Va. Newlyweds Die in Embrace

By BRUCE EGGLER

Dr. Robert V. Steagall Jr. had worked Christmas Day and New Year's Eve at Roanoke, Va., Memorial Hospital to build up a few more days for the vacation he and his bride of seven months were planning to take in New Orleans.

The young couple left Roanoke New Year's Day and were planning to return yesterday. Instead, they were gunned down in a hallway on the 18th floor of the Downtown Howard Johnson's.

Police discovered their bodies yesterday, locked in an embrace. Steagall, 28, had been shot in the head and left arm. His wife Elizabeth, 25 had been shot in the right eye.

Dr. and Mrs. Steagall, had lived in Roanoke since July. He was interning at the hospital there, and she was working as an audiologist at a speech and hearing clinic.

They had been married in June, the same month he received his M.D. degree from the University of Virginia's School of Medicine and she got her master's degree in speech pathology and audiology there.

William H. Flannagan, director of the Roanoke Memorial Hospital, told

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Dr. Robert V. Steagall

Stay-Away Order Issued to Public

Police have cordoned off the portion of the Central Business District from Canal Street to St. Joseph and from Claiborne Avenue to Camp Street for the duration of the Howard Johnson's crisis.

Only emergency travel into the area will be permitted. Emergency calls should be directed to the Command Desk, 821-2000 or 822-4161.

Stores on the uptown side of Canal Street are closed. The Chamber of Commerce urges residents to stay away from the Canal Street area.

Death Ends Newlyweds' Trip

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the Roanoke World-News that the young intern's record was "nothing but top-notch." Friends of the young couple described them both as dedicated and serious. Another intern who lived next door to them said, "They really cared about their patients."

Steagall planned to go into family practice in Martinsville, Va., about 50 miles from Roanoke, where his parents live. Mrs. Steagall, whose maiden name was Elisabeth Day, came from Roxboro, N.C., about 10 miles south of the Virginia border.

The couple's bodies were identified by W. J. Hickman III, a fellow intern in Roanoke who was in New Orleans visiting his parents. He became concerned yesterday when he did not hear from the Steagalls and went to the Howard Johnson's, where he learned that police had found the bodies of a young couple in the hotel.

Hickman identified the bodies at the coroner's office.

A memoral service for the couple was held at 12:15 this afternoon at the Roanoke Hospital.

Funeral arrangements are still in complete, but plans call for the funeral to take place in Roxboro with burial in Martinsville.