MONTREAL – A little-known connection between Canada and Abraham Lincoln’s assassin will quietly mark an anniversary this week: it’s been 150 years since John Wilkes Booth hobnobbed with Confederate leaders in Montreal.

John Wilkes Booth (1838-1865) led a conspiracy to kidnap Abraham Lincoln that evolved into an assassination plan for Lincoln and members of his cabinet. The Canadian Press.

Six months after Booth’s October 1864 visit, he shot the president in the back of the head. Clues have pointed to Booth’s mysterious trip to Montreal as a precursor to Lincoln’s April 1865 assassination in Ford’s Theater and shoots President Lincoln in the back of the head. He then escapes from Washington, DC, leaving the city — and the nation — in a panic. For the next 12 days, alleged Booth sightings place him virtually everywhere in the country.

The museum, which did not respond to multiple requests for comment, described itself as protecting the integrity of its collection, preserving those artifacts for future generations. But according to the bonekeepers, until there exists a non-destructive method of examining the vertebrae, there will be no test.

The Assassination of President Lincoln from left to right: Major Henry Rathbone, Clara Harris, Mary Todd Lincoln, Abraham Lincoln, and John Wilkes Booth. Print by Currier & Ives.

Forward into the past. John Wilkes Booth in 1865, the same year he killed Abraham Lincoln. Adds Johnson: “Interestingly enough, a lot of people wrote about how his stage presence and his acting on stage was so evocative of real life; it was like it had never been seen before. It was one of the first unpredictable moment-to-moment actors that had harnessed a lot of what Stella Adler, Stanislavski and Meisner really teach: acting is reacting. The whole “you did this so I’m going to do something different” created this really fierce unpredictability about him. His assassination essentially martyred Lincoln - which is NOT at all what Booth wanted to do - and he put Andrew Johnson in the presidency, who many felt were incompetent in putting this nation together that had been torn and ravaged from war.