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Study of Dallas Film Disputes Theory of an Assassin on Knoll

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LEXINGTON, Mass., May 18—An analysis by one of the nation's top photographic laboratories has demolished a widely circulated theory that a second gunman was involved in the assassination of President Kennedy.

The Itek Corporation disclosed today that a month-long study of an amateur movie of the shooting had disproved the existence of a rifleman pointing a weapon from a grassy knoll at the Kennedy car in Dallas on Nov. 22, 1963. Itek made the study as a public service.

The 8-mm. color motion picture was shot that day by Orville Nix, a Government employe who was standing among the parade spectators in Dealey Plaza. It shows the President hit by the fatal bullet and Mrs. Kennedy climbing onto the back of the convertible.

In the background is the knoll and atop it a wooden picket fence and a white concrete pavilion with a low wall. Enlargement of certain frames brings out what to the unaided eye bears a resemblance to a man with one elbow resting on the roof of a station wagon behind the wall and squinting down a gun barrel at Elm Street where Mr. Kennedy was shot.

Itek photographic scientists improved the quality of the film content by utilizing advanced image enhancement methods. "The man with the

rifle" was found to be shadows of tree branches and leaves on the side of the white pavilion. Itek said the analysis showed that the object that apparently was a station wagon or some vehicle was in a parking lot behind a wooden picket fence and 20 feet behind the "shadow gunman." A rifleman at that location would have had to fire from nine feet above the ground for his trajectory to clear existing vertical obstructions, it said.

The independent Itek conclusions on the Nix film were in keeping with the Warren Commission report with one exception. The Itek study indicated that at the moment of the impact of the fatal bullet, the Kennedy automobile was about three feet farther back than the spot where the Warren investigation placed it.

That finding, however, would make it even more unlikely—if not impossible—for a second gunman to have hit Mr. Kennedy from the aperture between the picket fence and the pavilion on the knoll.