

Essential Question: When did Dr. Mudd recognize the “injured man” as John Wilkes Booth?

Document A: Statement of Dr. Samuel A. Mudd

On Friday April 21, 1865, one week after Lincoln’s assassination, Lieutenant Alexander Lovett arrested Dr. Mudd and took him to Bryantown for interrogation. Dr. Mudd was interrogated for six hours and produced the statement excerpted below.

“About 4 o’clock on Saturday morning, the 15th, two persons came to my house and **commenced** rapping very loudly at the door. I was very much alarmed at this, fearing that they might be somebody who had come there not for any good purpose...Before opening the door, however, I **inquired** who was there. They told me two strangers from St. Mary’s Co. who were on their way to Washington; but that the horse of one of them had fallen, and broken the rider’s leg. Satisfying myself of the correctness of the statement of one of them having received an injury, by going to a window & seeing one of them in distress, I went and opened the door.

I examined the injured leg, but did not give it a very thorough examination owing to the parties wanting it attended to in such **haste**. My examination was sufficiently thorough, however, to enable me to discover that there was one bone broken about two inches above the ankle joint.

A photograph of Booth was afterward shown me by a detective, but I did not observe any resemblance between the two men, though I must say that I have very often been shown likeness of **intimate** friends, and failed to recognize them by their pictures.

These men remained at my house until 4 & 5 o’clock in the afternoon. I never saw either of the parties before, nor can I **conceive** who sent them to my house...The names given by these parties-the young man Henson, and the other Tyson or Tyser.”

Source: Statement of Dr. Samuel A. Mudd housed at the *National Archives Records Administration (NARA)*, M-599, reel 5, frames 0212-0239.

Commenced-began

Inquired-asked

Haste-speed; swiftness

Intimate-close

Conceive-guess; understand

Document B: Testimony of Colonel H. H. Wells

The following is an excerpt of testimony given at the assassination trial by Colonel H. H. Wells. Wells interrogated Dr. Mudd for over six hours after his arrest on Friday, April 12. Wells gave the following testimony regarding the interrogation of Dr. Mudd on May 16, 1865.

He (Dr. Mudd) said he did not recognize the wounded man. I exhibited to him a photograph of Booth, but he said he could not recognize him from that photograph.

He said he had been introduced to Booth at Church, some time in November last, as wanting to buy farming lands, and that they had some little conversation on the subject of lands. In this conversation Booth asked if there were any desirable horses that could be bought in the neighborhood cheaply; and Mudd mentioned a neighbor of his who had some horses...Booth remained with him that night, and next morning purchased one of the horses.

In answer to a question, he admitted that he could now recognize the person he treated as the same person he was introduced to---Booth. He had never seen Booth from the time he was introduced to him in Church until that Saturday morning (April 14).

Source: Testimony of Col. H. H. Wells in Benn Pitman, *The Assassination of President Lincoln and The Trial of the Conspirators* (New York, NY: Moore, Wiltach, and Baldwin, 1865), 168-169.

Document C: Second Affidavit of Mrs. Sarah F. Mudd

Despite being an eye witness to the events that occurred at the Mudd farm, Mrs. Mudd was not allowed to testify in her husband's defense. Mudd's defense attorney, Thomas Ewing, had Mrs. Mudd prepare two statements describing what happened at her farm on April 15, 1865. Ewing's hope was that President Johnson might read these statements and overrule the decision of the military commission. This excerpt is the second of Mrs. Mudd's statements. It was written on July 6, 1865, just one week after the commission found Dr. Mudd guilty and sentenced him to life imprisonment.

"I, Sarah F. Mudd, wife of Dr. Mudd, on oath do say,

That I saw John Wilkes Booth when he was in Charles County last fall. He came Sunday evening after supper, staid all night, and next day my husband went with him to **Gardiner's** where Booth bought the horse - Booth did not return from Gardiner's with my husband - and was never at my husband's house, or so far as I know in the neighborhood before or after until the 15th of April - nor did I ever hear of my husband having met him elsewhere, or being in any way directly or indirectly in communication with him...

Up to this time I had not the least suspicion that the crippled man was Booth - and I am sure no one would have recognized him as being the same man who was at our house last fall - for he was very much thinner, and looked so pale and **haggard**, and changed with his heavy whiskers, as to alter entirely his appearance. I am certain that my husband did not recognize him, or suspect him to be Booth even after I told him of the **false whiskers**. I am sure too that Herold was a total stranger to the Doctor, as he was to me...

As to my husband having recognized Booth while he was at our house, I repeat that he did not recognize or suspect the stranger to be Booth; had he done so he certainly would have mentioned it to me, but he did not. Moreover, he did not notice the crippled man specially, nor seem to be interested in learning where he came from or where he was going."

Sarah F. Mudd

Sworn and Subscribed before me this 6th day of July 1865

B.W. Ferguson J.P

Source: July 6, 1865 affidavit of Sarah Frances Mudd, found in the Thomas Ewing Papers, Library of Congress.

Gardiner-the Gardiner family lived next to the Mudd farm. Dr. Mudd took John Wilkes Booth to their farm to buy a horse in November 1864.

haggard- worn/fatigued

false whiskers-fake beard

Document D: The Dutton Report

Captain George Dutton was an officer on the ship U.S.S. Florida. The Florida was the transport ship that took Dr. Mudd, as well as the three other men sentenced to prison in the assassination trial, to Fort Jefferson on Dry Tortugas Island, Florida. Dr. Mudd was sentenced to life imprisonment by the commission who conducted the trial.

“Sir-I am in receipt of your communication of this date, in which you request information as regards the truthfulness of certain statements and confessions reported to have been made by Dr. Mudd while under my charge, **en route** to the Dry Tortugas.

In reply, I have the honor to state that my duties required me to be constantly with the prisoners, and during a conversation with Dr. Mudd, on the 22d of July, he confessed that he knew Booth when he came to his house with Herold, on the morning after the assassination of the President; that he had known Booth for some time, but was afraid to tell of his having been at his house on the 15th of April, fearing that his own and the lives of his family would be endangered **thereby**.

I will also state that this confession was voluntary, and made without **solicitation**, threat or promise, and was made after the destination of the prisoners was communicated to them, which communication affected Dr. Mudd more than the rest; and he frequently exclaimed, “Oh, I can not live in such a place.”

Source: Affidavit of Captain George W. Dutton in Benn Pitman, *The Assassination of President Lincoln and The Trial of the Conspirators* (New York, NY: Moore, Wiltach, and Baldwin, 1865), 421.

en route-on the way

thereby-by doing so

solicitation-being forced

Document E: Dr. Mudd's Response to the Dutton Report

The following is an excerpt from Dr. Mudd's response to Captain Dutton's accusation. It was written in a letter to Mrs. Mudd. She subsequently made the letter public.

"The following is a sworn statement written by my husband while he was a prisoner in Fort Jefferson, and which he was not permitted by the authorities to have published. He sent it to me in a letter about the 1st of October, 1865. This statement was made to correct **erroneous** statements, which had appeared in the public press, allegedly quoting my husband."

August 28, 1865.

"1st. That I confessed to having known Booth while in my house; was afraid to give information of the fact, fearing to endanger my life, or made use of any language in that connection---I positively and **emphatically** declare to be **notoriously** false..."

I never saw or heard of Booth after the 23d of December, 1864, until after the assassination, and then he was in disguise. I did not know Booth whilst in my house, nor did I know Herold; neither of whom made himself known to me."

Source: Nettie Mudd Monroe, *The Life of Dr. Samuel A. Mudd* (New York: The Neal Publishing Company, 1906), 42.

Erroneous-false; incorrect

Emphatically-without doubt; clearly

Notoriously-especially

Document F: Notes of Samuel Cox Jr.

Samuel Cox Jr. was the son of Samuel Cox. After Booth and Herold left Dr. Mudd's home on April 15, 1865 they traveled to the Cox home where they sought help. Cox ultimately passed Booth and Herold to Thomas Jones, who hid them in a pine thicket until they could safely cross the Potomac. The following is an excerpt of personal notes written in the margins of a copy of Jones' book on the episode by Samuel Cox Jr. He was a boy at the time of the assassination, but was old enough to be sent by his father to bring Jones to the hiding place of Booth and Herold. The excerpt was from an alleged conversation he had with Dr. Mudd as the two were on the campaign trail running against one another for state legislature in 1877. Dr. Mudd was pardoned and released from prison by President Andrew Johnson in 1869.

"In 1877, after Samuel A. Mudd's return from Dry Tortugas and when he & myself were **canvassing** this County as the Democratic candidates for the Legislature, he told me he knew Booth but casually...He told me he was not favorably impressed with Booth, and that when Booth and Herold came to his house the night after the assassination, they told him they were just from Virginia & that Booth's horse had fallen soon after leaving the river & had broken his leg, that he had rendered him medical assistance while in utter **ignorance** of the assassination.

Then after he had set the broken leg, he, Dr. Mudd took letters he had but a short time gotten through the **contraband** mail for distribution, and that in going to Bryantown to mail them he was surprised to find the village surrounded by soldiers, and upon being stopped by a **sentry** he was horrified when told the president had been shot the night before, and, upon asking who had shot him the fellow had answered Booth.

He then told me his first **impulse** was to surrender Booth, that he had...come with a lie upon his tongue and received medical assistance which would be certain to have him serious trouble. But he determined to go back and **upbraid** him for his treachery, which he did. And that Booth had appealed to him in the name of his mother whom he professed to love so devotedly and that he acted and spoke so tragically that he told them they must leave his house which they did..."

Source: Handwritten notes in Samuel Cox Jr.'s copy of *J. Wilkes Booth, An Account of His Sojourn in Southern Maryland after the Assassination of Abraham Lincoln, His Passage Across the Potomac, and His Death in Virginia*, by Thomas Jones. The original is housed in the Maryland Historical Society in Baltimore, Maryland.

Canvassing-campaigning

Ignorance-unaware

Contraband-illegal; covert; underground

Sentry-soldier standing guard

Impulse-instinct; feeling

Upbraid-yell at; scold

Timeline of Major Events

- December 10, 1833**.....Birth of Dr. Samuel A. Mudd
- April 14, 1865**.....John Wilkes Booth assassinated President Abraham Lincoln and escapes Washington
- April 15, 1865**.....John Wilkes Booth arrives at Dr. Mudd's house to seek medical attention (*Doc. A*)
- April 19, 1865**.....Lt. Alexander Lovett interviews Dr. Mudd at his home
- April 21, 1865**.....Second interview at the Mudd residence. Dr. Mudd is arrested and sent to Washington (*Doc. B*)
- May-July 1865**.....Lincoln assassination trial. Dr. Mudd is found guilty and sentenced to life in prison at Fort Jefferson on Dry Tortugas Island, Florida
- July 1865**.....Dr. Mudd is transported to Fort Jefferson on the U.S.S. Florida (*Doc. D*)
- July 1865-**
February 1869.....Dr. Mudd imprisoned at Fort Jefferson. President Andrew Johnson pardoned Mudd and he returned home. (*Doc. E*)
- 1877**.....Unsuccessful run for State Legislature (*Doc. F*)
- January 10, 1883**.....Dr. Mudd died from complications of pneumonia