



Come Retribution: The Confederate Secret Service and the Assassination of Lincoln

William A. Tidwell, James O. Hall, David Winfred Gaddy

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Many Confederates believed that Abraham Lincoln himself was the sponsor of the Union army's heavy destruction of the South. With John Wilkes Booth as its agent, the Confederate Secret Service devised a plan of retribution--to seize President Lincoln, hold him hostage, and bring the war-weary North to capitulation. The code word for this stratagem was "Come Retribution."

But when Booth was stymied, the Secret Service took another course. They conspired to bomb the White House during a conference of senior Union officials. But this plot also failed. Next, the Confederates devised for Confederate forces to abandon Richmond and Petersburg and to link up with General Joseph E. Johnston in the South before General Grant's forces were prepared to move. This plan was thwarted, however, when Grant took Richmond. By April 9, 1865, Lee was forced to surrender.

Yet the willful, ardent Booth, smarting from the South's loss of the war, took decisive action at Ford's Theater during that spring night in 1865.

Investigating the assassination from their perspective as career intelligence officers, William A. Tidwell and David Winfred Gaddy, joined by James O. Hall, one of the leading authorities on the assassination, find and follow the clues, interpret the clandestine evidence, and draw well-founded conclusions. They are the first to explore the Confederate Secret Service's link to the death of Lincoln. In *Come Retribution*, originally published in 1988 and now available again in a paperback edition, they offer startling insights and give a new direction to the well-known and often-told story of Lincoln and Booth.

"The facts presented and the inferences drawn are provocative," said Nathan Miller in *The Baltimore Sun*. "Every account of the Lincoln assassination published in the future will have to take account of the arguments presented in this book."

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