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Books @ Authors

By GARY BARANIK

BOOKS & AUTHORS
BY GARY GARANIK
"ASHENDEN OR THE
BRITISH AGENT"

By W. Somerset Maugham
(Doubleday & Co.)

In March of 1928 Doubleday, Doran published "Ashenden or The British Agent" — the first W. Somerset Maugham book to appear under the Doubleday imprint. (His previous American publisher, George H. Doran, merged into Doubleday, Doran in 1927). On June 3, 1966, Doubleday will re-issue "Ashenden," a collection of master spy stories based on the author's experiences in the British Intelligence Department during World War I.

Mr. Maugham died in 1965, Doran was dropped from the Company name in 1946, and some spying techniques have changed since World War I, but the human nature, espionage, and intrigue depicted in "Ashenden" are as up-to-date in 1966 as they were in 1928.

Mr. Maugham's style of writing, mastery of plot, and insight into people are responsible for "Ashenden or The Secret Agent" being regarded as a classic.

"THE WARREN
COMMISSION AND THE
ESTABLISHMENT OF

TRUTH"

By Edward Jay Epstein
(The Viking Press Inc.)

INQUEST: **The Warren Commission and the Establishment of Truth**, by Edward Jay Epstein, will be officially released by Viking on June 29. The book is a study of the aims, methods and performance of the President's Commission on the Assassination of President Kennedy.

Mr. Epstein, a young scholar, began his book as a thesis at Cornell University. His intention was to provide a case study of the nature and activity of an extraordinary government Commission. He set out, as he puts it, to answer the question: "How did the Commission go about searching for such an elusive and many-faced quarry as the truth?" Further, how was the investigation organized? To what degree did political considerations affect the truth-finding process? What was the scope of the investigation, and what its limits? Finally, exactly how was the Report written?

The most important sources for answers to these questions were interviews conducted by Mr. Epstein with five of the seven members of the Commission and with ten members of its working staff. These interviews, together with documen-

tary evidence and Mr. Epstein's interpretation of it, provide a picture of the Commission and its work sharply at variance with the generally accepted view.

In the course of his research, Mr. Epstein found that the official version of the Kennedy assassination fails to contend with serious contradictions presented by the evidence. Without indulging in theoretical speculation about a deliberate suppression of crucial evidence, INQUEST clearly traces the process by which this official story came into being. Without advancing a new theory of the assassination, the book concludes that the absence of such a theory does not by itself prove the truth of the official version, and that the truth of the official version has not been established.

The disturbing statement that "there is a strong case that Oswald could not have acted alone," is one of several major conclusions Mr. Epstein reaches.

In his introduction to the book, Richard H. Rovere, *The New Yorker's* respected Washington correspondent, writes: "The case for Oswald's single-handed guilt rests, as of now, wholly on the Warren Commission's finding that only three bullets were fired at the Presidential party and that one of these described an eccentric course through the bodies of President Kennedy and Governor John Connally of Texas. According to Mr. Epstein, 'There was, however, no substantial evidence which supported this contention, and there was evidence that all but precluded the possibility that both men had been hit by the same bullet.'"