

BOOTH'S OIL SPECULATIONS.

Joseph H. Simonds.

For the Prosecution.--May 13.

I was acquainted with J. Wilkes Booth in his lifetime, and was his business agent, particularly in the oil region. I did some little business for him in the City of Boston, but it was very little, and was entirely closed up before I left there.

Mr. Booth's interest in the oil speculations was as follows: He owned a third undivided interest in a lease of three and a half acres on the Alleghany River, near Franklin. The land interest cost \$4,000. He paid \$2,000--that being one-half of it. He also purchased, for \$1,000, an interest in an association there owning an undivided thirtieth of a contract. That is all that he ever absolutely purchased. There was money spent for expenses on this lease, previous to his purchase of the land interest. He never realized a dollar from any interest possessed in the oil region. His speculations were a total loss.

The first interest he acquired in any way was in December, 1863, or January, 1864. I accompanied him to the oil regions in June, 1864, for the purpose of taking charge of his business there. The whole amount invested by him in this Alleghany River property, in every way, was about \$5,000, and the other investment was about \$1,000, making \$6,000 in all.

His business was entirely closed out there on the 27th of September, 1864.

One of the conveyances was made to his brother, Junius Brutus Booth, which was without compensation; but a consideration was mentioned in the deed. The other transfer was to me, and it was done in consideration of my services, for which I never received any other pay. There was not a dollar paid to J. Wilkes Booth at all for these conveyances, and he paid all the expenses on the transfer and the conveyances.

Pitman; page 45

Poore's report gives Simond's testimony in volume I, pages 39-42. Poore makes Simonds say that Booth's investments were in Venango county on the Alleghany River, near Franklin, and "in a different portion of the county."

The Daily National Republican of Washington for Monday, April 17th, 1865, carried a dispatch dated Boston, April 15th and including these words:

He has appeared upon the stage only a few times this season, having interested himself in oil speculations, and by this means became quite wealthy. At the beginning of the season he gave up an engagement he had already made, and for some time devoted himself almost exclusively to business at Oil Creek, where, at one time at least, he was associated with an old friend, who formerly resided in South Boston.