

Questions Raised On Murder Bullets

Did a bullet from Lee Harvey Oswald's rifle chip the curb of Main Street near the Triple Underpass?

That question remained unanswered Thursday.

And it raised other questions:

If one of the three shots from Oswald's mail-order rifle struck the curb, is it possible that another bullet ranged through President Kennedy's body and then hit Gov. John Connally?

If the chip did not result from a bullet, how did it get there?

Buddy Walthers, an investigator for Sheriff Bill Decker, found the chipped spot less than an hour after a sniper shot President Kennedy and the governor as their car moved slowly over Elm Street toward the Triple Underpass.

"A man came up to me and asked if I was hunting for bullets fired at President Kennedy," Walthers related. "He said he had stopped his car on Main Street and was standing beside it, watching the motorcade, when the shooting started.

"He said something hit him on the cheek hard enough to sting. I checked the area where the man said he had been standing and found the chip in the curb. It was on the south side of the street."

Main runs parallel to Elm on the south.

Walthers and Investigator Allan Sweatt searched the area for about 20 minutes without finding a bullet. They concluded that, if a bullet had struck the curb, the slug had ricocheted or disintegrated.

The motorist could have been hit by a sliver from the bullet or a particle of concrete from the curb, they concluded.

The chip appeared freshly made.

It was in line with the path a bullet would have taken if fired from the sixth floor of the Texas School Book Depository building toward the Kennedy motorcade. The trajectory, however, would have carried it above the heads of President Kennedy and the governor.

Walthers and Sweatt were within a block of the slaying site when the sniper opened fire. They

agreed with other witnesses that the assassin fired only three shots.

Gov. Connally said the first shot struck President Kennedy and the second entered his body.

Then, the governor related, another bullet struck President Kennedy.

That would account for the three shots.

It would not, however, account for the chipped spot.

Various theories have been advanced.

Was Gov. Connally mistaken about what happened during the 10-second period in which the sniper shot him and the President? Did the rifleman fire two bullets into the car, with one striking both President Kennedy and Gov. Connally, and then hurriedly fire a third which passed over their auto?

Or did the chipped spot have no connection with the shooting? Couldn't the motorist have been struck by a speck of gravel thrown up by a car? Couldn't the chip have been caused by other gravel?

FBI and Secret Service agents may have the answers. But they haven't revealed what they learned during their intensive investigation of the murder of President Kennedy.

Car fragments of bone with it, this slug tore away the skull and scalp upon emerging over the right ear. The doctors said it left a hole which measured 13 centimeters. (A centimeter is about two fifths of an inch.)

"That would make the hole about the size of a hen egg," an investigator noted.

Doctors who performed the autopsy said President Kennedy apparently turned his head before this bullet struck him. They said this would account for the trajectory.

They said that, while both bullets contributed to President Kennedy's death, it was the shot fired through his brain which left him without a chance to survive.

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