

# Manchester Relates Death-

NEW YORK (AP) — Mrs. John F. Kennedy and aides of her assassinated husband declined to sit with President Johnson on the flight from Dallas to Washington, William Manchester reports in "The Death of a President."

He wrote that Mrs. Kennedy instructed Malcolm Kilduff, a press secretary, to inform the reporters aboard the plane:

"You make sure, Mac — you tell them that I was not up front, but that I came back here and sat with Jack."

Her husband's coffin lay in the rear of the airplane.

**THE third installment of Look Magazine's four-part serializa-**

tion of Manchester's book relates the incidents.

Mrs. Kennedy and her husband had spent their last moments alone together in a private cabin on Air Force 1, Manchester wrote. When she returned to the compartment, after the coffin had been placed on the plane, she found Johnson "reclining" on the bed, dictating to a secretary, Marie Fehmer.

Johnson and Miss Fehmer left hastily.

Mrs. Kennedy was anxious to take off immediately for Washington, Manchester wrote. So were the Kennedy aides. They had been through a struggle, before they were able to remove Kennedy's body from Parkland Hospital in Dallas. Manchester wrote that they were afraid that Dallas authorities might appear at the plane and "kidnap" the President's body.

**BUT Johnson was equally anxious to be sworn in as Presi-**

dent while the plane remained on the ground at Love Field, the book says.

Manchester reports that a Dallas undertaker was so concerned about the pale satin upholstery in his coffin becoming stained with blood, that he wrapped the President's body in seven layers of rubber and plastic. "All this took 20 minutes," the author wrote.

Meanwhile, she kept asking a police sergeant, "Why can't I get my husband back to Washington?"

Another half hour was to pass while a furious dispute, which threatened to erupt into a fist-fight, developed over the question of performing the autopsy before taking Kennedy's body to Air Force One, Manchester writes.

**MANCHESTER wrote that the Dallas County Medical examiner, Earl Rose, told the Kennedy**

party that this was the law in Texas.

Kennedy aides, the author wrote, told Rose that the coffin contained the body of the President of the United States and said the law should be waived in this instance. Manchester wrote that Rose replied:

"There are state laws about removing bodies. You people from Washington can't make your own law."

Lawrence O'Brien and Kenneth O'Donnell, two top Kennedy aides, determined to roll the coffin to the hearse outside the hospital, even if it meant a fight.

**AS they started to push through the crowd in the corridor, a melee began. Manchester wrote that these words were exchanged —**

"These two guys say you can't go."

"One side," Larry said curtly."

## Plane Tension

Evening Journal, Wilmington, Del.

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"Ken said, 'Get the hell over. we're getting out of here.'"

In the plane, Brig. Gen. Godfrey McHugh, Kennedy's Air Force aide, raced to the cockpit and ordered the pilot of Air Force One to start the engines.

Meanwhile, arrangements had been made to administer the oath of office to Johnson while the plane was on the ground.

Thus, Kilduff countermanded McHugh's order.

**AFTER somehow passing each other several times in the corridor — resulting in orders and counterorders to the pilot — McHugh and Kilduff came face to face.**

The book says Kilduff told McHugh the plane would not leave until Johnson had been sworn in. McHugh mistakenly replied that Johnson was on the "backup plane."

Kilduff retorted, "Then you go back and tell that 6-foot Texan he isn't Lyndon Johnson. We're

not going . . . until the President has been sworn."

McHugh pointed toward the rear compartment and said, "I have only one President and he's lying back in that cabin."

This remark, Manchester wrote, ended Gen. McHugh's hopes for another star. McHugh retired from the Air Force a few months later.