

## SONS OF UNION VETERANS OF THE CIVIL WAR

Department of the Chesapeake

Patriotic Instruction – July 2021

It is ironic that, in this current climate of “tear down everything Confederate related,” signs would be erected covering the historical movements of one of America’s most notorious Confederate political assassins - who killed one of the greatest Presidents in U.S. history, and the author of the Emancipation Proclamation – would be allowed to be erected.

As we all know, Johns Wilkes Booth was pro-Confederate, but the rest of his family was, like many Marylanders at the time, divided between North and South. He was outspoken in his love of the South, and equally outspoken in his hatred of Abraham Lincoln. As the Civil War went on, Booth increasingly quarreled with his brother Edwin, who declined to make stage appearances in the South and refused to listen to John Wilkes' fiercely partisan denunciations of the North and Lincoln. In early 1863, Booth was arrested in St. Louis while on a theatre tour, when he was heard saying that he "wished the President and the whole damned government would go to hell." He was charged with making "treasonous" remarks against the government but was released when he took an oath of allegiance to the Union and paid a substantial fine. Booth is alleged to have been a member of the “Knights of the Golden Circle,” a secret society whose initial objective was to acquire territories as slave states.

We, the SUVCW, encourage the history of the Civil War to be told as accurately as possible, and stand by our position that monuments and memorials should be left in place, and used in conjunction with historical explanation to educate the public. We must be vigilant in following the development of sites, trails, and signage which may, or may not, spark controversy in today’s ever-changing political climate, and be prepared to realistically defend our history, whatever it may be, whenever, and wherever it occurs. History is currently a “moving target.”

FC&L

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