

February 23, 1939

Dear Mr. Budke:

Do forgive my long delay in answering your letter of February 10th with the abstract which you sent and the records of the Court House in Venango County. The letter and material reached me at a moment when I was swamped with work which could not be delayed. I am only just out from under and only this morning have had leisure to go over with some care the abstract and examine the plot of land in which Booth had his interests. The document is admirable for its clarity and authority. What is most important it settles beyond dispute one date in tracing Booth's movements at this period. That is, that he was in New York on the 29th day of October 1864. *ch*

The conveyance of the land to Simonds as trustee on the 29th day of September 1864 does not prove, as you say, that he was in Franklin on that date. That as yet I have not been able to prove by documents. I rather think he was occupied in recruiting for the kidnapping at that time. He did considerable work before he went to Canada in October. The date when he went I have not established, but it is certain that he was there on October 27th when the records show he took out money from a Canadian bank.

I was interested in your comments on the Dramatic Oil Company, the way such combinations were formed, and made.

As I understand it there is as yet no evidence as to when the Dramatic Oil Company first came together, when they took over the land and began operation. The general statement that Booth was in

Franklin as early as April of 1864, that he spent the Summer there, is subject to revision. He made an engagement of two, and I think three weeks, at the Boston Museum beginning at the end of April 1864 and continuing probably to the middle of May. *filed*

I am under the greatest obligation to you, dear Mr. Budke, for the excellent digest you have made of these records. It gives me something substantial to hang to. At this moment your digest and the play bills along with newspaper stories of Booth's appearance at various points, also his registering at the National Hotel in Washington, are the chief material for making a calendar of his movements - something which I think must be done.

If you are interested in having a copy of the calendar on which I am working I shall be glad to send it to you with the understanding of course that it is tentative-as far as I have been able to go.

With renewed thanks for your courtesy in this matter, believe me

Very sincerely yours