

CTF

History 225

Re: Lincoln Conspiracy

The Context:

* Begin w/ the Dahlgren raid and the Confederate leadership's belief that Dahlgren's orders to burn Richmond and assassinate Davis and any other Confederate leaders they could lay their hands derived from the higher circles within the Union--right up to the White House.

* The work of the Confederate clandestine services in Canada. It is certain that Booth was associated with this "Department of Dirty Tricks." Booth was a Confederate spy and was used to run messages and medicine into Confederate lines.

The Rebels Secret Service were active in attempts to destabilize the 1864 election. Fire bombing of New York; efforts to free Confederate POWs; raid on St. Alban's, Vermont; financing and encouraging secret Northern organizations like the Kinights of the Golden Circle and other pro-Confederate "patriot" groups in the old Northwest to take up arms and declared a Confederation of the NW and break off from the Union in time for the 1864 election.

In 1864 there was an effort by a member of the Secret Service to spread a yellow fever epidemic in WDC with the use of infected blankets. It failed because yellow fever couldnot be transmitted in this fashion.

Booth was not involved in any of this. But there is evidence that he was part of a Confederate plot to kidnap Lincoln; spirit him from Washington to Richmond and hold him hostege for the exchange of Southern POWS or for other forms of political blackmail. Booth headed up an action team to grab Lincoln and both times it failed to materialize.

These were plans adopted after the Dahlgren Raid.

The Thomas Harney mission to blow up the White House w/ Lincoln and what ever cabient or war leaders were inside. Harney was an explosive expert from the Torpedo Bureau. He was to be infiltrated into WDC by Mosby and his raiders in April 1865. A part of Mosby's force was spotted by Union calvalry and Harney along with some others were taken prisoner. (Wm. Tidwell, April '65)

After this that Booth decided to go ahead with his plans to assassinate Lincoln and Johnson, Grant, Seward, etc.