

## **AFFIDAVIT OF LOUIS J. WEICHMANN.**

COL. H. L. BURNETT, *Judge Advocate, Cincinnati, Ohio:*

*Colonel*--I stated before the Commission, at Washington, that I commenced to board with Mrs. Surratt in November 1864. As a general thing, I remained at home during the evenings, and, consequently, I heard many things which were then intended to blind me, but which now are as clear as daylight. The following facts, which have come to my recollection since the rendition of my testimony, may be of interest:

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I once asked Mrs. Surratt what her son John had to do with Dr. Mudd's farm; why he made himself an agent for Booth (she herself had told me that Booth desired to purchase Mudd's farm). Her reply was, that "Dr. Mudd and the people of Charles county had got tired of Booth, and that they had pushed him on John." Before the fourth of March, she was in the habit of remarking that "something was going to happen to old Abe which would prevent him from taking his seat; that Gen. Lee was going to execute a movement which would startle the whole world." What that movement was she never said.

A few days after, I asked her why John brought such men as Herold and Atzerodt to the house, and associated with them? "O, John wishes to make use of them for his dirty work," was her reply. On my desiring to know what the dirty work was, she answered that "John wanted them to clean his horses." He had two at that time. And once, when she sent me to Brooks, the stabler, to inquire about her son, she laughed, and remarked that "Brooks considered John Surratt, and Booth, and Herold, and Atzerodt a party of young gamblers and sports, and that she wanted him to think so." Brooks has told me since the trial that such was actually the case, and that at one time he saw John H. Surratt with three one-hundred dollar notes in his possession.

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When Richmond fell and Lee's army surrendered, when Washington was illuminated, Mrs. Surratt closed her home and wept. Her house was gloomy and cheerless. To use her own expression, it was "indicative of her feelings."

On Good Friday I drove her into the country, ignorant of her purpose and intentions. We started about half past two o'clock in the afternoon. Before leaving, she had an interview with John Wilkes Booth in the parlor. On the way down she was very lively and cheerful, taking the reins into her own hands several times, and urging on the steed. We halted once, and that was about three miles from Washington, when, observing that there were pickets along the road, she hailed an old farmer, and wanted to know if they would remain there all night. On being told that they were withdrawn at about eight o'clock in the evening, she said she "was glad to know it." On the return, I chanced to make some remark about Booth, stating that he appeared to be without employment, and asking her when he was going to act again. "Booth is done acting," she said, "and is going to New York very soon, never to return.

Then turning round, she remarked: "Yes, and Booth is crazy on one subject, and I am going to give him a good scolding the next time I see him." What that "one subject" was, Mrs. Surratt never mentioned to me. She was anxious to be at home at nine o'clock, saying that she had made arrangement with some gentleman who was to meet her at that hour. I asked her if it was Booth. She answered neither yes nor no.

When about a mile from the city, and having from the top of a hill caught a view of Washington swimming in a flood of light, raising her hands, she said, "I am afraid all that rejoicing will be turned into mourning and all this glory into sadness." I asked her what she meant. She replied that after sunshine there was always a storm, and that the people were to proud and licentious, and that God would punish them.

The gentleman whom she expected at nine o'clock on her return, called. It was, as I afterward ascertained, Booth's last visit to Mrs. Surratt, and the third one on that day. She was alone with him for a few minutes in the parlor. I was in the dining room at the time, and as soon as I had taken tea, I repaired thither. Mrs. Surratt's former cheerfulness had left her. She was now very nervous, agitated and restless. On my asking her what was the matter, she replied that she was very nervous, and did not feel well. Then looking

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at me, she wanted to know which way the torchlight procession was going that we had seen on the Avenue. I remarked that it was a procession of the arsenal employees, who were going to serenade the President. She said that she would like to know, as she was very much interested in it. Her nervousness finally increased so much that she chased myself and the young ladies who were making a great deal of noise and laughter, to our respective rooms.

When the detectives came, at three o'clock the next morning, I rapped at her door for permission to let them in.

"For God's sake, let them come in! I expected the house to be searched," said she.

When the detectives had gone, and when her daughter, almost frantic, cried out:

"Oh Ma! just think of that man's (John W. Booth) having been here an hour before the assassination! I am afraid it will bring suspicion upon us."

"Anna, come what will," she replied, "I am resigned. I think that J. Wilkes Booth was only an instrument in the hands of the Almighty to punish this proud and licentious people."

LOUIS J. WEICHMANN.

Sworn and subscribed before me this 11th day of August, 1865.

CHAS. E. PANCOAST,  
*Alderman.*