

February 23, 1939

Dear Edna Turpin:

What a very nice letter. Of course I am delighted that you liked the Rogers story and that you thought it showed me an honest woman. The Lord alone knows how I tried to be honest in writing that dreadful book, and what pain honesty caused me!

I am glad to say that the proofs of the Recollections are all done and that I am able to go to another job, get the taste of that and its shortcomings out of my head.

My other job is one I have stumbled on. I never meant to carry my Lincoln work beyond his death. I never meant to consider John Wilkes Booth, but a set of unexpected circumstances started me at it, and I have become deeply interested in the poor boy's making. I never for a moment have thought that the Confederate authorities had anything to do with the assassination. It was Booth's act and Booth's alone.

But it is very difficult to trace Booth's movements and here is where I am asking a little help from you. He played in the South before War actually began, was a guard at John Brown's hanging. The difficulty is to find where and when he played in the South and it seemed to me there might be somebody in Richmond in the library, or in a private collection, that had made some study of Booth and his life in the South before the War. Could you tell me or could you tell me where I could go to find out?

Not long ago I met a woman who lived at one time in Lynchburg, Virginia. She was certain that Carter Glass has a large collection of John Wilkes Booth material but she was a more or less muddle-headed person and on the strength of what she said I would not presume to write to Mr. Glass. But if occurred to me that if he had ever made such a study you might know about it.

