



Mary Surratt: The Life of the Alleged Lincoln Conspirator Who Became the First Woman Executed by the U.S. Government

Charles River Editors

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*Includes pictures *Explains the conspiracy and includes accounts of Surratt's involvement and trial

*Includes online resources and a bibliography for further reading *Includes a table of contents "Only in the case of Dr. Samuel Alexander Mudd is there as much controversy as to the guilt or innocence of one of the defendants." – Laurie Verge Before the night of April 14, 1865, John Wilkes Booth was one of the most famous actors of his time, and President Abraham Lincoln had even watched him perform, but his most significant performance at a theater did not take place on the stage. That night, Booth became one of history's most infamous assassins when he shot President Lincoln at Ford's Theatre in Washington, D.C. Perhaps not surprisingly, the actor's flair for the dramatic came at a cost to the plot. It took almost no time for the shocked public and the federal government to begin unraveling Booth's conspiracy, which had mostly faltered from the beginning. Following the shooting, America's most famous manhunt commenced, and it was a 12 day pursuit that became the stuff of legends and controversy itself. Eight others were eventually tried for their alleged involvement in the plot and convicted, and four were hanged shortly thereafter as a result of some of the nation's most famous trials. Though the conspiracy and the other conspirators as a whole are often forgotten, the most well-known among them today is probably Mary Surratt, whose boarding house was used by the conspirators (including her son) to hatch and plan out the conspiracy that ultimately culminated with the Lincoln assassination. However, while the cases against the other conspirators were strong, the ties between Surratt, who professed innocence, were more tenuous, and it mostly fell on the military tribunal to insinuate that Surratt was aware of the planning going on in the house. In addition to that, while Mrs. Surratt was being detained, the conspirator who attacked Secretary of State Seward, Lewis Powell, showed up in disguise at her boarding house three days after the attacks, further damning her by association. The trial was no less controversial, as it was handled by a military tribunal that was short on professional counsel on both sides. A number of witnesses were called, and the defense sought to impeach witness testimony and poke for inaccuracies, but in the end, Surratt was sentenced to hang, and all of her appeals for clemency either went unheard or were rejected. On July 7, 1865, Mary Surratt became the first woman executed by the U.S. government. Mary Surratt: The Life of the Alleged Lincoln Conspirator Who Became the First Woman Executed by the U.S. Government comprehensively covers the controversial life and trial of Mary Surratt. Along with pictures of the important people and places, you will learn about the alleged conspirator like you never have before.

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