after leaving the first roadblock, around 9 AM, George Atzerodt was still in Georgetown, borrowing \$10 from John Galdwell **[Pitman, p. 148]**.

About 11 o'clock, the stagecoach reached the second picket station where soldiers prevented anyone from going through, except Webster, carrying mailbags. Webster was allowed to proceed, but his last

remaining passenger (*Atwood*) was taken out of the stage by Union soldiers, and no one else was allowed to continue until each wagon had been searched, causing a three to four-hour delay.

By this time, it had taken Webster a full three hours to travel the short distance from Washington to Tennallytown. **(See Map)** The stage typically averages about four miles an hour [E&S, p. 776].

A local produce farmer, William Gaither, drove one of the detained wagons, and Sergeant Lewis L. Chubb was in charge of the guards who ran the second checkpoint station at Tennallytown. Gaither later stated to investigators that he saw Sergeant Chubb drink cider in the little store with the passenger (*Atwood*) left behind by Howard's stagecoach. Gaither added that this stranger (*Atwood*) walked among the wagons talking with everyone in a very "jovial" way as though he knew them.

During the long wait, the stranger (*Atwood*) spent most of his time with Sergeant Chubb, paying for their drinks while appearing to be well acquainted with him [E&S, pp. 581- 82].

Stanton's War Department claimed that the man posing as *Atwood* was George Atzerodt, an assassination suspect, who was on the run, nearly broke, and hoping not to be recognized. Yet, the man calling himself *Atwood* talked boldly with everyone and bought drinks for his friend Sergeant Chubb. (Was *Atwood* Atzerodt or Thomas?)

About 3 PM, after an almost four-hour wait, the guards thoroughly searched William Gaither's wagon before allowing it to continue through the checkpoint. *Atwood* asked Gaither for a ride, and Sergeant Lewis L. Chubb was later court-martialed, charged with two counts: "drunkenness on duty, and disobedience of an order" for allowing Atzerodt through the checkpoint with Gaither. However, Chubb was later found not guilty on both charges [E&S, p. 582].

If Chubb was court-martialed for allowing his friend Atzerodt to pass through the checkpoint, why was he found not guilty? Was Chubb's friend Samuel Thomas and not Atzerodt?

When *Atwood* got into Gaither's wagon, he made a very polite bow to the Captain and said, "*It's all right so far.*" **(What did he mean?)** [E&S, p. 581]. Did the Captain understand what *Atwood* meant?

The Captain of the checkpoint station also allowed Gaither and *Atwood* to proceed north towards Rockville, but the army did not charge the Captain with disobeying orders. When the wagon reached John Mulligan's Tavern & Blacksmith Shop twenty miles north of the second checkpoint station, *Atwood* told Gaither that his father's wagon was behind them and would get out to wait for his father there [Ibid].

If Atzerodt had been in Gaither's wagon and not Thomas, as the military investigators claim, why would he get out at Mulligan's and not ride as far as Gaithersburg? **(See Map)** When William Gaither reached the Tavern, he turned west toward Germantown, but *Atwood* got out to travel north toward Monocacy Junction. Foster reported that soldiers following Gaither's wagon arrested Atzerodt near Monocacy two days later, under orders from General Tyler, but that was not true [E&S, p. 537].

About the time Gaither dropped *Atwood* off at the Tavern to wait there for his father's wagon, George Atzerodt was already several miles to the west of Rockville heading towards Germantown. John Kinder, Clapper's Mill manager, gave Atzerodt permission to spend the night at the mill, before finishing his journey to his uncle's home [E&S, p.781].

The fact is: When Gaither's wagon reached Mulligan's Tavern, Atzerodt was already approaching Clapper Mill several miles ahead of *Atwood* and William Gaither. Also, Monocacy Junction is nowhere near Germantown [E&S, pp. 581, 886]. Saturday morning General Tyler ordered soldiers to follow the stagecoach leaving Washington, and on Monday, April 17, they arrested Samuel Thomas on the road

leading to Monocacy Junction. In contrast, soldiers under orders from Captain Townsend captured Atzerodt near Germantown on April 20.



Rockville District Map 1865

The location of William Gaither's home at Gaithersburg is on the road leading towards Clapper's Mill near Germantown, where George Atzerodt spent the night of April 15. Why would he get out of the wagon at the Tavern?

Monocacy Junction was north of Mulligan's Tavern, and nowhere near the location Sergeant Gemmill arrested George Atzerodt. Monocacy Junction was also the area suspects fired at soldiers while fleeing Washington.

Again, evidence and testimonies substantiate that Atzerodt was not the man in Howard's stagecoach driven by Webster, nor the man, *Atwood* riding in William Gaither's wagon. Colonel Burnett's military investigators switched *Atwood* to Atzerodt to protect Thomas from further analysis [E&S, p. 555].

On the day of Atzerodt's arrest (April 20), William Gaither stated to investigators, "I do not know a man by the name of Atzerodt. I do know of a man who I *have heard* was Atzerodt. The first time I ever saw him (*Atwood*) was when he got out of the stage up at the pickets. It was Saturday morning near 11 o'clock. There was no one else besides him in the stage except the driver" (Webster) [Ibid].

Webster's only stage passenger was calling himself *Atwood*. George Atzerodt and Samuel Thomas were both arrested, so why wasn't William Gaither, Webster, or Sergeant Chubb asked to positively identify the man they saw on Rockville's road calling himself *Atwood*?

Stanton used reward money for bait.

From the beginning of Stanton's bait and switch, things did not go to plan. One of Booth's kidnapping conspirators, Louis Wiechmann, panicked after discovering Booth had murdered the President. Wiechmann attempted to cover his association with the kidnapping plot, running first to Howard's Stable, where anyone working there could identify him as frequently riding out with Booth.

At around 5:30 AM, Wiechmann found Brook Stabler, the manager for Howard's Livery Stable located near 6th & G St. Washington, and begged Stabler not to disclose any information about him knowing Booth or Surratt. However, Stabler immediately reported his whole conversation with Wiechmann to General Fry at the War Department [E&S, pp. 1178, 1181].

Wiechmann's next move was to run to the Metropolitan police station to convince the authorities he had nothing to do with the assassination. However, when Secretary Stanton learned that Weichmann was divulging secret information previously known only to the War Department, he flew into a berserk rage. **[Read the details in Chapter 13 of *The Reason Lincoln Had to Die* by Don Thomas].**

Later that same Saturday afternoon, the stage driver heading back to Washington also told police about seeing Gaither's wagon. However, the return driver was not the substitute Webster, but Webster's boss, Francis Kerns. Kerns had stayed Friday night in Rockville on personal business, and on Saturday evening, he drove the stage back to Howard's Stable in Washington.

While driving south, Kerns passed about 15 market wagons leaving Washington heading north. He gave investigators a very confusing and uncertain statement about the man he saw in Gaither's wagon, even unsure about the produce farmer William Gaither, and which day it was he saw the wagon. **(Francis Kerns was not allowed to make a positive ID of Atwood.)**

Kerns told investigators that about 3 PM, half-way between Washington and Rockville (ten miles), he saw Atzerodt in the wagon with Mr. Gaither. But that cannot be true; Gaither's wagon was still in Tennallytown at 3 PM [E&S, pp. 776-77]. Kerns added, he had seen Atzerodt before at Howard's Stable, and several times around the Pennsylvania House, but never knew his name [E&S, p. 778].

The fact is: After Howard's Stable boss, Brook Stabler, talked to Wiechmann, he convinced Kerns to tell the police that the man in Gaither's wagon was Atzerodt [E&S, pp. 1182-83].

Brook Stabler had a financial reason to accuse Atzerodt of being *Atwood* because Stanton posted no reward for anyone other than Booth's former kidnapping accomplices. Stabler wrote a letter on May 2, claiming an equitable share of the money offered for information leading to the capture of a suspected kidnapping conspirator [E&S, p. 1184]. Stabler's primary motive for his War Department report was to collect the bounty for the arrest of George Atzerodt.

The proof Stabler had already talked to police about Atzerodt before talking to Kerns is that he learned about Samuel Thomas from the investigators, but he misunderstood *Atwood's* name. Stabler referred to Atzerodt (a man he was well acquainted with) as Azworth, just like Francis Kerns, identified Atzerodt during his statement [E&S, p. 1178 & Pitman, p. 71].

Kerns got his information about Atzerodt from his boss Brooks Stabler before being interviewed by the military investigators, which makes his statement about seeing Atzerodt riding in the produce wagon skewed [E&S, pp. 1183, 776-77].

Brook Stabler was not an eyewitness to the man riding in Howard's stage nor Gaither's wagon, and there was no reward offered for anyone other than Booth's kidnapping accomplices. Kerns admitted he never knew the man in Gaither's wagon was Atzerodt until Brook Stabler pointed him out [ibid].

Francis Kerns, Webster, William Gaither, and Sergeant Chubb never made a physical identification to prove that George Atzerodt was *Atwood*, and none of those witnesses ever testified at the trial. The only witness who said the fugitive escaping Washington spoke with a German accent was Sergeant Gemmill, and only after he arrested Atzerodt on April 20 [Pitman, p.149].

If it was Atzerodt calling himself *Atwood* on April 15, then:

- Why didn't any of the other witnesses mentioned that *Atwood* had a thick German accent?

Booth was not working alone before he shot Lincoln, and he was just one of many people running away from Ford's Theater after the assassination [E&S, pp. 138-39, 1042, 1195].

All-day April 15, soldiers searched the countryside looking for two men who entered Jared Hopkins's barn a few miles from the Snell's Bridge heading north to Baltimore. Mr. Hopkins's young niece saw the two strangers in the barn and ran to the house, giving the alarm. Both men took to the woods; one man stole Mr. Hopkins's horse and was traced west to Sugarloaf Mountain neighborhood, where he got away. Neither man was ever found [E&S, pp. 1185-87, 538].



On the road between Washington and Baltimore, a party of about 8 to 12 men fired upon another detachment of soldiers. The suspects also took to the woods but were not followed because of darkness. Other men also fired at soldiers on the road leading from Washington to Marlborough, and again in two or three places in Prince George County towards the Patuxent River. All these suspicious characters were shooting at soldiers while running north from Washington, but the soldiers never caught anyone.

Stanton needed to quickly change the investigation's focus away from the escape of Samuel Thomas and all the other suspects escaping north after the assassination. They were men who helped Booth kill Lincoln, but the reward posters entice witnesses to concentrate only on Booth's former kidnapping accomplices, John Surratt, George Atzerodt, and David Herold.

Stanton personally authorized a local farmer, James W. Purdom, to be a Clarksburg District Montgomery County civilian detective for the War Department. The Secretary of War ordered all officers and soldiers to afford Purdom assistance and protection. Prudom informed the soldiers that George Atzerodt was in Germantown with his uncle [E&S, p. 221]. James Purdom received a \$2878.78 reward for information leading to George Atzerodt's arrest, Samuel Thomas was never heard from again [E&S, pp. 1068, 308, 589, 651, 803, 1190].

The War Department paid \$25,000.00 for the arrest of George Atzerodt but denied Brook Stabler's reward claim. Only one civilian received War Department money for Atzerodt's capture, and he was commissioned a civilian detective, by and for the War Department.

Major E.R. Artman 213th Pa. Vols. \$1250.00.

Sergeant Z. W. Gemmill, 1st Del. Cav. \$3598.54.

Six Privates 1st Del. Cav. each @ 2878.78 = \$17272.68.

James Purdom \$2878.78. Total \$25,000.

Summary:

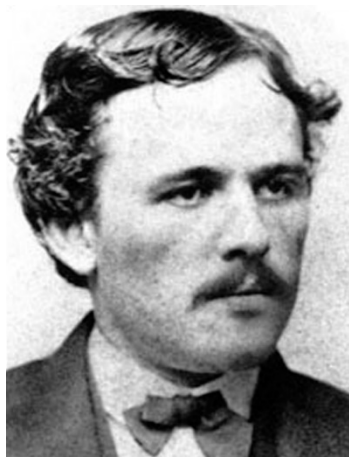
During the search for suspects escaping north of Washington, soldiers were attacked from several different locations, but their search ended with no arrest. Meanwhile, other men were hiding and stole horses, yet Stanton's investigation focused on finding only Atzerodt, Herold, and Surratt.

- **What happened to Samuel Thomas and all those other men who ran north from Washington while shooting at the soldiers?**

In response to a firefight between soldiers and suspects, Stanton orders Colonel L. C. Baker to print reward posters and have them passed out, pulling the search away from the north in Montgomery County, to the south in Charles County. An opposite direction from where the soldiers were attacked by men fleeing north after the assassination.

Using the Surgeon General's photographic laboratory Colonel Baker was able to attach pictures of Booth, Herold, and Surratt to some of the reward posters [E&S, p. 242]. To accomplish the photo poster Baker received help from Louis Wiechmann, a suspect arrested for being part of the Booth kidnapping plot [E&S, p. 1333].

Wiechmann knew John Surratt was not in Washington before or during the assassination yet worked with Stanton to portray Surratt as a primary assassination suspect [E&S, pp.1324-1327]. John Surratt was arrested and tried two years later and found not an assassination accomplice to John Wilkes Booth.



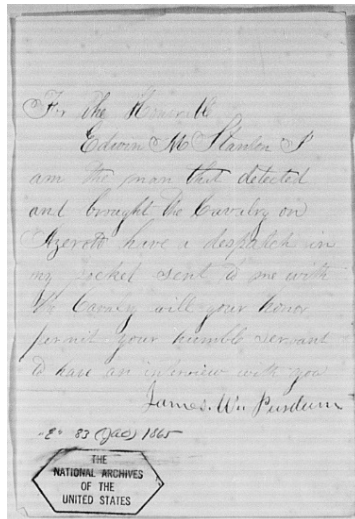
Louis Wiechmann, John Surratt's best friend.

Despite Louis Wiechmann's profound association with John Wilkes Booth and being actively involved with everyone convicted as a conspirator, he became the War Department's prime prosecuting witness. After the trial, Wiechmann writes to Stanton:

- *"I therefore **again** have recourse to you, confident that you will assist me as far as you can. I do not like to say that I claim a reward. I would be very grateful to you if you could assist me in procuring a situation for a few months, at least, in the Custom House or Post Office of this city [Washington] or Boston" [E&S, p.1333].*

Edwin Stanton and Joseph Holt procured Wiechmann a position at the Philadelphia Custom House, but he lost his job in November 1866, under the Johnson administration. When Ulysses Grant became President, Stanton again arranged to get his job back, and Wiechmann worked at his government job for the next twenty years. Yet, Wiechmann got fired once again, after the election of Grover Cleveland.

Some individuals then and now maintain Stanton did not threaten to hang Wiechmann if he refused to give false testimony about Booth's kidnapping conspirators [E&S, p. 1319]. However, no logical reason or supporting evidence can substantiate that claim. Whereas there is overwhelming evidence to validate, Wiechmann did strike a deal to save his own life by agreeing to help with Stanton's bait and switch cover-up. [E&S, p. 1328].



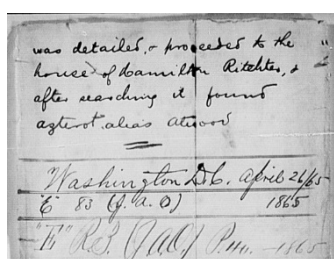
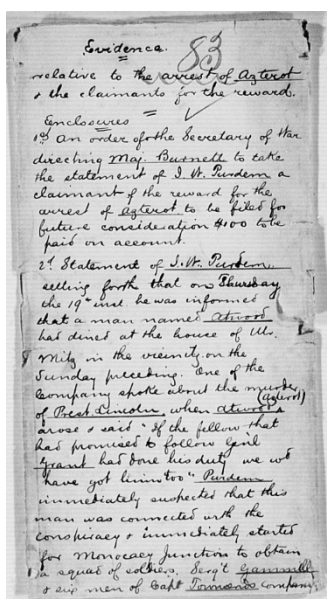
James Purdom asks Stanton for a private interview.

James Purdom had a dispatch containing contrary testimony, by Hezekiah Metz, concerning what Atzerodt said about killing General Grant.

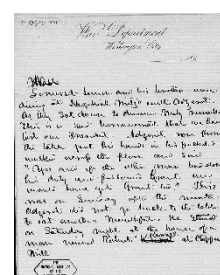
Purdom asked Stanton for a private interview, and Stanton ordered Burnett to take his statement (written in Stanton's handwriting) and file it for future consideration, \$100 to be paid from his pre-approved reward account [E&S, p. 1070, 1190, 2:231].

During the conspiracy trial, Hezekiah Metz gave his version of Atzerodt's comment about killing Grant. However, the other witnesses, who also heard the same statement, James and Somerset Leaman, gave a different rendition that did not implicate Atzerodt or Michael O'Laughlin as accomplices in the alleged plot to kill Grant [Pitman, pp. 149, 152]. Michael O'Laughlin died in prison convicted for lying in wait to kill General Grant, despite having no evidence, and several opposing testimonies [Pitman, pp. 226-27, 229-33].

Below, is the document of Stanton's order for Colonel Burnett to pay Purdom \$100 for Hezekiah Metz's statement against Atzerodt [E&S, pp. 1189-90, 2:221-32].



(2:221-22)



Purdom's dispatch in Stanton's handwriting.

[See statement by James Stabler [E&S, pp. 1185-88]. See, New York crowd article "How They Got Away with Murder"

www.reasonlincoln.com

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

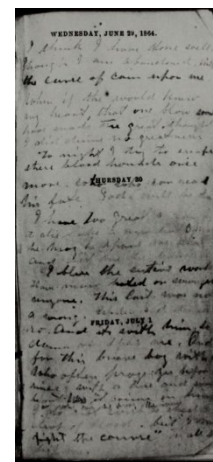
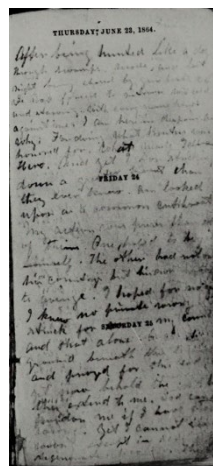
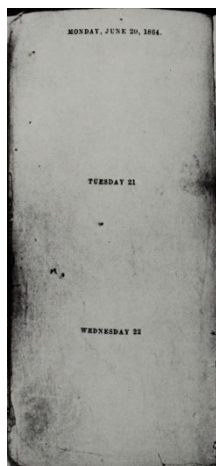
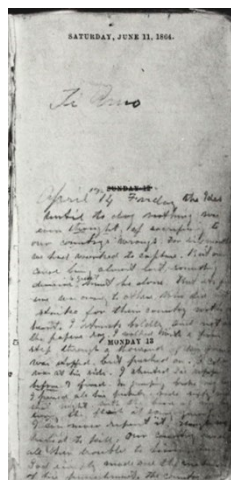
31.

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.)

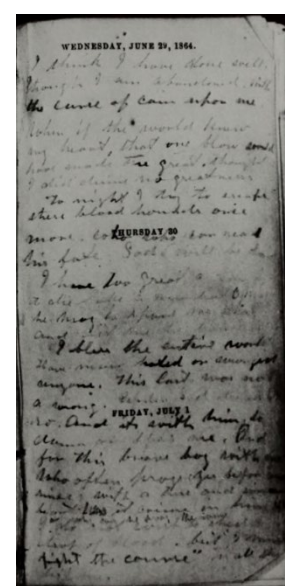
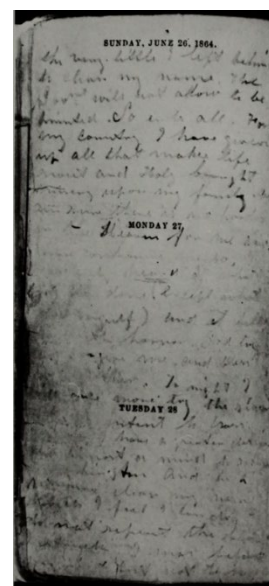
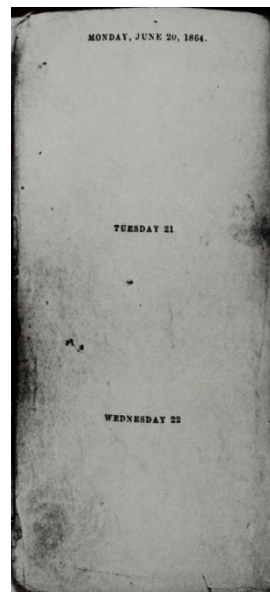
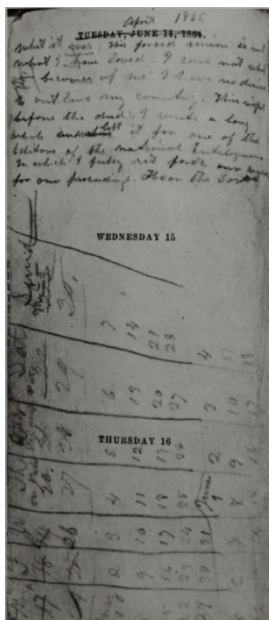
Back pages of sheets:

28
June 14

29
June 20

30
June 26

31
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.)

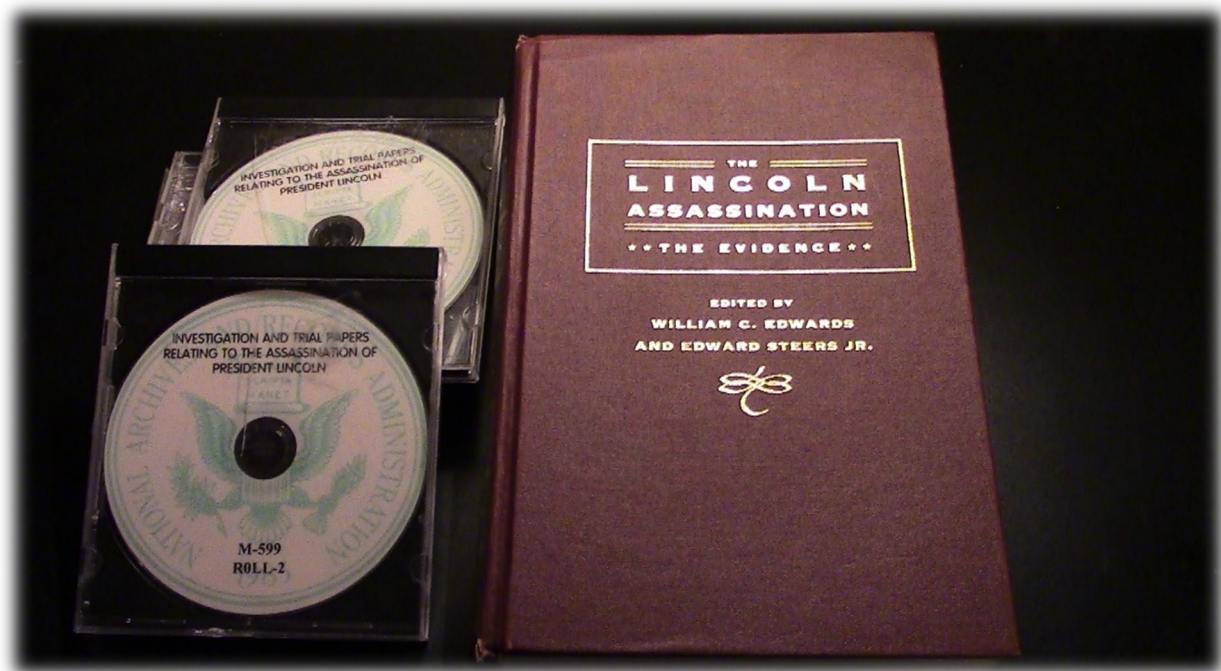
Exam conclusion:

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].